

RS Zest



Concept

The RS Zest is a brand new compact boat that delivers more crew space and practical, enjoyable features than older rivals. It replaces the RS Quba, has been developed by Jo Richards (who designed the Pico, over 20 years ago) in conjunction with RS Sailing and brings a much-anticipated generation-step for training centres and families.



Twenty years of experience in the design, production and usage of boats in this sector lead to a long list of developments that would, together, redefine the practical usage – offering more efficiency for operators and more untimidating fun for sailors.

The opportunity to comprehensively move the game forward led us to replace our popular RS Quba model with an entirely new boat that we believe renders existing rivals obsolete.

This is a significant claim – read on for a design explanation to justify our pride and confidence!

RS Zest specification

Designer	Jo Richards and RS Sailing		
Length	3.59m	11' 9"	
Beam	1.47m	4' 10"	
Hull construction	Comptec PE3 rotomoulded polyethylene		
Mainsail	Dacron reefable	5.7m ²	59ft ²
Jib (optional)	Dacron	1.2m ²	12.5ft ²
Mast	2-part aluminium alloy – foam filled top		
Boom	Aluminium alloy		
Rudder blade	Polypropylene		
Rudder stock	Moulded glass/nylon – lift & lock system		
Tiller extension	Aluminium alloy		
Centreboard	Pivoting – Polypropylene		

Optional rowing kit, mast head float, wind indicator, top cover, mast/rolled sail sock cover, launching trolley.

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Carrying capacity & stability

Boats in this sector are commonly sailed by two, particularly in training use, but must be usable by one person – youth or adult. The capability to carry a helmsman plus two young crew (three sailors in total) would be a significant benefit for many centres and families – leading to more cost-efficient ratios, so this has been a key goal for the RS Zest.

Existing models in this size range are cramped for the crew and often sail with a bow-down attitude. The volume of the RS Zest hull has been increased, with the centre of buoyancy further forward to support higher crew weight and give improved handling when fully loaded.

Part of the volume increase has been achieved through waterline beam which also noticeably increases the stability to an exceptional level for a boat of this size.

Cockpit space

Space in the forward section of the cockpit is significantly greater than other models, making the boat genuinely comfortable for two and even practical with three. An instructor and two youngsters, or parent and two kids works well. This feature increases the scope and value of the boat.



Crews deserve comfortable sailing and the RS Zest's cockpit design offers 3-stage seating as confidence builds.

1. Centre thwart – a new feature in a boat in this sector, giving inboard security
2. Intermediate side-seats – inspire confidence during training
3. Comfortable side-decks – for more experienced crews and hiking in strong winds

The RS Zest deck design also incorporates a clear foredeck area. Small sailors simply find it fun to sit forward, maybe with toes in the water – and that's what keeps them wanting more!

Durability

The pivoting centerboard (as opposed to a daggerboard in comparable models) allows the boat to be used in shallow water and largely removes risk of damage through grounding during launch and recovery. The spine created through the aft section of the cockpit adds stiffness and strength to the structure to extend the life of the hull.

Deep bilge rails on the hull contribute to secure tracking (lack of skittishness) and protect the hull from beach damage through concentrated material thickness. Replaceable aluminium wear pads at the aft end of the bilge rails further protect the hull. The bilge rails and centerline rail create a 3-point-landing so the hull sits securely on a pontoon or slipway.

The transom design has been handed down from the RS CAT16 where loads can be enormous. It allows rudder fittings to be bolted through a massively strong area without breaching the hull skin. This system also removes risk of leaking. Worn transom fittings can be replaced easily and without requiring re-sealing.

The rounded bow will reduce damage between boats in training fleet use as well as damage during imperfect pontoon arrivals.



RS Sailing's Comptec PE3 rotomoulded polyethylene hull construction system uses the highest quality materials and computer controlled thickness distribution for added strength where required. The QC testing procedure developed by RS allows us to check key areas of every hull during the completion process.

Capsize recovery & safety

Grab handles are built into the hull bilge rails to help sailors, especially children, climb onto an upturned boat. Wide gunwale flanges also offer a secure step during capsize recovery (and provide a drier ride underway).

Easy-reach grab handles are moulded into the cockpit sides to assist re-boarding the boat from the sides quickly after capsize. The transom has also been designed to facilitate safe boarding over the stern, with scallops either side of the rudder, a wide, comfortable top surface and no mainsheet bridle in the way.

Specific, strong towing points are built into the bow and stern (clear of the rudder) to facilitate easy attachment and towing lines of boats.

Rigging

A new mast step and gate design gives a simple, secure, 3-stage mast stepping process:

- Place the mast on the boat at a shallow angle
- Push up to vertical
- Mast gate holds the mast in place while the spring-loaded mechanism is locked

This safe process means youngsters and pupils can rig their own boats, something not generally recommended with masts of this size that need lifting in vertically.

A class-leading high boom has been incorporated to inspire confidence and reduce head bumps, potential injury and

subsequent routine medical checks – an increasingly important factor for busy training centres.

The central mainsheet sheet system avoids the tangles around the rudder that have been common on boats of this type. It reduces the need for instructor attention after launching or hoisting sail, especially afloat.

Centreboard & rudder

We have designed the RS Zest with a pivoting centerboard, with two key attributes in mind. The first, as previously described, is the durability gain when, inevitably, the boat is grounded during inexperienced use.

The second is convenience and ease. The centerboard is always in place ready for use and much easier for young, inexperienced hands than inserting a loose daggerboard. Forward cockpit space is not reduced when

sailing with the board partially raised in shallow water or when launching, enhancing this key attribute of the RS Zest.

The lift & lock rudder system has been developed for the RS Zest following successful experience with a similar system on the RS Quest. It has a simple, intuitive action with positive locked up / down positions. A kick-up facility reduces the chance of grounding damage.

A transom gudgeon incorporates a built-in rudder retaining clip which is easier to operate and less prone to damage than separate clips.

Polypropylene material has been chosen for the rudder and centerboard construction as it is extremely strong. The yellow colour offers high visibility and increased safety if the boat is inverted.



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