

Minivap 50 Steam Boat

The 'Mini-vap' class was conceived in France. The basic rules are that the boat should have a maximum length of 50cm and that the beam can be up to one third of the length, (this can be two thirds for paddle boats), and steam power is required. Having decided the max length, they then allowed up to 10% greater - why not say 55cm in the first place?



This makes for easily transported models which range from very basic to fairly sophisticated. This particular model started with a simple meths fired boiler and a single cylinder single acting engine. This has now changed to gas firing (using the same boiler) and a double acting V twin oscillating engine that will self start in both forward or reverse directions and has throttle control.

Two channel radio control is fitted, one controlling both speed and direction whilst the other looks after the rudder. In this case the rudder is a Kort nozzle. For those who don't know what Kort nozzle is, rather than a simple plate fitting just behind the propeller it consists of a short length of tube round the prop with enough clearance so that it can be pivoted to direct the thrust as required.

If anyone has tried steering a boat in reverse using a normal rudder you will know just how difficult it is. With a Kort nozzle however it is as simple as steering when going forward.

