

HM Review

Jeff Troy

F-15 Eagle ARF Electric Ducted-Fan

E-flite brings twin-EDF technology to a great-looking jet with excellent performance.



Specifications

- Wingspan: 36 inches
- Area: 420 square inches
- Length: 47 inches
- Weight: 40-50 ounces
- Motors: Two 420 ducted-fan
- RC: 4-6 channels with 5 servos, 8 with retracts

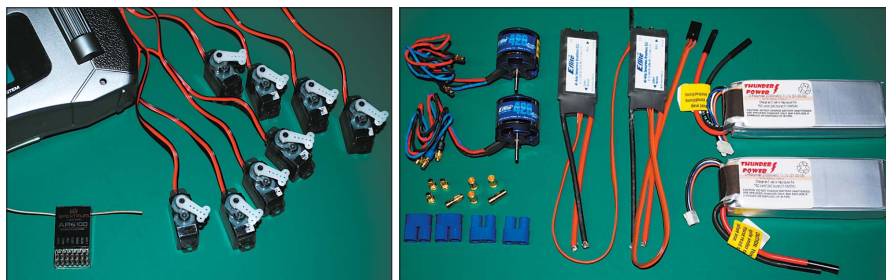
ARF Features

- Molded foam components
- Factory-painted color scheme
- Two fan units and impellers
- Fixed gear and retract gear
- Complete hardware kits
- 36-page instruction manual

E-flite ducted-fan brushless outrunners ride inside these fan shrouds. Motor wires pass through the shrouds during installation. Impeller hubs are tightened through access holes.

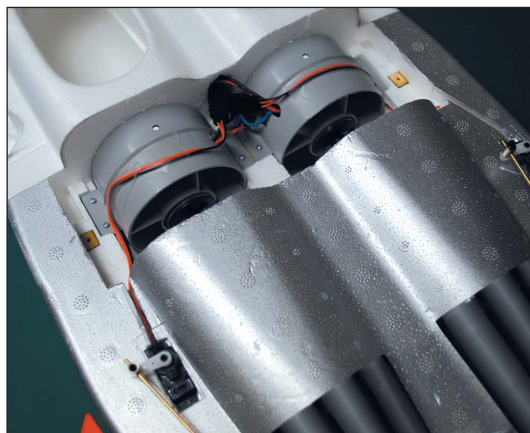
E-flite always gets it right. Big statement, even bigger truth. These guys have a string of unrivaled successes with electric-powered aircraft and accessories that dealers — and the modelers they service — have come to respect, and regard as money in the bank. The new F-15 Eagle was unveiled at the Weak Signals R/C Expo in Toledo, and the demand was instantaneous.

My review model arrived with the full complement of E-flight power and RC accessories. Two special 420 ducted-fan brushless outrunner motors, two 40A speed controllers, eight S75 servos and an assortment of the new Lightweight servo extensions were all there. Three of the servos were sent for the included retracts, and two Thunder Power LiPo packs to handle the power.

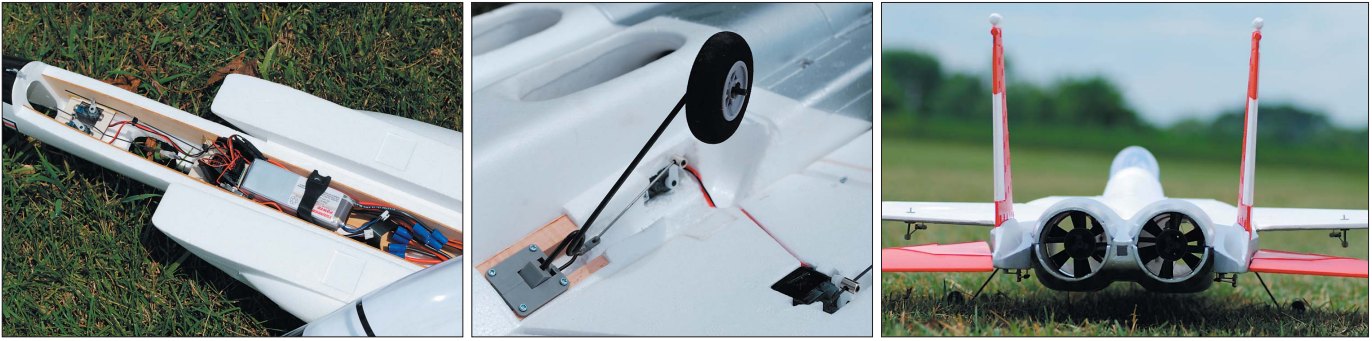


DSM2 Spektrum RC 2.4GHz DX6i with the AR6100 receiver and eight S75 servos guide Hobby Merchandiser's F-15 Eagle. Two E-flite 420 BL ducted-fan brushless outrunner motors, two Thunder Power 2100mAh LiPo batteries and a pair of E-flite 40A ESC's complete the options.

Assembly is a bit more time consuming than I anticipated, although this is easily understandable when the potential complexity of a scalelike F-15 jet is considered. The fan shrouds must be removed from the model so the motors and impellers can be installed, and routing the motor wires through the factory-cut holes in the shrouds requires special care because the electrical connectors have already been soldered onto the motor wires at the factory. Horizon has prepared an F-15 addendum to address motor installation into the shrouds. The addendum will clarify any questions customers may have about the installation procedure.



The F-15 Eagle comes with two sets of landing gear. Pilots who fly only over grass fields can save weight by assembling the model with no gear at all. Just hand-launch the EDF jet and do the belly-landing thing on touchdown.



Component positioning in the nose makes setting CG easy with the batteries against the nosegear mount. Both fixed gear and three retractable gear units are included in the kit. Tail view of twin fan units is very impressive.

If a paved surface is used, pilots can select either the fixed landing gear or the beautifully engineered set of mechanical retracts. I chose the retracts because flying this jet with the gear tucked up is a definite rush-and-a-half.

Installing the RC equipment has been very carefully considered by E-flite. There is a molded-in pocket for every servo and a path for every wire. I chose the Spektrum DX6i and eight E-flite S75 servos, and the servos are retained with Hangar 9 6-Minute Epoxy. Very few assembly steps require adhesive, and those that do are also handled with Hangar 9 6-Minute Epoxy.

My home and flight-test fields are both grass, but I just had to have those cool-looking retracts in my F-15. Brandon Wright did the gear-up hand-launch, and the model quickly gains airspeed and climbs from release. This is an amazingly stable jet, with little-to-none of the stall problems one might expect when the model slows.

At low-power settings, the jet maintains altitude and hangs right in there without dropping the tail or a wing tip. It glides smoothly and predictably for low-power or power-off landings, although keeping the speed a little higher is always advisable with any ducted-fan model.

High-power flight is extremely impressive, with wide, scalelike loops and hot low passes standing out as clear crowd-wow favorites. Rolls are crisp at the recommended surface throw settings, and hot-dog pilots can always increase these settings to bring the jet's roll rates up to "blistering." The model holds its heading nicely inverted.

Park pilot jet jockeys with no tolerance for the volume of a glow-engine fan jet or the expense of an actual turbine will be immediately attracted to the E-flite F-15 Eagle. The simplicity of twin electric ducted-fans, the model's compact size, low overall cost and functional retracting landing gear make this jet a great buy. **HM**



E-flite's F-15 Eagle is a hot-looking EDF jet, but it's also extremely stable and predictable at low-throttle settings.