

# Picoo Tandem Z-1

ON TEST



THERE HAVE BEEN MANY VARIATIONS ON THE PICOO Z ULTRA MICRO HELI THEME SINCE THE MODEL'S INTRODUCTION. NOW SILVERLIT ELECTRONICS HAS COME UP WITH AN INTERESTING NEW CHINOOK-STYLE TANDEM ROTOR DESIGN, SO WE DECIDED TO GIVE IT A TRY



The Picoo Z range of ultra micro RC helicopters seems to be growing all the time. Imported and distributed in the UK by Flying Toys, the range has enjoyed a lot of success, particularly at Christmas time, being awarded the title of 'Toy of the year' on several occasions. The models are very keenly priced and offer the general public the heli flying experience in the comfort of their own homes at a low cost. They are

**The Picoo Tandem Z-1 is small but perfectly formed and looks great**

also good for more experienced RC heli modellers who want to get in a bit of airtime indoors or in more confined spaces.

**GENERAL DESIGN**

The model we're looking at here is of particular interest as it features a tandem rotor design that's been made to look like a full-size Chinook. Silverlit have done a pretty good job with the moulding of the foam fuselage which is an excellent representation of a Chinook.

The scale appearance is also helped by the camouflage colour scheme of

the model we tested. It is available in some other colour schemes if you prefer something brighter, but the camouflage really suits this model. The Tandem also has a tiny three-wheel undercarriage, which again is very 'in scale' with the rest of the little machine.

Like most of the other models in the Picoo Z range, the Tandem has single rotors with weighted flybars, the only difference with the Tandem being that there are obviously two. Even though the model is made from lightweight foam, it still feels solid and robust, meaning it should be able to withstand quite a lot of crashing abuse.

**MODEL CONTROL**

You can see that a lot of research and development work has gone into the Tandem in order to get it flying correctly and keep it controllable. Each rotor is cantered over slightly, the front to the right and the rear to the left. While the rear rotor is static, the front rotor moves in all directions and is used to control the model in flight.

**Picoo Tandem Z-1 at a glance**

- Supplied completely assembled and already charged ready-to-fly, with pre-installed three-channel proportional infra red control system.
- Take off, hover and descend, turn left and right, with proportional forward movement.
- Range up to 10m.
- Frequency: Infrared control system - individual bands A, B & C allow up to three different Picoo Z helicopters to be flown together.
- Instruction Manual included providing helpful tips for the new helicopter pilot.



Extra stability is provided by some clear plastic plates that are mounted at the front and rear. The front plate can be removed if desired, but as it can't really be seen once the model is in the air it's probably a good idea to leave it on. Having a third channel means the Tandem can move up and down,



The twin rotors provide the model with a lot of power which makes it a real challenge to fly



The Tandem Z-1 is available in other colours including orange as shown here, and also red and blue



The infrared transmitter has a training plate fitted to the right-hand stick. This can be removed for full control

left and right and also backwards. A training plate is fixed to the transmitter to restrict the backward stick movement initially, but we found it better to remove this and gain back full control.

As with other Picoo Z models, the Tandem Z-1 is controlled via infrared. Indoors this is no problem as long as you remember to point the transmitter at the model. The transmitter operates on one of three bands, A, B or C, which are changed using a switch on the front of the transmitter. You must make sure you choose the correct band for your model before attempting to fly it. This choice does have the advantage of

being able to fly up to three models at the same time.

**FLIGHT TEST**

The Tandem is factory fitted with a tiny LiPo battery, so the only power required are six AA batteries for the transmitter. Once these are fitted you can charge the model. This is done via a small flylead that comes from the transmitter and plugs into the model. It takes around 20 to 30 minutes to fully charge which gives around five minutes of flight time.

Flying the Tandem Z-1 is a real challenge. The two rotors provide the model with a lot of power and also make it spin around which makes it a real handful so care needs to be taken for the first few flights and until it's trimmed properly.

Two dial trims are provided at the top of the transmitter, one for

front to back and the other left to right. It does take a few attempts to get the trimming right, but once dialed-in the Tandem becomes much more controllable. It will still keep you on your toes, but once you get the hang of it and fly a few circuits it becomes quite a satisfying achievement.

This Picoo does require a bit more space to fly in than some of the other models, so you will either need to clear away some of the furniture or find an empty sports hall in order to enjoy flying the Tandem properly.

**THE VERDICT...**

The Picoo Tandem Z-1 looks great. If you have a particular liking for Chinooks you'll love this little model. It will also appeal to those pilots who fancy something a bit different and a new indoor challenge. As already mentioned, this little heli isn't easy to fly and does take quite a bit of patience and practice to master, but once you do it's hard to put down. Well done to Silverlit for creating yet another super little model at a good price that is bound to sell well. ←

Neil Mead



As with many of the other Picoo Z models, the Tandem is charged from the transmitter via a flylead. This can be tucked away inside the transmitter when not in use

**Flying tips**

- Read the instructions thoroughly before attempting to fly.
- Always watch the heli, don't look at the transmitter.
- Once airborne, use only fine adjustment on the throttle stick.
- Keep all stick movements small, don't over control.
- Don't attempt to fly in an area with lots of obstacles!
- If you turn left (viewed from the rear), the heli will slow down - turn to the right and it will speed up.
- If you don't have a third channel, you can go forward by slowly turning right - to stop moving forward turn briefly to the left.
- If you do have the third channel, don't let the heli fly forward too fast, as it will lose stability.

**TECH SPEC**

Picoo Tandem Z-1	
<b>PRODUCT TYPE:</b>	Ultra micro 3-channel indoor RTF
<b>MAIN ROTOR DIA:</b>	130mm
<b>LENGTH:</b>	170mm excluding rotors
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	23g including battery
<b>BATTERY:</b>	High capacity integral LiPo
<b>CHARGER:</b>	Integral transmitter/charger supplied with LED indicator/ auto shut off
<b>CHARGING TIME:</b>	20-30 minutes for full charge
<b>FLIGHT DURATION:</b>	5-10 minutes between charges
<b>BATTERIES REQUIRED:</b>	6 x 1.5v AA Alkaline batteries for transmitter/charger
<b>AGE RECOMMENDATION:</b>	8+ Adult supervision recommended for operation.
<b>SSP:</b>	£49.99
<b>AVAILABLE FROM:</b>	Model shops, toys shops and all Flying Toys stockists
<b>MANUFACTURER:</b>	Silverlit Electronics
<b>WEB:</b>	www.silverlit.com
<b>UK DISTRIBUTOR:</b>	Flying Toys
<b>TEL:</b>	01702 295110
<b>WEB:</b>	www.flyingtoys.com