

Pulsar Talion XQ38 Review



The following is a review of the Pulsar Talion XQ38 by Korey Kirschenmann (Night Goggles, Product Specialist).

FEATURES

- 384x288 Microbolometer Resolution
- 2.5-10x Magnification
- 1475-Yard Detection Range
- Photo And Video (with audio) Recording
- Wi-Fi connectivity And Stream Vision 2 App Supported
- Waterproof, IPX7 Rated Housing
- 9 Hour Battery Life
- Ten Reticles In Nine Colors
- Picture-in-Picture Mode
- Discrete And Smooth Zoom
- 3 Sensitivity Levels
- 8 Color Palettes
- Stadiametric Range Finder

SIZE/WEIGHT: The Talion is the newest entry in the Pulsar family of thermal scopes. It has a more traditional glass-looking scope design. This new format should work well on both AR style guns but even better on bolt-action guns. The scope will have two different QD options. The one tested is the single lever QD mount. It wouldn't work well as a scanner just due to the size and shape, but the scope still seems lightweight.

Size: 12.99" x 2.24" x 2.645"

Weight: 24.69 oz

IMAGE QUALITY: The image quality is respectable on the Talion XQ38. It struggles with Positive ID (PID) at long range. The ULIS (Lynred) sensor has improved in high humidity with the lower mK ratings in comparison to early Trail models. In my opinion, it still doesn't handle humidity as well as the iRay sensor but has improved. The overall image is a little blotchy but coyote and hog hunters should have no issues shooting hogs/coyotes to around 250 yards in my opinion.

POWER: The Talion XQ38 includes a B-Pack Pulsar APS5 (Li-Ion) which is rated to run the Talion for 9 hours. In my testing, the Talion without wifi or recording lasted 7 hours and 45 minutes. This battery is brand new and could potentially increase in runtime after a few charging cycles. The test was run at 70°.

The Talion also allows for a 5V battery pack connection via USB C connection. The TRB from Night Goggles worked perfectly with it. The pack charges the internal battery while it is supplying power. No issues switching back and forth between power sources. The Talion ran for 9 hours using the TRB with no B-Pack APS5 battery.

The battery door was hard for me to close and seal. It definitely is not something you would want to do in the dark.

POINT OF IMPACT (POI) TESTING:

Zero: The Talion has .67, .33 and .17" adjustments. They seemed to work as expected.

Mount: The Talion XQ38 provided included a very compact one lever QD mount. Pulsar has indicated there will be another larger mount available later this fall. I removed the scope on 4 different occasions and retested RTZ (Return To Zero). On one of the tests, the RTZ was perfect. On two occasions, it moved about 1MOA, and one time it moved 2 MOA. I would be a little leery of removing it often for precision shooting, but it typically will be close especially if not using it for long-distance shooting.

Zooming: I saw no difference in my POI from moving through the zoom levels with either discrete or smooth zoom.

PIP: I saw no difference in the POI of the main reticle and the PIP reticle.

Cold-Weather Testing: As it is still very warm out, I tested temperature sensitivity by wrapping an athletic ice pack around the scope for 15 minutes to see if the POI moved. I did see a small amount of movement around 1MOA during this test. Older Pulsar models really struggled with this, but I still have a little concern if using in extremely cold climates.

WIFI/APP TESTING: I tested the StreamVision 2 app on an iPhone 11. In keeping it connected for 1 hour, I had a few drops in connection during that time. By the time I noticed it, I simply entered the viewfinder mode and it connected again. I don't know what causes the loss of connection. You can change virtually anything on the scope from the Stream Vision 2 app so it is incredibly powerful.

RECORDING: The Talion allows for Video (with audio if mic is turned on) recording in two quality levels. When compression is turned on, the Talion can store more than 31 hours of video. With it turned off, the recording quality improves, but decreases the amount of video storage to roughly 4 hours maximum. The format of the video files is .mp4. I found the audio to be OK at best. It picked up lots of wind noise, but shots and voice recordings were muffled and overall audio quality was not as good as other options I have used in the past.

UESR MANUAL: There is only a quick start guide. No manual is included with the packaging, but users can find an online manual at <https://www.pulsar-nv.com/glo/support/manuals/2966/talion-specifications/s1836/>



FOV/MAGNIFICATION: I do believe the FOV is a really good all-around choice. This scope could be used for virtually any purpose. The 2.5x base mag and 9.8° FOV should work for coyotes and hogs. Pulsars ability to support both smooth and discrete zoom for both the main reticle and PIP is a major plus.

INTERFACE: There are tons of features on the Talion. Some would maybe say too many. The operation of the three buttons and dial were well thought out but are a bit confusing. I really like the position of the power button and the ability to hibernate or turn the power off with this button.

EYE RELIEF: I used the Talion without the eyecup. For some reason, there is some magnetism to the eyepiece so I could feel the magnetic pull to the metal frame of my glasses. I am so used to an eyecup that I did scope myself a few times. The outside of the eyepiece is not metal so it didn't leave any marks.

OVERALL FORM: I believe the Talion will be especially popular for people with bolt action rifles. For those transitioning from glass scopes, it will feel more comfortable as it is similar to what they are used to. I was pleased with the overall form and function of the scope.

OVERALL FEELINGS: The Talion XQ38 is a solid performer especially considering the price. Due to more traditional glass-scope style, it can be utilized on bolt and AR style guns. This style is not as multi-functional (scope and scanner) as some of the more compact models. The Talion is loaded with the known Pulsar features, and the fit and finish of the scope looks very professional. The middle-ground magnification and FOV should work for a variety of different applications. During my hunts, I found the scope to be accurate and I had no glitches of any kind during hunting or testing. During testing, I found the POI stayed consistent between the main window and PIP as well as throughout the entire zoom range. The ability for Pulsar to include both discrete and smooth zoom in both the main window and PIP is so unique.

The battery life did not last as long as advertised, and it would be very difficult to swap the battery pack in the dark. On the unit I tested, the battery door was very tight and difficult to close. The included QD mount of the Talion did not RTZ as well as some other mounts I have tested. Due to the fact the weather is still very warm, it was hard to test for how temperature may impact point of impact. My limited testing yielded a result which showed improvement over earlier models tested but there still may be some movement during extreme temperature changes. The StreamVision app is incredibly powerful but as with past Pulsar tests, I did have several drops in my Wi-Fi connection. This could be due to the heavy Wi-Fi traffic as well as multiple Wi-Fi routers in my testing area but it is something to note.

