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>> Catastrophic Forks Failure

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08-27-2008, 11:58 AM

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[lebenfitti](#)

Rad Tone



Join Date: Apr 2008
Location: Muskegon, MI Area
Posts: 12

Determine the root cause

Glad you are going to be OK! Many wishes for a speedy recovery.

I agree with jimbo59 that a good metallurgical failure analysis is in order and that the handling of the pieces should be kept to a minimum. Keep the fresh fracture surface intact - don't damage them until they are analyzed properly.

As a degreed metallurgist with 20 years experience, I can tell you that NO ONE can do a failure analysis from posted pictures, nor can they provide proper conclusions as to what caused the failure. Everything is just speculation thus far.

I don't know your next steps, but if you are interested in pursuing an analysis, PM me and I may be able to get you some contact information for doing a proper analysis.

The history of the part (and the bike) will play a large part in this.

2004 R1150RT
Life is a temporary condition



09-05-2008, 04:37 PM

17

[redbaroness](#)

Registered User

Join Date: May 2008
Posts: 3

Just a heads-up that this happened to another rider this week on an '03 Dakar.

<http://www.advrider.com/forums/showt...=371650&page=8>.



01-11-2009, 02:04 PM

18

[redbaroness](#)

Registered User

Join Date: May 2008

For those of you not on ADVRider, check out this thread:
<http://www.advrider.com/forums/showthread.php?t=393785>

**[jtussey](#)**

jtman

Join Date: Jul 2006

Location: Michigan

Posts: 2

Ditto for front fork failure

I'm a mechanical engr and have been riding motorcycles for 30 years. Her failure is just like mine. For those who say fluke failures happen, I would respond in agreement. However, these are not fluke failures. Same failure mode on same motorcycle type. A good indication would be to go to a Honda or similar and ask how many shocks they have replaced with flange failures like this. I think you find the answer to be basically none outside of catastrophic crashes.

Go to BMW and ask how many front shocks they have replaced on the f650gs. They won't tell you, because they are ashamed.

The following is from my direct experience. Each should research the topic fully themselves to determine validity.

NHTSA has begun actively investigating these failures. If anyone else has information which could be useful to the investigation, you might be able to help fellow club members. It is easy to contact NHTSA.

My history: I was a past original owner (current ride K1200) of the fun little 2002 f650gs. After 1400 miles the axle flange on the right side suddenly failed and cracked off from the fork. I was on a straight road, and the bike had seen an easy commuter life with never an accident. I hit the pavement as the front rotor jammed in the caliper. ABS doesn't help these moments...

The spill was not ultra serious, but took me out of action for a few months and left me with several permanent reminders.

I contacted BMW and after they reviewed the bike, they said that I caused the crash (on a straight road at 35mph) and then the axle flange broke. Not their issue.

I had witnesses in cars behind me. I was simply traveling on a straight road, but had crossed over some mostly smooth railroad tracks about 200' prior to the failure.

I had a metallurgist qualified in fatigue and casting failures (Detroit, MI area) look at the failure, and he agreed it was not a catastrophic failure resulting from a crash, but stress/fatigue failure that cracked over time. I passed this information on to BMW, but without any response. Posted to Berlin auf Deutsch, but still no response.

I didn't know what else to do, so I went on with life glad I was not doing 70mph when it failed.

In time I've learned others have been hurt like the lady in this post, and now the details are coalescing. I won't go into details but I've learned enough to know that my situation was not singular, at all.

If I owned a F650GS, I would assure that I had the new, updated fork design before I rode further.

If you want to learn more, visit or mail NHTSA. Feel free to contact me.

jim

website: <http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/complaints/index.cfm>

Documents may be submitted to:

Office of Defect Investigations

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

1200 New Jersey Ave SE

Washington DC 20590

Attn: Bob Young, Principal Investigator, PE09-026



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