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## Barker's High-Performance Exhaust for the *BMW R1200GS/A*

by Paul H. Smith

As the owner of an aging but chronically overloaded *GS Adventure*, I'm often forced to resort to, or at least attempt, weight-saving measures. One of the heaviest components is the exhaust. The stock exhaust on my '07 model is bigger, heavier and less efficient than it could be, a definite candidate for an upgrade.

With a heritage in R&D and racing, *Barker's Performance Exhaust* is an all but unknown player in adventure motorcycling. You're not likely to see splashy ads or scores of sponsored bikes out there, but their background fascinated me, so I thought I'd at least give their new slip-on exhaust for the *BMW R1200GS/A* a try. If anything, given their racing background, I was a little concerned that their exhaust would be a little too loud for my taste. I'm not a member of the *Loud Pipes Saves Lives Club*, and prefer the quieter side of engineering, especially considering the long distances, hours and constant day-in and day-out pounding on the ears. As it turns out, *Barker's* engineers did their homework and the upgrade, which met my other criteria, seems to be as quiet as the original.

The first thing you notice upon unpacking the exhaust is the build quality. Although it's smaller and lighter than the stock version, this is a battle-ready product. Dropped bikes are a fact of life in dual-sport/adventuring, and exhausts can easily get banged up, or even torn right off the bike. So, a little extra armor may prove important one day. And, there's the added value that this system will not wear out any time soon.

*Barker's* claims their exhaust is approximately six to eight lbs. lighter than stock, and that you can expect a nominal

four- to six- horsepower increase. With the swap, you'll also notice a slightly better throttle response. The exhaust note seems a little lower, which translates to being less annoying, especially over long distances. With earplugs at highway speeds, I'm now barely hearing the engine, and all that remains are the wind and road noises. If there's a downside, it's a minor one—at city speeds the exhaust seems to exaggerate the various popping noises so common on boxer engines.

The exhaust ships with a spark arrestor already installed, but if you live in an area that doesn't require it, it's easy to remove or re-install. Their spark arrestor includes a screen to cover the exhaust port. Thinking back to many not-so-tidy environments I've ridden and camped in, it sure seems that this screen is also a great way to prevent little critters as well as debris from getting in there.

The guys at *Barker's* have done a great job with their new slip-on exhaust for the *R1200GS* family. If you're in the market for a new exhaust, you might want to consider *Barker's*. It's basically a flawless product that has a lot of value-added quality. And, just in case it's important to you, they're a 100% American-owned company. **FITS:** R1200GS/A (2006–2012) **MSRP:** \$795 **BarkersExhaust.com**

### PROS

- Improved throttle response
- Lighter and smaller than stock
- Tougher construction

### CONS

- Boxer engine pops are more apparent at lower speeds