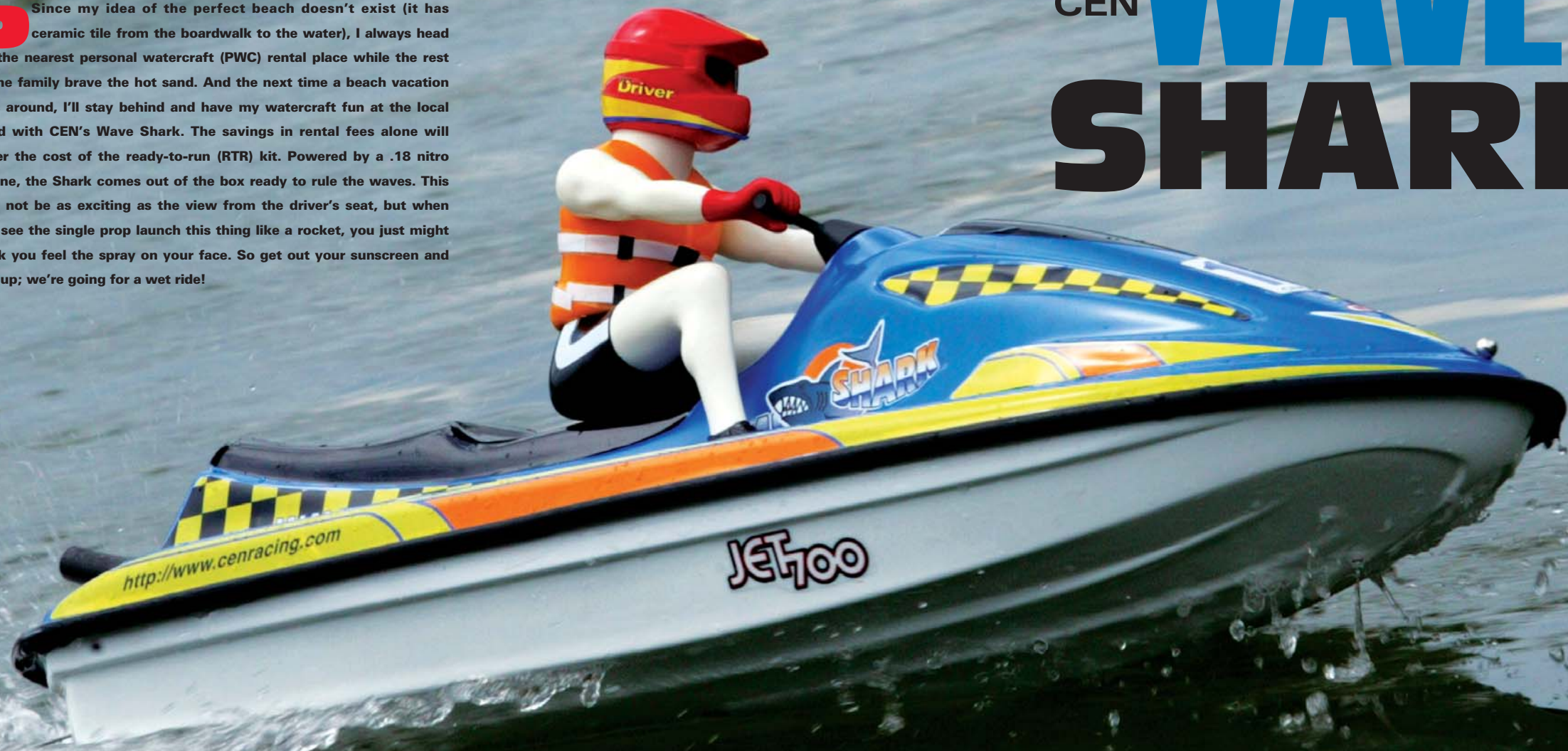


Summertime means vacation, which often involves the beach. Since my idea of the perfect beach doesn't exist (it has ceramic tile from the boardwalk to the water), I always head for the nearest personal watercraft (PWC) rental place while the rest of the family brave the hot sand. And the next time a beach vacation rolls around, I'll stay behind and have my watercraft fun at the local pond with CEN's Wave Shark. The savings in rental fees alone will cover the cost of the ready-to-run (RTR) kit. Powered by a .18 nitro engine, the Shark comes out of the box ready to rule the waves. This may not be as exciting as the view from the driver's seat, but when you see the single prop launch this thing like a rocket, you just might think you feel the spray on your face. So get out your sunscreen and suit up; we're going for a wet ride!

CEN WAVE SHARK



Sink your teeth into this!



RTR

NITRO PERSONAL WATERCRAFT

AT A GLANCE

WHO MAKES IT

CEN Racing

WHO IT'S FOR

Everyone

HOW FAST 23.2mph

HOW MUCH \$250



TECH SPECS

HULL LENGTH 29.1 in. (740mm)

WIDTH 9.1 in. (230mm)

HEIGHT 6.3 in. (160mm)

WEIGHT 6 lb. (2,721g)

HULL Molded ABS plastic

ELECTRONICS 2-channel, 27MHz FM pistol-grip

STEERING In-line rudder

ELECTRONICS Direct shaft

POWER CEN NT-18, 2.99cc water-cooled nitro engine

WHAT WE LIKED

- It has a driver!
- Plenty of speed
- The guts are pretty easy to work on

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The hatch takes a while to install
- Decals started to come off sooner than I would have liked
- Needs a cover to protect the electronics
- Could use a larger fuel tank

GOT TO GET

- AA batteries
- Fuel
- Glow igniter
- Paint for driver



DRIVING IMPRESSIONS

There's no clutch, so the prop begins to spin as soon as the engine fires; a gentle forward toss is needed to launch the Shark. With a squeeze of the trigger, the engine hit a high note as the prop began to cavitate. Then, without warning, the rider pulled the throttle, catapulted his craft toward the center of the pond and reached the far end almost too soon to make the turn.

After that quick lesson in how the Wave Shark likes to be driven, it was time for me to take a step back and adjust my trigger finger. Ease into the throttle until the Shark is moving, and then clamp it for a more controlled high-speed run. Steering response is quick—so quick that it's almost as if you just need to think about turning. A sharp move in either

direction can flip the craft from front to back. That in itself can be exciting, but save it for when you are more in tune with the boat's handling. Until then, why not mount the included skid fins at the rear? They're designed to increase stability. At full speed, the prop and rudder are the only things touching the water, but on anything but a glass-smooth surface. The Wave Shark starts to wiggle as its speed increases. Play your "wake cards" right, and you may even get some air time. It takes only a few minutes to adjust your thinking and driving style to match the CEN Wave Shark's nature. Stay focused, keep your speeds in check, and you will find it's one of the most enjoyable RC watercraft you've driven.



A 2-channel, 27MHz FM radio system with 2 standard servos is already installed but it's somewhat exposed. I did get water inside the hull at times, but it did not seem to affect the gear.



The driver has to be assembled and painted, and then the boat only needs decals and the handlebar attached before Scuba Steve can take the helm. The Skyion radio is already installed and needs 8 AA cells for the transmitter and 4 for the receiver.



This thirsty CEN .18 nitro engine drinks the 3 ounces of fuel in about 4 minutes, but the power it puts out ensures that you get 3 minutes of pure adrenaline-pumping action. It features a slide carb, a water-cooled head and a direct-drive shaft to spin the prop.



The large, in-line rudder does a great job of steering the Shark. The tube that's visible here is the water pick-up that sends water around the engine for cooling and then exits at the side of the hull.

DOCKSIDE DEDUCTIONS

On the bench, I took some time to see what the Wave Shark has to offer. The hull is a semi-deep-vee style molded in white plastic. The upper deck/hatch is a piece that requires decals to add details such as the seat, instrument panel and graphics. The rider looks a bit small for the Shark's scale, but it's so much better than having to run it without a driver. He has to be painted, though ours still looks as if he needs a little more sun to get those pigments to darken. Under the hatch, the Shark's few components are laid out in such a way that everything is easy to get to. The 3-ounce fuel tank (way too small, in my opinion) is mounted toward the bow, just in front of the engine. To the rear is a tray that holds the electronics. It's totally unprotected and would benefit from having a lid of some type to keep moisture away from it.

The Wave Shark arrives with a 2-channel, 27MHz, FM Skyion DX Pro radio installed with two standard servos and a 4-cell AA battery holder to power the receiver. The .18 CEN engine features a water-cooled head to keep temps down—particularly important, since there isn't any air flowing around under the hatch. A composite 2-piece pipe directs the exhaust out at the stern through a rubber extension tube. A direct-drive shaft runs from the engine to the stern and straight to the prop. One rudder takes care of steering, and it includes a water pick-up to send water to the engine head. ©

Links
CEN, cenracing.com

For more information, see our source guide on page 177.