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Check your F650GS or Dakar Forks

WOZZUPPP WayneC1?

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11-03-2008, 03:58 PM

#46

4sport

Adventurer

Joined: Nov 2008
Location: Kirkland, WA
Odometer: 10

[Blame MaddBrit](#)

[quote](#)

fork failure

2002 Dakar, born 2/2002 old design forks 😞
Has anyone found a splint/bolt-on fix or just change out?

11-04-2008, 01:34 AM

#47

2Advent

F650gs moder

Joined: May 2008
Odometer: 5

[Blame MaddBrit](#)

[quote](#)

I have a dakar 2000 old style, so I have been reading up on changing my front forks before I go to morocco next year.

Check this posting...

<http://www.advrider.com/forums/showthread.php?t=399113>

So found some ktm WP enduro forks and ktm/yamaha triple clamps cheap and gonna do the mod this dec once I moved the bike into brothers garage 😊. Aswell as putting new coloured lights in dash and duel headlights.

I will document my efforts and post them up in case someone is interrested, but will be gathering as much info from others as I go alone.

I value my life more than taking chances...I think?

11-05-2008, 12:47 AM

#48

Cage Free

Chicken

very n00b



Joined: Jul 2008
Location: NoVA
Odometer: 10

[Blame MaddBrit](#)

[quote](#)

2003 Dakar

Production Date: 05/2003

New Style Forks (according to provided pics). 🙌

"It was one of those long perfect moments in the human driving experience that makes everybody quiet." -HST

'03 F650GS Dakar 😊

11-05-2008, 08:00 PM

#49

[talltony](#)

Gnarly Adventurer

Joined: Apr 2005
Location: Dorset,UK
Odometer: 129

From BMWUK regarding later type forks

Dear Mr.Jack,

Whilst not wishing to cover old ground,it does seem strange to me that you are unable to endorse the fitting of the later ,modified,forks to my bike.

I can see no reason for BMW to go to the expense and trouble to design and fit a modified component to any machine other than to replace a component that has proved to be faulty.

I am unable to find any reference to failures of the later style forks.

Below is a copy of a report from a BMW owners magazine that you may find interesting.

Yours sincerely
Tony Holt

Dear Mr Holt

Thank you for your most recent email dated October 31, 2008. I am sorry to learn that I have been unable to allay your concerns over your BMW F650 GS and that you feel that, as the front forks have been modified on later models, there is an issue with the previous design.

As a company that strives to provide our customers with a premium product, we are always conducting research and development initiatives throughout our entire vehicle range. As part of this process, components and systems may be updated, however, I can assure you that this is not an admission that a particular part is substandard or requires modification. This is a representation of our commitment to provide a continually high standard of product.

As previously advised, we rely on the collation of failure reports by our dealership network to highlight any problems that may arise with our vehicles. If a problem is highlighted as being common, we will always take the necessary steps to resolve the issue with as little inconvenience to our customers as possible. Having already checked the records that we hold for your specific motorcycle, I can confirm that there are no outstanding campaigns for your motorcycle.

I am sorry that you have had further cause to contact us, however, I hope that my response clarifies our position on the matter.


Yours sincerely

BMW Motorrad UK
Simon Jack

02 F650 Dakar
95 XR250

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)

 quote

 11-05-2008, 08:23 PM

50

BMW Car Club of America report

I hit 'submit' too soon....

Here is the report I sent to BMWUK in the above email.

From 2004 BMWCCA Magazine Issue

ALUMINUM FAILURE

I recently experienced a component failure. Although it is not with a BMW sedan, but with a motorcycle, I thought it might be of interest to BMWCCA members as more and more BMWs use alloys, and the failure of my GS650 motorcycle fork axle flange was likely caused by a poor alloy casting.

I was travelling east on a straight 30-mph road at normal speed when the bike suddenly fell over, taking the rider down, too. Thankfully, there were witnesses, but none so close that they would run over me. I am thankful that the failure didn't occur at 70 mph. I had just crossed over railroad tracks when I hit the ground; I believe the tracks were the final jolt that caused the weakening axle flange to fail. The bike

was a 2001 GS650 with about 1,400 miles on it, and it is the bike they advertise as their Dakar

endurance bike. You can see that the flange pulled away from fork, taking a piece of the alloy. As an engineer, I find this type of failure discomfoting because it happens so quickly and without any warning. After the accident, I checked both the floor in my shop and the spot outside my office where I parked the bike, expecting to see shock oil drips, but there were none. The only clue I had before the accident was that the front brake lever was "stiffer."

I've been driving BMWs exclusively since I was seventeen, from my first 1602 to the current 530i, and this GS650 was my first BMW Motorrad-my forty-something birthday gift. Whether you are an owner of a 650GS, or driving modern alloy equipped cars, I would advise that you do a quick check of the vehicle before every drive, as this failure was unannounced. Be sensitive to new shudders, sways, or other unfamiliar vehicle actions, as it might save your life.

I'm also quite disappointed with BMW's response. The dealer said that it was impossible for this part to fail, and that I must have been doing something unusual.

BMW Motorrad hasn't responded since they got full pictures of the failure several months ago. I think they want to close their eyes and pretend it isn't a normal component failure, hoping that I was doing something strange with the bike like skydiving or some such. My friends have all grown tired over the years of hearing me sing BMW's praises. I've gotten a real earful this year as they have chided me about

how the GS650 let me down. And now, with BMW not even trying to make right this failure, I'm having a tough time defending BMW.


So, be careful, be wise, and be aware of changed vehicle characteristics. I know I will.

Jim Tussey
Caro, Michigan

02 F650 Dakar

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)

 quote

 11-07-2008, 10:30 AM

51

[Benesesso](#)

Gnarly Adventurer


Anyone know of a case where these BMW forks broke on the left side only, or the left side broke first?



Joined: Jul 2008
Location: Litchfield Park,
Arizona
Odometer: 499

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)

 quote

 11-07-2008, 11:15 AM

52

[GSjoyride](#)

Gnarly Adventurer

? left fork failure ?

have you checked the Chain Gang F650 site?



Joined: Apr 2008
Location: Marina-by-the-Bay,
CA
Odometer: 216

<http://f650.com/phpbb3/viewforum.php...24c4e94a60d8c0>
(don't know how to link you up better than this, enter fork failure in the search)




this majorly sucksand BMW is basing part of their

consideration on whether or not the dealers have reordered the part.

What the ??? Most of the folks replacing their forks are NOT replacing with stock parts, and not necessarily going through dealers either-geez, go figure, I wonder why??


Did you post a pic?

2009 encounter with a drunk drivers tail gate @ 65 mph, updated report 2-8-09
<http://www.advrider.com/forums/showthread.php?t=420667> 

'07 BMW F650GS

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)

 quote

 11-07-2008, 12:55 PM

53

[Benesesso](#)

Gnarly Adventurer

>"Did you post a pic?"<

No--*I* didn't have a fork breakage problem. Just doing a little checking.




Joined: Jul 2008
Location: Litchfield Park,

Arizona
Odometer: 499

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)



 11-07-2008, 02:45 PM

54

[WayneC1](#)
Adventurer

Joined: Oct 2008
Location: Australia
Odometer: 58

The answer is do we have not identified any instances where the LHS has broken by itself....so far

Looking at the images in the pic at the start of the post it would seem the RHS is the weakest of the two fork legs.

The ABS mounting bracket adds vertical gussetting but little lateral strength

BMW's reliance on dealer reports as per letter above fails to account for insurance write off's which in many cases the dealer never gets to see



 11-10-2008, 04:45 AM

55

[GSBS](#)
FunHog



Joined: Nov 2005
Location: Blount Springs, AL
Odometer: 1,628

Safety Wire...

After looking more closely at the lower left photo (right side, old style forks) at the beginning of this thread, I noticed that fork had been wired together with what looks like safety wire.

I haven't had any issues with my forks, although a VERY close inspection revealed a tiny scratch or hairline flaw on the left side fork (just above the ABS sensor). I can't tell if it's just where a rock scratched it bouncing off the road or something more.

I'm thinking that for my own peace of mind I'll use several wraps of safety wire on each side so in the event that a catastrophic failure were to occur at least the wheel should stay on long enough to get stopped.

I'll post photos if I can work out the technique and make it work.

"I'd rather sweat than bleed." - Troutrider


My website: <http://studioblountsprings.com/>

<http://motocompound.com/> 

Last edited by GSBS : 11-10-2008 at 04:55 AM.

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)



 11-10-2008, 05:58 AM

56

[Cubdriver](#)
Stampede Swimmer



Joined: Aug 2007
Location: Palmer, Alaska
Odometer: 176


Whoa GSBS, do you think that safety wire will do anything to stop a catastrophic failure at speed? I sure do not. I think the photo you referred to had them wired together after failure just for the photo. could be wrong, but I would not go slowly down the driveway and expect safety wire to hold if the fork failed. Get new ones and hammer the shit out of BMW. Maybe there is something in numbers.

KLR650
HD Softail..... OOPS not on this site

For Mrs CD:
F650GS
Yamaha TW 200

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)

 quote

 11-10-2008, 05:05 PM

57

[farkleface](#)

Adventurer

Joined: Nov 2008
Location: seattle
Odometer: 24


2001 dakar old style forks.


Today we (me 01 dakar and my brother 07 dakar) planned a great ride on the olympic peninsula. We set out to scout some new (to us) trails. After many days of rain it was extremely muddy and the rivers were high. We cruised some great fs roads for a couple hours and did some exploring. then we became committed to some single track that we soon realized was not built for these bikes at all and when confirmed by a guy ktm200 who told us we were crazy, we realizing we couldn't turn back due to a steep long downhill start that was deep mud we decided to go forward. to make a long story short 5 hours, a break lever, headlight, a few turn signals, some mirrors, a little blood ,and a lot of sweat we made it 10 miles and back to some fs roads and civilization.

I have to say, it took a little fun out of worrying about spending a rainy november night deep in the woods being eaten by cougars, while I kept thinking my front wheel was going to fly off at anytime.

I now have a 03 yz front fork in the mail-can't wait
(It was a great ride)

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)

 quote

 11-10-2008, 10:36 PM

58

[JDLuke](#)

Familiar with sarcasm



Joined: May 2007
Location: New Jersey
Odometer: 1,947

Quote:

Originally Posted by **farkleface**

2001 dakar old style forks.

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*I now have a 03 yz front fork in the mail-can't wait
(It was a great ride)*


This sort of thing (not to mention some of my own experiences being silly with my F650GS) leads me to believe that the design of the casting is fine, but that occasionally the actual casting process would leave flaws in that area. Maybe the metal was cooling down a bit as it reached that area or something. I suspect that if you

have a 'good' set of forks (X-Ray inspection?) this would never happen, whereas if you have a 'bad' set it's just a matter of time.

OMG radioactive anthrax... with eggs!

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)

 quote

 11-12-2008, 12:22 AM

59

[talltony](#)

Gnarly Adventurer

Joined: Apr 2005
Location: Dorset,UK
Odometer: 129

Quote:

Originally Posted by **JDLuke**

This sort of thing (not to mention some of my own experiences being silly with my F650GS) leads me to believe that the design of the casting is fine, but that occasionally the actual casting process would leave flaws in that area. Maybe the metal was cooling down a bit as it reached that area or something. I suspect that if you have a 'good' set of forks (X-Ray inspection?) this would never happen, whereas if you have a 'bad' set it's just a matter of time.


That may be true as AFAIK there does not seem to be any correlation between usage or mileage and failure. However BMW(or Showa) must think differently or they wouldn't have strengthened the later sliders.

Tony

02 F650 Dakar
95 XR250

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)

 quote

 11-19-2008, 11:30 PM

60

[talltony](#)

Gnarly Adventurer

Joined: Apr 2005
Location: Dorset,UK
Odometer: 129

My latest communication with BMWUK

Dear Mr.Jack

It has occurred to me that many,if not all,of these fork failures and the subsequent damage would have been the subject of an insurance claim and even if presented to a dealer for repair may not have attracted attention as a component failure.It would most likely have been assumed that the fork breakage was a result,rather than the cause,

of the crash.

In view of this, I would be interested to know if the failure reports you mention include reports from insurance companies,in particular BMW insurance which I

believe provides cover for a high percentage of BMW vehicles on the road.

Yours sincerely

Tony Holt

The reply, this time not from the service manager but the customer service manager:

Dear Mr Holt

I have reviewed the chain of correspondence between BMW Customer Support and yourself, and I was sorry to learn of your ongoing dissatisfaction with the front forks on your BMW F650 GS. On behalf of BMW UK, I regret any detrimental effect that recent experience has had on your faith in your motorcycle and the BMW brand as a whole.

I have taken the opportunity to discuss your case with a representative of BMW UK Motorrad who has assured me that the front forks on this model have not been subject to a product enhancement or product recall which, as a responsible manufacturer, BMW would have initiated had a trend of failure been identified by our company head office. As previously explained, BMW does implement a policy of continuous product development and might alter component specifications and maintenance requirements throughout the lifecycle of a product range but this is not, and never has been, indicative of a product quality issue.

With regard to your comment that BMW AG data in respect of front forks would be incomplete due to cases being handled via insurance companies, I should perhaps clarify that in an instance where an insurance company believes manufacturing defect to be responsible for any insurance matter raised, that insurance company would instruct BMW UK to involve itself in that case as an absolute priority. A technical inspection would be required from the manufacturer and, if fault was found with the product and deemed the cause of any consequential damage or events, BMW UK would assume liability for the matter. Again, there is no such trend of approaches from insurance companies in relation to the front forks of the BMW F650 GS.

It remains that fact that BMW UK is unable to offer any goodwill gesture to you to assist with costs for replacement front forks to be fitted to your motorcycle.

In closing, I trust that I have adequately clarified the position of the manufacturer in this instance. I wish you many happy miles on your BMW F650 GS and all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Marian Luff

Customer Service Manager

Region 7

BMW UK

I think that's about as far as I am going to get with this.....

Tony

02 F650 Dakar
95 XR250

 [Blame MaddBrit](#)

 quote

 new reply

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-- cRASH

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