



# TAIFUNNEWS



The unofficial newsletter for Taifun owners in the U.S.A., Canada and elsewhere.  
*Dedicated to improved operation, increased enjoyment and flight safety!*  
Publication will be when and if we feel like it. If we have nothing to say and there is no newsletter, it will be up to YOU to contribute useful or newsworthy items.

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Editor: Joe Volmar, 65MA

## GEAR PROBLEM

Dear Taifun owners

We would like to share with you some experience we had with Taifun 17E. After purchase in Germany some three years ago, we flew the Taifun to Israel. It was an uneventful but exciting flight originating in Mainbullau via the Alps, Graz Austria, Dubrovnik Croatia, Corfu Greece, over the Greek Islands and abeam Cyprus to Haifa. Total flying time was approx 16 hours.

We would like to report to you two events that may be useful to consider.

In a short time after arrival we found that steering the aircraft on the runway or positioning it by hand in the hangar required excessive forces. We also noted that tire wear is

un-even. We suspected that the wheels are miss-aligned. Measurements yielded a tow-out of some 5-6 degrees vs. the required a tow-in of 1 degree. Clearly this problem originated at the manufacturer. It is surprising that such a large misalignment escaped the QC department of Valentin back in 1987. Corrective action required cutting out the upper torque link hinge point bushings on left/right main landing gear struts and re weld in desired position. After repositioning the wheels symmetrically with the centerline of the aircraft and adjusting for a proper tow-in, re welding the hinge point bushes completed the job. Steering, taxi and roll outs are as now as they should be.

Last year a pilot experienced difficulties in lowering the landing gear in-flight. These were scary moments as it appeared that the landing gear is stuck up for good. The gear was eventually lowered by cranking the lever back and

forth with a great deal of force. A check of the nose landing gear strut head revealed that the retraction shaft broke off at the weld attaching to the gear head body. The entire nose landing gear was disassembled and re welding job took care of the problem.

We are interested to know if any of our readers had similar experiences to those described.

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## WHAT AN AIRCRAFT!

Dear all:

I just once want to publicly thank Joe Volmar for taking the effort to maintain his Taifun Newsletter.

For me (and probably for most if not all of you) the Taifun is essentially a love affair with a temperamental (and unique) aircraft.

When, in 1984, I told Klaus Holighaus that I had bought one (Klaus was the owner of the world-known Schempp-Hirth glider factory, and an exceptionally gifted "design economist"), he told me that I had just done the deal of my life: "You are buying an aircraft for less than half of its true cost, and soon it will become a rare, valuable object, because economics will cause production to stop after some one hundred aircrafts, after the initial working capital will have been burnt out".

Really, Mr. Valentin, the founder of the Taifun company, was a man deeply in love with micro-mechanics (he owned, as his main business, a highly computerized machine shop), and it showed in the "cost-is-no-concern" design of certain Taifun parts.

As any in new design and manufacturing organization, the Taifun project had many flaws, some hidden, some more obvious, but overall I still have to discover a more lovable aircraft.

Many of you may remember the test in a main US flying magazine (was it Flying?), where it was stated that the Taifun had the best single engine cockpit comfort ever flown by the reviewer.

More recently, once I found myself in a 5 hour Taifun flight over the Alps with Dick Rutan (and I noticed how, his first time in that aircraft, I was mercilessly shown how much better a Taifun can be flown!), and he commented that the Taifun had certain extraordinary features, such as a very harmonic progressive hardening of the control efforts with increasing speed.

A Taifun requires a patient, loving owner, but it will amply repay him with great pleasures!

Thank you again, Joe, for allowing us all to share this love affair together.

*Alvaro de Orleans-Borbon*

## PILOT REPORT

Here is a very interesting comparison report of the Taifun vs. the Ximango by one of our former owners, Rob Morgan:

Hi Joe,

I really like the Super Ximango. Overall I think the performance is a tad bit better than the Taifun. Where it really counts is the rate of climb. I never could get much better than 250 to 300 fpm out of the Taifun at sea level on a cool day. I pretty regularly get 500 fpm from the Ximango at a density altitude of about 3000 ft. When I moved out west I pretty much knew that I didn't want to be flying the Taifun out here because of the more common density altitude days we encounter at the places I often fly. I recently took off from Williams, AZ with a density altitude somewhere between 9500 and 10,000 ft. I doubt I could have gotten airborne in the Taifun. The Ximango climbed slowly at about 250 fpm.

Handling - for both aircraft is superb, but I'd give extra points to the Ximango at minimal controllable airspeeds and thermalling; particularly in roll axis. Rather than getting stiff at the higher airspeed, the controls of the Ximango

remain pretty light through out the airspeed spectrum. I don't really see this as a big positive or negative for either aircraft, just a difference.

Takeoffs and landings - the Taifun is much easier to control. Being a true taildragger, the Ximango requires the pilot stay on top of the situation at all times. Left crosswind takeoffs can be very interesting when flying the Ximango if the pilot isn't on top of the situation. At the same time, the landings require very positive rudder control till the tailwheel is firmly on the ground.

Cruise - I fly the 100 hp (Rotax 912S) version of the Ximango, the AMT-200S. I regularly see about 104-105 knots on the airspeed throttled back a couple hundred RPM from where I could be setting the throttle. (I always try to be easy on the engine just because I want it to last.) I used to see about 98 knots airspeed with the Taifun and the 80 hp Limbach. Fuel burn in the Ximango averages 4.5 gph running premium Mo Gas. Pretty much equivalent to the fuel burn I witnessed in the Taifun running Av Gas.

Factory & Dealer support - the Taifun is out of production and as you know, you have only one European option for parts support, which is Korff. Unfortunately, and probably due to their size and profit

margin dealing in limited numbers of parts for a handful of out of production aircraft, I seldom found real responsiveness to my needs. Thus far, I can say that I'm much more pleased with the responsiveness to my needs for parts for the Ximango (which have been few). Having the aircraft still in production is also certainly a big help.

Thermalling - Both aircraft are heavy and typically fly with higher wing loadings than a pure sailplane. As a consequence both require just a bit more lift than a pure sailplane to stay in the air. However, I would give a slight edge to the Ximango over the Taifun in its ability to climb in a thermal. This may partially be due to the excellent low speed handling qualities of the Ximango. I think the winglets on the Ximango do help in this regard.

Price - The Taifun wins hands down. No doubt, condition, equipment, and hrs on the airframe and engine have a lot to do with setting a value on each aircraft. However, I would wager to say the average Taifun in this country is probably valued in the 65K to 80K range vs the Super Ximango (the more recent versions like what I fly) which is probably valued in the 115k to 130K range.

That's a big difference. Is it worth the difference? I think that depends on the pilot. I think the Super Ximango does offer better performance, especially important if flying in the western USA. I also value an ability to get parts promptly, good dealer support and responsiveness. For me, I'm very happy with the Ximango.

That's pretty much my 10 minute pilot report and comparison of the two aircraft. Take care of yourself, and I hope to see you out there flying sometime.

Rob

## DOLLY FOR SALE

Our friend Shawn Knickerbocker, has a rigging dolly for sale..... The dolly is to aid the rigging of wings to the rear portion of the fuselage; it rolls and makes the whole motor-glider easier to move and store...\$500 takes it (does not include shipping)

Cell #: 904-382-9614



"*TAIFUNNEWS*" is an unofficial publication published solely for the benefit of Taifun owners in the U.S.A., Canada and elsewhere. Information and photographs will be gratefully accepted but publication will be at the editor's discretion. Clean and legibly typed copy or E-Mail submissions will be appreciated. Use of published information is strictly at your own risk; the contributors and the editor assume no responsibility for the feasibility and/or quality of processes, procedures or products described in this publication. Published in U.S.A. © Joe Volmar

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