

Precision Rocking **At** **The Seat Of Your Pants**

Lou Magyar takes a seat in the Precise Racing Chair

LOUMAGYAR





On a slow afternoon, with little to do but surf the internet aimlessly, I decided to go looking for a product to review. Google being Google, I didn't need to look far. As Google's 'ad words' customize themselves to one's current browsing patterns, I easily found the Precise Racing Chair. I clicked on the link presented and was intrigued by what I discovered. The Precise Racing Chair is a marriage of a gamer's rocker chair, and a serious simulator rig. An email later, to Ron Minke at Aptimise, the marketing

company behind the Precise Racing Chair, and I was waiting for the chair to arrive. The company being in Fort Wayne, Indiana (about 175 miles from me), it wasn't too long before the Precise Racing Chair arrived—with Ron seemingly following it all the way to my front door.

I set out to get a good feel of the [Precise Racing Chair](#). It's a design unlike any other that I have seen, much less reviewed. The chair uses no fasteners, and simply snaps together. In just a few minutes the chair

is ready for your wheel. The entire seat is made from blow molded panels whose fit is excellent, in my opinion, when component size is considered. Of course, I am not a molding expert, so I could just be blowing bits of polyethylene. A side benefit of polyethylene is that it is impenetrable to just about anything sticky ... almost nothing will stick to the chair, keeping it clean and easy to clean should a spill occur. Now, did I mention how really easily this chair fits together? From the literature provided, I was able to glean that the Precise Racing Chair began its life as something called the 'AK Rocker 200 Gaming Chair' (the AK Rocker 200 box was a big clue!), and evolved, with the help of some modifications and add-ons, into what now sits on my floor—the Precise Racing Chair.

The box ... if you've ever read one of my reviews, you know that I look at the box. A box will tell you a lot about what you've just received: It is an indicator, a sign not only of the contents, but of the manufacturer, the design-processes involved—indeed, one day I will write the definitive book on the deep symbolism of the box, and how its contents are folded therein.

This box is just that, a box. No foam, no bubble wrap, nothing but two extra pieces of cardboard for puncture prevention. The small pieces are all taped to the inside of the box with packing tape. Recyclers rejoice—the whole package can be recycled. The various pieces of the Precise Racing Chair fit in the box so compactly, that I, of all people, the guy who is known for his ability to pack ten pounds of crap in a two pound box, couldn't figure out how to get it back into the box, once I got it out—though, granted I didn't give it that much thought, and perhaps I wasn't trying that hard to send it back.

The AK Rocker 200 portion of the Precise Racing Chair is made up of four primary components. Two legs, a back, and a seat. That's it. Simply slide the legs into the back, slide the seat onto the legs, give it a sit, and the chair is assembled.



A nylon strap—the Power Strap—helps maintain the leg position when a load (aka your ass) is applied to the chair. It's called a Power Strap, but it's not actually plugged in to any power—its purpose is to maintain the lateral position of the legs relative to each other ... (aka it keeps you from falling on your ASS, which would happen if the legs spread apart). The AK Rocker 200 has a choice of padded seat cover skins. The original skins came in either red or blue with attractive embroidered logos, but Ron tells me that they will shortly have skins available in orange, gold, green, a brighter blue, and a brighter red along with the all black. These will not have the embroidered logos, so that users will be able to get a customized logo applied. The new covers also have thicker padding in the seat and back rest areas. The new colors are the much brighter tones that are typically seen on race cars.

I chose the red skin for my seat. The skin attaches quite easily to the seat, with three mesh pockets at the top, two straps, and a series of side clips that secure it to the edge of the seat bottom. In less than ten minutes, the AK Rocker 200 chair is ready for any gaming. With just a few more minutes' setup time—

about fifteen in all—and the AK Rocker 200 transforms into the Precise Racing Chair.

The components that morph the AK Rocker 200 into the Precise Racing Chair are elegantly simple. Two front, and two rear stabilizers keep the chair from rocking. They simply slide on, in the case of the rears—or engage a hole, in the case of the fronts. That done, the AK Rocker 200 is a rocker no more. The front stabilizers have three molded slots in them. These slots are for 'mounting' the controller stand. The controller stand is the component that holds the wheel in place, and it's an adjustable square metal tube topped with a pivoting 11 x 4 inch platform. If your wheel has a table clamp system, it will work with the controller stand—no doubt about it. The controller stand has both adjustable height and tilt, and you can set your wheel up to whatever position is comfortable for your driving style. The three molded slots in the front stabilizers adjust the wheel's distance from you—forward for close, rearward for far, with middle being what you might imagine. Setting it up is simply a matter of placing the stand's crossbar in the stabilizer slot of your choice, applying magnetic 'shims' to the stand, and clamping the stand to the AK Rocker 200 seat with a high tensile strength wire loop and latch. The purpose of the wire loop and latch is twofold: Firstly, it maintains the wheel controller stand in position while you are driving; And second, it allows you to lower the wheel to the floor when you are finished to accommodate easy egress.

That's it for the basic Precise Racing Chair. There are several add-on components, as well as an option for really aggressive drivers which—while I didn't experience it personally—sees the controller stand wheel platform pivot when you need it to the least! To remedy this, Precise has made available a 'grade 8' nut and bolt kit, complete with wrenches, called the Power Clamp. This nifty little extra will, beyond all reasonable expectations,

clamp your wheel platform into the position you like best, and keep it there. The Power Clamp kit also comes with a shim to place between the two halves of the wheel upright tube. The shim takes up any slack between the two, and effectively prevents any movement of the head relative to the tube.

Also available separately are two side platforms. These are mounted on tubes that simply slide into the end of the wheel controller stand tube. The platforms are available in either 10 x 10 inch or 10 x 20 inch configurations, and are mounted either left or right, depending on your preference. For example, if you are a 1967 BRM driver, you might want your shifter on the left, just for historic accuracy. Either platform can be rotated in a full circle, and raised or lowered to suit your specific needs. With two of them, you can use a shifter on one side, and have your keyboard or remote at your fingertips on the other. Ron sent me one of each to test out. I found that with my G25 wheel, the shifter mounts well to the 10 x 10 inch platform mounted on the right, and the keyboard (or eight pound laptop) fits nicely on the 10x 20 inch platform on the left. The whole unit assembly, with two add-on platforms, including mounting the wheel and shifter, takes about fifteen minutes to get ready to race. The efficient design of the components makes assembly a pleasure and, unless you add the Power Clamp, not one tool is harmed in the assembly of the Precise Racing Chair. Did I say it was easy to build?

When visiting the Precise website, I was impressed with the amount of documentation available. They have a complete set of user guides and instructions, in web-based .PDF that provide step-by-step details for every component and its assembly. From assembling the AK Rocker 200, to adding the Power Clamp, its all right there for your reference ... and if you aren't inclined to read so much as watch (which is inconceivable, considering you are reading this review at this very moment), then there is

an assembly video on the website in which a rather attractive young lady inquires, 'Are you ready? Do you have what it takes? Do you have the right equipment?' So yes, I'll wait here while you go watch. This short video is a [complete assembly](#) of the Precise Racing Chair—no edits involved, and I know this because I just assembled the chair ... did I mention how easy it was to assemble then?

By now, you should know that I'm a big man, and I don't need to go into the details of my six foot, 300 pound frame, and the difficulties I have finding a comfortable racing seat. Needless to say, it is a challenge to be comfortably seated in most standard racing seats for any length of time. The Precise Racing Chair has no such challenge for me. Even before I put the skin on the AK Rocker 200 seat, I was impressed by its deceptive comfort. The seat is wide, yet somehow seems to hold you like a true racing seat. The position of the back relative to the seat is snug and relaxed. I experienced no discomfort from long duration stints in the chair racing, which—having tested a fair-few rigs in my life—is certainly not something I take for granted, as most have proven challenging to my frame (aka ass), and—for those on the upper-end of the spectrum like the Roadster—means I need to get the larger (I like to think of it as the deluxe) seat (while the lower-end products like the Playseats have no such thing available at all).

The Precise Racing Chair is lightweight, and easily reconfigured from gaming, to racing, and back again in short order. I have been testing it in our playroom with the various game console racing titles we have (EA Sports NASCAR '09, Gran Turismo 5 Prologue) and with my laptop running several different PC sim titles. It's quite well suited to the task. We have two gaming chairs in the playroom now. the Precise Racing Chair, and a chair that my son brought home from 'retirement' (he works part-time at EBash—a gaming café). This chair is covered in microfiber, swivels and tilts, and is equipped with speakers ... yet the

kids all like to sit in the Precise Racing Chair or AK Rocker 200 (depending on what they are playing) rather than the other cushy chair. In my opinion, it speaks volumes when the padded chair with speakers is put aside in favour of the Precise Racing Chair, a utilitarian, and efficient thing if I ever saw one.

Moreover, its light weight is deceiving because the thing is strong—it weights twenty-three pounds, and yet holds my 300 pounds with ease. Amazing!

Precise now has an adapter for the XBOX360 Wireless racing wheel, as well. The adapter mounts directly to the base of the wheel and replaces the controller stand platform. Previously, the table clamp accessory included with this wheel had been criticized as too flimsy, but that device has now been bypassed, and you're able to mount more directly to the wheel base for much better results. To use this, you remove the brackets and wood wheel mounting platform on the top of the silver extension tube, and install the provided bracket in its place.

Judging by all the recent improvements, modifications, and adaptations, I think it would be safe to say that Precise is committed to making the Precise Racing Chair a quality chair at a great price. The base Precise Racing Chair retails for \$229.95, with the optional equipment ranging from \$13 to \$55. If you already own an AK Rocker 200, Precise sells a complete add-on kit for under \$130, and provides detailed instructions to modify the chair to accept the Precise Racing kit. As tested, the chair with the Power Clamp and two side accessory platforms, the Precise Racing Chair would be about \$350 retail. When you roll-up the comfort, configurability, and ease of use into the factor, one might expect to pay twice that for a comparable product. If you are in the market for a racing chair that doubles as a gaming chair, then look no further. The Precise Racing Chair is just what you've been looking for—comfortable, affordable, fun—you won't be disappointed with the Precise Racing Chair.



PROS

- Easy to assemble
- Lightweight
- Comfortable
- Quickly Reconfigurable for gaming or sim-racing

CONS

- The seat skin has a tendency to slip off on occasion
- Magnetic Shims can get lost (when the kids play with them)

PRICE

\$229.95