

# The Chain Gang

BMW F650 Discussions

 

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## Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416751)**

by **redbaroness** on August 11th, 2008, 3:32 pm

Also, while I do not wish to see BMW "punished" for anything related to this type of part failure, I *DO* hope they take note and deal with this in a reasonable fashion.

You and me both. :) I had faith in BMW and their bikes and I truly believed this was the best adventure bike for me.

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416752)**

by **redbaroness** on August 11th, 2008, 3:36 pm

*Will in CA wrote:* Why in both videos is the camera looking so down, so we can see what causes the crashes. Is this an ongoing occurrence? That little slip in the mud should not cause the forks to brake. The way I read the note at the end of the video is the RIDER did a triple summersault. I wonder how tight that pinch bolt is on the axle?

The reason is a lot less sinister. I mounted my helmet camera incorrectly.

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416753)**

by **redbaroness** on August 11th, 2008, 3:37 pm

*i\_yeti wrote:* Why did she have a photo of the wheel one day before the crash? Was there already a developing problem?

No, I had done a low speed drop in thick, sludgy mud the night before and I just wanted to capture how dirty the wheels were.

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416754)**

by **redbaroness** on August 11th, 2008, 3:40 pm

*jsanford wrote:*

*grandevox wrote:* Not to assign blame, but in wondering how severe it was to \*possibly\* cause unseen stress damage.

It wasn't that severe. I hit a rut going 40mph and endo-ed. The handlebars sheared off and the front fairing mounting was tweaked and had to be replaced. The dealership gave it a clean bill of health.

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416757)**

by **nineof6** on August 11th, 2008, 3:59 pm

Thanks for the responses redbaroness. Good to hear you made it through.

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416760)**

by **grandevox** on August 11th, 2008, 4:11 pm

*redbaroness wrote:*It wasn't that severe. I hit a rut going 40mph and endo-ed. The handlebars sheared off and the front fairing mounting was tweaked and had to be replaced. The dealership gave it a clean bill of health.

That sounds pretty severe to me.

As for the dealership okaying it with a clean bill of health, that was wrong.

When I was wrenching anytime there was any front end crash damage to a bike that came in for repair (to the front end) I always replaced everything - if the customer didn't want that then they went elsewhere.

One thing is for damn certain, If I flipped my bike and endo-ed it the triple clamp, fork tubes, sliders and all the other gubbins would all be replaced before I rode the bike again.

Not trying to assign blame, but this is a classic demonstration of what concealed damage can do to one.

My confidence in my F-650 is being restored now that I know that your bike was subjected to extreme abuse before it broke in the manner it did.

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416762)**

by **Dr. Mordo** on August 11th, 2008, 4:28 pm

RB, I just want to say I'm glad you're pretty much ok, and that those pictures scared the sh\*t out of me.

You must be lucky, cause something tells me I'd be dead if my forks broke.

Incidentally, from the pics I've seen, it looks like the failure was right where the casting holding the axle joined the fork. I don't think it'd even be possible to see cracks if they were there from the vantage point of the pics.

What are the docs telling you about your arm?

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416767)**

by **maddog** on August 11th, 2008, 6:46 pm

RedBaroness:

I have been thinking about this report since yesterday and honestly I can't imagine how terrifying it would be to just have the bike \*buckle\* underneath you as you ride! Just makes me shudder...thought about as I hopped on my Dakar for the ride to work today.

Lots of woulda coulda shoulda seems to be showing up from some posters...in my opinion I have crashed off road bikes that hard and not had something like this happen later. Look at the pounding that some of my H\*nda's took, and they had showa forks! I'm on the manufacturer defect side on this one.

It's surely possible the accident you had previously contributed to the issue, but I just have this feeling that if I could SEE a defect in MY slider tube, and it was located at THE SAME PLACE where your tube failed, AND BMW changed the part in 2003 after other failures...that manufacturing issues may have played a bigger role than the previous crash.

I strongly recommend, per my last post, that other members on this forum CHECK YOUR SLIDER TUBE for true next time you take it apart. On my bike this was OBVIOUS that the slider was not straight! The difference between new and old slider tube was easily visible, the new one did not bend light passing through it. It is unlikely that a slider tube would bend, because it is CAST. A defect at that location would have led to stress concentrations, stress concentrations accelerate fatigue, cast members tend to develop stress cracks under fatigue...etc.

Good luck in future, and fast healing. Hope we can see you around here under more positive circumstances next time...I'm happy for you that you lived to tell the tale.

Maddog

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416775)**

by **kubrick** on August 11th, 2008, 10:49 pm

*redbaroness wrote:*I had faith in BMW and their bikes.

Me too, until I bought the F800ST a year ago in spring. BMW motorcycles are not what they used to be. They are becoming larger, more complex and very unfriendly for an amateur mechanic. It also looks like BMW releases new models too hastily, without appropriate testing and the F800 is an excellent proof of that. Too many malfunctions, recalls and untrained service to deal with them. Never buy a BMW unless it is in production for 5-6 years.

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416778)**

by **pfoo** on August 11th, 2008, 11:44 pm

That is just scary. Hopefully none of the classics have had Fork problems. Any news on this from BMW? I would think something serious as this would be announced... but then they are corporate giants, it's cheaper for them to take it case by case. My cousin used to represent BMW liability and I heard some crazy things happen to their cars.

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416791)**

by **careyab** on August 12th, 2008, 1:45 am

*chichimo wrote:*

*redbaroness wrote:*.... those who think that I knowingly rode a damaged bike to my impending death in the middle of the f\*\*king Yukon, ...

just in awe at the damage and the fact that you are ok....that is all that really matters...that you are ok, even with the injuries you sustained...though I am curious...and did not find it in any of the posts,...but do you have any recollection of how fast you were going when the failure occurred???? and no, I don't think you knowingly rode a damaged bike .....and I don't think the bulk of the posters here do either.....just glad you are ok, and going to ride again.....terrible accident .....

I agree with the awe and that RB is ok and that she wouldn't knowingly ride a damaged bike ... I think most of the discussion here is to alert one another of a potential hazard to life and limb and whether or not there was a major systemic problem with forks of that model year (s), or if forks of that design are more susceptible than previously thought to off-highway stresses, or if this case is somewhat unusual and perhaps related to a previous crash. I'll be most of us will be carefully checking of forks, whether of that vintage or not; the question is whether or not to get so leery of the forks as to replace them (with difficulty and expense) with other types of forks or switch bikes ...

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416794)**

by **careyab** on August 12th, 2008, 1:59 am

*grandevox wrote:*

*redbaroness wrote:* It wasn't that severe. I hit a rut going 40mph and endo-ed. The handlebars sheared off and the front fairing mounting was tweaked and had to be replaced. The dealership gave it a clean bill of health.

That sounds pretty severe to me...When I was wrenching anytime there was any front end crash damage to a bike that came in for repair (to the front end) I always replaced everything ... One thing is for damn certain, If I flipped my bike and endo-ed it the triple clamp, fork tubes, sliders and all the other gubbins would all be replaced ... this is a classic demonstration of what concealed damage can do to one...

Big front end impacts have always worried me because I once broke an axle on a Dodge Powerwagon 4X4 on a FS all-weather road; I hit a deep pothole. The problem was, I saw the pothole and hit the brakes to slow down, and that magnified the impact-related stress significantly; if I hadn't hit the brakes, might have escaped damage (or broke shock or a spring or tore a wheel off, rolled the truck ...

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416798)**

by **SS in Vzla.** on August 12th, 2008, 2:26 am

WOW!

Last week we where reading the e-mail update a couple of Venezuelan bikers sent us from their trip to Alasaka.

When I read the post about the forks "breaking" I thought my Venezuelan buddy was maybe exagerating or he was not expressing properly (after all, he rides a 1200 Adv...what does he know about forks )

So, I stand corrected, he was not exagerating.

Glad you are (mostly) OK Redbaroness, sorry for the bad luck!

Heal fast

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416804)**

by **redbaroness** on August 12th, 2008, 2:49 am

*SS in Vzla. wrote:* WOW!

Last week we where reading the e-mail update a couple of Venezuelan bikers sent us from their trip to Alasaka.

When I read the post about the forks "breaking" I thought my Venezuelan buddy was maybe exagerating or he was not expressing properly (after all, he rides a 1200 Adv...what does he know about forks )

So, I stand corrected, he was not exagerating.

Glad you are (mostly) OK Redbaroness, sorry for the bad luck!

Heal fast

I met them and hung out with them! They helped me out during the crash. You can see one of them holding my hand when I was down. If you are in touch with them, please tell them I said hello and have them get in touch with me.

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416805)**

by **redbaroness** on August 12th, 2008, 2:54 am

*kubrick wrote:*

*redbaroness wrote:*I had faith in BMW and their bikes.

Never buy a BMW unless it is in production for 5-6 years.

I thought I did just that. :|

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