



U.S. Department
of Transportation
National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline
Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects
1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 111

Date Received

Repository ☐

05-MAY-2003 JUN 27 11:47
10018138

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City SAINT LOUIS

State MO

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☒ YES ☐ NO
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA will not provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.
Signature of Owner Date 5/28/03

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Make GULF STREAM	Model MOTORHOME	Model Year 1997
Date Purchased 11-13-1997	Dealer's Name and Telephone Number HARNEY RV St Louis MO	Engine: No. Cylinders V10
Original Owner	Dealer's City St Louis MO	Fuel Type: GAS
Transmission Type Auto	☐ Antilock Brakes ☒ Cruise Control	Vehicle Component Code 190000 TIRES
Powertrain		Multiple Failure: 5

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s) 7-16-00 8-4-00 06-2001	Failure Mileage 19000	Failure Speed 65-70 mph 07-2001 07-2002
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ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make Firestone Cooper Michelin	Tire Model (Name or Number) LT 225/75 R16 LRE	Tire Size (Example P215/65R15) MICHELIN XPS R16
DOT No. (Example: DOTM19ABC036)	☒ Original Equipment ☐ Prior Repair	Failure Location: VARIOUS (5) LOCATIONS
Tire Component Code	AND Subsequent Repairs	Tire Failure Type SIDEWALL FAILURE

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make:	Date Manufactured:	Model No./Name:
Seat Type:	Installation System:	
Child Seat Component Code:	Failed Part:	

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es), and injury(ies).)

Crash ☐ Yes ☒ No	Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No	Number of Persons Injured NONE	Number of Deaths NONE	Reported to Police N
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Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).
Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure;
i.e., parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

THE INSIDE TANDEM TIRES WILL FAIL, BLOWING OUT WHILE IN MOTIONS. THE OWNER HAS CHECKED TIRE INFLATION AND WEIGHT OF MOTORHOME LOADED AND UNLOADED. THE OWNER HAS HAD (3) DIFFERENT TIRE MANUFACTURES AND BRANDS OF TIRES. THIS MOTORHOME HAS PROPANE LINES INSIDE THE WHEEL WELD. HE IS BEING TOLD BY GULFSTREAM TO USE A BIGGER TIRE. PLEASE DESCRIBE DETAILS

See Attached Summary of what happened
AND corresponding receipts, information

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY.

The Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579) This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a Manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

Mr Michael J. Jordan
Safety Defects Program Assistant
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
USDOT NHTSA
400 Seventh St SW
Washington DC 20590

June 12, 2003

Dear Mr Jordan

I am providing the following summary of the events surrounding the tire failure problems as well as an update on my recent problems on my vacation in South Dakota May 31 to June 9, 2003.

I purchased an 1997 Gulfstream Conquest Class C Motorhome (on a Ford E-Super Duty van chassis) new in November of 1997 from Harney's Motorhomes in St Louis Missouri. The vehicle number is 1FDLE40SOVHA03167 Gulfstream Serial # 18257.

I have been discussing this problem with the following persons over the past 2 1/2 years with the following parties:

Mr Russ Yeo 800-289-8787 ext 3386 of Gulfstream Coip
Mr Ron Levitz and Mr Tom Conn also of Gulfstream Corp
Mr Carl Schneider 800-444-3371 of Ford Customer Service
Mr Rich Cullem of Firestone Tire Corp 800-356-4644 or 630-972-5012
Peggy at Michelin Tire Company RV Customer Assistance 800-847-3435
Alexander Tire Dealer in St Lous Mo 314-843-8855

AND my current conversations with Gulfstream (Mr Scott Pullin 800-289-8787 ext 3720) and Ford Motor Company which you are aware.

And now a summary of the problems:

My first blowout occurred on July 16, 2000 on I-44 (right rear inside dual) which did extensive damage to my underbody compartments.
My second blowout occurred on August 4, 2000 on I-55 and did extensive damage to my underbody compartments and nearly fractured a copper tubing propane line inside the left rear wheel well (left rear inside dual tire).
I purchased four new Cooper tires on the four rear tires because I felt that the firestone tires were the problem.
The third and fourth blowout occurred the next summer June and July 2001 on vacation on the left and right inside duals (Coopers).
I suspected that the tires were not the problem but both Gulfstream and Ford indicated that I had to either overloaded the motorhome or underinflated the tires.
Also in the spring of 2001 I replaced the front tires with puncture proof Uniroyals.

In late summer 2001, my wife and I decided to buy the most expensive rv radials made with special reinforced sidewalls to make sure we wouldn't have any more problems. Also I was told by Michelin to increase the tire pressure to 90 psi to help the tires run cooler and carry more load. Gulfstream even recommended to go to the next larger tire LT245/75R22.5 after I started blowing the Michelins.

The fifth blowout occurred on vacation of July 2002 right rear inside dual(Michelin)

UPDATE FROM ORIGINAL REPORT TO NHTSA

The sixth tire failure occurred on I44 in May of 2003 and the tire just deflated due to a valve failure – the sidewall was not damage and Alexander Tire installed a new valve.

The Seventh, eighth, and ninth failure was on May 31st and June 1st 2003 while on vacation -- all valve failures and the last blowout a front tire on I-90 which I almost lost control of the Motorhome.

We were in Murdo, South Dakota with another couple who were following us in their motorhome. I took my damaged spare to a truck repair facility and relayed all the problems I was having. They inspected the spare and indicated that the valve installed on the tire was only rated for 60 psi and that Ford had put the wrong valves on some of their vans and that they remembered a recall. My tire dealer indicated that they merely put on the tire the same type of valve which was on there—in this case the wrong valve.

Apparently all this expense and stress and problems were for nothing and I believe it to be the problem since I drove 1500 miles without any tire problems after they changed all my valves to steel bolted truck valves rated at 120psi.

I only ask that you put out some sort of bulletin to the tire people, RV people and the Chassis people so that other people who are having the same problems get some help.

I am carboning a copy of this to Mr Bob Livingston at "Highways" Magazine so he can tell this story also.

Thanks for your help on this.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
St Louis Missouri [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

cc:
R Livingston