

DRIVEN
 R E V I E W

CEN Aqua Jet

Electric aquatic fun!

by Bob Hastings


FAST FACTS
MANUFACTURER: CEN Racing

BOAT: Aqua Jet

STYLE: Semi deep-vee

DRIVER: Anyone from newbie to experienced

SPEED (AS TESTED): 8.8 mph (6-cell); 17.1 mph (12-cell)

PRICE: \$219


It's amazing how many tangents that RC takes you on; whether it's nitro or electric, on-road or off-road, each presents its own new facet of fun. It's the same way with RC boats. If you've never tried them before, you'll discover that it's a completely new dimension of radio control. Best of all, there's a good chance that you already own all of the support equipment that you need to get involved. If you're new to RC, or you wouldn't dare plunder anything from your present fleet of surface vehicles, then consider an RTR boat like CEN's Aqua Jet. This electric-powered semi deep-vee measures nearly 30 inches long and is a great way to take things way off road.



The Aqua Jet includes a 2-channel radio system (installed), full-color graphics, sealed top deck tools, and ABS boat stand. Just add batteries and you're all set.

PHOTOS BY WALTER SIDAS

DRIVING IMPRESSIONS

We hit the local quarry for some hot laps with the Aqua Jet. The sleek shape looks fast sitting on the included stand, but seeing the boat on the water was awesome. I started with a single, fresh Peak 6-cell 2400mAh pack to get a feel for the handling. The boat accelerates quickly and gets up on plane in a matter of seconds. The hull's lifting strakes help the boat break the surface rapidly, and the integral fins aid in the boats cornering. The single pack powers the Aqua Jet to a top speed of 8.8 mph during our initial runs. Of course, we're speed freaks here, so it wasn't long before we switched over to a pair of 6-cells to see what the boat had in it. The acceleration of the 775 motor is swift using 14.4V, and we discovered that you could really enhance the

boat's handling by playing with the center of gravity (CG) of the boat. More forward helped the boat carve turns better, but further back let the boat reach a higher top speed. The AJ maxxed out at 17.1 mph using the twin packs. One thing to keep in mind is that the torque of the propeller helps the boat turn more sharply to the left, but high speed turns to the right are significantly wider. If you find yourself running out of room, a quick blip of the throttle off/on will help tighten things up.

Waves don't seem to upset the hull much. By the time we were halfway through our packs, the water was pretty well churned up at the test site. Of course, we were obligated to ram right through the larger rollers, but the hull took it in stride.



TECH SPECS

LENGTH: 29.1 in. (739.1mm)

BEAM: 6.3 in. (160mm)

WEIGHT: 53.3 oz. (1,511 g)

HULL: Vacuum-formed yellow ABS deep-vee w/ planing strakes

DECK: Removable top deck with sealed inner hatch

DRIVE: Direct drive 775 motor with 2-blade surface-drive propeller

STEERING: Single servo w/ wire push-rod link and trailing rudder

ELECTRONICS: 2-channel pistol-grip radio with steering servo and ESC

ACCESSORIES: Instructions, boat stand, graphics, tools, driver, and throttle man

RATINGS

DURABILITY—The hull, stand and support gear are all sturdy ABS and put up with a lot of flexing. “Erich-the-gorilla-fisted” did manage to split one of the front mounting tabs for the top hatch, but we quickly fashioned a new one out of some donor material from the stand and a hunk of servo tape.

EASE OF USE—If you don’t mind a little wallpaper action with the vinyl graphics, then the AJ is a cinch to finish off. Put your batteries on charge before you start to sticker and you’ll be all set to hit the beach when you’re done.

What we liked—

- ⊙ Designed for 6 or 12-cell use
- ⊙ Cool stickers with “Speed changes you” graphic
- ⊙ Includes stand
- ⊙ Good performance and value

What could be improved—

- ⊙ Reverse would have been nice, but I wouldn’t sacrifice the twin-pack power to get it.



The hull accommodates two 6-cell packs as shown, or you can install a single battery across the area in front of the radio box. The Aqua Jet’s radio gear, 775 motor, and ESC are all factory installed.

Additional items needed:
8 AA Batteries, rechargeable battery pack(s)

ITEMS USED

Peak PEK4110—two 6-cell pack 2400mAh NiCd battery packs—\$59.99

Novak 4490—Millennium Pro charger—\$150.00



Megatech MTC3923—AA Batteries (12-pack)—\$7.50

CONCLUSION

Whether it’s a day at the pond or out on the lake, the CEN Aqua Jet is equally suited to just about any water conditions. Once we wrapped up the formal testing of this boat, I played around with it on a large river and even in the ocean. Remember to wash down the boat thoroughly if you go play in the salt. The hull is remarkably stable and moves at a nice clip, with two batteries onboard. Even bashing through the large rollers and taking flight didn’t upset the boat. The hatch seal kept all but a few drops of water out of the inside and the boat always seemed eager for more. Like all of the CEN products we’ve seen, the AJ offers a solid balance of performance and value. If there’s a boat in your future, I can sincerely tell you that the Aqua Jet is a hull of a good time. ☺

Links

CEN/Genka Trading Corp., www.cenracing.com, (714) 792-1923.

Megatech Intl., www.megatech.com, (201) 662-2800.

Novak Electronics Inc., www.teamnovak.com, (949) 833-8873.

Peak Performance, www.peakmotors.com, (714) 692-8533.

For more information, please see our source guide on pg. 193.