



JAMARA CHINOOK

Steve gives this ingenious little twin-rotor heli a definite thumbs-up – it's a giant leap forward in controllability at this sort of size

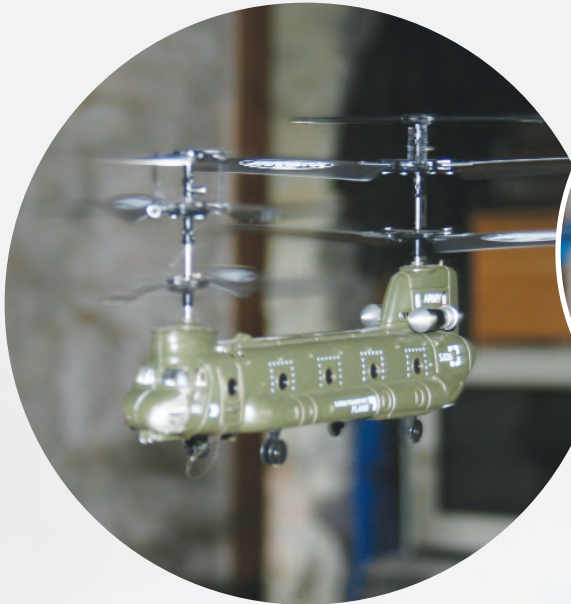
Not that long ago, the idea of a model helicopter was a preposterous engineering solution awaiting the genius of Dieter Schluter and others to get something working in a reasonably convincing manner. Once the

concept had been proven, improvements came thick and fast, whereupon the performance and controllability of model helicopters very soon eclipsed their full-sized brethren. Alexander Van De Rostyne appeared on the scene with his amazing Pixel and Pixelito sub-miniature helicop-

ters which in turn spawned the incredibly successful Picoo Z – a helicopter for true lounge flying. But even so, five years ago would a betting man have laid down his life-savings on a wager that a fully functioning three-axis miniature scale model helicopter would be on the market, let alone a twin rotor scale job? Well, here it is – Jamara's Chinook, which has to be just a step away from the fully 3D capable mini-helis which are surely just around the corner now!

Every 'sub-miniature' type model helicopter I've witnessed has been but a 'toy' – a clever toy to be sure but a toy nonetheless. But this one takes things just a step further. You could reasonably argue that the single rotor Picoo variants are essentially just hovering machines, whereas this Chinook is different. To get your single rotor micro-heli into forward motion, the

FAR LEFT: Superbly stable – a swift sortie around the kitchen whilst the kettle boils. **LEFT:** Incredibly stable – here flying one-handed whilst operating my Canon DSLR with the other. Easy to do, too! **BELOW:** Looks very scale – despite the twin contra blades, she's definitely a Chinook.





TOP LEFT: Detail is surprisingly good and very evocative of this famous machine. **TOP RIGHT:** Scale detail is very convincing; far better than the foam-bodied alternatives. **ABOVE LEFT:** Sub-miniature charge socket and switch are situated underneath the fuselage. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Ready to disembark a platoon of storm troopers to your kitchen table!

trick has been to move the balance point further forward, but then your stationary hover is gone. So this Chinook is far more sophisticated, employing twin contra-rotating blades and clever electronics which mix each pair individually or together for full control. And it works brilliantly. This one will hover, turn on the spot, and go forward or aft at speed and that's essentially everything that the full-size version is capable of. So here you have a fully functioning, three-axis scale model helicopter that will take off from the palm of your hand, fly circuits or figure-eights, forwards or backwards, execute pirouettes and then land back in the palm of your hand with incredible precision and under full control. Now that's quite astonishing and, indeed, would have been unthinkable not so very long ago.

The electronics are driven by infrared and the customary, three bands are available to let up to three at once to be flown together. The Chinook is essentially 'Mode 2' which will suit the majority, but it's so easy to control that this jaundiced old Mode 1 flyer had no trouble making the conversion and, to further qualify that, I even flew the model one-handed whilst taking the flying

shots, it's that positive on the sticks. The right hand stick on dual-axis gimbals with throttle on the left form the main controls whilst atop the neat little transmitter are two blue buttons left and right and these are your fore and aft trims, whilst a third trim - a rotating knob, sitting under the switch on the front panel - is used to trim the machine left and right.

Given that this is a battery-powered electric job, straight off charge or towards the end of a flight the trim wanders a bit and I found the best way of getting into stable flight was to hold the Chinook for a few seconds at full power to take the top off the charge, then trim and you're away. Hand launches or 'helipad' takeoffs are equally successful and, with practise, you can

easily take off and land the model in the palm of your hand, or perhaps from a table mat, both making great party tricks, whilst the flashing navigation lamps are bright enough for night flying around the dinner table - amazing!

Although driving four rotor blades and a full set of flashing navigation lights, the flight time is quite good and compares favourably with the less sophisticated single rotor types - and you get a mains charger in the package with a UK adaptor, so it's easy to recharge and great fun.

A definite thumbs-up to this one, then - it's a giant leap forward in controllability at this sort of size from expectations and I was far more impressed than I thought I would be - cynical in my old age I guess. Nice little thing, Jamaral! ■

Specification

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| ROTOR DIA: | 145 mm |
| LENGTH: | 165 mm |
| WEIGHT: | 45 g |
| RADIO: | Three channels |



Model helicopters have never been this good at this size until now - superb flight characteristics.