

HM Review

Jeff Troy

P-38/F-5E Lightning

Lockheed's venerable "Fork-Tailed Devil" takes to the skies as a light and agile sport scale twin-boom electric ARF from the creative and innovative E-flite division of Horizon Hobby in Champaign, Illinois.



Specifications

- Wingspan: 48 inches
- Area: 307 square inches
- Length: 35 inches
- Weight: 33 to 40 ounces
- Power: Two 450 outrunners
- RC: Three to six channels, with 4 to 6 servos, 2 ESC's

ARF Kit Features

- Molded foam components
- Factory-applied paint scheme
- Complete hardware package
- Pushrods, horns and linkage
- Outrunner motor mounts
- Landing gear and armament
- 36-page assembly manual

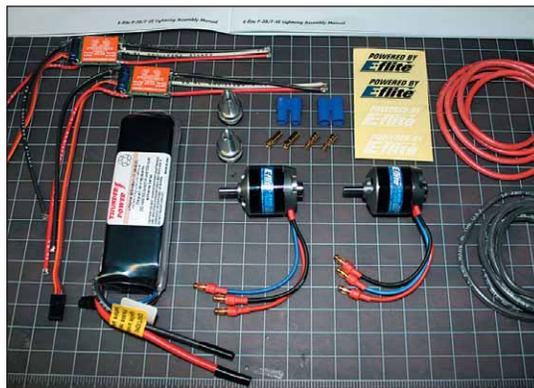
Few airplanes are more instantly recognizable than the Lockheed P-38 Lightning. Not-so-kindly dubbed by its WWII Japanese adversaries as the "Fork-Tailed Devil," the P-38 performed military duties from photo-reconnaissance to fighter, night fighter and light bomber, and scored heavily in the Pacific Theater. A longtime favorite of advanced RC model builders, a good P-38 was considered to be beyond the reach of most average builders and fliers. E-flite has changed all that by creating an outstanding P-38 that's a good fit for the moderately skilled.

E-flite's P-38 uses molded foam as its primary construction material. The model comes factory painted in a dark gray military scheme, complete with invasion stripes, insignia and squadron markings. The fuselage booms, twin vertical fins and rudders, wing center section, fuselage pod and horizontal stabilizer/elevator are all factory-assembled as a single unit. Wing tip panels are separate parts, and secure to the booms with Phillips screws.

E-flite's P-38 will fly on three channels using two servos through a Y-harness for ailerons, one servo for the elevator and the third channel for motor speed. The model performs better when rudder is added, and that option requires two additional servos, another Y-harness and two 12-inch extensions. A sixth servo can be added for steerable nose gear, and that's a good idea for paved runways. E-flight suggests omitting the under-wing dress-up armament

and all landing gear, then using the hand launch when flying from grass or rough terrain.

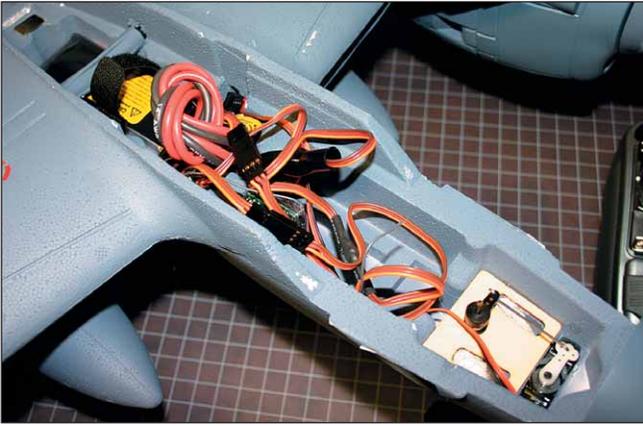
I opted for the full six servos in my review model. E-flight has provided passageways from the booms, through the wings and into the fuselage pod to handle all the wires and extensions to the center-mounted receiver. Painted ABS covers hide the wires, and the model is able to retain a very clean and uncluttered exterior.



Brushless power calls for two Park 450 outrunner motors and 25A speed controls, 14-gauge silicone hookup wire and one 3S Thunder Power 2070mAh LiPo battery.



Recommended RC system is Spektrum 2.4GHz with three to six E-flite S75 servos, assorted extensions and Y's.



Servo extensions, speed control wires and battery connections are all routed into the center fuselage pod. Magnetic canopy catch makes for easy access.

I chose the Spektrum DX7 2.4GHz transmitter and R6000 receiver for my P-38. I also used the recommended E-flite S75 servos and a pair of Castle Creations Phoenix 25A electronic speed controls. Soldering is required for the ESC's, 16-inch extensions and the battery connectors.

I had my P-38 ready to fly in two relaxed evenings, and the job was most enjoyable. Since the P-38 is my all-time favorite American WWII fighter, I would still have enjoyed the build if it had required twice the time. E-flite has done a magnificent job with this kit, and I'm thrilled that such a complicated and angular subject can now be modeled to perfection in a short time by almost anyone.



Each wing panel mates to a fuselage boom and secures with two plated Phillips-head screws.

While not intended for beginners, E-flite's P-38 can be flown by intermediate sport fliers in park flyer conditions. The brushless setup provides ample power for appropriate fighter aerobatics, and the counter-rotating propellers completely eliminate any thrust issues from P-factor.

For more information about E-flite's new P-38/F-5E Lightning 400, E-flite servos, electric motors and accessories, Thunder Power LiPo batteries and Spektrum 2.4GHz radio equipment, see the ads on pages 5 and 49, visit www.horizonhobby.com on the Web, or telephone Horizon Hobby in Illinois at 800-535-5551. **HM**



From any angle, the P-38/F-5E Lightning is a menacing yet graceful fighter aircraft. E-flite's "38" is stunning.