Product Review - 2014 HOTT Micro Magic RTR – Part I. Hull and appendages RTS

***By Mike Eades MM #15 & 3*15**

I had heard that the new Graupner SJ Company, through their German subsidiary, was selling two new versions of the popular Micro Magic, a kit version V2 which had been extensively reviewed by Ralf Bohnenberger and published on the MMI and USMMCOA Forums, and the HOTT RTR version allegedly modeled on Mike Weston's "Champ Spec" MM. Since I had built several kit versions of the MM Racing model and had also bought a few years ago one of Mike Weston's boats I was interested to see how the new version had turned out and how it compared with the Weston version. I also wanted to test the process for buying from Graupner, Germany.

I placed an order online with Graupner SJ Germany and received a confirming invoice showing a price of Euros 308.40 (VAT had been deducted and including shipping via FEDEX), $350 US including a $9.20 foreign transaction fee on my AMEX account. Five days later the product showed up at my door!

Inside the shipping box was the customary blue Graupner MM box although somewhat larger than the old kit box (Figures 1 & 2). Inside the packaging was simple and impressive with the hull supported between two polystyrene cut out supports (Figure 3) and the rudder, fin and bulb neatly packaged inside a cut out polystyrene block, well protected and stable (Figures 4, 5 & 6). The partially rigged mast, main and jib booms (Figures 7 & 8) plus a folded card leaf containing the sails (Figure 9), a box containing the Graupner HOTT Receiver and an Instruction Manual completed the shipment.

I had previously downloaded English copies of the product description and Operating Manual for the HOTT RTR version from the German Graupner web site and immediately was pleasantly surprised to find that the boat I received was significantly different from the pictures in that literature and much more closely identifiable as a good copy of the Mike Weston "Champ Spec" version. However some stings in the tail emerged as I started to assemble the boat and examine in detail.

Features:	**MM HOTT RTR**	**Weston Champ Spec**
Hull painted white, nice finish, good seal deck to hull (Fig 10 & 11)	Yes	No (paint your own)
Hatch secured with 5 latches, extra one at front (Fig 12)	Yes	Yes
Rudder servo offset to provide extra room inside hull (Fig 13)	Yes	Yes
Single steel steering rod & rubber boot (Fig 10)	Yes	Yes
No jib trim servo	Yes	Yes
Space on servo board for on/off switch (Fig 13)	Yes	No
Main sheet adjustment in rear cockpit (Fig 10)	Yes	Yes
Flat knob on transom for backstay loop attachment (Fig 14)	Yes	Yes
Back of fin to center rudder post (mm)	210	210

Mark I fin and rudder (Fig 14)	Yes	Yes
Mark II bulb painted (Set back from front of fin) (Fig 6)	Yes (26mm)	Yes (25mm)
Keel/Bulb depth from base of hull to base of bulb (mm).	138	135
Fin & Bulb weight	426 gm	420 gm
Jib pivot attachment to deck via front and rear facing hooks (Fig 15)	Yes (larger)	Yes
Jib pivot location - bow tip to front deck hook (Drawing 45 mm)	40 mm	50 mm ??
Shroud attachment eyes installed (Fig 10)	Yes	No
No on/off switch direct connection battery to RX	Yes	Yes
No drain plug	Yes	Yes
Jib pulley in inner hole, main pulley in outer hole on servo arm	Yes	Yes
Three position battery location strip (Fig 16)	Yes	Yes
Weight of hull RTS with fin/bulb, rudder and electronics – no rig	942 gm	834 gm
(With added 5-AAA 1000 mah NiMH battery and Spektrum AR6100e Rx)		
Weight of painted hatch alone (compared with spray painted #315 hatch)	14 gm	18 gm

In summary – The HOTT RTR MM is beautifully built (keel, mast and rudder are all properly aligned; no leaks!) a close copy of Weston's Champ Spec boat in most respects however there are a few causes for concern:

1. The painted fin & bulb are over the Class Spec weight by 6 gm; presumably the paint thickness is the cause? Class Secretary Gray suggests drilling hole to remove some lead and fill with epoxy/micro-balloons if necessary to meet Class Rules.
2. The location and larger size of the forward hook for location of the jib pivot is different from the Champ Spec which itself is not at the drawing location, how serious? CS Gray suggests this should not be an issue since different attachment methods for jib pivot and ability to alter location of jib pivot on the boom are already permitted.
3. The ready to sail (RTS) hull with all electronics etc is heavy coming in at over 100 gm above the Champ Spec painted hull. The hull seems stiffer and more substantial than on my Champ Spec boat. European information confirms the molding is thicker than for prior versions. The servo boards seem to be of thicker plastic material?
4. Communication with Ralf Bohnenberger, MMI European representative dealing direct with Graupner on changes to the new product line, informs that the European MM group is recommending Race Organizers accept the RTR version (out of the box) as Class legal at least for a 2 year trial period.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

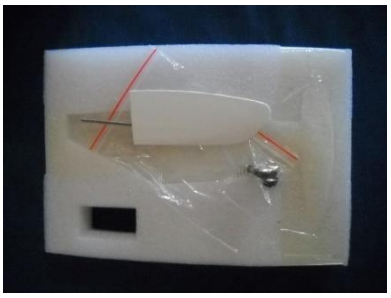

Figure 4

Figure 5

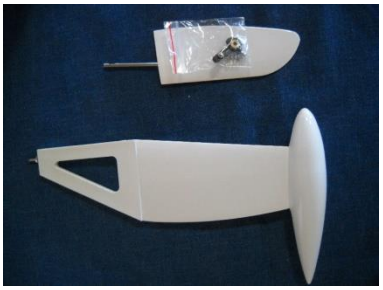

Figure 6

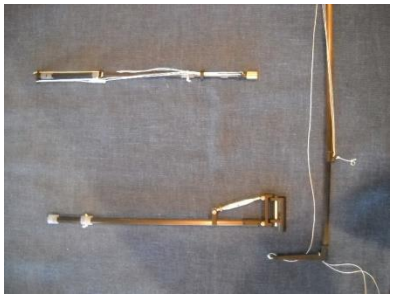

Figure 7

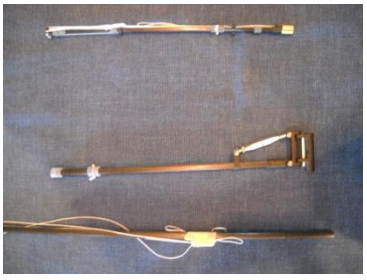

Figure 8

Figure 9

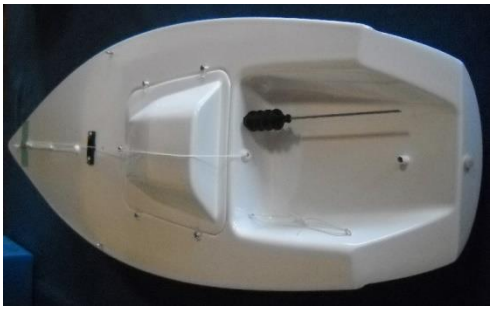

Figure 10

Figure 11

Figure 12

Figure 13

Figure 14

Figure 15

Figure 16