

Associated costs of joining and racing with R/CU

by Roland DeSteeze, edited by Geoffry Grembowski in 2014

How To Join R/C Unlimiteds

Have you always wanted to race your own Unlimited Hydroplane? Like most of us, you probably can't afford the real thing. But you may be able to realize your dream, only on a smaller scale, by racing a 1/8th scale R/C Unlimited. Here's how: First, contact R/CU's registrar, who will help you select a boat, from the club's hull roster, that no one else has and is available. Once you decide on a model that you like, send in the \$10 registration fee. This not only reserves your boat but also automatically makes you a club member. You'll also need to join the American Power Boat Association, which sanctions all R/CU events for insurance purposes.

Next, order a fiberglass hull or plans for your boat depending on which construction method you have chosen. Also, check around to see if there are any used boats for sale from club members. This is a great way to quickly get into and learn about the sport. Just be sure the boat comes with the club's registration. If you've decided to build the boat yourself, you have 24 months to complete it. Be sure to ask lots of questions of fellow boaters. They are usually eager to help new people get started. (Of course, once you start winning, they'll quit talking to you!) Try to acquire many photos of your real unlimited so you can build and paint it as "scale" as possible. Once the boat is complete, it's time to hit the water! Plan to test your new boat a lot, which will help you set the boat up correctly and give you lots of valuable "stick time." When you feel confident that you can control the boat around the course, it's time to take your R/CU driver and oral test. You will be quizzed about the club's rules, and asked to drive 5 laps in under 2 minutes, demonstrating good control over your boat. Once you pass, you're ready to go racing!

The Costs

Here is a list of some of the costs involved in 1/8th scale hydro racing:
Unfinished Fiberglass hull with cowl and wings: \$400 to \$700.

Used "ready to race" boats: \$400 to over \$2000

Materials to build a wood boat from scratch: \$100 to \$300

Plans: \$35 to \$75

Paint, decals or graphics, etc.: \$100 to \$400

Hardware (rudder, prop, skidfin, shaft, etc.): \$100 to \$200

Engine: \$200 to \$450 (sometimes now above \$500 -ed.)

Tuned pipe, header and muffler: \$50 to \$100

Radio equipment, including servos: \$200 to \$500

Misl. gear (starter, glow igniter, batteries, etc.): \$50 to \$200

Fuel: \$15 to \$25 per gallon

Glow plugs: \$2 to \$8 each

Race entry fee: \$15 a boat per race

~~A.P.B.A.~~ N.A.M.B.A (ed.) yearly insurance: \$45

R/C Unlimiteds yearly registration: \$15

Questions? Call our [registrar](#).