

Dennis McFarlane

## FiiK Electric Skateboards Big Daddy

*You're never too old to for a Big Daddy.*

FiiK Skateboards is an Australian company involved in the manufacturing of high-end skateboards and accessories, and the company's electric skateboard division is only one aspect of a wide range of products offered to enthusiasts.

FiiK USA, located in Boca Raton, Florida, is wanting to expand its presence in the U.S. market, but has chosen not to get involved with big-box stores. The company prides itself in its products and the personalized service it can offer its customers. Since many hobby dealers offer a wide range of alternate products and because so many hobby stores have now combined with other outdoor activities such as bicycles, FiiK USA feels the local hobby store is the perfect outlet for its product distribution.

When asked if I'd be willing to evaluate one of the companies skateboards I jumped at the chance. I haven't been on a skateboard in a whole lot of years, since I was a younger teenager back in the 60s, but I'm a sucker for anything on wheels (Is Cruzin Coolers still in business?) and there was absolutely no way I was going to turn down this opportunity.



*The electric motor is wrapped in aluminum and has plenty of cooling fins to dissipate the heat.*

After what seemed like an eternity UPS finally delivered a large box, 48in long x 21in wide and 12in deep. The box was not only large, but cumbersome and heavy, weighing in at 75lbs. It's the first time since I've been on a first name basis with my local UPS driver I did not see Jim with a smile on his face.



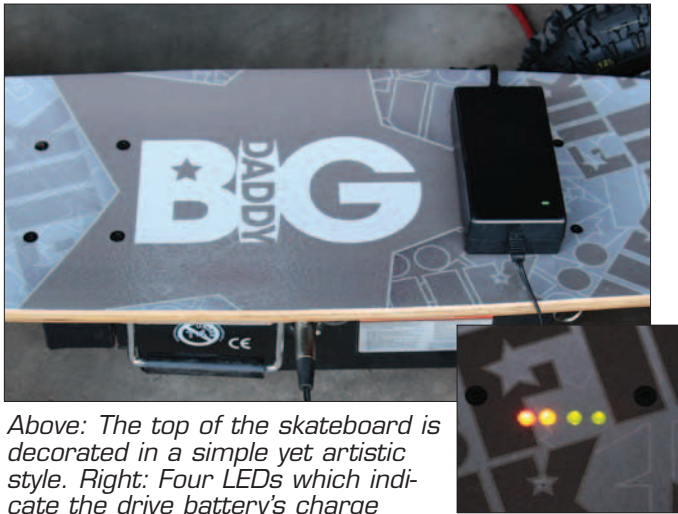
The carton itself was simply a plain brown corrugated box, marked FiiK Big Daddy. Upon opening, the inside of the carton is divided into three compartments, each separated by molded foam packaging. The skateboard itself was the largest compartment, the battery tray a second and the accessory package, a pistol grip throttle control, set of fuses, extra drive belt and small rather basic tool set was packaged in the third. The owner's operating manual is printed in two languages, English and German, is easy to read, and almost light-hearted in its presentation. As an



*The left rear has a contained drive system which consists of a toothed belt and matching pulley.* example it mentions the cartons contents to include an owner's operating manual, "But you already know that, you're reading it."

As easy reading as the manual is, there are a number of stern warnings listed including not only the operation, but the operator's (rider's?) proper attire. Also part of the manual are directions for the board's safe use. Avoid city streets and sidewalks, park pathways, etc. It also mentions the Big Daddy is meant for adult riders, and juveniles should have written permission from their parents on file. Only my opinion, but I don't believe this is intended to scare anyone, but is directed at the consumer as part of the company's legal protection.

The skateboard itself is molded from laminated wood, and it is extremely well made. The top surface is simple, but artistically decorated and covered in a non-



*Above: The top of the skateboard is decorated in a simple yet artistic style. Right: Four LEDs which indicate the drive battery's charge status are mounted to the nose of the Big Daddy.*

skid coating. The wheels are green anodized cast aluminum shod with inflatable tires. The trucks are also manufactured from a cast aluminum alloy. The motor specifications are not listed, but it's large and wrapped in an aluminum housing with plenty of cooling fins. The rear left rear wheel is belt driven, and as mentioned a spare belt is included as part of the package. The Big Daddy includes LED headlight and taillight units mounted to the front and rear of the board.

There are also four small LEDs located on the front top of the board that indicate the charge status of the drive battery. The FiiK Big Daddy skateboard is complete in every conceivable detail.

There are two battery options available. The one included with the review board consists of three large 12V sealed lead-acid batteries wired in series putting out a nominal 40 volts on full charge. At 31.5 lbs the lead-acid pack is heavy, but if needed replacement batteries are inexpensive, a major consideration when the time comes.

Also available as an option is a lithium package. The specifications of the lithium option are not listed, but I'm sure it weighs considerably less and puts out more amps. Unquestionably needed for competition, weight and amps are the benefit of lithium batteries, and it's the reason why so many consumers are willing to pay the extra price.

It doesn't matter if the product is an airplane, car, or in this case an electric skateboard, the first course of action is to charge the battery. This takes time, a lot of time, the initial charge of the review battery was 12 hours. It's absolutely mandatory to have patience as the initial charge will determine the battery's longevity. If your customer is an impatient type recommend he plug it in and walk away. Under no circumstances should the initial charge be rushed.

While the battery was charging the tires were inflated to the recommended 24psi, and the manual was read and re-read several times as various switches were located. The board

itself has two, the master on-off which is a push button located on the left side of the battery box and there is a small toggle on the right that activates the headlight and taillight should the end user decide to ride at dawn or dusk.

There is also a small three position switch which is hidden in the throttle control's battery compartment. The settings are pretty self explanatory, but for those who are a bit put off when asked to read instructions, forward is the beginners mode, middle is for more intermediate riders and the most rearward position is for advanced riders. That's about all there is to preparing the skateboard, but as I can assure you, there is no use staring at the charger's indicator light, it won't make the battery charge any faster, I tried.

The next morning the fully charged battery was mounted to the board using a very clever yet secure system of a tongue and retractable pins. Big Daddy was placed upright,



*The trucks are manufactured from an aluminum alloy and like the entire product are well engineered.*

and rolled onto the drive. As I stated when opening I haven't been on a skateboard in years. My last experience is when skateboards were just that, worn out roller skate trucks mounted on boards. By taking things slow the first step in orientation was simply standing on the board until balance was achieved. This didn't take long, so with the throttle set to the beginners mode, the first runs up and down the driveway were initiated.

Not in any hurry to snap an elbow or smash my melon, acclimation to the board and the way it works was done in small steps. That said, with only a little practice runs up and down the street were begun. Within the battery's first charge the throttle had been stepped up from beginner to intermediate and our neighborhood was being cruised on the Big Daddy.

This thing is an absolute blast, I don't know how else to describe it. Each rider will most likely develop his own style, but for me placing my feet at an angle works best. Relax and keep your arms to your side. Don't



*Wear a helmet as a person never knows when the time to bail out will crop up.*



emulate the surfers you see in some of the 60s movies the classic stations run late at night. Extending your arms in some sort of balancing act does nothing but look foolish and cause any movement to be exaggerated. I'm right handed, so my stance was with my left foot forward and toes pointing to the right. To turn right press on the toes of your forward foot and lean into the turn. The same goes for turning left. Press on your heel and shift your body weight slightly to the left. Those that are left hand dominate will undoubtedly do just the opposite, but regardless, in no time turns will become second nature.

Once a person has caught on to making turns with the front truck he can start shifting his rear foot around as well. This adds immensely to the ability of the board to make tight small radius turns. As expected, the faster a person goes, the more sensitive steering becomes. There have been a number of unplanned for bailouts – always suggest the user wear a helmet – but it's all part of the fun and learning experience. Setting the throttle control switch to the advanced setting brings on crazy speeds, in the area of 30 mph while at the same time draining the battery of its charge that much faster. I've not entered the world of slides, skids and other maneuvers. Let's face it, I'm a grandfather several years



*Learning how to ride the Big Daddy takes time but it's well worth the fun.*

beyond AARP eligibility, and there was only so much I was willing to experiment with, but regardless I have continued to have fun on the Big Daddy, way beyond a basic review.

It's not just kids and young adults that will enjoy owning a skateboard of this quality. I'm planning on taking the board along on our next trip to South Dakota. Where we stay, the campground's general store is located more than a half mile away from our campsite. Setting the throttle switch to the intermediate level will keep the board within the campground's speed guidelines and simple tasks such as picking up the morning paper will no longer involve a round trip walk of over a mile.

Plus zipping along the flightline at the next few CD'd events is certain to elicit more than one reaction, perhaps a sale.

The FiiK Big Daddy electric skateboard is exceptionally well engineered, way beyond anything most people might envision, and I can state emphatically from my experience the board is worth the investment. Plus there are a number of different models available on FiiK's website covering everyone's needs and price range.

Dealers are always looking for something different to draw customers into their stores and FiiK skateboards may just be the product you are looking for. **HM**

# JOIN US FOR THE RIDE.

FiiK, the world's top-performing electric skateboard line, is the hottest RC product to grow your business. We're expanding and selectively looking for hobby stores to carry our products. **Get on board.**



**CHECK OUT THE VIDEOS AT:**  
[FiiK.com/hobbyshop](http://FiiK.com/hobbyshop)







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"FiiK has taken my shop to a whole new level. Carrying the FiiK line has brought in a new group of faces, sales have grown and overall they have really helped increase my business."

Troy Pinkston, Owner  
Big Blue Hobbies - Lexington, KY