

## FAST TRACK REVIEW

Text by Chris Kovachevich

Photos by Walter Sidas

CEN

GST 7.7



## FAST FACTS

**MANUFACTURER:** CEN/GTC**VEHICLE:** GST 7.7R**CLASS:** 1/8 scale 4WD off-road monster truck**DRIVER:** Beginner to moderately experienced**PRICE:** \$559.99 (MAP)**SPEED:** 39.6 mph

**T**he world of monster trucks is constantly evolving and changing—improvements come along at almost a weekly pace. The CEN GST 7.7 is the newest product of the evolution of the venerable CEN Genesis that has developed a loyal following in the rough and tumble world of monster trucks. By equipping the Genesis with a 7.7cc engine and a three-speed transmission, the folks at CEN are now offering a vehicle that has features that are not available in any other vehicle in its class.

A **BIG** new entrant in the Monster Truck arena



## THE RUNDOWN

The CEN GST 7.7 is truly the biggest of the big. Designed to be the top of the pile in the highly competitive world of monster trucks, the GST's 7.7cc engine is the largest displacement engine of any monster truck. In addition to the largest engine available in a vehicle of this type, the GST also has huge wheels and tires—7.5 inches in diameter. These factors, when combined with a longer wheelbase than anything out there (the folks at CEN consider this a true 1/8 scale vehicle), make the GST the biggest and baddest of the bunch of true monster trucks. In addition, the 220cc fuel tank allows the fun to last longer between stops for fuel. The GST is comprised of lots of good features that add up to a strong, fast and enjoyable truck.

**THE PACKAGE**—The GST 7.7 arrives fully assembled and ready-to-run. All that is necessary to get the 7.7 ready to go is the installation of four AA cells in the under slung receiver pack and eight AA cells in the transmitter. Add fuel and a glow igniter and the GST is ready to go. Even though the truck is ready-to-run, a full assembly procedure is outlined. This type of information is vital to the long-term enjoyment of the GST. Maintenance and component replacement are certainly made easier with the excellent instructions supplied with the GST.

**CHASSIS**—The GST uses a DVC (Dual Vertical Chassis) style. This design is very strong and does an excellent job of resisting damage from the hard hits that a monster truck of this type gives and gets. Cross bracing is excellent and we saw no chassis flex—not front to rear or side-to-side, or any form of twisting, and none of the attaching screws loosened up. A nice touch is the heavy-duty roll bar that adds stiffness to the chassis in addition to protecting the large cooling head of the 7.7 engine. The GST 7.7 chassis is designed to last a long time under very rough conditions.

**SUSPENSION**—The GST 7.7 uses upper and lower control links supported by eight large capacity shocks with functional reservoirs. When you consider the weight of the GST, eight shocks are not a bad idea. Reservoir shocks require a different bleeding technique than their non-reservoir brothers, and the folks at CEN have put full instructions in the included manual—a nice touch.

**ENGINE**—The CEN 7.7 engine is a new entrant in the monster truck arena and it's certainly a willing performer. After a quick

break-in with O'Donnell 30 percent fuel, we tuned the engine for performance and allowed the transmission to shift. The cast exhaust does a reasonable job of quieting the large displacement 7.7cc engine without any evidence of performance loss.

Performance is a hard thing to judge without a lot of instrumentation, but there is no doubt that the GST is one fast big truck. Shifts (both of them, since the GST is equipped with a three-speed transmission) came smoothly and at appropriate times after the engine was tuned for performance. Can anyone ask for anything else?

## PERFORMANCE

I took the GST 7.7 to the season final race at my home track, Timberline Raceway in Osawatomie, Kansas. Even though the GST is not marketed as a racing vehicle, I was anxious to see how it would stack up in stock trim against other trucks in the stock monster truck class. The performance of the GST was certainly up to the level of the other entrants in the class; the



power and the handling of my totally stock vehicle were good enough to run at the front of the pack. The GST jumps very well and has the cat like tendency to always land on its "feet." The four-shoe clutch provided positive engagement and never slipped throughout our two qualifiers and the main. Unfortunately, my main with the GST came to a premature end (while running second and catching a highly modified Revo) when an E-clip (it's always the simple things, isn't it?) decided to run away from its happy home on the right CVD drive.

**STEERING**—Steering the GST is a formidable task. The 7.5-inch wheels and tires require a lot of torque to get moving, and the installed steering servo is certainly up to the task. The metal-g geared servo does an amazing job of turning the wheels of the GST when the truck is stationary—a base line that indicates excellent "in motion" performance. The heavy-duty steering servo is protected by a 1/8 scale style servo saver/bellcrank with a built in spring. The spring installed on the GST servo saver is a bit light for the task and even though I tightened the adjustment, the servo saver seemed to be a bit on the weak side.

**DRIVETRAIN**—The GST sets new standards when it comes to the size and strength of the drivetrain. Its driveshafts are the largest diameter (8mm) of any monster truck currently in production and they make normal monster truck driveshafts look like toothpicks in comparison. Large 23mm hexes are used to drive the 7.5-inch tires—a new standard in size from the manufacturer.

The GST is equipped with three six-gear differentials: two crown and four spider gears. A unique design is used to hold things together—gear supports rather than the more common shafts position the gears in the aluminum cases. The differential assemblies are contained in housings rather than the more common combined housing/bulkhead. As supplied from CEN, the differentials are grease-filled, but the option is always available to tune the handling of your truck with various weights of silicone fluids.

Power from the 7.7 engine is transmitted via a four-shoe clutch—a first for this type of vehicle where two and three-shoe clutches are normal. Another great feature of the GST is the four metal brake discs. All this braking surface provides a lot of stopping power, which can be independently adjusted to provide additional front or rear brake bias.

## CEN GST 7.7



### ADDITIONAL ITEMS NEEDED:

12 AA cells (8 for transmitter and 4 for the receiver pack), glow starter, nitro fuel (we used 30 percent O'Donnell) and fuel bottle

### ITEMS USED:

O'Donnell 30 percent nitro fuel (LXMGD9) \$27.95 per gallon, Dynamite metered glow driver (DYN1925) \$19.95, Dynamite turbo fueler (DYN2000) \$9.95



The heavy-duty front suspension of the GST is highlighted by the use of dual reservoir shocks at each corner and heavy-duty composite steering knuckles.



The 7.7cc engine is the largest in its class and offers great performance. The oversize cooling head does an excellent job and no overheating problems were encountered during our test.



The four-shoe composite clutch of the GST provides excellent resistance to slip and smooth engagement. What more could you ask for?



The MTM braking system of the GST consists of four rotors that are independently adjustable—a nice touch that works very well.



The underside of the GST features a well sealed radio box, and switch and servo on either side of the heavy-duty front drive shaft.

### What we liked—

- ⊙ Biggest BAD BOY on the block
- ⊙ The supplied radio system is better than average for RTRs
- ⊙ Good factory support
- ⊙ Did I mention biggest BAD BOY on the block?

### What could be improved—

- ⊙ Stronger servo saver spring



The DVC (Dual Vertical Chassis) of the GST is rigid and works very well for this type of vehicle. Another nice feature is the access port in the side of the transmission that allows adjustment of shift points.

### CONCLUSION

With the GST leading the pack of monster trucks in terms of displacement, tire size, and number of clutch shoes, we expected a lot from our test vehicle. And we weren't disappointed. The GST arrived with its electronics properly set up from the factory, and the engine was a willing participant in this test—it broke in easily and quickly, and never failed to start on the first or second pull.

Handling is quite good and the supplied chevron treaded tires worked very well on the black Kansas dirt of our test track. Jumping is a very strong point with the GST—it always seems to land properly and with a resounding thud. This monster truck sounds like a lot of fun and it definitely is! 🎧

### Links

CEN/GTC, [www.cenracing.com](http://www.cenracing.com)

O'Donnell Racing Fuel, distributed exclusively by Great Planes Model Distributors, [www.odonnellracing.com](http://www.odonnellracing.com), (800) 682-8948

Dynamite, distributed by Horizon Hobby Distributors, [www.dynamiterc.com](http://www.dynamiterc.com)

For more information, please see our source guide on page 225.

## TECH SPECS

CHASSIS	<b>MATERIAL:</b>	Anodized aluminum
	<b>TYPE:</b>	DVC (dual vertical chassis)
	<b>SPECIAL FEATURES:</b>	Heavy-duty construction with lightening holes
	<b>LENGTH:</b>	23.1 in. (587mm)
	<b>WIDTH:</b>	18.4 in. (467mm)
	<b>WEIGHT:</b>	17 lbs. (7.7kg)
SUSPENSION	<b>GROUND CLEARANCE:</b>	4 in. (111.8mm)
	<b>WHEELBASE:</b>	15.63 in. (397mm)
	<b>AUTHOR'S OPINION:</b>	This is one chassis that doesn't flex. Torsionally, it's totally solid. We were never able to find any evidence of any flex anywhere in the chassis.
		<b>RATING—9</b>
	<b>MATERIAL:</b>	Molded composite
	<b>TYPE:</b>	Independent double wishbone
DRIVETRAIN	<b>SHOCKS:</b>	Eight aluminum with functional reservoirs
	<b>TRACK F/R:</b>	18.4 in. (467mm)
	<b>WHEELS:</b>	Chrome plated 5.7 in. (132mm) with 23mm hubs
	<b>TIRES:</b>	7.5 in. (190mm) chevron treaded all terrain with foam
	<b>AUTHOR'S OPINION:</b>	The GST's eight oil-filled shocks work very well under all of the circumstances we tested. Excellent damping is the rule here, and we were never able to bottom the truck during our testing.
		<b>RATING—8.5</b>
STEERING	<b>TYPE:</b>	Three-speed forward and reverse transmission with integral center differential
	<b>DIFFERENTIALS:</b>	Front and rear six-gear with aluminum cases
	<b>BEARINGS:</b>	All ball-bearing support
	<b>BRAKES:</b>	Four-wheel braking with independently adjustable dual front and rear MTM discs
	<b>DRIVESHAFTS:</b>	Steel CVD style shafts, 8mm diameter.
	<b>AUTHOR'S OPINION:</b>	The GST comes with a heavy-duty drivetrain—lots of metal parts that are the largest in the industry. The transmission shifts smoothly and has easily adjustable shift points. Enough said.
	<b>RATING—9</b>	
	<b>TYPE:</b>	Dual bellcrank with bearing support
	<b>AUTHOR'S OPINION:</b>	The GST uses a dual bellcrank system with a built in adjustable servo saver—a common set up in most competition level 1/8 scale buggies. The supplied spring with the GST is a bit weak for the task, and no amount of adjustment could "firm up" steering response.
		<b>RATING—6</b>