

Honda CBR6000 Crash Repair

So, I thought I'd do a "brief" article on a cosmetic fairing repair to my 2010 CBR600RR for anyone who's interested. I bought the bike new in late 2010 and, as it was the first brand new bike I've ever purchased, I was keen to keep it in good nick. Sadly, a crash in front of me on a track day out at Broadford in late November 2011 (in the first session of the day..) resulted in me going down along with the guy who lost the front end - right in front and to the inside of me - on the left-hander running onto the front straight.

Impact with both the rider and his sliding bike was unavoidable. Bones were broken, by both me and the other rider, and I don't remember the moment of impact as I was knocked out in the process. It was a bad result all round, as both me and the other rider ended up in hospital and, while I'm not sure about his bike, mine was heavily scuffed on the left hand side. It could have been worse, of course, and, on the plus side, minimal repairs (a new front indicator and left hand clip-on) were required to get the bike back on the road. The damage wasn't easy to spot, either, as the scratches were black in colour (under the cover layer of red paint) and blended into the black and red colour scheme.

It was always going to bug me, though, riding around on a scratched up bike. So, I bit the bullet in May and decided to get the damage repaired. I'd never had to bother too much with this stuff before as the only two repairs I've ever had to carry out were insurance jobs but, as this was a track incident, an insurance repair wasn't an option. The first decision was whether to have the existing panels plastic welded (there was one small crack in the upper/front fairing) and repainted, or just buy brand new (OEM/genuine Honda) replacement fairings. I thought about getting a set of the new non-OEM/after-market fairings that are advertised all over the web but didn't seriously consider this option as I wanted to keep the bike stock in case I decided to sell it. Plus, they seemed generally (judging by comments on forums etc.) to be of pretty dubious quality and to require lots of post-purchase stuffing around to somehow make them fit.

I did the maths and, while there was not a huge amount in it, decided to go with the slightly cheaper option of repainting the existing fairings. I spent a couple of hours at least trawling through the myriad of U.S. websites out there offering fairly cheap OEM fairings. The cheapest I could find were available at PowersportsPlus.com. I worked out that it would cost me around \$1000 for a full set of front/upper, left hand side and rear fairings. That figure didn't include postage either, which was bound to be substantial on a package that big.

My choice was influenced by Ben's suggestion that I get Paul Tallents involved in repainting my fairings and putting new stickers on. After speaking to Paul, who is an ex-MSR member, and taking the bike out to him in Mitcham to look at, he offered to do the job for under \$500. That didn't include the cost of the stickers, of course, which I'd need to source, and some of the plastic bits and pieces which would cost more to paint than they would to replace. So, in the end, I guess I opted for a bit of a compromise. Paul was repainting the existing fairings but I was also sourcing new stickers and a stack of other plastic and other bits and pieces from overseas in order to get the bike back to "as new" condition.

The biggest hassle in terms of getting replacement parts was sourcing the right part numbers. As everyone who's ever repaired a bike will know, it's absolutely essential to get the right part number, particularly if colour is an issue, as it will always be with stickers, for example. When I contacted Honda directly, they refused to provide part numbers and suggested I contact one of their "authorised dealers". I did that, in the form of Stevo's in the city. They also refused to provide part numbers directly. They would get the right parts for me, they said, but only if I purchased the parts from them (and at no stage would they actually communicate the part no.'s themselves to me). I can see that both Honda and Stevo's were trying to protect their bottom line but I was pretty unhappy all the same. It's pretty galling when a manufacturer whose product you have purchased refuses to provide you with basic information about that product when necessary to have repairs carried out. A big thumbs down to Honda on this count.

Anyway, I was confident about all of the part numbers I'd sourced from the web except for the stickers. While all of the websites selling parts have basic diagrams setting out the various parts and all bikes have colour codes etc. which can be used to help identify the right parts, I was not 100% sure on the stickers I'd selected. None of the web sites provided colour pictures of parts and even minor differences amongst models in different countries can, of course, mean the wrong result in terms of stickers or other minor bits and pieces. That's what I figured anyway.

While PowersportsPlus.com were pretty unhelpful in terms of ensuring I had the right parts (not really their problem I guess), I found a useful website at bike-parts-honda.com. The domain name seems obvious but it took me a while to find it. This site identifies individual models by model, country, year etc. and includes colour pictures. You can search by country and VIN no. to make sure you get exactly what you need. It's a great resource for the after-market repairer. After checking all of the part numbers I'd ordered on this site, I was much more confident of actually getting the right parts.

It took 3-4 weeks for the parts to arrive but, when they did, I was rapt to see that everything was there and that the stickers were the right colour, size etc. By that stage, Paul had the repainted fairings all ready to go. All I needed to do was head out to his place just outside Warburton and put it all back together again. I was pretty lucky with the weather (mid-winter, it could have been pretty nasty) and made it out to Paul's place by 11am one Saturday morning in late June.

I should mention, too, that it was an absolute b*tch to remove the side fairings. I'm not mechanically minded at all, which didn't help (neither did the fact that I was trying to remove them outdoors, in the rain, and with a hangover). Each of the three different side fairing components are intricately connected with a number of interfitting fiddly bits and plastic and rubber bits. I think that the whole side fairing covers on the current model CBR600RR was a bit of an ad-hoc design intended to cover the electronic components of Honda's sports ABS system, which are big and fairly ugly (on this first generation model). I don't care as long as they work but the fairing covers are definitely not user-friendly. No doubt they will sort it in the next model (which, apparently, is due to arrive in the first half of 2013).

Given my difficulties in removing the side fairings (the front upper and rear were pretty straightforward), I was a bit apprehensive about putting it all back together again. Paul provided much cheerful, patient and invaluable assistance here. I doubt that I would ever have managed to get it back together again without his help (without smashing or scratching something anyway).

We spent the whole of what developed into a pretty cold and rainy Saturday afternoon stuffing around with it all. By 4.30pm, though, it was all done and I was ready for the cold, dark ride back into Melbourne. I was stoked to have the bike back to original condition, though; the whole exercise was well worth the money and effort. Paul's work was fantastic in terms of quality and attention to detail.

I'm now contemplating selling it to go back to a 1000. The advert. has written itself: "well maintained and loved CBR 600RR, never dropped ('cept that one time, and it wasn't my fault btw), never ridden in the rain ('cept when it rains and I have to go somewhere, which seems to happen a lot), never ridden hard ('cept when I want to go fast) or on track ('cept for the odd track day to blow the cobwebs out) - it's sure to fly out the door.

I've got the bike up for sale at the moment but, depending on what I can get for it (and that may be not much at all), it'll probably be around for a while yet. Not a bad thing at all.

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