



*Horizon Hobby's second generation of inexpensive, entry-level SPARC radio control models is here now.*

*by Devin Troy*

**N**on-committed, non-hobbyist consumers will sometimes find the cost of hobby grade RC equipment to be above what they are willing to pay, not because they question the value but because they are simply not hobbyists and not committed. When price is an issue, unaware shoppers will often visit one of the local discount marts or electronics stores, where they come away with inexpensive but inferior, toy-level models.

SPARC was introduced to bring those non-hobbyist shoppers and their dollars back to hobby shops, and the models have each been engineered to close the gap between toys and "real" radio control. Each model is



rugged to withstand reasonable abuse, and each comes complete with a transmitter and batteries, an AC wall charger where needed, and easy-to-read instructions.

Four new RTR SPARC models were introduced in Rosemont, and here's your first look at the group. **HM**

## **Wind Streak Radio Control Mini Hovercraft**

The Wild Streak, SPARC's new radio control mini hovercraft, gives drivers an exciting new twist on remote control vehicles. While most people fly airplanes, and drive boats and cars, there is something thrilling and mysterious about driving a working RC hovercraft.

The Wild Streak comes with dual-stick radio controller, a 9V transmitter battery, 9.6V rechargeable NiCD battery and a charger. The controller handles throttle, steering and brake. The central motor provides a strong cushion of air, and a durable rubber air bag "skirt" makes for less drag. The Wild Streak's small and compact design

allows for easy travel, while the lightweight, high-impact plastic body gives added strength to the fun machine.

Driving the Wild Streak is a blast. It's easy and simple to control as it sweeps, light-as-a-feather, across a paved parking lot or other smooth surface. With its light and fluid movement, driving the hovercraft gives a new twist to a usually routine trip to the lot. Something new and different like this added a special air of excitement when I drove it, and the Wild Streak transformed my trip to the pavement into a unique experience — very fun and very much an upbeat couple of battery runs.



*With an air bag that fills as soon as the model is turned on, the new SPARC Wild Streak RC Mini Hovercraft is fun to drive over any smooth surface. A large NiCD pack and an AC wall charger are included in the package.*

## M1A2 Abrams Battle Tank

SPARC's M1A2 Abrams battle tank is also an extremely fun model to drive. It isn't fast, but it's very realistic and gives drivers the feel for what it might be like to operate a heavy vehicle in combat.

The Abrams has great features, including bright LED cannon fire and recoil, and real battle sounds. The tank can maneuver over obstacles, spin and turn. It is available in two frequencies.

The M1A2 Abrams battle tank is a blast to experiment with over different

surfaces. I drove over cement, grass, gravel and mulch, and the tank performed well no matter what the terrain. The battle sounds allow for the use of imagination, and the turning and speed of the tank display battle-like realities.



*The Abrams Battle Tank will handle most terrain, even this dry mulch.*

## Arrowhead AH-78 Radio Control Attack Helicopter

SPARC's Arrowhead AH-78 ready-to-fly attack chopper is a fun, easy way to learn the basics of flying an RC helicopter. The Arrowhead AH-78 has twin blades for ultra-stable flight, and 3-channel control for forward flight, steering, climb and descent. The RC system, batteries and a wall charger are all included.

The Arrowhead AH-78 is a lot of fun to fly. Flying a helicopter can often prove difficult for inexperienced flyers, but this model brings chopper flight to an easy level of comprehension. I was very pleased with how simple it was to grasp the techniques required to fly the Arrowhead.

After a few short test hops to trim the controls, learning to control the AH-78 chopper in flight is a lot more about having fun than frustration.

The Arrowhead AH-78 Attack Helicopter has consistent speed and seems well-balanced in air. It reaches impressive altitudes and takes direction extremely well, even from a beginner like me; the machine answered every command I gave.



*Devin Troy practices hovering the SPARC Arrowhead AH-78 Attack Helicopter, then going for altitude and forward flight. The Arrowhead is extremely durable, and it's an excellent flying beginner's machine.*

## Nitewatch Aerolite 2 Radio Control Helicopter

SPARC's Nitewatch is the second Aerolite helicopter release in the line. This one's got lights on the machine and two sets of lights on the landing pad. Red lights at the corners mark the grid, and sequencing green lights in the center mark the landing zone.

The left stick controls rotor speed and makes the machine lift or descend. The right stick gets the nose up and down so the machine can fly forward and return to hover. A center dial rotates to keep the tail boom lined up.

Because of its small size and cool lighting features, the Nitewatch Aerolite 2 makes a really fun machine to fly indoors at night.



*Flying RC helicopters just doesn't get any easier than this. Once the tiny machine is trimmed, SPARC's Nitewatch Aerolite 2 practically hovers and flies by itself. Cool lighted landing pad, too.*