

# A BMW, AND GOOD LUCK, CONQUER A CLOSED ROAD

Story & Photo: Dave Burke



Good luck has been the story of my life really. This happened on the last leg of a 4,000km trip to Victoria and return. I was riding my 1974 BMW R90/6. I left Bairnsdale about a month after the terrible bushfires of 2019 / 2020. Many roads were indicated as “closed” on the VicRoads website, including the Monaro Highway, which is the route I usually take.

I decided to take the road from Bruthen to Jindabyne through the Alpine National Park. This is mostly dirt, but was open according to the VicRoads website.

I had travelled about 180-odd kilometres when I came to a “road closed” sign. This was a big problem as I had already passed the “bingo” point at which I didn't have enough fuel to return to Bruthen. I sat there for a while contemplating my odds and decided to carry on. This was actually a risky strategy, as any breakdown or injury would leave me with no hope of rescue or assistance. “Oh well, plough on and hope for the best!”

As it turned out, the road was closed for good reason; the fires had destroyed literally everything, but had been extinguished by torrential rain. The lack of ground cover meant that a lot of creek crossings on the road had been washed out by said rain. That left many large, exposed pipes which had to be traversed by my poor old BMW. I also worried about whether there might be a crossing so badly damaged that I simply couldn't ride around it. Fortunately the old girl managed to moto-cross her way over logs and pipes and, eventually, we made it to Jindabyne; where I put 21 litres of fuel into a 22 litre tank.

I think I was lucky that the old bike is (relatively) light compared to many modern adventure-bikes. (I have a Multistrada 1200 which would have been way too big and cumbersome to go places the old girl went). But, as I say, I've always been lucky!