



OUR TOP FLYING TOYS TESTER, NEIL MEAD PUTS ANOTHER OF SILVERLIT'S LATEST ULTRA-MICRO CREATIONS THAT COMBINES THE LOOKS OF A RACING CAR AND THE FLIGHT PERFORMANCE OF A HELICOPTER THROUGH ITS PACES

GROUND TO



If you're a regular reader of Rotorworld you'll know that I love my toys and especially my flying toys. Luckily I'm in a great position to be able to try most of them and some of the best come from Chinese manufacturer, Silverlit whose growing range of products are distributed in the UK by Essex based company Flying Toys. Being the father of two young children also gives me another excuse to get the little ultra-micro hells out and have some air to air combat around the living room where if we're not knocking each others models out of the sky we're taking Artex off the ceiling or buzzing the ornaments, all when mum's gone out of course!

Features at a glance

- Supplied completely assembled and ready to run and fly.
- Pre-installed three channel digital proportional infrared control system.
- Run on a smooth surface and steer left and right.
- Switch to helicopter mode by pressing the set top button to take off, spin in either direction, hover and descend with three modes of forward movement.
- Range up to 10m
- Bands A, B and C allow up to three Silverlit helicopters to be flown together.
- Helicopter features a flashing red power indicator and switchable LED searchlight.
- Instruction manual provides helpful hints and tips for beginners and enthusiasts.
- Age recommendation: 10+ adult supervision advised for safe operation.
- Spare parts supplied: Two replacement rear rotors and removal tool supplied.

MODEL DESIGN

The Air Racer being reviewed here supersedes the company's similar Sky Auto product from a couple of years ago and brings with it new styling and, in my opinion, improved build quality. As with the Black Hawk Deluxe model reviewed last month, the Air Racer is part of the newly branded 'Power In Air' range from Silverlit. This brings with it neat packaging that makes the products easily identifiable as officially from Silverlit.

If like me you're into motor racing and R/C models you'll love the styling of the Air Racer. The clever design makes the main fuselage look like a Formula One racing car and the red model even features similar livery to the Ferrari F1 racing team.

The main feature that separates the Air Racer from just being any other ultra-micro model is that it can be driven along like a conventional car and then at the press of a button it will convert into a three-channel heli and take off, hover and descend, steer left and right and all while having three modes of forward flight. A nice touch are the tiny foam-filled wheels which help to absorb the impact from heavy landings.

Using the same infrared control as its successful Picoo Z siblings, the Air Racer features the latest Silverlit specification which includes a superb injection moulded body and excellent build quality. In fact the main fuselage is made of remarkably robust impact resistant rigid plastic that will withstand a lot

Push the button and the power increases and the Air Racer takes off smoothly



The Air Racer flies well and is easily controlled thanks to the little tail rotor

In the air or on the ground, this little model is a lot of fun to use

The model is charged via a fly-lead from the infrared transmitter



The Air Racer comes in the latest Silverlit 'Power in Air' packaging



With the Air Racer you have the choice of driving along the ground like a car or flying like a helicopter



Push the take off button on the transmitter and the Air Racer takes to the air with ease

AIR MISSILE

of impact. Of course this is helped by the model's extremely light weight which means that when the worst does happen there's very little energy for the model to have to absorb. As with other helis, the most vulnerable parts are the main rotor and the tail rotor, but even these can withstand quite a lot of abuse and are also easily replaced (spare tail rotor blades are available in a pack of five for just £2.99 and two are supplied with the model).

Protruding out from the main fuselage is a thin metal tail boom which has a tail fin mounted three quarters of the way down and a tiny motor driven tail rotor right at the end. This gives the model stability during flight and allows it be steered quite accurately for such a small model. A clear Lexan fin is also mounted just below the tail boom which can hardly be seen, but does help to stabilise the model.

EXTRA FEATURES

Once powered up the Air Racer incorporates a red flashing power indicator and a switchable blue LED searchlight that is operated via the transmitter. As usual with Silverlit models, the Air Racer is supplied completely ready to fly out of the box. It operates on one of three infrared bands (A, B and C) which allows up to three Air Racers to be run at the same time.

A lightweight lithium polymer battery built into the convertible chopper provides flights of up to ten minutes, driving two powerful micro motors, and can be conveniently recharged direct from the transmitter in less than half an hour.

FLIGHT TEST

This is one neat little model that cries out to be played with and I couldn't wait to have a go of it. The infrared transmitter requires six AA batteries and the model is then charged from the transmitter via a fly-lead that's tucked away under a sliding cover on the front. Our model must have already had some charge in the built-in LiPo battery as it only took about ten minutes to reach full capacity.

Once disconnected from the transmitter it was time to put this little toy down and see what it could do.

I have laminate flooring in my living room and the Air Racer was quite happy to drive around on that and managed to pick up quite a

bit of speed in driving mode. So I'd proved that the model was drivable, but now it was time to get airborne so I pushed the throttle stick to maximum and also pressed the button on top of the transmitter and the power increased and up she went as easily as that.


Once in the air you can adjust how fast the Air Racer will fly by pushing the buttons on the top of each side of the transmitter. The options are normal flight (left button), fast forward flight (right button) or continuous forward flight (both buttons). This is a clever system which works well as you are able to maintain height using the throttle stick while still being able to adjust flight speed.

THE VERDICT...

As with all the other Silverlit models we have tried recently, the Air Racer does exactly what it says on the box. It's easy to drive around on the ground but has the added ability to fly at the press of a button. Once

in the air it is just as easy to control, so easy in fact that my five-year-old son is quite proficient and confident with it.

All the Silverlit ultra-micro models available from Flying Toys offer super stable flight characteristics and are easy to operate indoors in the smallest of spaces, or outdoors in calm conditions.

Now with the Air Racer you can race on the ground or in the air and have an amazing amount of good family fun and all for under £30. 

TECH SPEC

Silverlit Air Racer

Product type: Three channel convertible chopper
Main rotor dia: 145mm
Rear rotor dia: 30mm
Length: 187mm
Weight: 19g including flight battery
Flight battery: 3.7V 4.83W 90mAh 2.2g LiPo
Charger: Integral transmitter/charger supplied with LED indicator/auto shut off
Charging time: 20-30 minutes for full charge
Flight duration: 5-10 minutes between charges
Batteries required: 6 x 1.5V AA alkaline batteries for transmitter/charger
SRP: £29.99

Available from: All good model and toy shops

Manufacturer: Silverlit Electronics

Web: www.silverlit.com

UK distributor: Flying Toys

Tel: 01702 295110

Web: www.flyingtoys.com



The Air Racer is also available in blue and silver