



Jeff Troy

Flight Report

Decathlon

ParkZone takes on the graceful Bellanca, and delivers an inexpensive scale-like model in the completely ready-to-fly format.

ParkZone makes beautiful small electrics. To date, their selection falls into the park flyer category, but it's important to understand that with the exception of the gentle Slo-V, ParkZone models are not aimed toward absolute beginners. They may be small, but ParkZone aircraft are modelers' models.

The delta-wing Stryker is a hot aerobat — fast, agile and ideally suited to air-to-air dogfighting with HobbyZone's ACM (Aerial Combat Module). The J-3 Cub is easier to fly, and it sports the winning combination of scale-like appearance and abundant power. The bright red and white Decathlon is one of the newest models in the ParkZone lineup, and it carries the banner proudly. This one's got great looks, sturdy construction, an excellent power curve and the capability to accomplish rudimentary rudder/elevator aerobatics.

Some definition of assembly is required, although that's limited to inserting the aluminum landing gear legs into the two slits in the fuselage, securing the wing over the fuselage saddle with four included rubber bands and attaching the wing struts, then charging the included motor battery, connecting it to the lead from the speed control/receiver and inserting the battery in the hatch at the bottom of the fuselage.



ParkZone's slogan is Just Fly, and they've chosen it because everything that's needed to assemble and fly the model is included in the box. The entire factory-built airplane is there with its three-channel FM radio system completely installed, the geared 370 motor is factory installed and the propeller and spinner come already mounted, and once the battery is charged and inserted, the only thing left for the modeler to do "just fly."

Each ParkZone airplane comes with a nickel-metal hydride motor battery and a DC charger. The charger has



Specifications

- Wingspan: 35.4 inches
- Length: 25.3 inches
- Weight: 16 ounces
- RC system: 3-channel FM
- Motor: Geared 370
- Battery: 8.4V 600mAh NiMH
- Skill Level: Intermediate

RTF Airplane Includes

- Ready-to-fly airplane
- Factory-installed FM RC system
- Proportional FET ESC receiver
- All hardware and fasteners
- Propeller and spinner
- Motor battery
- DC charger
- Transmitter batteries
- Instruction manual



ParkZone Decathlon as it was introduced last fall, flying high above the Horizon Hobby exhibit in Rosemont, Illinois.

an adjustable rate dial, and it should be set at maximum to charge the 7-cell pack that comes with the Decathlon. I plugged the DC charger into the cigarette lighter jack in my van, then let the bat-

tery charge while I read through the instructions, inserted the eight included AA dry cells in the transmitter and strapped the wing over the fuselage. After mounting the wing, the two soft plastic wing strut bases are fastened to the bottom of the fuselage.

Gary Colby and I met on the flying field at Valley Forge National Historical Park. Gary had the camera

ready while I gave the model a brisk handlaunch. The model is extremely stable, yet is surprisingly agile in stiff wind.

This model is ideally suited to intermediate fliers, and despite the “high wing, electric power, no ailerons” configuration, it is positively not a primary trainer. The Decathlon flies like an arrow, and can hold its own with basic rudder/elevator aerobatics.

For additional information about the Decathlon, see the ads on pages 5 and 63, or telephone Horizon Hobby in Champaign, Illinois, at 217-352-1951. **HM**



Decathlon shown flying high once more, this time over scenic Valley Forge National Historical Park in Pennsylvania.



New Decathlon climbs out in front of a stand of trees at Valley Forge. ParkZone distributed by Horizon Hobby, Champaign IL.