



# Light Flight

The show must go on and new heli models from Silverlit

*Carnival demo,  
hovering in the strong  
head wind*

**B**ack in sunny June our club did a flying display at a local carnival. A reduced football field was our flying area and this would have been perfectly adequate had the wind co-operated. Because of the other activities on three of the four sides of our display area we were restricted to flying small electric models and these did not enjoy being flown in the very strong and gusty wind. However, 'the show must go on' as they say and we did our best; I guess whether we are asked to do it again will be a sign as to whether the organisers thought it successful. It's always frustrating when models cannot be flown to their full potential but if we are asked to repeat the display next year we will have a better idea of what can be achieved in the size of flying area and with the various restrictions.

The next day I was a spectator at the local Woodspring Wings show and here the wind also caused quite problems even for large models. A few models received a dunking in the water filled reans that border the Woodspring flying field and had to be rescued. Unfortunately a rather large lovely scale twin engine Oxford was one of them plus a couple of Panics.

Looking towards the indoor flying season I'm giving the low-down on some of the latest Silverlit helicopters from Flying Toys Ltd. These are getting more sophisticated all the time and have performances to match.

## Silverlit Specials

Hot on the heels (or should it be tail rotors?) of the first 2010 helicopters from Silverlit and Jamara I have now had a chance to look at some more models from this innovative manufacturer. David Rawlins at Flying Toys Ltd has provided me with some of the very latest, 'hot off the line' examples of the type of high quality helicopters produced by the Silverlit team. Basically in this overview I'm looking at four new models with the larger 'Fortress' having a spot of its own later. Looking at the smallest of the new helicopters first these are in the 'Power in Air' series packaging

and are delightful models of the Bell 222. Two versions are available in either red and white or blue and white colour schemes and they feature very high scale detail.

This helicopter uses an IR control system and is powered by a 3.7 V 90 mAh LiPo. It is available on either 'A' and 'B' and features full 3-channel control plus a switchable light. The Tx uses 6 x AA dry cells and incorporates a charging lead. A yaw trim 'wheel' is provided on the top of the Tx. The yaw and pitch stick has a cover plate that restricts the control to either yaw or pitch. Once the controls have been mastered this plate can be removed to give more control.

As anticipated this model has excellent stability and can be flown with a high level of precision. While the basic mechanics are not far removed from the original Silverlit helicopters the stability and overall control is hugely advanced. As usual from this firm a high quality product with a good performance. The RRP of these helicopters is £39.99.

Moving up a size but still in the Power in Air series packaging we have the Z-Century and the Z-Bruce. Both helicopters are still quite small but have a 4-channel IR control system plus a switchable light and are powered by a 3.7 V 130 mAh LiPo. The Tx has a very nicely designed battery compartment lid that does not require a screwdriver to open and only uses 4 x AA dry cells. A charging lead is incorporated in the Tx and in addition a USB charging lead is supplied. This can be used with your laptop or PC or a mains/USB output device, these are readily available and I've seen them for less than £3 on eBay! A yaw trim button is provided on the face of the Tx. The provision of a roll control will obviously add interest to flying these helicopters.

The body styles are very different with the Z-Century having an eye-catching, futuristic and sleek body while the Z-Bruce has an attractive scale type body. I always do the first test flights of new helicopters in my one-car garage. OK the car is not in there when I fly but there are washing lines etc. so it's a small and restricted



*These small helicopters are easy to fly and very responsive*



*David and Janine at their Flying Toys Ltd stand*



*The Silverlit Bell 222s 3-channel micro helicopters*

space. This gives me a first impression and sometimes unintentionally demonstrates the toughness of the design! I then have to meet up in a more suitable space with either a pilot or cameraperson for the flying shots.

The smaller Bell 222 helicopters flew as expected in the garage and I then moved onto these slightly larger helicopters. I was very interested to see how sensitive and responsive the pitch and roll controls were. I was delighted to find that they worked extremely well and gave smooth and precise flight control. One really did get a 'big helicopter' feel when flying the Z-Century and Z-Bruce. These two helicopters really represent the pinnacle of design and performance for this size of model. The bodies can be opened up by carefully unscrewing the eleven tiny, tiny screws and the new geared tail rotor and dual magnetic actuator swash plate mechanism can be seen. The tail rotor uses a right angle drive so the motor is fitted lengthwise in the tail rather than across, a very neat arrangement. The RRP of these helicopters is £39.99.

I am a traditional mode 1 flier and have to fly all the small helicopters that I get in mode 2. This was very easy when they had just 2-channel and not much more difficult when the 3-channel micros arrived. Now with 4-channels to operate it gets a bit trickier and I have to do some intensive brain training while flying. Naturally I'm OK with having the roll on the right and yaw on the left but it's having the throttle and pitch on different sticks that catches me out sometimes, particularly in a one-car garage!

**Bit of a Sucker!**

I fell in love with the last of the helicopters in this particular overview before I had opened the box! I'm a bit of a sucker for tandem rotor helicopters and have had quite a few already from firms like Twister, Century, Jamara and Silverlit. The new one from Silverlit is interesting as it is a super scale model of several helicopters mixed together and called the Twin Hurricane. Interestingly the attractive artwork on the box shows a 1949 Piasecki HUP tandem helicopter! Now this would have been a fascinating helicopter to model.

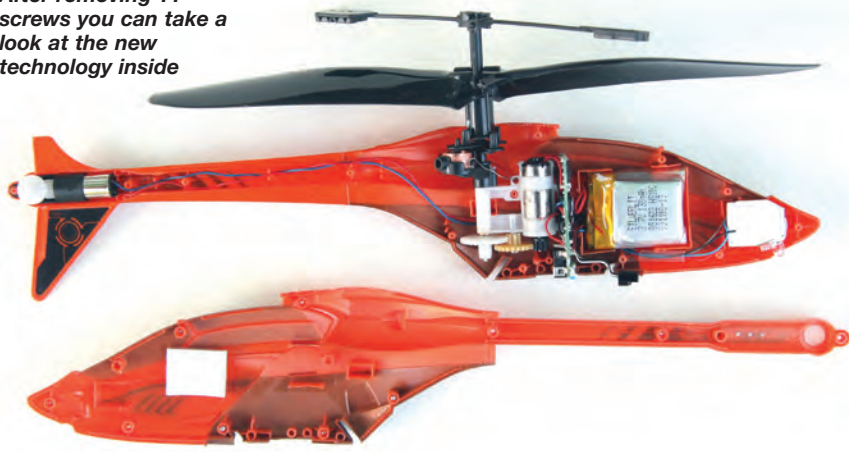
The Twin Tandem Hurricane seems to incorporate bits of Chinook and Sea Knight with the result being an extremely handsome helicopter available in either an olive green or blue/grey colour scheme. The scale detail is phenomenal with internal details visible through opening doors! The helicopter power supply is a 3.7 V 200 mAh LiPo battery. The 3-channel IRTX plus light switch uses 6 x AA dry cells and has a charging lead for the helicopter battery pack. Two trims for yaw and pitch are positioned on the top of the Tx and 'A' and 'B' bands are switchable. The yaw and pitch stick has a cover plate that restricts the control to either yaw or pitch. Once the controls have been mastered this plate can be removed to give more control.

Although not difficult to fly the Twin Hurricane requires fairly sensitive handling and looks very impressive in the air. The secret is to spend time getting the pitch and yaw trims set to give a stable hover. Moving out of the hover should then be done carefully remembering that with the cover plate in position you have no



*The Z-Bruce has a very realistic scale type appearance and the Z-Century looks very sleek and stylish*

After removing 11 screws you can take a look at the new technology inside



I just love the Twin Hurricane tandem helicopters



backwards control. When you feel confident remove the plate and start using the combined yaw and pitch controls to fly more dynamically. This really is a gem of a helicopter and has the stability of a co-axial with the more realistic appearance of the FP rotors. The RRP is £49.99.

**New Hinges**

Over the years I have tried numerous types of hinges for control surface and other applications like hatches, cockpits etc. As far as 3 mm and thinner Depron is concerned 3M Blenderm is still my favourite method of hinging and this system functions really well. For thicker 5-8 mm Depron I usually use a different method, often models using this material are faster and heavier. Mylar strip and pinned flat hinges all work well and are easy to fit, as are the round Polypropylene hinges sold by Robotbirds.

EPP is now a popular building material and while tape is a very convenient method of hinging I've had some problems when using it on EPP surfaces unless these are sealed with thinned PVA glue or similar. I had to re-hinge the control surfaces of several of my early SUMOs. I replace the tape with the Robotbirds round Polypropylene hinges and these are easy to fit, secure and long lasting. Robotbirds now have an interesting new hinge available that is not only very easy to fit to both Depron and EPP surfaces but has a smooth and reliable action. As can be seen in the photograph all that is required to fit the hinge is to firstly cut a shallow

RIGHT: The scale detail is exceptional, even the doors open!



slot in the wing and control surface. Glue can then be applied to the parts of the hinge in contact with the surface and it can be fitted, UHU POR, epoxy or FF CA can be used. I tend to fit the hinges to the flying surfaces first then add the control surfaces. Robotbirds also have some control horns that are fitted in a similar way and these are equally successful.

**Tailend**

Yes it's the FunCub time again! Visiting the Hobbyking online store I spotted some rather interesting looking scale bombs. I purchased a couple for my FunCub and the system has worked really well. I'm always interested in readers' small indoor and outdoor electric projects. Information and photos are always welcome either directly to [john@stennard.orangehome.co.uk](mailto:john@stennard.orangehome.co.uk) or via the editor at Traplet.

I am available for talk/demos on indoor R/C within my 50-mile range of Bristol and as the Western Area Education Coordinator I am also happy to talk to school pupils and youth groups. **RCMW**

In the air these models are very realistic and fly well and are a convenient 'room flier' size



ABOVE: A very useful 'easy to fit' hinge from Robotbirds

RIGHT: Fancy some target practice? My FunCub on patrol, bombed up and ready for action and (inset) the hand lends scale to the size of the bomb

