



Dennis McFarlane

# In the Air

## Parkzone Sukhoi Su-26m Bind-N-Fly

*Big fun in a small micro-size package*

Those of us who attended the indoor demonstration at the NRHSA Table-Top Exposition were the first to see the Sukhoi Su-26m BNF demonstrated to the public. The response to the product was outstanding, and dealers have all anxiously been awaiting the arrival of the airplane to stores. The wait is finally over, and it has been worth the time it took to get this product on the shelf.

The full size Sukhoi Su-26 is a Russian aerobatic airframe that has competed successfully in world level competitions for many years. Different manufacturers have modeled this same level of performance in several different sizes over the years. My first success in International Miniature Aerobatic Club (IMAC) competition was with a Sukhoi Su-26 twenty years ago. In model form, one of the things that make a Sukhoi Su-26 so popular is the huge radial cowl. Pointing the nose of a model airplane straight at the ground during competition can be a little intimidating, but the big round nose of the Sukhoi Su-26 allows for total throttle management and can take a little of the pressure off a competitor.

The model tested is most likely just about as far away from an IMAC design airframe as one can get. This little Sukhoi Su-26 has a wingspan of 400mm and a length of 365mm. The weight is listed as 34g or ever so slightly over one ounce—pretty tiny and very lightweight by anyone's standards. The size alone is remarkable, but things continue to get better. This micro flier is a fully functional



4-channel proportional model airplane. Most people think in the terms of a toy when they see something this small, but this is not the case with the Parkzone Sukhoi Su-26. This little airplane is a completely flyable, fully aerobatic, airframe.

Powering this tiny bird is a 70mAh Li-Po battery, the same battery used in other Parkzone micro fliers like the Vapor and Ember. What I find amazing is that the engineers



*Leaning on a Spektrum DX7 the diminutive size of the Parkzone Sukhoi Su-26 become apparent.*

have managed to reduce the power requirements of the onboard circuits so that this tiny battery is able to power up all the electronics, the motor, three servos and the receiver without the slightest difficulty. Many customers talk about issues involving “brownout” with their 2.4g systems, but after several flights I can attest that this is not an issue with the Parkzone Sukhoi Su-26.

Following the instruction manual, I “bound” the Sukhoi to my Spektrum DX7. Cindy Claus gave me

this radio as a Christmas present when they were first released, and it has been trouble-free since first put in service. Anyone who has dealt with the Spektrum line or JR DSM line of radio systems knows about binding a receiver to a transmitter and the procedure that is to be followed. At Al's Hobby Shop countless customers have been helped with binding issues by explaining the proce-



*This hobby is always full of new experiences. Once the wind died down again, the takeoff went smoothly.*

sure in detail to every customer with a question. With that statement made, I have to admit a slight problem binding this airframe to my DX7. The problem occurred because I couldn't see the flashing light on the receiver. By getting into a dark area and looking into the cowl of the Sukhoi, I was able to locate the flashing light on the receiver. Then binding was completed without any further problems.

Later that evening the wind died down, and I wanted to try the Sukhoi. What a fun airplane it turned out to be. It took about half of a battery charge to completely sort out trim and balance for the airplane. Once trimmed, the little Sukhoi Su-26 flew around completely under control. Loops and rolls are part of what this airplane is all about.

One of the things that makes this hobby so much fun is continually new experiences. On the second flight, a gust of wind grabbed the Sukhoi, blew it up and backwards, and the airplane ended up on the roof of the house



*Although being marketed as primarily an indoor aircraft, the Parkzone Sukhoi Su-26 handles calm outdoor conditions.*

sitting upright on the landing gear. I waited for the wind to die down, then applied the throttle and flew the Sukhoi off the roof. It was the first time I have ever flown a radio control airplane off the roof of my house.

Parkzone makes recommendations in the manual about what transmitters to use and which to avoid. There is no question this airplane needs dual rates to be flown properly, so make sure your customers heed the recommendations. Control throws are clearly stated in the manual and were just about right. The only thing I added to my DX7 was 25 percent exponential to the aileron and elevator. Expo is a personal choice, and that worked for me with this model.



*Takeoffs from any smooth surface, such as blacktop or concrete, are as simple as applying power.*

Making the initial flights outdoors was a benefit as there were a couple of vertical landings in the grass during the tune-and-trim flight that might have damaged the propeller or motor shaft had the surface been concrete or a hardwood floor, such as a basketball court.

The Parkzone Sukhoi Su-26 comes well packaged and was received damage free. The product will only be available in the Bind-N-Fly version because, by the time a modeler is prepared to handle this type of an airframe, he or she will already own a transmitter from a previous product that can then be bound to the Sukhoi Su-26. This product, like previous Parkzone micro fliers, uses very little retail space to display. If your customers are looking to relax, suggest another Parkzone airframe, such as the Ember or Mini Super Cub. However, if a customer needs to refocus, this is a lot of fun in a small package that costs less than one performance servo for a large airframe. **HM**