

Hamilton Jet Model HJ271  
Application Review

## Jet Boat Opens Up New Himalayan Highway



**For the people of Nepal, reliance on mountain roads and foot paths for vital communications and transport links between cities and remote villages has been a major hurdle in their country's development. The topography of this mountainous country has meant that relatively short journeys can take a disproportionately long time because of the need to use safe passes or skirt natural obstacles, such as the Arun River.**

International Development Enterprises, headed by Dr. Paul Polak and working in cooperation with the World Bank, is an organisation committed to developing opportunities in the commerce, communications and transport fields in countries such as Nepal.

Dr. Polak identified three major rivers capable of providing over 600 km of access. One, the Arun River, had over 100 km of potentially navigable water reaching many villages – however treacherous rapids, shoals and strong currents made the Arun unsuitable for the transportation of people and freight using traditional craft and it was obvious a special boat was necessary to utilise this natural “highway”.

Darell Bentz, of Bentz Boats USA, designed and built a special 36 foot jet boat capable of carrying a respectable payload while maintaining good performance essential for safe operation on a white water river.

Arun I (named Nepal II for testing) is powered by twin Hamilton Model HJ271 waterjets coupled to 330 hp Ford “Merlin” turbo-diesel engines. The vessel was extensively tested on the Snake River, Idaho, USA, prior to delivery. This river closely simulates the conditions likely to be encountered in Nepal and the boat effortlessly negotiated the swift white water and skimmed over shallows.

Local river expert Chuck Gardiner was enlisted to operate the craft and train selected Nepalese as operators and found the standard of design and construction, performance and manoeuvrability of Arun I to be ideal for the task for which it was conceived. Such was the success of Arun I, it is anticipated a fleet of these craft will eventually enter service in this remote region of the world.

**Footnote:** Arun I is not the first boat with Hamilton Waterjets to be seen on the Arun river. In 1968 Sir Edmund Hillary organised a jet boat expedition to explore the Sun Kosi, Tamur and Arun rivers and determine the suitability of these rivers as communications links between remote villages.

## ▶ Brief Specifications

**NAME:**

Arun I

**SERVICE:**

River Passenger/Cargo Ferry

**LENGTH:**

36' 0" (11.00 metres)

**BEAM:**

11' 6" (3.50 metres)

**DRAUGHT:**

6" (150mm)

**WEIGHT:**

10,260 lbs (4,664 kg) unladen  
with 150 US gallons of fuel

**CONSTRUCTION:**

Aluminium

**PAYLOAD:**

8,000 lbs freight

48 passengers

**SPEED:**

52 mph (45 knots) empty

40 mph (35 knots) half load

30 mph (26 knots) fully laden

**WATERJETS:**

Twin Hamilton Jet Model HJ271

**ENGINES:**

Twin Ford Merlin turbo diesels, each  
246skW (330shp) @ 2800rpm

**OWNER:**

International Development  
Enterprises

**DESIGNER / BUILDER:**

Darell Bentz, Bentz Boats, Lewiston,  
Idaho, USA

**Hamilton Jet DISTRIBUTOR:**

Northwest Marine Services Corp,  
Tukwila, Washington, USA

