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Has anybody ever seen a failure like this on an early F650GS or Dakar?

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Which Bike? Comments and Questions on what is the best bike for YOU, for YOUR trip. Note that we believe that ANY bike will do, so please remember that it's all down to PERSONAL OPINION. Technical Questions for all brands go in their own forum.



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25th October 2008

#31

tmotten
Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Aug 2005
Location: Gold Coast, Australia.
Posts: 272

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog**
My guess is BMW simply buy an "off the shelf" item from Showa. Showa would take no part in testing or spec-ing out the shock or forks. It's all up to the BMW to figure out what component is best for the particular bike.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **AliBaba**
*Yes, as I said " **Anyway it's not interesting that Showa made the forks, BMW has the responsibility for the final product.** It looks like you liked Chris story of broken shocks, it wouldn't surprise me if they were Showa. But again, that's BMWs responsibility.*

There is no such thing as 'off the shelf' I reckon. The problems people are having with fitting aftermarket forks show that. The part in question would be custom for the bike and there would have been some design component in there I reckon. If we design infrastructure of the architect's plans we ask for all relevant parameters to design the infrastructure to the relevant standards set out by a body charged with setting these standards. In Australia this would be AS. These are based on lab test, etc.

Therefore I just can't accept that a company in the automotive industry would just walk into a Showa shop and ask for 'that one'.

In the case that I'm imagining Showa would prepare the design which is supplemented by a spec listing out all sorts of engineering parameters that they used and as mentioned before this (when agreed by both parties) becomes the reference document for any contractual issues. If there is anything missed in the spec (which happens more that you think) the lawyers will have a field day with it and create a tug of war.

This could even be the case considering the inaction and revised forks (which supports my feeling that it's not an 'off the shelf' product). Even for this Showa would have been involved because this would void the old spec supplied by Showa

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putting all responsibility on BMW. Not a position you would want to be in if you initially contacted another consultant/company to do engineering for you.

I don't think you can count out Showa this easily. Yes BMW has end responsibility to the customer, because it's their product in the end as they're selling it to you. If the Millau Viaduct would fall over would you contact Foster Architects who took all the credit for this job and 'sold it' to the local government, or the engineers who designed it. Than within that framework you have to dig deeper to find out who's responsible because the structural guys would look at their parameters, which are based on the civil guys who in turn received information from the geotechnical guys. It's not that simple.

What about the factory who actually built it? Would that be a Showa factory or maybe someone else? Who knows. Could be a production issue as suggested.

As for saying outright BMW is crap is just crap on it's own. I'm not a BMW fan, but am a fan of any company who thinks outside the box. Evidently shown by the new concept of the G450. Similarly KTM (upcoming electric bikes and 2-wheel-drive) and Yamaha (Supertrail, can't wait for a 450) with their inspiring concepts. My first bike was a 3AJ Tenere, rebuilt by Dave Lambeth, which we took through some of the roughest terrain Asia has to offer. It had it's own problems which if it would have been a BMW, people would have burned Yamaha for it. But because it's not, you don't hear anything about it, and the design flaw is still there. Personally I think that people hate the culture of arrogance surrounding BMW which causes all this, but that is just a psychoanalytical observation.

TacosTyringTravels.blogspot.com



25th October 2008

#32

khaylock
New on the HUBB

Join Date: Oct 2008
Location: Carmarthen
Posts: 12

Quote:

Originally Posted by **tmotten**
There is no such thing as 'off the shelf' I reckon.

I've gained the impression that a lot of the internal componentry (damper rods, pistons, fork caps etc etc) are 'bog standard Showa', and as such interchangeable with other Showa forks of the same diameter (early CBR600F is mentioned) although presumable the sizes of the apertures etc will be tuned for the application. However, I don't think the slider castings *could* be any kind of 'bog standard', they seem to be unique to the F650GS and Dakar.



26th October 2008

#33

leevtr
HUBB regular

Join Date: Sep 2008
Location: Essex UK
Posts: 84

Blimey

Quote:

Originally Posted by **chris**
My ha' penny's worth: All Beemers are shite.

<http://www.horizonsunlimited.com/hub...mw-r100gs-7766>

Glad the guy didn't die. Unless you want to lose your friends, tell them to keep away from the crap Bring Mir Werkstatt machines.

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*Ride safely
Chris*

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I was trying to think of something to say on this thread, and you just hit the nail on the head!!!!
So i'll say nowt.



26th October 2008

#34

tmotten
Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Aug 2005
Location: Gold Coast, Australia.
Posts: 272

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And..... stay away from Showa. They're shit. Any company who is happily associated with a piece of shit product like these forks sliders should have it's head examined. Probably let all the graduates work on all overseas designs.

TacosTyringTravels.blogspot.com



27th October 2008

#35

Threewheelbonnie
Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Apr 2008
Location: West Yorkshire UK
Posts: 398

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Quote:

Originally Posted by **khaylock**
I've gained the impression that a lot of the internal componentry (damper rods, pistons, fork caps etc etc) are 'bog standard Showa', and as such interchangeable with other Showa forks of the same diameter (early CBR600F is mentioned) although presumably the sizes of the apertures etc will be tuned for the application. However, I don't think the slider castings could be any kind of 'bog standard', they seem to be unique to the F650GS and Dakar.

Absolutely. The F650 fork will have started life as something similar from a slightly earlier bike. You start with what the customer asks, put a current design on the CAD station and redraw the bits that don't work.

One thing the F650 fork casting has that no other design in the 650 class had at the time was the hole for the ABS sensor. The lower leg is therefore BMW specific while the rest will probably be components from a parts library.

Andy



27th October 2008

#36



AliBaba
Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Apr 2001
Location: Norway
Posts: 868

On another forum someone posted a link to a story about a fork that had broken when the bike was used on a highway in 90 km/h.

Art

- Ken "Sparky" Mackenzie
- Nazia Parvez
- Simon Roberts



The Honda was a -97 model and the mileage was only 17kkm.

Honda in Sweden says that this could not have happen. "It's as likely as a car brakes in two on the middle" they say and they will not investigate the case further.

So guys, check your forks!!

Source (Swedish):

[Motorcykeln föll isär - Piteåpar nära döden - - Nyheter - Piteå-Tidningen - "Olyckan helt osannolik" - - Nyheter - Piteå-Tidningen -](#)



28th October 2008

#37



AliBaba
Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Apr 2001
Location: Norway
Posts: 868

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog**
BTW, the G450 concept is not new and mostly they've copied existing designs evolved by Japanese and Euro companies. (example .. See motor).

ROFL ROFL



28th October 2008

#38



mollydog
Moderated Users
Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Aug 2003
Location: california
Posts: 1,483

So tell me what is new on the G450? I mean really, truly new? Do tell! 😏

Do you think Rotax pioneered quick revving, high performance four strokes? They did not, but I can tell you who did if you're interested. Think Italian.

And the Chassis? Look familiar? The linkless set up and zero slack chain and pivot point system are not new either and IMO has yet to prove itself as effective over the long term.

The G450's have done well mostly because BMW's have paid some of the best guys in the world a whole lot of money to win on them. Lets see how the average rider does ... and lets see how the maintenance/longevity will be compared to competition.

Last edited by mollydog : 22nd March 2009 at 08:10.

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28th October 2008

#39

leevtr
HUBB regular

Join Date: Sep 2008
Location: Essex UK
Posts: 84

Im not really against bmw, but....

..... It annoys me they have such a hardened, snobby following, and for what??? Reliability....maybe years ago, but never any better than the japs at 2/3 of the price. Build quality.... same goes. Christ, if they're that good, why are they putting Rotax lumps in their smaller bikes. Probably because Rotax are actually better. Its amazing how people can follow a ' Badge '.

I am by my own admission, a Honda nut, and for good reason. I've had 5 of the things, and never has any so much as thought about playing up, and I've not been easy on them either.

I've never been to any bike factory, but as far as i'm aware, honda's engine test is Flat Out running on a bench, for 24 hours. Engine stripped, any signs of wear and they re-design it.

I doubt any BMW would withstand that abuse, at least not the newer ones.



Compass Expeditions - Adventure Motorcycle Tours

28th October 2008

#40

tmotten
Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Aug 2005
Location: Gold Coast, Australia.
Posts: 272

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog**
No doubt Showa would make suggestions based on weight, load capacity, and use. But the basic parts ARE off the shelf, but some key parts are custom configured to meet the technical parameters of the bike. But in the end it is BMW who have to make final approval. (after all, they are paying)

All the parts that are off the shelf are not in question. I agree on the likely cause being a casting issue. Can't help but thinking that there was a mistake made with the factors of safety.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog**
You know Motten, for a guy who rode his first bike just a few years back (according to your web site?) and then blamed a clapped out 17 year old XT for all your troubles, you've got some Chutzpah! By your own admission, you "didn't have a clue" on your trip on your XT's. You think F650's fuel injection will solve all your problems? How about learning how a carb works before condemning them? You've added a ton a extra electrics onto your new bikes, one that is famous for cooking batteries. I'd be very careful here.

There are dozens of reports here on HUBB documenting the stellar history and performance of XT's. But they do get old and they do wear out and they DO NEED MAINTENANCE by someone with a Clue! ... Tis the poor craftsman who blames his tools "

Never blamed the XT for all the troubles. You read what you want to read. Actually loved it (for a first bike) and am living proof that it doesn't matter what you ride, or how much you know, you'll get from A to B. This is just part of the adventure and was exactly the motivation I had when doing this trip. Same goes for all my trips.

I was pointing out that there is a design issue that someone as knowledgeable as Dave Lambeth wasn't aware of. If it had been a BMW it would be all over the web. Other things that caused problems were not due to lack of service

knowledge BTW. Oil was changed at interval often with input from a person with bike knowledge. No other maintenance was related to the part in the motor that failed (not the design flaw one). Probably a dodgy part. I still like Yamaha after this experience.

I reckon part of the reason you hear people are having problems with the F are because a lot of these are people like I was with the XT. Clueless about bikes, knowledgeable about the web. I haven't burned the XT for it and knew of ways to solve it. Best things for that are a deep end and a crash course. Homework in other terms. This can be done the hard way by sticking heaps of time in it, or the easy way by letting time do it's thing.

It's not that I can't be bothered learning about carbies (actually have a spare one in the garage which will be taken apart when I get time), it's just that I don't like the idea over FI, and this is based on the experience I've had with a carby. The FI concept is pretty simple when you look past the need for sensors and the electrical aspect. It has a 'get me the F out of here' setting if most of this fails. It's only that there weren't any computers around that the carby came into being I reckon. I can't remember anyone having any issues with it either to the extent that everything ground to a halt.

People we met on the road had to take their carby apart roadside. From their brand new Transalp. Another Transalp in the group blew their shock, another got dusted. Never heard a bad story about them, certainly not from me.

A reckon a lot of people have distrust about FI because of the emphasis now being on electrical engineering rather than mechanical.

Can't remember giving any advice about anything other than bikes I intimately know from experience gathered myself. Something that is seemingly becoming less and less common on this forum though. This certainly doesn't include all bikes made by BMW, only one. Again, suggesting this seems like it's all about the brand. Talk about being short sighted and hypocritical. Have given advice on travelling though. But I think I'm qualified for this.

I'm aware of overloading the electrical system. I've looked at ways of solving this and will keep an eye on it when a lot of current will be drawn (cold climates). Most if now all charging issues I've seen are related to the earlier models. The VR used to be somewhere less well ventilated. Been stranded with a dead battery before (Yuasa, and in the desert. No fun.) which stopped the mighty XT. Didn't contribute this to the bike though.


Quote:

Originally Posted by **leevtr** 

..... It annoys me they have such a hardened, snobby following, and for what??? Reliability....maybe years ago, but never any better than the japs at 2/3 of the price. Build quality.... same goes. Christ, if they're that good, why are they putting Rotax lumps in their smaller bikes. Probably because Rotax are actually better. Its amazing how people can follow a ' Badge '.

Your statement must prove my reasoning previously posted for the bashing than. Personally I can't stand going into the dealer for parts because of the arrogance. Doesn't help that it's a part HD, part BMW dealership. Don't hang with BMW riders either. But it's a 2 edged sword. Suggesting BMW motors suck because they chose Rotax for the single is the other extreme. More likely a financial reason considering the involvement of Aprilla. I grew up hearing Rotax mentioned in a good way. So I saw that as being a drawcard for choosing the F for the RTW trips. I'll find out soon if it's good. Certainly won't be taking other peoples opinions as gospel to make outrageous claims both ways until I know from personal experience.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog** 
BTW, the G450 concept is not new and mostly they've copied existing designs evolved by Japanese and Euro companies. (example .. See motor).

Who's put it all together like this? Most things aren't new. There are only so many things you can do within the current bounds of physics, but it's how you combine things that create new results at this stage.

It's disappointing if BMW's testing cycle wouldn't be up to scratch. Not sure if it's true but if it would be, it's disappointing. But than again, that's why we decided not to pick the first year of a new model. Advice from old timers BTW (Don't be mistaken reading BTW ad BMW. Tis like a red rag in front of a bull, that name.)

Now, while this thread slips into another senseless BMW bashing thread on the brink of being locked, let's just stop and think about what this is actually about. Forks are something that should never fail like, regardless off the company that designed it and put it's stamp on it, regardless of the factory they came out off, and regardless to which bike they were bolted onto.

Anyone up for a RTW trip at all?

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28th October 2008



#41 




AliBaba 
Veteran HUBBer


Join Date: Apr 2001
Location: Norway
Posts: 868


Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog** 
So tell me what is new on the G450? I mean really, truly new? Do tell! 


I think that there will be much more knowledge about the G450X in US next year, when David Knight have got rid of the orange color of his homepage and replaced it with white and blue 

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog** 
The G450's have done well mostly because BMW's have paid some of the best guys in the world a whole lot of money to win on them.

Yes, it's a shame they pay their drivers. It would have been more fair if only Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki, Husaberg and KTM was allowed to do this 

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog** 
Lets see how the average rider does ... and lets see how the maintenance/longevity will be compared to competition.

It would be interesting to see, but it will take some time. Right now there is only 2 G450X in this country, and literally thousands KTMs.

Personally I expect problems.... They are entering a scene they haven't been for decades with a brand new bike with lots of new solutions.

I would also guess that a lot of the bikes will be used for street-use, I believe it's the most powerful bike in this league you can legally use on the road.

On the other hand I'm looking for a bike in this segment (beside my BMW and Yamaha) and I might end up with a KTM.

Enduro is not what it used to be:

<http://www.historischesarchiv.bmw.de...oldergroup=irc>



28th October 2008

#42

leevtr
HUBB regular

Join Date: Sep 2008
Location: Essex UK
Posts: 84

Hardened following?

My post wasn't aimed at bashing BMW.... Just to raise the question, on what basis do they have such a hardened following, because other than the badge, I cant see it.

I think they are living on an old reputation, same as people like Mercedes.



They used to be arguably best.... But not any more.



28th October 2008

#43



AliBaba
Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Apr 2001
Location: Norway
Posts: 868

Quote:

Originally Posted by **leevtr**
My post wasn't aimed at bashing BMW.... Just to raise the question, on what basis do they have such a hardened following, because other than the badge, I cant see it.

Guess you mean people like me.

My bike doesn't have a proper BMW-badge, just this thing:



So for me it's not about the badge.

Quite a few people love to bash BMW so it would have been more relaxing to drive something else.



I have had bikes of seven different brands, for me the positive sides with my bike are:

- Mileage is above 200kkm and the bike can do a RTW tomorrow
- It works on all kind of roads. You can cruise on highways or cross dunes. It takes you everywhere!
- After visiting three continents and 40+ countries it had broken down only once beside the road. Well, it was not a total breakdown I could drive to the nearest village (broken rotor)

- Cheap parts, second hand parts available
- Parts available all over the world (police/army used to drive R80/R100)
- Good bike for riding 2-up
- Loads of knowledge on the internet
- Loads of aftermarket-parts and parts that fit from other models
- You can't find another offroad-worthy bike with the same level of comfort (comfort is underestimated on long trips)
- Fuel range (huge tank)
- Easy and cheap maintenance (service every 7500 km, can be done in 32 minutes, incl valveadjustments) for less then 50€
- My bike is 11 years old. I can still get all parts (for a reasonable price) in 3-5 days
- The bike is like a meccano-set, you can build what ever you like. Your needs might change. A "factory-bike" is just somewhere you start to build your own dream-bike.

Sure, this list is biased and preferences might differ.
I guess that when you have put yourself in situations where you will die if the bike doesn't start up you need faith.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **leevtr** 
I think they are living on an old reputation, same as people like Mercedes.
 *They used to be arguably best.... But not any more.*

Yes, the world consists of two kinds of people: **us** and **them**!

Anyway, the old reputation is still valid. For older bikes... Newer bikes tend to be more like the Japanese bikes, but there are exceptions.

I also like BMW for the technical bit. First with ABS, first with FI, first with fairing, experimenting with forks, HID as standard on some models, traction control, single sided swing arm, etc.

Have you read what various people wrote when BMW installed a light that didn't move with the forks? That's fascinating! BMW-bashing is not a new game. Or peoples reactions when they put ABS on a motorbike...


It's interesting to see that people get carried away when a Japanese fork brakes on a German bike but when a Japanese fork brakes on a Honda they don't say a word. There are loads of examples out there....

BTW I might be in the market for buying a new bike (enduro) and it will probably be a KTM, or maybe some Japanese stuff. I also have a Yamaha...

Pleas note that it's possible to write long post about this without bashing other brands or people.

Last edited by AliBaba : 29th October 2008 at 00:22.




 29th October 2008

#44 



mollydog 
 Moderated Users
 Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Aug 2003
 Location: california
 Posts: 1,483

I think this thread has run it's course I hope you have time to post reports here from time to time from on the road! 

Maybe some pics and links to your travel site.

Last edited by mollydog : 27th March 2009 at 02:21.



29th October 2008

#45

tmotten
Veteran HUBBer

Join Date: Aug 2005
Location: Gold Coast, Australia.
Posts: 272

Quote:

Originally Posted by **AliBaba**
[]After visiting three continents and 40+ countries it had broken down only once beside the road.*

That's amazing. I hope I'll get that sort of reliability. Have you got a photobucket page with the photo's of the trips at all? Had to Google HPN, but that is one of the bikes that has always inspired me for adventure RTW motorbiking, even before I knew what it was.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog**
Honda VFR (15K miles) I did ride a 900cc Kawa from the 70's however that had F.I.!! Very early, primitive version of course but it ran well!

Bloody hell. 70's? Did you have to put a 8" floppy disk into it? Must had some sort of pump mechanism controlling the induction rates?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog**
My only worry for you was the semi-dodgy rep of the electrics/battery systems on the F650. BMW have set things up so that even a slightly low or weak battery can effect the F.I. I've seen this on the R1150's/R1200's as well.

That was definately something on my concerns list as well. The problem is that with such a large group of typical owners not knowing anything or want to know anything about their bike but still providing info, it's hard to take info on a solid or not. This was one of those areas where sorting the solid from the crap became an issue. I'm still not sure if they have been squeezing the margins in the design or it's caused by the geometry/ location of the components or something else. Having a non-sealed battery above the motor would obviously speed up the drying out of it. After our battery failure a sealed battery was always going to be on the mods list, on any bike.

I can't remember if the bikes with the VR at the front of the motor have had any problems out of the ordinary. Loose battery terminals are most often the cause of 'problems'. Not sure if issues caused by loose terminals could really be called problems though. Luckily a lot of the accessories wiring was built by and with the help of my auto-electrician mate. Didn't really know how to use a soldering iron before that, but received a crash course (still produced some cold and dry joints though). Similar for all the steel work with another friend.


Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog**
No doubt your travel advice is well taken and very useful. But don't put down others (or the HUBB) who just happen to have A LOT of experience with LOTS of different bikes for the last 45 years. Hey man, don't pick on the old guys ... they may have a few things to offer up from time to time.

Not my normal reaction to old timer advice at all. Been riding with a few guys

from ADVrider over the last year a few times, and learned a tonne. Mostly on trail riding setup. But it's not all relevant for RTW riding, or it's sometimes a narrow-minded dogmatic opinion (often not even related to the bike itself), which is never useful. Have to be selective on the advice you take. Some of the guys only have to look at something to offer advice, but other actually wanna have a go at it to see what it's really like. Most people I've read giving senseless input threads like this have never even sat on the bike they criticize.


Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog** 
Look, you are leaving on a major trip. So I'm hoping you're focusing on that and I don't want to get into some sort of pointless arguments here distracting and stressing you out. I wish you all the best on your trip and hope things go smoothly.

We are all here to help with any advice, links, contacts and whatever else we might have to offer.


Cheers. Appreciate the offer. One thing I haven't been able to work on is the troubleshooting aspect of dealing with faults, because I've had nothing wrong with it yet, so I might have some posts related to this. I'm bored of working on mods now, and am finally finished (good thing because I'm leaving next week). Having been working on these bikes for as long as I have, I don't wanna turn a single spanner until the next service. Just hope that some of the other non problems solving mods won't cause some issues. 😊 At least after having done all the work myself I should be able to come up with something.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog** 
Fact is, there is no "bashing" going on here, I see mainly just opinions based on BMW experience and reports of forks breaking on the early F650's.

Not so sure about that. Reason for me even getting involved was because of some of the posts on the first page. Again, probably never owned, spend time with or sat on one.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **mollydog** 
*I think this thread has run it's course I hope you have time to post reports here from time to time from on the road! 🌟
Maybe some pics and links to your travel site.*

Agree. There's always the blog subscription. 😊

TacosTyringTravels.blogspot.com

Last edited by tmotten : 29th October 2008 at 09:41.



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LinkBacks (?)

LinkBack to this Thread: <http://www.horizonsunlimited.com/hubb/which-bike/has-anybody-ever-seen-failure-38514>

Posted By	For	Type	Date
The Chain Gang &bull; View topic - Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure	This thread	Refback	5th February 2009 01:06
Pohjolan KurapyÄrÄxiliÄxt &bull; katso viestiketjua - HUOM! Alkumallien BMW F650GS / Dakar omistajat	This thread	Refback	1st January 2009 19:27

LinkBacks (?)

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Interesting BMW fact I heard - PNW Riders	This thread	Refback	1st January 2009 12:57
Pohjolan KurapyÄrÄxiliÄxt &bull; katso viestiketjua - HUOM! Alkumallien BMW F650GS / Dakar omistajat	This thread	Refback	11th December 2008 15:50
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