

TECHNICAL - - Forks - Cont'd.

(4) With the screw out, just pull the fork tube out of the slider. Don't do this operation upside down; that is, with the slider on top and the tube on the bottom. You could drop the damper rod assembly (or parts of it) out of the top of the tube and onto the floor scattering pieces everywhere.

(5) Done properly, the damper rod will be dangling out of the bottom of the fork tube as you withdraw the tube from the slider. As a precaution, take the damper rod screw and put it back in the damper rod. That way, even if you tip the fork tube, you won't be spilling the damper parts out on the floor. Meanwhile back in the depths of the slider, you'll find a loose piece rattling around. This is the damper rod seat which is supposed to position the damper rod in the center of the slider.

(6) This is a photo of old friends somewhat reunited. Inside the fork slider shown at the left, the damper rod fits down in the damper rod seat (the thing that looks like a top hat) and the whole thing is held together by a damper rod screw, which passes through the slider, then through the seat (located inside the bottom of the slider), and finally into the damper rod itself.

(7) Getting the damper-rod assembly out of the fork tube takes a pair of Seeger-ring pliers. Don't try to finesse your way through without the proper tools. With the ring removed, the assembly will come out, or should come out. A sharp tug on the rod will usually do it, but don't get too violent. You don't want to bend any part of the rod itself, so a couple of sharp, energetic, but straight yanks are in order.

(8) Presto. You have the damper assembly before you. And a bit more. The assembly has been laid out with the damper rod seat in its relative place, on the bottom. When you inspect the damper-rod assembly you will begin to understand the reason for disassembling the fork. Various pieces are likely to show gouges and burrs, and there will be metal chips in the damper unit, in the fork tubes, and inside the sliders.

(9) Shown here is an enormous stab wound in the damper rod seat. How did it get there? When the forks were assembled (probably with the springs in, not out) the damper rod seat got cocked slightly in the bottom of the fork leg. At full compression the Seeger ring (see photo 7) dug into the seat. Remember that one slider did not run up fully on its tube (see text accompanying photo 1). The slider would go up until the edge of the Seeger ring would dig into the edge of the seat. Rotating the tube maneuvered the Seeger ring around to the other side of the cocked seat, whereupon the tube dropped another half-inch into the slider.

(10) One problem leads to another. The dag on the damper rod seat produced a high spot; that in turn made contact with the inside of the damper rod bush. Close investigation of the parts will uncover obvious imperfections. Work carefully with small files and 360/400 wet and dry emery paper. Remove the raised ridges of the gouges, but don't file and paper your way to the bottom of any trenches. You don't want to change any dimensions of the parts.

(11) In many places you'll see metal particles or debris of some kind. The grit shown here was lodged in one of the damper rod holes; a similar piece of grit in one of the floating ring valves could upset the damping. Do not fiddle with the holes themselves. You can alter the damping rates by changing the size of the orifices. Many times holes are so small you might not realize you've changed the hole sizes with two swipes of a file.

(12) Practically everyone should stop after cleaning up, deburring and massaging the damper assembly. For most people going further is pointless. True, if you have a lathe handy and want to polish the components, you can do it. That might make you feel happier, but the parts won't function significantly better. The removal of one Seeger ring will enable you to carry the disassembly to this point. Unless you're a whiz, diagram as you take things



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