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08-21-2008,  
04:09 PM

[redbaroness](#)  
Registered User

Join Date: May  
2008  
Posts: 3

### Catastrophic Forks Failure

Spreading the word so more people are in the know.

Photos from my crash in the Yukon (clear day, bit windy, smooth pavement, and was riding a 2002 F650GS.



















Rest of the crash photos: <http://red-baroness.net/Motorcycling/images/BrokenB>  
From the ChainGang site: <http://faq.f650.com/FAQS/ForksMaintF...rk%20Failu>  
ADVRider thread: <http://www.advrider.com/forums/showthread.php?t=371650>

08-21-2008, 04:22 PM

#2

### **RJM2096**

Rob Mayes



Join Date: Nov 2007  
Location: Midwest USA  
Posts: 1,111

Man, I hope you fully recover. Our thoughts are with you.

Do you think the fork was stressed out or was it a defect? Has the front wheel ever been removed and re-installed improperly? Have you done any jumps or rough off roading?

#### **Rob Mayes**

[www.cyclecranks.com](http://www.cyclecranks.com) | 2000 BMW R1100RT (Current) | 2000 HD DynaWide Glide (Current)  
1985 Honda Magna V-65 | 1970 Norton Commando | 1966 Triumph Chopper | 1962 Honda 125 Sport



08-21-2008, 05:47 PM

#3

### **riderR1150GSAdv**

Fl Keys Fishing Guide



Join Date: Aug 2003  
Location: Florida Keys  
Posts: 2,276

First off, I hope you fully recover from this accident.

I have never seen a break on a bike like this, but to me it is a failure within the Heat Affected Zone while the forks were made. Aluminium gets brittle when welded and should be pre heated and post heated in these critical area's. I don't think that that happened here. 🙄 I am also looking at the massive pitting inside the fork material and this could also be a factor in the failure.

Sidebar here; I used to inspect welds for a living on oilrigs and had certifications in several NDT procedures for Lloyds and ABS.

Please get well soon!!!

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*Last edited by riderR1150GSAdv : 09-07-2008 at 04:48 PM.*



08-23-2008, 08:50 AM

#4

### **F650624**

Registered User



Join Date: Feb 2008  
Location: Chester, SD 57016

#### **Fork Failures**

One of these failures is too many. Three known failures of this potentially fatal failure should have caused a recall. BMW doesn't actually make these forks, they buy them from Showa. These forks are also found on Aprilia and Honda motorcycles. The Better Business Bureau is probably the only agency with enough clout to find out from Showa how many of these failures have actually occurred. Checking the axle mounts will







Join Date: Nov 2005  
 Location: Calgary, Alberta  
 Posts: 2,509

the ST forum?

Glad you're OK and hope you can sort things out with BMW. That was a really scary accident.

The only activity more expensive than litigating is playing polo.

Rinty

*Last edited by rinty : 08-25-2008 at 01:00 PM.*



08-25-2008, 11:48 AM

#9

[pffog](#)

Registered User



Join Date: Apr 2006  
 Posts: 270

First glad you are OK

Not sure there are any grounds for litigation. Looking at the pictures shows severe pitting, and corrosion on the rim, bolt head and the aluminum. This is not normal, and would indicate some long exposure to caustic substances. Hardly a "defect" IMHO.



08-25-2008, 07:00 PM

#10

[ndjimbo](#)

ndjimbo

Join Date: Mar 2008  
 Posts: 20

Quote:

**Originally Posted by pffog**

***First glad you are OK***

***Not sure there are any grounds for litigation. Looking at the pictures shows severe pitting, and corrosion on the rim, bolt head and the aluminum. This is not normal, and would indicate some long exposure to caustic substances. Hardly a "defect" IMHO.***

Yeah, but the pitting looks like it's on the inner diameter of the fork's tube--not something that a user would normally have access to.

My advice: go talk to a lawyer.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Jim

*Last edited by ndjimbo : 08-25-2008 at 09:36 PM.*



08-25-2008, 10:46 PM

#11

[jimbob59](#)

Registered User

Join Date: Aug 2008  
 Location: North Carolina  
 Posts: 42

**pitting or porosity?**

Quote:

**Originally Posted by ndjimbo**

***Yeah, but the pitting looks like it's on the inner***



**diameter of the fork's tube--not something that a user would normally have access to.**

**My advice: go talk to a lawyer.**

**Best wishes for a speedy recovery.**

**Jim**

Jim:

I have not clue which it really is, but I wonder if it is pitting or maybe *porosity* in the casting?

I can not tell for sure from the picture.... but my eyes are not like they were when I was 20 🙄

If it is truly pitting on the inside ... that would have to imply either introduction of caustic substance to the reservoir, or fork oil gone REAL REAL bad ???

What are your thoughts?

Jim



08-26-2008, 09:44 AM

# 12

**jingdog**

Registered User

Join Date: Apr 2007  
Posts: 275

Quote:

**Originally Posted by pffog**   
**First glad you are OK**

**Not sure there are any grounds for litigation. Looking at the pictures shows severe pitting, and corrosion on the rim, bolt head and the aluminum. This is not normal, and would indicate some long exposure to caustic substances. Hardly a "defect" IMHO.**

If I was on a jury and got this case I would give her everything she asked for.

BMWMOA 132064

I can screw it up as good as anyone. Maybe even better...



08-26-2008, 10:28 AM

# 13

**mr1ch12000**

Just South of Eden

So have you gotten the bike and owner to a dealer ?

Hope your ok...



Join Date: Jul 2006  
 Location: Calgary Alberta.  
 Canada  
 Posts: 1,365

Loonie-Tics  
 BMW club  
 Gone for now hope to see you all soon Michael..  
 Lost children will be sold to MOA staff and trained to ride  
 Harley's



08-26-2008, 06:35 PM

# 14

[ndjimbo](#)  
 ndjimbo

Join Date: Mar 2008  
 Posts: 20

Quote:

**Originally Posted by jimbob59**

**Jim:**

***I have not clue which it really is, but I wonder if it is pitting or maybe porosity in the casting?***

***I can not tell for sure from the picture.... but my eyes are not like they were when I was 20***

***If it is truly pitting on the inside ... that would have to imply either introduction of caustic substance to the reservoir, or fork oil gone REAL REAL bad ???***

***What are your thoughts?***

**Jim**

Hey Jim. I agree that it looks more like porosity than pitting. However, I don't know how much porosity, if any, is allowed by the applicable standards. I would assume that very little porosity is allowed for such a high-stress member. I would also be curious to know what type of non-destructive testing the manufacturer does on these things before they leave the factory.

Anyway, as you alluded to in your previous message, we're armchair quarterbacking what could be a complicated metallurgical issue. This is something that "the experts" will need to evaluate. Let's just hope that the cause of this failure, whatever it is, is one-in-a-million!!

Jim



08-26-2008, 07:58 PM

# 15

[jimbob59](#)  
 Registered User

Join Date: Aug 2008  
 Location: North Carolina  
 Posts: 42

**Get a professional opinion ... I say.....**

Quote:

**Originally Posted by ndjimbo**

***Hey Jim. I agree that it looks more like porosity***



**than pitting. However, I don't know how much porosity, if any, is allowed by the applicable standards. I would assume that very little porosity is allowed for such a high-stress member. I would also be curious to know what type of non-destructive testing the manufacturer does on these things before they leave the factory.**

**Anyway, as you alluded to in your previous message, we're armchair quarterbacking what could be a complicated metallurgical issue. This is something that "the experts" will need to evaluate. Let's just hope that the cause of this failure, whatever it is, is one-in-a-million!!**

**Jim**

Jim ... I agree it looks like porosity (arm-chair-qback) ... I have no idea what, if any, NDT is done ... but I would suspect that the permitted level of porosity would be MUCH lower than what we are seeing in those pictures.....

Based on our "free" pseudo-professional opinions I'd sure get an analysis done... It really looks defective to me... but then I've never cross-sectioned any fork tubes either..... 🤔

And again... echoing other members ... you were fortunate not to have been killed ... whoa..... scary bad.... put a few extra coins in the "poor box" ;-)

Jim



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