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R/C Report

E-flite Blade Tandem

This rescue electric helicopter offers a fun twist to the mCX platform

E-flite's latest offering is a scale-looking model of a tandem rotor helicopter. The tandem rotor arrangement is a somewhat unique platform not often seen, and it provides a fun twist to the Blade mCX line of micro helicopters.

The main rotor diameter is 7.5 inches, and the overall helicopter length is 15.5 inches. The flying weight with the included 250 mah 3.7V LiPo battery installed is 2.0 ounces. The body is finished in brilliant yellow. Graphics include a red stripe that runs the full length of the body. The color and graphics add to the eye appeal and give this



As with most micro R/C products, the Blade Tandem Rescue is packaged in a molded foam container that not only prevents damage but also provides convenient storage and transportation.

machine presence both on the ground and in the air. Installed are three functioning LED navigation lights that offer some intriguing night-flying opportunities.

Although classified as a micro helicopter, due to the tandem main rotor arrangement, there are four brushed can-style motors used to power the rotors along with a 5-in-1 mixing board. Packaged onto this tiny circuit is a DSM2 receiver, multiple ESC's to handle the motors,



gyros, and servo control units. With the extra motors and electronics the battery was upped from the standard micro 100 mah LiPo to a 250 mah unit. Everything involved with micro flight is a balance of weight and power, and the battery provides a nice combination of light weight and flight time.

There are no landing skids; rather a tricycle landing gear with rotating dual wheels is installed. The landing gear is quite sturdy and allows pilots to finesse roll-out landings and take-offs.

The package includes a Celectra-1 LiPo charger that features an AC wall adaptor and the ability to choose from seven different charge settings. There is a blinking LED display to indicate the status of the battery charge.

Topping off the package is the now-familiar MLP4DSM transmitter. This one includes dual rates. The dual-rate feature is a nice touch that allows first-time heli pilots the opportunity to fly with somewhat reduced con-



The wheeled landing gear is a departure from the standard strut-and-skid landing gear generally used on micro helicopters.

trol throws that are preset at the factory. (Note: In this reviewer's opinion, due to the complexity of the tandem rotor design and the slightly higher cost of this offering, it would be best to advise first-time heli purchasers to select a simpler model.)

Typical of E-flite's Blade offerings, the box art is striking and sells the features of this design. Bold colors, views of the model flying and static views together with side panels showing all the contents should answer any questions a consumer might have without ever having to open the box. The contents are securely packaged within the molded plastic foam inner liner container. The conven-



The Tandem arrangement of the main rotor blades is relatively unique in the world of micro helicopters. Combined with the scale-like appearance of the fuselage, the Tandem offers plenty of eye appeal in flight.

ient carrying handle will be appreciated by the end-user. This helicopter is exciting, and the packaging does an excellent job of selling it.

The 41-page instruction manual does a thorough job of explaining the operation of the Rescue Tandem. There is ample discussion of how to use the Celectra-1 charger and the variable rate charging capability. This charger can only be used with the supplied AC wall adaptor. There is no provision for using DC power. Of particular importance are the Troubleshooting Guide as well as an Exploded View Parts Listing and Replacement Parts List. This information is helpful to both consumers and retailers.

I will admit to some trepidation as the first flight approached. With my admitted lack of, but quickly growing, helicopter experience, I was not sure what to expect. As I soon found out, none of my fears were warranted. This machine is stable and relatively easy to fly. The best



The flight characteristics of the Tandem are best described as graceful. In any attitude, the Tandem moves slowly yet control remains positive.

way to describe its flight characteristics is to say it is "graceful" in the air. The helicopter moves slowly and positively in any attitude. Confidence levels grow after only a few flights.

Helicopter enthusiasts will welcome this offering. The scale looks and impressive flight performance, enhanced by the functioning LED navigation lights, will broaden the appeal of this machine. The \$179 selling price for a complete package will not be an issue. However, it's likely that you will sell this product to customers with previous electric helicopter experience.



First flight trepidation quickly vanished as I found the Blade Tandem Rescue to be stable and relatively easy to fly. The Tandem is a fun package that is sure to appeal to the micro helicopter enthusiast.

Also plan to stock additional battery packs, #EFLB2501S. The glow-in-the-dark main rotor blades #EFLH2220GL Lower Main Blade Set and EFLH221GL Upper Main Blade Set from the mCX also fit the Rescue Tandem and should offer some unique flight experiences when coupled with the LED navigation lights. **HM**