

# Adventure Rider

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ADVrider > Riding > Face plant

## Crash in Destruction Bay, YT

**WOZZUPPP WayneC1?**

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10-09-2008, 08:00 PM

# 166

kwh

Fat Hairy Git



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



Stop press! I found a setting on the Advanced Search form of the Chain Gang site that let me up the number of characters returned by the search! Apparently the entire text of the messages is in the search database, even though it is no longer in the main message archive...

So, here are Gertarg's three messages again, in full this time!

- 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 dirt road. No pot holes or obstructions - just 3 tracks.

The casting on the forks where it holds the wheel is the part that snapped - first on one side and then the other.

I have a lawsuit pending with BMW (the wheels of justice move slowly) and they have admitted to knowing about 3 failures other than mine that happened before they redesigned the part, adding material. I'm wondering if there are other failures that BMW doesn't know about or isn't talking about.

Gertarg

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 more material. They decided not to notify owners.

I'm wondering if any Chain Gang members know of similar failures.

Gertarg

by [gertarg](#)

on May 14th, 2005, 3:39 am

Forum: [General Discussion](#)

Topic:

Replies:

Views:

- [Jump to post](#)

- snip -

So, it sounds like 'Gertarg' actually went through some kind of Discovery process as part of his lawsuit and got BMW to admit that they knew about this, and that they redesigned the part! Everything I know about the US justice system I learnt from watching old episodes of LA Law on British TV and reading Groklaw.net so I may be completely wrong about this, but doesn't that mean that somewhere in court records in the USA all this will be documented and in the public domain?

Do we think it went to court? Would BMW even take the risk of it getting that far? And if it didn't get that far, do we think that Gertarg would have been compelled to sign some kind of gagging order as part of his compensation agreement?


Really, it does make finding this 'Gertarg' fellow quite a potentially useful exercise! I suspect that he could shed some very powerful

light on all this!

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

 Blame MaddBrit



 10-09-2008, 10:54 PM

# 167

## WayneC1

Adventurer

Joined: Oct 2008  
Location: Australia  
Odometer: 58

### F650 GS Fork Checking

I have started a separate thread for fork information over in thumpers to assist people without going through 12 pages here

See


<http://www.advrider.com/forums/showthread.php?t=393785>

Trust it is helpful to people & would love to see some other machine production dates & fork styles added







 10-10-2008, 08:17 AM

# 168

## skeptic

Gnarly Adventurer

Joined: Jul 2006  
Location: SoCal  
Odometer: 163

The finish of the left fork at the axle is very rough. I bet an analysis would reveal some porosity. Increasing the thickness of the webbing surrounding the axle would be a bandaid for crappy metallurgy and quality control. Maybe that was the corporate decision. It seems like a critical part and should have led to recall IMHO. I do hope you have an independent metallurgical study performed.

Slightly off topic, but somewhat relevant is this. I have a 2003 BMW Mini Cooper S and despite the numerous "refinements" made to correct "issues", BMW has never fessed up to any design or manufacturing errors or faults To do so would be bad for PR and the bottom line. Fast forward to the 2007 and later models. Some Owners of the new MiniCooper S's have a persistent "death rattle" from the the valve train. BMW has not acknowledged any problem nor fixed the problem so far as I am aware.

I believe a little transparency on issues like this would bring some positive goodwill and reduce lawsuits. We all want to believe that BMW stands behind its products. Silence is not golden.

<http://www.motoringfile.com/2008/02/...issue-exposed/>


Just to clarify - I love my 2003 Cooper S. It is incredibly fun to drive, and I can't complain about how it has held up, considering the abuse I have given it. I just wish BMW would head off the complaints by being a little more open about these issues, and pro-active in fixing them or explaining them away.

Be skeptical and a critical thinker. Don't be fooled by fake patriots

*Last edited by skeptic : 10-11-2008 at 03:40 AM.*

 Blame MaddBrit



 10-10-2008, 08:22 AM

# 169

## crazybrit

Beastly Adventurer



Joined: Mar 2006  
Location: Portland, OR  
Odometer: 4,438

Quote:

Originally Posted by **skeptic**  
*I do hope you have an independent metallurgical study performed.*

So what is happening here RedBaroness? Seems like a 1million+1 posts from various people lately (funny) but not much from you other than the comment about the nice call from BMW.

Where is the bike? Did you ever get it back or did it get totalled out and disposed off up in the Great White North.

Or are you prohibited from commenting further due to the terms of your financial settlement with BMW 🙄

Blame MaddBrit

[quote](#)

10-10-2008, 10:50 AM

# 170

## WayneC1

Adventurer

Joined: Oct 2008  
Location: Australia  
Odometer: 58

Skeptic, do a search on the NHTSA system and you will find a large number of reports to them filed by BMW on the mini's, seems they had quite a few problems.

Crazybrit, redbaroness is doing what she should do, recovering. She has also copped too many unwarranted comments on her motives in the forums especially the f650 forum.

Lets find out the facts, not jump to conclusions

No one ever wins from situations like this, riders are injured and reputations are damaged when commonsense does not prevail.

[edit](#)

[quote](#)

10-10-2008, 03:40 PM

# 171

## GazzaFish

Gnarly Adventurer



Joined: Apr 2007  
Location: Melbourne, AUS  
Odometer: 224

wow. I have an 03 dakar and wheelie a lot.....well.... I used too...



Blame MaddBrit

[quote](#)

10-11-2008, 05:35 PM

# 172

## kwh

Fat Hairy Git



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

Quote:

Originally Posted by **GazzaFish**  
*wow. I have an 03 dakar and wheelie a lot.....well.... I used too...* 🙄


Would you mind updating the other thread with its build date details and what kind of forks it has? '03 bikes are the most interesting because that is smack on or about the time period when they were changing over from the original design of fork

castings to the redesigned & uprated items.

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

 Blame MaddBrit

 quote

 10-11-2008, 11:12 PM

# 173

**KCDakar**

What are we waiting for?



Joined: Nov 2006  
Location: South of Kansas City  
a spell  
Odometer: 2,868

Quote:

Originally Posted by **kwh**  
***Would you mind updating the other thread with its build date details and what kind of forks it has? '03 bikes are the most interesting because that is smack on or about the time period when they were changing over from the original design of fork castings to the redesigned & uprated items.***

What other thread? 🤔

Edit: Found it.

<http://www.advrider.com/forums/showthread.php?t=393785>

To me, the best kind of trips are the ones you planned on the way, allowed yourself to change, and maybe didn't end up where you expected. Klay

I don't mind riding in the rain and I don't mind riding in the cold. But cold rain makes my makeup run. GSBiker


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Save \$5 on **Smugmug** by entering coupon code:  
**GJBcMk1uLoZm6**

*Last edited by KCDakar : 10-11-2008 at 11:19 PM.*

 Blame MaddBrit

 quote

 10-12-2008, 07:27 AM

# 174

**kwh**

Fat Hairy Git



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



**OK, searching the net I've just found another clue!**

This is on another forum where they have become aware of this thread and were discussing it.

<http://www.bmwporttouring.com/ubbth...913#Post388913>

In summary, user 'Killer' is reporting that in 2001 he was in South America when a rider had one of these and broke his neck. I think this may be 'Gertarg', unless there were more than one American rider almost killed in Argentina by collapsing forks in 2001. I shall attempt to find out more...

Quote:


Yup, exactly the same thing happened to one of those GSs on my South America trip in 2001. I looked at the bike afterwards, the axle mounts fractured, pathetic design, you could drop a KLR650 off a roof and it wouldn't break like that. My fellow rider broke his neck among other things, we

were out of helicopter range and the first ambulance that made it there wouldn't take him because his injuries were too bad. He ended up on a bigger vehicle then having two airlifts and spent several months in hospital down there and a couple more in Chicago but as far as I know he recovered OK. He sued BMW and I believe they settled, the lawyers talked to us all and I told them what I thought of that design, don't know any more details as it was obviously all hushed up by the lawyers. This was on the infamous RT40 in Argentina but the road wasn't to blame for this one.

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

 Blame MaddBrit



 10-12-2008, 03:53 PM

# 175

## Beezer

Beastly Adventurer

Joined: Oct 2004  
Location: Anchorage, formerly  
Spennard (hub of the universe)  
Odometer: 1,166

There are liquid penetrant test materials that are relatively cheap & easy to use that enhance visual detection of cracks open to the surface. I think you can get a kit for about \$60 or so in the aircraft parts stores. It will not detect flaws inside the casting unless open to the surface.

If I had one of these bikes I would go x-ray..... soon.... unless replacement parts of better design are available at reasonable prices. There are companies in my town that can do industrial radiographic inspections.... a set of Piper lift struts costs \$120 for two x-rays. That would be a sure fire way to detect porosity, which is what looks to be a big part of the problem with this failure mode.

BTW, the Cessna gear fittings are extrusions... a form that is quite susceptible to intergranular corrosion when combined with improper heat treating. The gear legs themselves are steel.

*Last edited by Beezer : 10-12-2008 at 04:07 PM.*

 Blame MaddBrit



 10-12-2008, 09:17 PM

# 176

## Benesesso

Gnarly Adventurer



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

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

Agree. Took another, longer look at the fractures, and it's apparent that the cracks must initiate on the inside of the tube--as others here have suggested. That pretty much rules out the Cessna-like SCC problem, because the fork ID is full of oil, of course. It also means that the cracks aren't visible from the outside, and the fact that these forks apparently weren't leaking before they failed means the "critical crack length" is pretty short. The short critical length is typical of many cast alum. alloys, even w/o any porosity.

SO, dye penetrant and visual checks probably aren't going to find this booby-trap. I can't believe BMW is going to get away with this. They may be able to buy silence from most, but all it takes is one well-off injured rider to demand a full court case and not accept whatever BMW might offer.

Unfortunately, there are so many cases of poor design that the

public never hears about, thanks to Mr. Green's appearance.

Blame MaddBrit

quote

10-13-2008, 02:11 AM

# 177

dwayne

Silly Adventurer



Joined: Feb 2006

Location: wheelie in purgatory,  
Calgary

Odometer: 1,493

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Beezer**

*There are liquid penetrant test materials that are relatively cheap & easy to use that enhance visual detection of cracks open to the surface. I think you can get a kit for about \$60 or so in the aircraft parts stores. It will not detect flaws inside the casting unless open to the surface.*

*If I had one of these bikes I would go x-ray..... soon.... unless replacement parts of better design are available at reasonable prices. There are companies in my town that can do industrial radiographic inspections.... a set of Piper lift struts costs \$120 for two x-rays. That would be a sure fire way to detect porosity, which is what looks to be a big part of the problem with this failure mode.*

*BTW, the Cessna gear fittings are extrusions... a form that is quite susceptible to intergranular corrosion when combined with improper heat treating. The gear legs themselves are steel.*

yes and no. x-ray needs about a 10% thickness change (or porosity size) compared to the total thickness of the material between the film and the source of radiation to detect flaws.

That \$120 is based on them having done it before and looking for a specific defect(s) in a specific area. Aircraft NDT procedures are usually pretty complete and give a lot of information that helps reduce the time to do a job. complicated shapes, and not knowing for certain which defects are present and which way they are oriented needs more exposures. At least 2 per leg would be required, but possibly more. Oh and you NEED to disassemble the fork for decent results. I have done this a few times.

Having said that x-ray would be the best bet. Ultrasonics would work, but the shape of the part would require some specialized equipment and the grain structure would be a factor to work around.

It is important to note that NDT will only find existing flaws not a bad design. You can spend the money and time on NDT but still might have a part that fails.

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

Roads and Ruins [Scotland](#)

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

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["When your only tool is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail"](#)

Last edited by dwayne : 10-13-2008 at 02:26 AM.

Blame MaddBrit

quote

10-13-2008, 03:09 AM

# 178

**knallhart**

n00b



Joined: Sep 2007  
Location: Yukon  
Odometer: 1

Blame MaddBrit

Hey Redbaroness,

I'm one of the EMS guys up in Yukon -- and a rider.

I'm glad to see you're still in (back in?) one piece. Rubber side down from now on.

*Last edited by knallhart : 10-13-2008 at 03:16 AM.*



10-13-2008, 12:50 PM

# 179

**manfromthetix**

Lost in Space



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

Quote:

Originally Posted by **kwh**  
*In summary, user 'Killer' is reporting that in 2001 he was in South America when a rider had one of these and broke his neck. I think this may be 'Gertarg', unless there were more than one American rider almost killed in Argentina by collapsing forks in 2001. I shall attempt to find out more...*

Hey, I know "Killer" (Bob) and have ridden with him and visited his home in Southern Utah. He's an ex-patriot Brit and a great guy. I'm sure he would help you find out what you need to know if you PM him on BMWST.com.

I've been following this with personal interest because I almost bought one of those bikes in 2002 for my (now ex-) wife and have thought about it again for my new girlfriend. God how I would hate to put someone on a bike that had known defects that could lead to her getting injured.

The plot thickens..... 🤔

Heal well, RedBaroness, lots of folks are rooting for you!

Doug

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

Blame MaddBrit



10-14-2008, 05:21 PM

# 180

**kwh**

Fat Hairy Git



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




**OK, here are the hi-res pictures of SGK3's failed fork...**






Click on the picture for hi-res Flickr metallurgical horror...

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

 Blame MaddBrit

 quote

 new reply

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