

The Chain Gang

BMW F650 Discussions

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Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417463)

by **wontco** on August 15th, 2008, 10:44 am

My take (since you didn't ask):

ANY MC that calls it self a Dual Sport (or adventure bike if you prefer) should be able to take the abuse of that crash and still keep going.

It should be able to do this (toward the end):

<http://s251.photobucket.com/albums/gg299/sinner1965/?action=view¤t=jERRYHOLE>

and keep going with out worrying if the shocks are going to spontaneously disintegrate.

Or, look like this:

loongng before having to worry about about structural integrity of forks. (two different bikes and incidents for the record)

I agree with a statement somewhere in a previous post; The rim should've been a taco before having to worry about stress damage to the fork, Biff or no Biff. Showa's are supposed to be *upgrades* on a lot of stock bikes aren't they?

Last edited by [wontco \(./memberlist.php?mode=viewprofile&u=21685\)](#) on August 15th, 2008, 10:57 am, edited 1 time in total.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417464)

by **Dr. Mordo** on August 15th, 2008, 10:52 am

*Ricemannv wrote:*What if you have a sudden and catastrophic failure of your front tire tube that leads to you crashing? Can we parlay that into a lawsuit as well???

Riceman

Yes, we quite possibly can if it was the result of defective manufacturing and if many people have suffered the same fate.

About 10 years ago Firestone tires that were stock on Fords just started falling apart while people were driving causing deaths and injuries. Firestone blamed it on Ford and vice versa, but Firestone got sued by a number of different people and finally the government forced them to recall the tires. There were over 6 million bad tires, all replaced because people raised hell much like RB is trying to do.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417468)

by **Ricemannv** on August 15th, 2008, 11:03 am

Ah yes, America, the land of lidigation. It is quite a lucrative industry it seems. Fork fail. Sue. Tube fails. Sue. Spill coffee in your lap. Sue. Dog chokes on his dog food. Sue. Where does it end.....

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417473)

by **kwh** on August 15th, 2008, 11:21 am

*Ricemannv wrote:*What if you have a sudden and catastrophic failure of your front tire tube that leads to you crashing? Can we parlay that into a lawsuit as well???

Riceman

I'll tell you what, I'll agree to try and deal with a front tyre deflation at 85mph without stacking it if you are happy to demonstrate dealing with your front forks collapsing at 85mph. You go first...

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417475)

by **Ricemannv** on August 15th, 2008, 11:36 am

*kwh wrote:*I'll tell you what, I'll agree to try and deal with a front tyre deflation at 85mph without stacking it if you are happy to demonstrate dealing with your front forks collapsing at 85mph. You go first...

Will you accept a sworn affidavit from one of "the dozen" who has experienced this fork failure phenomenon instead, Counselor? Careful on what you advise me to do. You could be held liable in a court of law.

Riceman

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417477)

by **kwh** on August 15th, 2008, 11:44 am

*Ricemannv wrote:*Ah yes, America, the land of lidigation. It is quite a lucrative industry it seems. Fork fail. Sue. Tube fails. Sue. Spill coffee in your lap. Sue. Dog chokes on his dog food. Sue. Where does it end.....

Hopefully with BMW making good by recalling and repairing what may well be the defective and dangerous motorcycles it has sold to many people who are blissfully unaware of what might be about to happen to them, and (just as a side issue), paying for the medical treatment, pain and material damage that their past omissions in this regard have caused Red-Baroness personally.

Note that as far as I know (which isn't far I will admit), Red Baroness is going to have the overwhelming bulk of her material and medical costs covered more or less by one or more insurance companies, so I doubt that she is going to be any much better off if she follows this through, let alone become obscenely wealthy as a result of pursuing it (although if she does become happen to become obscenely wealthy, I'd like it to be known that I've always spoken very highly of her). I suspect her main reward will be in forcing BMW to stand behind their product worldwide and deal with issue by fixing it for all those customers with pre-June-93 F650GS bikes...

When all is said and done, assuming she does pursue this, I'm pretty sure the amount of effort and time and concentration she will have had to devote to it all will make it seem like a very poor excuse for a money making exercise indeed!

If and when BMW recall somebody's F650 in the Philippines and fit new fork components, with the result that that person (possibly somebody you know) *doesn't* have a similar failure and a fatal crash three days later, will you still be so dismissive then?

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417479)

by **kwh** on August 15th, 2008, 11:48 am

Ricemannv wrote:

*kwh wrote:*I'll tell you what, I'll agree to try and deal with a front tyre deflation at 85mph without stacking it if you are happy to demonstrate dealing with your front forks collapsing at 85mph. You go first...

Will you accept a sworn affidavit from one of "the dozen" who has experienced this fork failure phenomenon instead, Counselor? Careful on what you advise me to do. You could be held liable in a court of law.

Riceman

Funny guy. If you get a recall notice about these forks, but the idea of BMW being forced to fix them so that they definitely won't fail on you and kill you distresses you that much, just ignore the recall notice and carry on taking the risk. I'm sure you are proving something to somebody.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417480)

by **Dr. Mordo** on August 15th, 2008, 12:36 pm

*Ricemannv wrote:*Ah yes, America, the land of lidigation. It is quite a lucrative industry it seems. Fork fail. Sue. Tube fails. Sue. Spill coffee in your lap. Sue. Dog chokes on his dog food. Sue. Where does it end.....

I find it fascinating that you think that it is ok for a company to produce defective and potentially dangerous products. You seem to think that it is wrong to confront these companies with their shortcomings. Do you not believe that someone should be held accountable for their actions? If someone makes toothpaste with poison in it, should there be no legal repercussions? What about a car that catches fire as soon as you start it? Is it just bad luck for the consumer who bought it? Where does it end...

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417483)

by **mothra** on August 15th, 2008, 12:48 pm

Dr. Mordo wrote:

Ricemannv wrote: Ah yes, America, the land of litigation. It is quite a lucrative industry it seems. Fork fail. Sue. Tube fails. Sue. Spill coffee in your lap. Sue. Dog chokes on his dog food. Sue. Where does it end.....

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So you are saying that McDonald's coffee is defective for being hot? Sometimes I wish I was Canadian.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417489)

by **Ricemannv** on August 15th, 2008, 1:28 pm

kwh wrote: If and when BMW recall somebody's F650 in the Philippines and fit new fork components, with the result that that person (possibly somebody you know) *doesn't* have a similar failure and a fatal crash three days later, will you still be so dismissive then?

I passed this information on to the local BMW message board here in the Philippines for anyone interested. It didn't generate any comments other than someone asking me if I was going to join the next get together.

I think it is uniquely American that we expect guarantees in life. Almost like we are entitled to do whatever we want without anything bad coming from it. If you want to ride a motorcycle like a jackass down some rough dirt road then it is quite within the realm of possibility that something may go wrong. Shoot, something can go wrong even with the most cautious of riders. Even bikes in the Paris-Dakar and similar races have mechanical failures. Perhaps BMW is at fault in putting defective forks on their bikes. I am leaning towards the previous abuse as the root cause of this accident. I know that irritates you, but I do have a right to that opinion do I not?

Someone else said a metallurgic analysis would probably be able to determine the cause. I agree and would like to see the results of that. And like the same poster said, "It's all speculation until then".

Now I would like to know if this "KWH" joined the group on August 10th just to enlighten us all on this topic or if it is a known member who feels they need to post under a different "nome de plume". Please explain.

Riceman

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417491)

by **Ricemannv** on August 15th, 2008, 1:35 pm

Dr. Mordo wrote:

Ricemannv wrote: Ah yes, America, the land of litigation. It is quite a lucrative industry it seems. Fork fail. Sue. Tube fails. Sue. Spill coffee in your lap. Sue. Dog chokes on his dog food. Sue. Where does it end.....

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Another American wanting guarantees that he will be absolutely safe persueing his choosen activity? It is a motorcycle. There are hundreds of things that could go wrong. If are going to ride then you are going to have to manage the risks as best as you can and within your tolerance for risk. There is no guarantee that nothing will ever break on your motorcycle. sh*t happens. Otherwise, stay on the couch and watch the Long Way Down. And just so you know, I am an American.

Riceman

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417493)

by **chichimo** on August 15th, 2008, 1:52 pm

In many of the 3rd world nations I have traveled in, consumer rights are while heard of, are in fact for the most part non existence, yet the consumers of those countries long for just the most basic of these rights. Businesses as a rule, in the past are all about making money for the principles who own an interest in the company, esp large conglomerates. Like establishing unions and workers right, it has been a long hard battle to establish that companies who manufacture and sell consumer products have a liability to their customers. Ideally all companies should realize that a loyal base of consumers are a sure fire formula for success. Take Costco, they have a business model that is the envy of the retail world, treat their employees well by most accounts and treats it's customers like royalty. They are a hugely successful company in a industry rife with cutthroat competition. Yet their business model makes no sense, bring back any product you bought from us, any time regardless of age and we'll cheerfully refund your money, no questions asked.

Those who argue that companies who manufacture machines of which they are aware have structural defects which can destroy lives and yet remain quite about it and refuse to deal with the issues, that these companies have no liability regardless of age of the product which are in everyday use are idiots. You benefit greatly from the activists in a society who step up to the podium and take on the 'big boys' in a multitude of ways, yet you sit sneering from the sidelines making ridiculous comparisons between Mac Donald's coffee while others fight the fight you benefit from.

If my daughter had been killed, injured and maimed for life due to a structural defect in a fork casting that bmw sold, knew about and did nothing about for years, you can rest assured I would fight to my dying day to make that company accountable for the misery they are responsible for.

Such a cavalier attitude in this day and age....that companies large or small have no obligation to their customers, or liabilities issues..... and a ludicrous concept.

There is a huge difference between 'sh*t happens' as the Riceman portends and having structural defects as the root cause of 'sh*t happens'....I wouldn't begin to know if bmw is at fault, if the metal was damaged by prior use or what, but for a company to knowingly coexist with known structural defects in crucial components of their machines yet do nothing about it until they destroy enough lives that the public rises up and forces action is down right criminal....and they should be held accountable. Yea, things happen enough with the best of products, worst when you are using something sold as the best with the company playing Russian roulette with known defected components.

Not looking for guarantees for accident free life, just looking for the products I buy to do as their manufactures state they will do. And not lie to me about the product, dangerous enough riding a bike, don't need any help with manufacturers covered up defects.

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417494)

by **Dr. Mordo** on August 15th, 2008, 2:25 pm

Ricemannv wrote:

Dr. Mordo wrote:

Ricemannv wrote: Ah yes, America, the land of litigation. It is quite a lucrative industry it seems. Fork fail. Sue. Tube fails. Sue. Spill coffee in your lap. Sue. Dog chokes on his dog food. Sue. Where does it end.....

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Riceman

First, I am not saying that RB's crash was necessarily due to defective manufacturing. But I am saying that if it is because BMW designed it poorly, then they have a responsibility to make it right.

Second, Chichimo nailed it.

Third, you didn't actually respond to my statement.

Fourth, this is fascinating coming from you:

I think it is unquieiy American that we expect guarantees in life. Almost like we are entitled to do whatever we want without anything bad coming from it.

This is exactly what you are defending - you believe a company can do whatever it wants without anything bad coming from it. Do you think that the consumer is responsible for a faulty product, but not the manufacturer? Should they be guaranteed to not be sued no matter what they do?

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417495)

by **Ricemannv** on August 15th, 2008, 2:33 pm

I find it difficult to believe that BMW would knowingly leave a product out on the market that has the potential to kill hundreds of their customers from a known manufacturing problem. Sorry, I'm not buying it. But what do I know. I'll leave it up to you conspiracy theorists and your lawyers to prove they have done that.

Ride Safe. Have Fun.

Later,
Riceman

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Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p417497)

by **grandevox** on August 15th, 2008, 2:57 pm

Let's preface this with IMHO...this is me just sayn'

(and just reading this it has a cranky undertone)

When I put my butt on a motorcycle I know that what I am doing is potentially dangerous. If I should go down there is no protection, so therefore I feel if something does go wrong it's likely to be beyond the scope of the company who made the bike. How many F-650's are running around on the road? A lot. How many have had the fork sliders fail? One or two, maybe 6? I wonder what the story was, the entire story before the forks fell apart?

You could sue a motorcycle manufacturer for selling a dangerous product, just it's very design is dangerous- it can fall on you. It can loose traction and fall down, just stop and you'll fall down! This ladies and gentlemen are NOT SAFE PRODUCTS!!! A car is MUCH safer, so dump those dangerous motorcycles and just make cars. What are they stupid or something???!!!

Aircraft, personal type, Cessna, Piper and the like kept getting hit with liability lawsuits; the product was dangerous said the jury - so what was the solution? Quit making them. Problem wasn't that the aircraft was dangerous, the issue was that people were dangerous and did stupid things with them. They ran out of gas and sued. They flew into a cloud and didn't know how to handle that, they sued. They crashed into mountains and sued. They crashed in a crosswind landing, they sued. So what did the general aviation aircraft manufactures do? Quit making them. They still made general aviation aircraft, just nothing johnny six-pac could fly without being an accomplished and current pilot. Good news, you can now buy a New 4 place Cessna or Piper today. It's been improved, and will set you back as much as a house in many parts of the country. Why did they start making them again? Tort law reform limiting manufactures liability after a number of years.

It's no secret that BMW builds cars, as does H*nda and Suz*k* - and the automobile division is MUCH more profitable than the motorcycle division. So if stupid people ride motorcycles, damage them and go riding righteously on their way and something goes wrong later - it's your godam fault. Don't blame it on the company; they have no control over your stupidity. So you take it to court. You get a couple of million out of it because the stupid hand picked jury went you way. BMW's insurance carrier decides it time to raise the insurance premium more - now the bikes are so expensive no one can afford to buy them. BMW pulls the plug on the motorcycle division in the US, now where are we? No bikes, no parts, no dealers. H*nda? Suz*k*? K*w*saki? It's not going to make too much of a dent in their bottom line if the quit doing business in the USA. It happened to general aviation, could it happen to motorcycles?

BMW put the F-650 through many torture tests before it was released to the public, and an extra year of them on the roads before they came to the US. I am certain that BMW is trying to make the best and safest motorcycle around, but stuff happens, and I think some people go out of their way to troy and break their motorcycles, this is just one more example.

BUT...if a through analysis shows that the fork legs were somehow defective and should have been caught in QC and weren't, and the defects were due to poor casting quality, well then, there is a valid point to all this. Perhaps the product was defective. But the \$64 question is, when a part like that fails, is it due to owner neglect/abuse or defect? And if it's a defect is it an engineering defect or manufacturing defect?

Last edited by [grandevox](#) (./memberlist.php?mode=viewprofile&u=23508) on August 15th, 2008, 4:19 pm, edited 1 time in total.

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