

Wings of warm

Surely, you people at *Cycle World* are aware of the overheating problem that has been affecting the Honda GL1800 Gold Wing since its introduction in 2001. I think you should either write a story about the problem or at least contact Honda and see if you can get some response. They have refused to address this issue with the thousands of us who have this problem, and we're seriously thinking about rallying the factory for support.

Niles Slemmer
Riverside, California

Save the postage, Niles. This past December, American Honda sent a letter to all the original owners of GL1800s acknowledging the company's awareness of an overheating problem. According to the letter, approximately 1 percent of the 25,000 GL1800 owners in the U.S. have reported instances of the needle on the coolant temperature gauge moving up into the red zone, but only when the ambient temperature is high, and only when the bike is ridden very slowly, usually around 10 mph. When I spoke with a Honda representative about the problem, he referred to this style of riding as "parade mode." He said that almost all of the reported incidents had occurred while the bike was either crawling through



traffic at a walking pace or taking part in an actual parade.

In the letter, Honda pledges to find a solution in time for the upcoming summer riding season. Until then, GL owners who are riding slowly and observe the temperature beginning to rise are advised either to increase their speed or shift into second gear. If that simply is not an option and the coolant-temperature needle reaches the red zone, the rider should pull over to the side of the road as soon

as possible and let the GL idle so the fans can run and cool the engine.

GL1800 owners who have not received this letter from Honda, or who experience overheating problems that do not necessarily occur when the bike is being ridden as described in the letter, can contact American Honda through a special toll-free number set up exclusively for this purpose. The number is 866/784-1870, and it is active from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. PDT on weekdays.

Loose values

I have a question about the torque values of fasteners. As you pointed out in your "Don't dork it, torque it" reply in the October, 2002, issue, I am aware that the best values to use are the ones supplied by the manufacturers, but what do you do if you don't have the specification for a particular application? Is it a valid method to use a torque wrench to undo a nut or bolt, gradually increasing the pressure on the torque wrench until the bolt begins to turn, and then use that value to reinstall?

Eric Anderson
Littleton, Colorado

Absolutely not! Trying to determine torque values using that method is almost guaranteed to give you incorrect results. To begin with, you can't assume that the fastener was properly torqued when installed. Even if it was, that doesn't mean the same amount of torque will be required to remove it. Countless normal factors can contribute to making the fastener either easier or harder to loosen than it was to tighten.

On a component that is subject to considerable heat, for example, repeated ex-

pansion/contraction cycles can cause a fastener to loosen over time. So can the compression of a gasket, the continual exertion of large forces or even the minor stretching of a bolt or a stud.

Conversely, bolts and nuts frequently find a "home" after they have been undisturbed for quite a while and thus require considerably more torque to undo. Ever loosened the lug nuts on an automotive wheel? They may have been installed using around 100 or 125 foot-pounds of torque, but it often seems to take Herculean force before they suddenly break loose with a loud crack! You wouldn't even consider installing those same lug nuts with equivalent force.

What's more, the presence of thread-locking compound, rust or any other form of corrosion on the threads of a fastener will have dramatic effect on the amount of torque required to loosen it. Ditto for any corrosion between the head of the bolt/nut and its mating surface that might increase the coefficient of friction between them. Even a lock-washer—particularly the one-way split-

Recall Roster

NHTSA Recall No. 02V272
Harley-Davidson FLTRSEI
Model year: 2000
Number of units involved: 782
Dates of Manufacture: September 1999–
May 2000

Problem: On this limited-edition Screamin' Eagle Road King, built by H-D's Custom Vehicle Operations, the braided clutch cable could contact the rear-brake line, causing the line to abrade. Over time, the line could begin to leak brake fluid, potentially causing the loss of rear-brake function, possibly without warning, that could result in a crash.

Remedy: Dealers will replace and reroute the braided clutch cable. Owners who do not receive this free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Harley-Davidson at 414/342-4680.

ring type designed to prevent a fastener from undoing itself—will cause false torque readings when a nut or bolt is loosened.