

was the order of the day. Some owners said their dealers had used 75w90 wt. synthetic. Some owners said their dealers had used 75w140 wt. synthetic. One owner found out his dealer used 80w90 non-synthetic. Several dealers were quoted as saying BMW didn't have a 75w90 wt. synthetic gear oil, while others used it and were found to be displaying it on their shelves. Frankly, I was disappointed in both BMW Motorrad USA and the dealership network for the lack of information and wrong information on this subject.

BMW has issued two service bulletins which do contain information as to what gear oil to use in the new style final drives. And in both cases those bulletins say that 75w90 wt. GL5 rated synthetic gear oil should be used. The first reference found was in the Bulletin issued in 2005 related to bearing play and the spline fit of the wheel flange and axle tube discussed earlier in this column. That Service Bulletin specifically says, "We highly recommend using BMW Super Synthetic Gear oil. 75W90, P/N 07 51 0 394 082" - the very same oil some dealers said didn't exist, in justifying their use of 75w140 wt. gear oil.

The second service bulletin reference is contained in the bulletin outlining the procedures to change the final drive gear oil at the 600 miles service on 2007 models. That bulletin specifies Castrol SAF-XO as the proper lubricant. This caused great consternation because apparently Castrol SAF-XO is marketed in Europe but not in North America and nobody seemed able to figure out what it was or what it meant.

A visit to the Castrol company Web site however makes it very clear what it is. Castrol SAF-XO is a premium GL5 rated, 75w90 wt, synthetic gear oil. In the process of several owners asking their dealers what they used and why, and asking for documentation from BMW, nobody has unearthed any documentation that suggests anything other than GL5 rated, 75w90 wt. synthetic gear oil is appropriate to use in the Hexhead and New K bike final drives. In my opinion, owners should insist that this is what is installed in their final drives until and unless a dealer can produce authoritative documentation from BMW to the contrary. And if they do, please send a copy to me.

Good wrenching!

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