

## Arrow Play MV by Zegul

Before trying this boat I had heard a lot of good things about it so the expectations were high. Many had told me that it was a good play boat but also good enough to be a versatile boat to use for multiple purposes.

The first impressions of the boat was that the build quality was very good and the deck and bottom felt strong and stiff. For a laminated boat in the play boat sector I feel this is very important cause the boat is bound to face some rough times eventually.

On the water the first thing I came across was the clear soft shine of the boat. For an unexperienced paddler this might feel unreliable at first but it's a lot of fun once you get used to it. The boat responded very well to canting and I could steer it easily by going side to side with my balance.

Finding a good paddling position is the next crucial thing for me. With this boat I worked a bit more than usual but it was definitely worth the while. You can feel that the boat has gone through some serious time of testing and it responds differently even with the smallest change in position. For me the sweet spot was found by moving the backrest an inch backwards and adding some extra foam across the seat underneath my tailbone.

When the position is secured the next thing is to test how it will handle more advanced techniques and therefore be suitable as a play boat. Happily it is here where the Play MV shines, mainly because of the outstanding design of the cockpit. The main problem that I have found with cockpits is that the height or shape is wrong, making you lean towards the edges when going into extremes. In a play boat this can become even dangerous if you are going into some rough waters and get pushed around by more serious forces of water. As mentioned, the Play MV does not have this problem. You can securely roll, skull or whatever you like without even noticing the cockpit. This combined with the boat's very controllable secondary stability we are starting to get the true nature of this boat.

The next thing that you come across is the boat's tight front grip. First of all it is very relative to your own front to back balance so for this reason also, spend a bit extra to get it right for you. Secondly this is a very good character in a play boat because it means you have a strong secure passage out of danger by turning the boat upwind when needed. On the downside what this means is that you will use your skeg or varied paddling techniques more when going side wind with the boat.

With this said it feels logical to continue with the skeg design. The skeggs on the Zegul boats are firm and secure to use. The only problem I found with the one on this boat was that the rectangular part in front dropped a bit into the water making the low portions of the skeg not as effective as they could be. Not sure if this is a common problem but it is easily fixed with a file. The second thing that could maybe be improved would be to move the skeg a bit backwards. On the boats that have this I have found that you don't feel the skeg as much when you use it and also the skeg often becomes a bit more effective.

As a conclusion of the boat I think it is one of the best allrounders I've tried. It's decently fast, a lot of fun and feels reliable enough to push your boundaries. As a pure play boat I would maybe make the front with a drop less grip, but without compromising the boat's very good ability to turn upwind when needed. Or as a one of the best allrounders I've tried I would work a drop more on the skeg performance to give it that extra spark. This said, even in this condition you'll be very happy with this one.

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