

Adventure Rider

RIDE THE WORLD.



ADVrider > Riding > Face plant

Crash in Destruction Bay, YT

WOZZUPPP WayneC1?

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10-04-2008, 12:57 AM

151

kwh

Fat Hairy Git



Joined: Jan 2005
Location: SA31, United Kingdom
Odometer: 98



Quote:

Originally Posted by **WayneC1**

At the time of my incident I was in a critical phase of a major project and I could only leave the machine with the Dealer and BMW to inspect / repair while I flew out 800 kms west to continue the project, complete with a black and bruised neck (literally) and rather dazed & bruised brain.

The executives I was working with on the project were concerned I would not make it through but we did.

As for the repairs BMW refused to come to the party claiming I hit something which I did not.

In an odd twist BMW footed the bill under their roadside assist program to truck me out of the bush 130 kms back to the dealer & my city base even though under roadside assist accident recovery costs are the owner's costs and mechanical failure costs are BMW's. I understand the cost was \$A1500

This thread though makes the time line rather clear.

The parts were "revised" and into production by June 03, my incident was Aug 03 and the replacement RHS fork leg was the new style so even spare part holdings had been replaced by Sept/Oct when they did the repair.

Yet despite the above timeline they advised me in Sept 03 that, and I quote,

"There are no other failures of this kind anywhere in the world we are aware of"

What annoys me most is not the discovery of a problem, however infrequent it may or not be, It is the fact that they were clearly aware there was a problem and not only denied it but have left me with the old LHS fork leg, not to mention all the other machines out there to potentially cause a problem.

It sounds to me like you were a mere coin-toss away from being a quadriplegic and/or a drooling vegetable for the rest of your days.

Still, never mind, I'm sure the BMW guys who were able to sell you a brand new bike and then stiff you for the cost of repairs when it tried to kill you less than 24 hours later without anybody finding out about the design flaw must surely have got a real nice bonus that year.

So that's OK then.

PS: I wonder what happened to all the inventory of spare fork castings that might have been being held in stock around the world when the new part came in? Do we believe that BMW left them out there in the wild? Or do we believe that they recalled them from stock and replaced them with the newer design?

Quote:

The people we need to find are those who had the problems back in 2000 to 2002 which lead to the changed fork leg.

Absolutely. It's scary how many people have appeared on one thread on one internet forum who have had this nightmare visit them, and presumably some of the people who had this happen in 2001 or 2002 and lived to tell the tale are still around and active online?

Some people this happened to will never know it, of course. They wake up on the ground, bike in ditch with wheel hanging off, "What happened?", and never assumed that their front wheel might have just fallen off! Others will have had the bike go into a slapper or otherwise out of control and centre punched something solid, smashing the front end and destroying the evidence with impact damage.

However, I think that the law of averages being what it is, there must have been fatalities and life changing injuries as a result of this problem, both before and after BMW found out about it and decided to do nothing for existing customers. Outcomes that mean that accidents that claimed the lives or quality of life of riders are never traced back to this failure, and that we never find out about this.

Let's face it, if you had bashed yourself back into the mind of a five year old when you crashed, you wouldn't have exactly been in a position to find out about this thread and post in it tell anybody here what happened to you, and even if by some miracle they knew exactly how and why you crashed, I sincerely doubt that any of your non-biking friends and family would ever have found it and posted themselves on your behalf!

I therefore assume that there have been such deaths and life changing injuries already, but that nobody knows about them. And logically, if nothing is done there will be more deaths and life changing injuries.

Quote:

have now also checked the part No's for all GS & Dakar's both single and dual spark. There is only one Part No for each fork leg across all the year models.

Blame MaddBrit

quote

10-04-2008, 01:46 AM

152

manfromthetix

Lost in Space



Joined: Dec 2004
Location: Lexington, Virginia
Odometer: 924

The best question here is "what happened to all those old style fork tubes"? BMW is well known for producing enough parts to support their bikes for decades, so you know they had a pile of them out there as spares.... You can go on-line and order OEM parts for your 1973 bike today no problem, so why not the original-style 2002 F650 fork leg??

Doug



"If it doesn't blow smoke and make noise, it isn't a sport!" - radio ad for shop in Bozeman, MT

Blame MaddBrit

quote

10-04-2008, 04:21 AM

153

redbaroness

Gnarly Adventurer



Joined: Apr 2008
Location: Seattle, WA
Odometer: 101

Quote:

Originally Posted by **WayneC1**
I know and respect the BMW Australia rep who advised me of the results of the metal testing but there was something in his voice the day he rang which made me disbelieve the information he provided.

A very nice man from BMW North America called me after I was out of the hospital and said - "We've never heard of this happening before."

Thank you for posting about your experience.

Blame MaddBrit

quote

10-04-2008, 06:33 AM

154

kwh

Fat Hairy Git



Joined: Jan 2005
Location: SA31, United Kingdom
Odometer: 98



Quote:

Originally Posted by **manfromthetix**
The best question here is "what happened to all those old style fork tubes"? BMW is well known for producing enough parts to support their bikes for decades, so you know they had a pile of them out there as spares.... You can go on-line and order OEM parts for your 1973 bike today no problem, so why not the original-style 2002 F650 fork leg??

Doug



Thinking about it, the best evidence that it didn't just happen to be 'different' but was designed to be a direct replacement for the


earlier design is that they gave them the same part numbers and sell them as the BMW fork castings to owners of earlier bikes who need new castings (probably because their front wheels have fallen off in a bizarre accident that BMW have never heard of having happened before). If they withdrew all the first generation castings from spares stock and melted them down for scrap, that would be yet *another* smoking gun.

Right now I'm choking and my eyes are streaming from all the gun smoke round here already, though...

Ken Haylock
BMW K1200GT SE & Triumph TT600
<http://www.cix.co.uk/~kwh>

 Blame MaddBrit

 quote

 10-04-2008, 07:18 AM

155

mjg

Studly Adventurer

Joined: Aug 2006
Location: Bentonville
Odometer: 573

Quote:


Originally Posted by **kwh**
Absolutely. It's scary how many people have appeared on one thread on one internet forum who have had this nightmare visit them

I haven't followed the thread very closely so I apologize if I missed someone making this point it but it's even more scary given the title of the thread.

Makes you wonder what kind of a reaction a thread labelled 'BMW fork failures' might get. 🤪

 Blame MaddBrit

 quote

 10-04-2008, 10:51 AM

156

WayneC1

Adventurer

Joined: Oct 2008
Location: Australia
Odometer: 58

With part No's it is not unusual for a part to be revised during the production cycle, where the revision is minor the Part No may well remain the same. In the case of a cast component though with a change like the fork leg it would be normal for a new Part No to be used. There are other parts for the GS which have changed & new Part No's created. Speed sensors and Cush Drive Hubs, magneto, magneto gear drive, BMS to name a few. The voltage regulator may be a revised part with only one Part No. Max BMW even has notes in some cases showing when the old parts were last available. Not the fork legs though


The fork legs are a cast then machined part. It may be faulty casting or it may be a fault in machining leaving too little strength in the fork legs. It may even be showa who made the change, we do not know.

The fact that BMW NA has claimed in 2008 to redbaroness that "they have not heard of this happening before" is the appalling aspect.



 edit

 quote

 10-04-2008, 07:47 PM

157

kwh

Fat Hairy Git



Joined: Jan 2005
Location: SA31, United Kingdom
Odometer: 98



Quote:

Originally Posted by **WayneC1**

With part No's it is not unusual for a part to be revised during the production cycle, where the revision is minor the Part No may well remain the same. In the case of a cast component though with a change like the fork leg it would be normal for a new Part No to be used. There are other parts for the GS which have changed & new Part No's created. Speed sensors and Cush Drive Hubs, magneto, magneto gear drive, BMS to name a few. The voltage regulator may be a revised part with only one Part No. Max BMW even has notes in some cases showing when the old parts were last available. Not the fork legs though

You'd almost think, if you were a bit paranoid, that maybe somebody was trying to cover their tracks. You know 'Oh, it was a cosmetic change, nothing more, so we didn't change the part number. Failures you say? Never heard of them!'

Obviously, that's tin-foil-hat territory. Isn't it?

Quote:

The fact that BMW NA has claimed in 2008 to redbaroness that "they have not heard of this happening before" is the appalling aspect.

Yes, absolutely. But then they claimed the same to you, having already redesigned the part!

The other thing that makes my blood boil is this line about 'You must have hit something', as if even if you had, on your brand spanking new motorcycle, that would make this your fault and allow them to stiff you for the repairs and wash their hands of the matter. As you say, you are still using the front wheel, and presumably the original fork sliders and bolt-on ancillaries, and of course the original casting on the other fork leg, 50,000 miles or whatever it is later. So, what were they claiming that you could have hit that would have broken only that one specific part of your Dakar's front end and not even dinked the rest of it? Obviously, unless they were idiots, *they* wouldn't have believed what they had been instructed to tell you by their superiors, so why should anybody else?

I also notice that I've never read any tales of woe from Honda Africa Twin riders Transalp riders or Yamaha XT riders or Kawasaki KLR riders about *their* front wheels suddenly and spontaneously falling off at speed and chucking them down the road, whether they've hit a bump or two recently or not! Even if we suspend all rational disbelief and accept BMW's word that your front end came apart because 'You must have hit something', (yeah, right!), why would that be an acceptable failure mode for the front end? Why would what happened to the others in this thread be 'not BMW's problem' if they had ALL mysteriously hit something that did no other damage to their front ends, dropped the bike or whatever in the days, weeks or months before their forks failed?

Ken Haylock

10-06-2008, 02:51 PM

158

DeeG

Huh?



Joined: Sep 2007
Location: Central WA
Odometer: 310

Red Baroness,
I am GLAD to hear you weren't too badly injured. HOLY CRAP!!!
dammit, now I'm gonna worry about something like this happening
to my GS every time I go for a ride..... 😬

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Benesesso**
*I'd bet a bunch that it's a design flaw, but it's *probably*
not a HT problem. The main point is that the metal most
likely did not itself change, it slowly cracked to the point of
sudden, final fracture. Happens all the time on many items.*

The left side landing gear on our Cessna (1970 C-150) suffered
from intergranular corrosion. Failure occurred at the top of the gear,
near the fuselage attach point.

It was detected during its annual inspection about 7 years ago. A
~31 year old part, no telling how long the problem had existed.

Looking at a couple of the pics, especially the one of the close-up
of the left side of the wheel, it looks a lot like what happened to
our plane.

It looks like the metal on the axle is flaked off. I could be
mistaken, it just looks frighteningly familiar.

We still have the gear, its down in the garage somewhere, and the
pics I took are buried in a computer somewhere I think I may just
go and look for it in the morning.....

I could be completely off the mark here, but that was the first
thing that came to mind when I saw the pics.

Intersting enough, the plane lived in Florida for the first 20 or so
years of it existence. GS spent how long in a crate on a boat from
Germany? Granted, 20 years vs a couple weeks, but what if the
combination of that constant salt air and an issue with the
manufacturing?

I don't know. I'm not a metalurgist, just curious if there is a
relation between the two. That and consumption of a goodly
quantity of some excellent wine..... 🍷

2007 F650GS ice blue - MINE
2007 F650GS black - his
2008 Honda CRF230L - says its mine, but guess who's riding
it.....
and 14 others that aren't quite dirt capable.

Last edited by DeeG : 10-06-2008 at 04:37 PM.

Blame MaddBrit

quote

10-07-2008, 01:51 AM

159

dwayne

Silly Adventurer



Joined: Feb 2006
Location: wheelie in purgatory,
Calgary
Odometer: 1,493

I believe the C-150 gear is a forging, not a casting, leaving it more susceptible to IG corrosion due to more highly strained grain boundaries. The "flaky" rough dull surface along the edges of the fork are indicative of the mode of the catastrophic failure (brittle fracture) rather than what caused the initial failure mechanism.

[Rum Runners Yukon, NWT & Alaska](#)
[Roads and Ruins Scotland](#)
[Kinbasket Lake Golden B.C.](#)
[A "Day" of Dirt Biking Rockies East Slopes](#)
[High and Dry Colorado and Utah](#)

"When your only tool is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail"

Blame MaddBrit

quote

10-07-2008, 04:43 AM

160

DeeG

Huh?



Joined: Sep 2007
Location: Central WA
Odometer: 310

Ahh...OK. I didn't know that the mfg process was different on the two. Learn sumthin new every day... :-)

I sent some of the pics to a friend of mine that has spent years working with metal, his opinion is it was a 'a very poor quality casting'. Porous metal, and as such, will corrode quickly. Best he could do with just looking at pics.

[2007 F650GS ice blue - MINE](#)
[2007 F650GS black - his](#)
[2008 Honda CRF230L - says its mine, but guess who's riding it.....](#)
and 14 others that aren't quite dirt capable.

Blame MaddBrit

quote

10-07-2008, 11:59 PM

161

Mudmonger

n00b

Joined: Jun 2008
Location: South Africa
Odometer: 3



That looks to be a very odd failure-did you get the bike second hand from the wheelie king? Heal up as fast as you can and try again, we'll be waiting.[/quote]

Wheelie king or not that should hold up, its no excuse for poor engineering- if there was traffic people could have been killed.. If I had a 02 gs 650 I would have it seriously checked out.

Blame MaddBrit

quote

10-08-2008, 01:15 AM

162

Benesesso

Gnarly Adventurer



Joined: Jul 2008
Location: Litchfield Park,
Arizona

Found a nice photo (photomicrograph) of a typical stress-corrosion-crack (SCC). Crack direction is left-to-right. Notice all the branches. This is NOT typical of fatigue cracks, including so-called corrosion-fatigue cracks. Fatigue cracks are usually just single, unbranched cracks, driven by stress. They usually go right thru the grains (transgranular), not around them (intergranular, IGSCC) like SCC usually does. Yes, there are some cases of transgranular SCC (TGSCC), but IGSCC is more common.


So, a good lab., upon receiving one of these broken forks (or the

Odometer: 499


piece that broke off) will examine it in an SEM (non-destructive), and possibly cut it up, mount a small piece in hard bakelite, polish it, etch it with very dilute acids to bring out the grain structure, etc., and look at the crack using a metallograph/metallurgical microscope.

All that will determine the MODE of fracture-the starting point for determining WHY the forks broke.

EDIT-photo didn't transfer.

 Blame MaddBrit

 quote

 10-08-2008, 01:50 AM

163

dwayne

Silly Adventurer



Joined: Feb 2006

Location: wheelie in purgatory,
Calgary

Odometer: 1,493

I think we are saying the same thing: The photos as posted are not enough information. All we can see is that it failed. They photos are not nearly enough to determine WHY it cracked. Only a lab with metallugists and proper equipment will be able to determine that with certinty, even then they will only be able to confirm/deny the presence of prexisting flaws and attest to the initiation mechinisms.

My guess is that it is not corrosion related at all. My statment of brittle failure is just to point out that the part was likely already "broken" before the failure became catastrophic.

Rum Runners [Yukon, NWT & Alaska](#)

Roads and Ruins [Scotland](#)

Kinbasket Lake [Golden B.C.](#)


A "Day" of Dirt Biking [Rockies East Slopes](#)

High and Dry [Colorado and Utah](#)

"When your only tool is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail"

 Blame MaddBrit

 quote

 10-09-2008, 02:48 AM

164

kwh

Fat Hairy Git



Joined: Jan 2005

Location: SA31, United
Kingdom

Odometer: 98



Just for completeness and information...

...here is as much text as I can retrieve for the messages posted by member 'Gertarg' on the Chain Gang website. The originals seem to have spooled off, but the first part of the text of each message remains in the search system, and this is what I have so far gotten from the three messages he posted.

- snip -

Re: Front forks total failure on '00 F650GS.

Sorry for not responding. Been out of town. Beem is probably the one that purchased my spares in '02. I bought the bike new in Aug 2000. Put about 5,000 miles on it mainly on blacktop and probably 400 on gravel/dirt roads. The failure occurred in Jan 01 on a dirt road in Argentina. Normal ...

by gertarg

on May 24th, 2005, 6:13 am

Forum: [General Discussion](#)

Topic:

Replies:
Views:

- [Jump to post](#)

Re: Front fork failures

I forgot to mention that as both sides of the forks snapped, the front wheel departed the bike leaving the bike and me doing 3 flips as the forks dug into the dirt. By the way the front wheel is in almost perfect condition. I didn't hit anything.

by gertarg
on May 14th, 2005, 3:49 am
Forum: [General Discussion](#)
Topic:
Replies:
Views:

- [Jump to post](#)

Front forks total failure on '00 F650GS.

I own a F650 GS that I received new in June of 2000. After about 5,000 miles, I experienced a catastrophic failure of the castings on both side of the front forks. I sustained major injuries. BMW has admitted to knowing of 3 nearly identical failures before they redesigned the forks, adding mor...

by gertarg
on May 14th, 2005, 3:39 am
Forum: [General Discussion](#)
Topic:
Replies:
Views:

- [Jump to post](#)

- snip-

So, this is entirely consistent with what we think we now know, and if we can find 'Gertarg', and he confirms what he posted above, he would be the proof that BMW have lied consistently to everybody else who has experienced this failure since at least his...

Ken Haylock
BMW K1200GT SE & Triumph TT600
<http://www.cix.co.uk/~kwh>

10-09-2008, 11:45 AM

165

WayneC1

Adventurer

Joined: Oct 2008
Location: Australia
Odometer: 58

We have now found the updated forks were fitted to machines as early as December 2002

To check your machine production date decode the VIN at the following web site

<http://www.bmw-z1.com/VIN/VINdecode-e.cgi>



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Face plant

[Go](#)

Times are GMT +10. It's 06:51 PM.

-- cRASH

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