

FAST TRACK REVIEW

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CEN RACING TALON READY TO STRIKE ATX

FAST FACTS

MANUFACTURER: CEN Racing
VEHICLE: Talon NX
CLASS: 1/10 Nitro Off-road Buggy
DRIVER: Entry level to intermediate drivers
PRICE: \$329.99
SPEED (AS TESTED): 40.23
 Acceleration: 11.74 sec. @ 40.23 mph in 553.15ft.
PART NO.: 9252
ADDITIONAL ITEMS NEEDED: Fuel, 12 AA batteries



One aspect I truly love about the RC hobby is its ability to load you up with funny stories and memories of romping on a vehicle around the yard or track. CEN Racings line-up of vehicles has certainly contributed to the aforementioned, and most memorable for me is probably the Fun Factor ATX Buggy. A little over three years ago, when we first started *RC Driver*, Editorial Stalker Erich Reichert and I took the ATX to the local park and proceeded to drive its wheels off for photos, testing, and just plain fun. I think throughout one day we put more than a gallon of fuel through the buggy. Most of the running was high speed passes across a ball field and a little bit of airtime on the BMX track; this vehicle produced a ton of fun and stories.

CEN went to work refreshing its line-up and took the ATX into the chop shop and released a vehicle that may appear similar, but has a whole new attitude. The new Talon NX has received a healthy dose of revisions, and it was our mission to take it back to that ball field and track to see if it is just as good as its predecessor.

CEN RACING TALON NX



THE RUNDOWN BLUE STUFF

The most visible change from the ATX to the Talon is the cool blue-anodized aluminum parts. Besides the color, the shock towers are the same as before, but the chassis is all new. The old chassis was a two-piece unit, and the NX chassis is one piece and has been lengthened to give the vehicle a longer stance. It's engraved with the CEN logo and countersunk, and it has angled edges for increased rigidity.

On the rough stuff, the benefits of the longer chassis were very noticeable; the Talon just handles so much better and is very stable off of jumps. The chassis upgrade is a nice feature.

CHASSIS BRACING

With a longer platform, bracing plays a key roll in reducing chassis flex. CEN molded a new, long composite-plate upper deck that also braces the chassis exceptionally well. The upper deck also serves as a mount for the laid-down steering servo and stand-up throttle servo, while connecting the front end to the rear spur mount and rear mount brace.

Again, going over bumps and jumps to test the new deck resulted in great handling and no bent aluminum after airing some insane jumps. The composite deck is lightweight and strong.

BIG TANK

One area that plagued the old ATX was the small 75cc fuel tank. Just when you were having loads of fun speeding across a field, you'd hear the engine putter and die out as the tank ran dry. The Talon is equipped with a 125cc tank which you normally find on 1/8-scale buggies. It has a flip-top lid for easy refueling and a spill catch just in case you overflow the tank.

On the field, the benefits of a larger tank were very noticeable, simply because the buggy ran longer than we had run the ATX in the past. The only complaint with the new tank is that the spill walls are a little too high and tweak the body when the car is on. A little creative trimming to the spill walls took care of the issue.



TRACK TREAD

The Talon NX was created to handle better on tracks, and the mini-block spike tires are the right style tire for semi-packed dirt surfaces.

On the BMX track, the tires grabbed a lot of traction and helped the buggy accelerate well from a standing start. Through corners, the tires roosted dirt, yet kept the buggy planted and under control.



ITEMS USED

Trinity
Monster
30% Platinum
Fuel-
MH0030T



Venom
2400mAh
AA
Recharge-
able
Battery-
1521



Check out CEN's new DSX radio that comes with its RTR vehicles. It has a digital display, easy scrolling keys, long range and most importantly, a bright blue LED light to let you know the radio is powered on.



Composite-body oil-filled coil-over shocks with aluminum caps help damp the pivot-ball suspension. Several holes on the shock tower allow for fine tuning the Talon's handling.

The Talon's suspension is highly adjustable, with its upper and lower pivot-ball setup and adjustable rear toe-rod, but why didn't they use these rods up front? The wheel bolts to a cast aluminum hex and axle, which rides on bearings like the rest of the drivetrain.



Bolted to the Talon's platform is CEN's potent VX-18 side-exhaust engine with pull-start, two-needle barrel carb and large cooling heatsink head. Here you can also see the included two-speed transmission that kicks up the fun factor of this buggy. A fiberglass brake disc helps slow up the buggy for corners.



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Here is a good look at the Talon's composite upper deck, laid-down steering servo attached to a servo-saver-style bellcrank,

and the large capacity 125cc fuel tank.

WHAT WE LIKED

- ⊕ The long wheelbase makes this buggy very stable on rough tracks.
- ⊕ 125cc tank means one thing—long run times.
- ⊕ New DSX digital radio system is a welcome addition to CEN's new cars.
- ⊕ Very fast with the VX-18 engine and two-speed tranny.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- ⊖ Wing mounts to the body and breaks off after a few hard crashes
- ⊖ Include adjustable steering tie-rods like the units on the rear
- ⊖ Thicker shock towers

CONCLUSION

When testing was all said and done, the Talon did its job and left us with plenty of stories to tell of big-air jumps and speed runs across parking lots and baseball fields. This revamped version of an original CEN staple is perfect for entry-level drivers and intermediate enthusiasts. We tested and rated this vehicle for them. The CEN Talon NX is truly fast, fun and ready to run at a great price; we give it a solid thumbs up. ⊕

Links

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

Trinity Products Inc.,
www.teamtrinity.com, (732) 635-1600

TECH SPECS

CHASSIS	MATERIAL	Aluminum
	TYPE	Plate
	LENGTH	16.3 in. (414mm)
	WIDTH	12.8 in. (326mm)
	WHEELBASE	11.6 in. (295mm)
	WEIGHT	5.6 lb (2540g)
	FEATURES	Angled edges for increased rigidity, countersunk screw holes
	RIDE HEIGHT	1.77 in. (45mm)

AUTHOR'S OPINION: The longer stance of the buggy produced by the lengthened chassis improves the look of the vehicle and, more importantly, the handling.

RATING-9

SUSPENSION	MATERIAL	Molded composite plastic
	TYPE	Double wishbone
	SHOCKS	Oversized oil-filled composite bodies with preload clips
	WHEELS	Dish style with relief holes
	TIRES	Mini-pin-style racing treads
	FEATURES	Pivot-ball style, aluminum towers, aluminum-pin pivot-braces

AUTHOR'S OPINION: Durable universal suspension components let you stock up on a spare parts that can be used to repair either end of the vehicle.

RATING-8

DRIVETRAIN	TYPE	Front and rear CV shaft drive. Two-speed transmission
	DIFFERENTIALS	Grease-filled gear diffs with hardened ring-and-pinion gears
	BEARINGS	Full bearings throughout
	BRAKE	Fiberglass disc
	DRIVESHAFTS	CVS Constant Velocity Shafts in the front and rear dogbones

AUTHOR'S OPINION: Two-speed tranny, hardened gears for the diffs, CV Shafts: this buggy has all the goodies for a long, reliable life.

RATING-9

ENGINE	TYPE	VX-18
	SIZE	3.0
	EXHAUST	Dual-stinger composite pipe with long route header

AUTHOR'S OPINION: The VX engine is an easy to start and tune mill; however, the engine likes to be run rich, so you'll have to sacrifice a little power to run reliably.

RATING-8.5

ELECTRONICS	TYPE	Skyion DSX
	SERVOS & FEATURES	G82122 high-torque servos and 4-cell AA holder

AUTHOR'S OPINION: A big thumbs up here for CEN's new radio system. Digital display, comfortable, better range and blue LED power light; great RTR gear.

RATING-9

STEERING	TYPE	Dual bellcrank with built-in servo saver
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AUTHOR'S OPINION: The steering unit is solid and has adjustable rods for tuning (although they're just straight threaded rods).

RATING-8

Venom Racing, www.venom-racing.com, (800) 705-0620

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





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