



DAY THREE – BALLADONIA TO EUCLA !

Thursday 24th February 2005

We awoke to discover the FESA had broken the back of the bushfire overnight and were into clean up mode and with the dust out here that was planned to take awhile.



While the support vehicles filled up I sized up a road train. This one was just a small one in comparison to those that would thunder down the 90 mile straight later in the day.



Why 90 mile straight ? Probably because 146.6km straight doesn't sound impressive enough. The longest straight in Australia runs basically between Balladonia and Caiguna in Western Australia. Apart from that fact it also could be known as the killing fields.

Everything from Roo's, Emu's, Foxes, and reptiles to Cow's, Sheep and Eagles lie baking in the sun. The stench from rotting road kill is unbearably intense in the open cockpit of the Vee. Hitting something that is dead on the road would not be a good thing in a vehicle so close to the ground, so regular "Road Kill Right" (or left or middle) is the constant call from Steve in the pilot vehicle. That is when he is not calling Roo or Emu left or right. Yes we did even have a "Roo Middle" which escalated into the old Mexican standoff. He did not want to move but after a couple of toots from the Britz bounced back into the bush.

Just on the approach to Caiguna is a signpost to the Caiguna Blow Hole. The blowhole is only about 50mtrs off the road and is tidal even though the ocean is over 100klms away. The air rushing out of the blowhole can reach a speed of up to 72kph. The air is cool and inviting, particularly on a hot day and has a smell cross between the salt of the ocean and the damp of underground. On closer inspection the pebbles below the race boots gave way and I was nearly presented with a very close encounter.



Before we knew it – we were back on the road !



The Madura Pass was not far off but before heading down onto the plateau we pause for the tourist picture opportunity from the lookout.



Lunch was at the bottom so the pause was not too long. The trek from Madura took us to Eucla our planned stop for the night. We set up camp and grabbed our winter woollies as the sea breeze off the ocean cooled the campfire red that warmed the heart.

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