

The Chain Gang

BMW F650 Discussions

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Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416810)

by **SS in Vzla.** on August 12th, 2008, 3:23 am

redbaroness wrote:

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.

Will do.

They're still on the road on their way home though and they are not "internet regulars"

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416829)

by **rc mad** on August 12th, 2008, 5:08 am

dunno where you guys are seeing visable damage in [this](http://red-baroness.net/Motorcycling/images/BrokenBike/wheelonedaybeforecrash.JPG)
(<http://red-baroness.net/Motorcycling/images/BrokenBike/wheelonedaybeforecrash.JPG>)
picture, i can't see any.

Looks to me like it upped and broke clean off, look at the breakages, no wear / bright marks which would indicate a slower failure with parts vibrating and rubbing against each other. I'd say itsa manufacturing defect around the wheel mounts. The earlier crash probably contributed to this one but without the dealer stripped down the front end they'd never know about it.

I still think you were very lucky to get out of that one alive, i'm really supriised the front end didn't just dig into the ground and flip you over the top. Heal quickly

Oh btw, your bike being a 2002 makes it the second or third year of production of the fi650's, what you really want is a 06 or 07 Or now's the time for a front end upgrade to usd forks or something

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416862)

by **redbaroness** on August 12th, 2008, 10:23 am

SS in Vzla. wrote:

redbaroness wrote:

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Rainer was riding behind me and he saw me go down. I'd really like to get a statement from him for the lawyers. I will PM you my contact info if you could pass it on to them. Please tell them that this is urgent.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416868)

by **claudia1976** on August 12th, 2008, 11:27 am

Holy crap.

I just got back from the Cabot Trail ride on an '02 and now I'm paranoid. I'll have to check my forks in the AM.

So glad to hear you are ok.

Claudia

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416895)

by **jsanford** on August 12th, 2008, 2:50 pm

RedBaroness, welcome! Hopefully you won't let the armchair speculating give you too negative an impression about this community (although if it has, I wouldn't blame you). Let us know if you need anything to help make the off-the-bike time a little easier. Perhaps I could create a backup of my Long Way Down DVDs to send to you for safekeeping or something.

maddog wrote: 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.

Indeed, you weren't the only one--the F800 has Showa forks too. I was actually really glad, for the first time in a while, that I'd bought the bike new.

Reminds me as well of similar accidents with bicycles. It's a lot easier to say "Replace the frame/fork, we don't know what we can't see," after a bicycle wreck. It kind of makes me want to see a photo of an unpainted Showa fork to see the weld lines and discoloration.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416973)

by **SS in Vzla.** on August 13th, 2008, 4:14 am

redbaroness wrote: Rainer was riding behind me and he saw me go down. I'd really like to get a statement from him for the lawyers. I will PM you my contact info if you could pass it on to them. Please tell them that this is urgent.

I know Richard, not Rainer, but we have several good friends in common. It doesn't matter, I'll gladly pass your contact info ASAP to them. I'm sure they'll be glad to help. I'll wait for your PM

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p416996)

by **Otto Krosse** on August 13th, 2008, 6:38 am

I would advise you to see a good lawyer first. Product failure is worth big bucks if there are injuries....and witnesses. Plus, it may encourage BMW to have a recall for inspections and replacements.

Just my .02

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417002)

by **NateLePain** on August 13th, 2008, 7:25 am

*grandevox wrote:*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.

I'm in agreement here. I've heard of forks being replaced for a lot less reasons, than an endo. I'm sorry for the accident but laying this at the feet of BMW seems like a stretch to me.

nlp

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417004)

by **Flash 412 (CO)** on August 13th, 2008, 7:27 am

Showa built those forks. Lots of bikes use Showa forks.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417081)

by **maddog** on August 13th, 2008, 4:59 pm

*Flash 412 (CO) wrote:*Showa built those forks. Lots of bikes use Showa forks.

And (shudder) every bike I have ever owned (except maybe my Hodaka) has had them, and both the bikes I have now have them, and...maybe the WP suspension kit isn't such a bad investment after all...

RedBaroness: I and probably many others here would be very interested to learn what happens when/if you contact BMW and/or Showa about this. They will probably try to point to previous "abuse" as the cause, since "we at (insert company here) have no way of knowing what sort of maintenance and/or abuse that the bike went through, and therefore absolve ourselves and our fine products of liability in this near-fatal accident"...but in any case, I'd be very curious. Keep us in the loop, will ya?

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417211)

by **redbaroness** on August 14th, 2008, 8:38 am

*maddog wrote:*RedBaroness: I and probably many others here would be very interested to learn what happens when/if you contact BMW and/or Showa about this. They will probably try to point to previous "abuse" as the cause, since "we at (insert company here) have no way of knowing what sort of maintenance and/or abuse that the bike went through, and therefore absolve ourselves and our fine products of liability in this near-fatal accident"...but in any case, I'd be very curious. Keep us in the loop, will ya?

I will indeed.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417229)

by **bigb** on August 14th, 2008, 10:38 am

I am all for consumers rights and especially motorcycles and even more for F650 riders; but riding the bike off road kind of takes all bets off the table. Its like trying to find a used front mag wheel for a H*nda F2: there are relatively few, and those are bent. Your forks take an innordinate beating offroad, even if you are light. And you lead the pack off road? HmMMM. How many of your mishaps are documented on the web?

Best of luck, but I would not expend a great wager. Be very thankful you are not handicapped or dead. Just all of your photo history on the web is not real good either. But I sincerely wish you the best of luck. If you did win, there are thousands of off-road motorcycle and atv riders who may immediately bankrupt the vehicle industry (as if it needs any help with its swift decision making).

HOWEVER, I believe you are RIGHT! And you are a Baroness, so...?
I hope you are feeling better soon.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417250)

by **Ricemannv** on August 14th, 2008, 12:23 pm

Can I add my comments? Thanks!

It was a very unfortunate accident. You are lucky to have escaped that without more serious injury. The bike took some serious abuse on that highside triple flip at Trollhaugen. I wonder how much more abuse it has seen. I do not believe you have a case against BMW. They will tear you up in court with the evidence of the previous wreck. I'm sure they will bring in a sorts of experts to do a fault failure analysis of the forks. In the end you will lose. I reccommend you just count your blessings and move on.

You should slow down a little bit and not push the bike so hard. I do think BMW is at fault with their marketing of these bikes. They put it out there that these bikes can go anywhere, like they are ready for the Paris-Dakar race right out the dealer's door. It is not so. That and there sometimes seems to be a great emphasis on riding fast. Especially in group rides. I don't think you will win any case with that angle either though. If you really want to ride these bikes hard offroad you need to do major modifications. For the type of riding displayed in the video you should upgrade your bike to something like the Touratech Rallye conversion.

Or you could get through that terrian on a stock bike by just slowing down and riding smart. A stock F650 can get through alot of terrian, but a Dakar-Paris Rallye bike it is not.

Ride Safe. Have Fun.

Case closed. Next....

Riceman

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417254)

by **mothra** on August 14th, 2008, 1:04 pm

First I am glad that you are OK that accident could have been so much worse. With that said trying to put the responsibility for your accident on BMW is stretch to me. But good luck they gave the lady that spilled coffee in her lap a bunch of money to. If you win I don't want to here about it.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417257)

by **Dr. Mordo** on August 14th, 2008, 1:29 pm

Well, I think it's safe to say that if you win most of us *will* want to hear about it.

BTW, has anybody heard of this happening on a non-F650? I haven't been riding long, but this is the first instance I have heard of this particular mishap.

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