

# bullshit detector

This month's industry bitching, backstabbing, general idiocy and grateful thanks...



## ALLO, ALLO?

Thanks this month to Moto Deschamps of Nice, a Triumph dealer who sorted our recalcitrant, misfiring Triumph Tiger on a recent test in the sunny south of France. It was 'les bougies' apparently. The candles? Eh? Gallic shrugs all round and mutterings of 'Bof', etc.

## BLUE TURNS GREEN

Suzuki is offering a great zero-per-cent finance deal on its robust and riotous fun DR-Z range. Only thing is, the bikes had to be registered before the end of December, because after that new Euro 3 emissions regulations came into place and would have complicated things for all concerned. Get one now!

## WHO YOU CALLING FAT?

Al 'A-Fat' Fagan of Fast Bikes who raced in the British supersport Cup in 2008, was looking a lot less like an Andrew Pitt-style supersport racing snake and a lot more like a salad-dodging fat bloke in a two-cow suit at the Portimao WSB test. Rumours that Fagan's team for 2009 had put him on a John McGuinness style diet were scotched. Along with the eggs Al loves so much.



## SPRINGTIME FOR HONDA

Dismay (we imagine) at Honda UK when its British MX1 champion Billy Mackenzie was named as a BNP member on a leaked membership list last month. But no excuse, surely for the pisspoo quotes from the firm's UK PR woman, Fiona Cole. She's quoted on the fascist bullyboy party's website as saying, "He decided to pay the annual subscription after the war on terror, which was something he felt strongly about. I'm a member of the Youth Hostel Association — it doesn't mean I do anything about it." She added: "Honda isn't a political organisation. Billy rides for us and is a fantastic rider. He would never do anything that brings himself or Honda into disrepute." Except, >

## NEW KIT

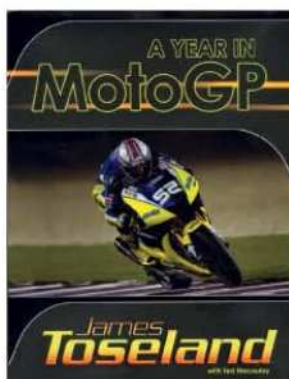


# SIDI VORTICE BOOTS

£289.95  
www.feridax.com

Italian boot boys Sidi have a new top-line race model for 2009, the Vortice. It's a heavily tweaked version of its previous top model, the Vertigo race. Which is to say that there's a new sole design, a replaceable ball-of-the-foot section in the sole as well as a fully adjustable shin tensioner and

more adjustability all round. They look like the last word in trickness and it appears the new sole has addressed the low-grip in the wet that affected previous designs. The external ankle-braces look a bit less obtrusive too. If we get a chance, we'll give them a run out.



# A BOOK AT BEDTIME

This month's best biking publications

## A YEAR IN MOTOGP

If you've ever wondered what a year in the life of James Toseland is like, then you better buy 'A Year in MotoGP' by James Toseland. Cashing in on a great start to his MotoGP career, Toseland's tale is an interesting insight into life in the eye of the storm. I say interesting, it is if you like the nitty gritty of a race weekend, but if you're looking for salacious gossip or stories of big nights out, then you're better off buying the *News of the World* – or just stick with the Bullshit Detector. At least there are plenty of big picture: to gawp at, but you do wonder how much extra blue and yellow ink the printers had to stock up on. For the committed fans only.

Costs **£18.99** Contact: [www.virginbooks.com](http://www.virginbooks.com)

## SEEING RED 2008

British superbike race fan? Then you'll be wanting a piece of this. Double Red's annual photographic almanac of the BSB championship squeezes more good shots into its 260 pages than you'd see at the Open. With coverage of the supersport championship and all the support races, it's a weighty, glossy, well-informed piece of publishing beauty. Where better to spend the xmas book token?

Costs **£30** Contact: [www.doublered.co.uk](http://www.doublered.co.uk)

# FORKING HELL?

*SuperBike* has been contacted by several owners of BMW's F650 GS enduro model whose bikes have suffered sudden front fork casting failures

Riders of BMW F650 GSs from the USA and Australia have detailed their experiences on online BMW and Adventure Riding forums, and also the *SuperBike* forum ([www.superbike.co.uk/forums](http://www.superbike.co.uk/forums)).

The problems relate to early versions of the F650GS and F650GS Dakar enduro built before 2002. One owner, Seattle-based engineer Rashmi Tambeh, was riding her 2002 F650GS across Alaska, when the front wheel suddenly came adrift, throwing her from the bike. Rashmi was riding along a smooth, Tarmac road at the time, and suffered a broken arm in the spill. When her riding companions looked at the bike, the front axle mounts seemed to have broken free from the fork bottoms.

We spoke to Rashmi, and she confirmed the story. She'd bought the bike as a

private secondhand buy in April this year, with 26,000 miles on the clock, and began riding it.

*"I crashed once at a dual sport rally in June when I hit a rut. It took a bad hit where the handlebars sheared off. My friends zip-tied them back and we were able to ride it to the closest hospital. The bike was taken to a dealership where they fixed the functional damage – a broken turn signal, mirror and a new fairing bracket."*

**"ON A SMOOTH, TARMAC ROAD, THE FRONT WHEEL SUDDENLY CAME ADRIFT, THROWING HER FROM THE BIKE."**

*be any fork damage and there was no visible damage or fork oil leakage. I did about 3,500 more miles on the bike before the fork failure."*

Rashmi isn't the only rider to have suffered such

an incident though. Wayne Carruthers in Australia also suffered an unexplained failure of the front fork lower casting on his F650GS. He'd picked the bike up secondhand from a dealer only the day before, and crashed while riding on a dirt road. On inspection, his front axle mount had also broken. There are also reports of other fork failures as far afield as South America.

The stories on internet forums have worried one British F650GS owner. Tony Holt has emailed BMW asking them if he should be worried about his bike's forks, and if BMW would be willing to swap his early model fork bottoms for later, redesigned parts. BMW has told Tony that there is no problem with his forks though, and they're not prepared to swap any parts on his bike.



Rashmi Tambeh (below) lost control of her bike on a straight smooth road when the front wheel came adrift (above). The front axle mount casting had failed (left)



2002 F650 GS Dakar – all clear from BMW

## BMW'S RESPONSE...

We asked BMW UK if they had any information on problems with the front forks on early F650GS models. This is what it told us.

*"BMW Motorrad UK has had no reported causes of such a fault in the UK. Whilst we cannot comment directly on this specific incident, we have spoken to engineers at head office in Germany who are confident, from previous research, that such a failure could only occur if the parts had been damaged previously."*

So, if you have an early BMW F650GS or Dakar (post-2002 models seem unaffected), and had any serious impacts to the front wheel, it may be worth having the forks examined. And if you're uncertain of the bike's history, then consider asking a dealer to check the machine out.

More info: [www.advrider.com](http://www.advrider.com)