



JB LURES Mega Chopper

It looks like a monster, but Dave Venn's 'Mega Chopper' may be just what you need when a bit of surface commotion is required to tempt a mother up from the depths. This beauty is the size of a small tuna and has the action to demand attention – but, as Matt Gross cautions, you'll need heavy tackle or a teaser rope to tow it.

IN A WORLD where the trend is 'bigger is better', JB Lures' Dave Venn has been inspired to create some cracking monster lures in his high-quality range. These are the types of lures that trailer boaties think twice about dropping into the wake because of the extra fuel it will chew up.

While tongue-in-cheek about the fuel economy, big lures do require big gear as their water drag is often substantial. At a length of 18.5 inches, the 'Mega Chopper' does have significant drag, but you would expect that, given its size, weight and profile. It has a 'Konahead-style' scalloped face with a medium to long curved head, tapering at the front and rear almost in the shape of an elongated bubble.

In reality, the Mega Chopper is only the size of a bait-sized tuna. It's a weighty lure, too, as a result of all the resin that goes into making a lure of this size. Most people don't appreciate just how difficult large lures are to pour. There are issues getting resin to set uniformly, with bubble removal, and with achieving long, sharp edges. Being able to create a large, blemish-free lure is a testament to the quality of Dave Venn's craftsmanship.

To run this lure, leave your 24kg gear at home; this beast demands a minimum of 37kg tackle. While testing it at six knots on my 24kg tackle, it pulled drag off the reel!

When putting this lure out the back, realistically you are targeting fish in the upper spectrum of their growth cycle. The Mega Chopper would not be out of place off Cairns or in the Ascension Islands, Hawaii or Madeira – in fact, wherever there is a genuine expectation of enormous marlin.

Aside from the drag, the first thing you will notice when running this lure is the large amount of BIG bubbles it creates. When we talk about smoke trails and lures, most often we're describing a fine but dense trail. Not so with the Mega Chopper. There is nothing subtle about the smoke trail this lure creates, which is arguably one of the reasons why many anglers opt to use it as a teaser.

Let me digress for a minute. Dave told me that the largest marlin he's ever seen was well over 450kg. On a glassed-out day it came in to look at the Mega Chopper they were running as a teaser. Right opposite it was a 10-inch JB 'Ripper' in 'Stripey' colours doing its work on the long corner. This was the lure the big girl ate before turning the ocean to foam and completely spooling the reel in one long, sustained run. Dave believes it was the Mega Chopper that attracted the fish to the back of the boat, where it then switched to the smaller lure.

When the Mega Chopper is set in the short-corner position you will notice that it is not a particularly deep-diving lure. Its business is conducted at or near the surface, where it sends out a huge rooster-tail combined with a forward splash. One thing that's very noticeable is the violent head shake that occurs just before the lure reaches the surface – it feels like a dog thrashing a rag. Also, when it breathes, you will notice that the lure has a tendency to track to either side as the edge of the scalloped face catches the surface, although it quickly straightens up in the dive cycle, so this does not become a problem. In fact, it looks very lifelike. The speed envelope for best performance appears to be between 4.5 to 9 knots.

You will have some challenges finding a hook large enough to rig this lure, and with sufficient gape to encourage solid hook-ups. I used a Hayes' hook in a 12/0 size (although I think the 14/0 would have been a better fit), but not many tackle shops will have those in stock, so it's highly likely you will have to order hooks online. When testing, we ran the lure on 550lb mono leader, which didn't seem to affect the lure's action. If running the Mega Chopper as a teaser, I would use the same leader with a D-shackle connecting it to 8mm rope, tied off around a corner cleat.

On a glassy day when noise and commotion can mean the difference between raising fish and not seeing anything, a big, splashy surface lure like the Mega Chopper is sure to demand attention and provide you with a firm advantage in hooking up to the really big fish. 🐟

"The marlin was well over 450kg and came at the Mega Chopper running as a teaser."

