

Review: Tahe Marine "Playspirit"

I got a chance to try Tahe Marines new boat Playspirit. Here some thoughts.

The first time I tried it was when instructing at my work place at Vuosaari paddling center. It was a calm day with almost no waves. Before entering the water I found some issues that maybe could be improved. The boat felt soft and the hatches felt a bit difficult to use compared to competing ones. The hatches I got fixed with silicon to work ok, also, Tahe told me that the boat I had was a demo version and that they were working on the softness issues, and that they will be solved for upcoming boats with improvement of production line.

In the water the boat felt suprising. It was on the slow side of things due to its lenght and width but this I had expected. The suprising part was the stiffness in holding course and the fun V-shape combined with a very stable secondary stability. From this experience I would recomend the boat for a beginners boat for learning canting techniques and getting used to a V-shape boat. For more experinced paddlers the boat felt a bit wide, a drop bulky on top and a bit on the stiff side to roll. Also when playing it over the secondary stability if not being very carefull with body aligment the boat tends to fall on top of you. This I have found a common problem with wider boats.

The second time I tried the boat (see video) was a very windy day out at sea. The wind was blowing + - 16 ms and the sea was going strong. Going upwind the boat felt heavy to paddle compared to my Arrow Play MV by Zegul that I usually use. Going side wind the boat excelled with its very good ability to keep course. I found that I wasn't even wanting to use skegg in this much wind. When going into more choppy sea I started to understand the boat more. This is a boat that is not ment for rolling or playing with various skulling techniques. Its ment to keep you upright going into almost anything. Keep you going straighnt in all wind directions, and still be able to turn when needed.

If the boat was lighter, less wide, and fully stiff and maybe called "Stormspirit" :) this would be a boat I would be happy to have. In this condition the boat goes more to the beginner side of things, but is still usefull when going into does stormy days, or wanting to do some tight rock hopping where you don't want to hurt your favourite baby. For a begining paddler this is propably one of the better boats to use for learning canting the boat and due to its very stable secondary stability I would be happy to put even a first timer in it. With is added skegg and rudder it gives a lot of idea of what various forms of kayaking there is + its V-shape develops needed balance for going into more advanced boats.

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