



Jeff Troy

Flight Report

E-flite's Blade CX Micro Heli RTF

Dual counter-rotating blades make this new machine one of the easiest to master.

E-flite's new Blade CX is an outstanding machine. This small electric helicopter helps make it possible for beginners to succeed in a discipline that has, until recently, has been somewhat difficult to master. If a pleasant comfort zone during the learning curve isn't enough for your customers, the low street price of the complete Blade CX package is only \$189.99 — and if that won't do it, it probably can't be done.

The Blade CX is one of a number of new helicopter designs using dual coaxial counter-rotating rotor blades. It's a slick looking machine with a factory-painted, soft Lexan body and lots of tiny composite accessory parts. There is absolutely nothing to assemble before flying.

The Blade CX package is complete. Nothing else is needed other than eight AA pen cells for the included transmitter. The box contains the completely assembled helicopter, a four-channel FM transmitter with mechanical trims, a two-cell 800mAh Li-Po battery and a special balanced DC charger (with a jack to accept an optional AC adapter), an informative and entertaining DVD and a 36-page instruction manual. A small screwdriver and a few nylon zip-ties are also included.



Blade CX helicopter comes with a four-channel RC system, a two-cell lithium-polymer battery and balanced charger.



Hovering the E-flite Blade CX outside the HM office building.

The Blade's two 180 motors are clearly visible upon removal of the helicopter's canopy. The motors drive the main rotor shaft through a large drive gear between the motor mounting area on the frame and the battery location. Removing the canopy also reveals the heart of the radio system, E-flite's 4-in-1 Receiver/Mixer, ESC/Gyro unit.

This is a very nice setup. The model looks great and the packaging is first class. The only question left unanswered was whether the model would be easy to fly, so I charged the battery as instructed, then went through the balance, control response and blade checking procedures described in the manual.

I've flown a few of these counter-rotating heli trainers, so I felt no intimidation as I powered up to get the Blade CX light on its legs. Throttle response was surprisingly smooth, and the model's attitude remained stable as it gently began to lift. All I had done was to center the trims before powering up, and absolutely no additional trimming was needed.



Specifications

- Length: 15.75 inches
- Height: 7.17 inches
- Main rotor diameter: 13.6 inches
- Weight (w/ battery): 8 ounces
- Motors: 180 (two)
- Battery: 7.4-V 800mAh Li-Po
- RC system: 4-channel FM with 4-in-1 receiver/mixer/ESC/gyro

Blade CX RTF Includes

- Factory-assembled helicopter
- Factory-installed RC system
- Factory-installed drive system
- 7.4-volt, 800mAh Li-Po battery
- Dedicated battery charger
- Screwdriver and accessories
- DVD supplementary presentation
- 36-page instruction manual

This was very cool. *HM's* art director, Gary Coughlin, was on the camera as I flew the Blade CX around outside the Hobby Publications building. The wind was calm, and we were fortunate enough to have an almost 60-degree day in January in New Jersey for our test flights. Up, down, scoot right, scoot left, tail in, tail out, pirouette and forward flight, the more I flew the Blade CX, the easier it got, and I can't imagine that any self-respecting teenage video gamer would have even the slightest problem earning his rotor rating on this machine. even if your prospective customers are a bit beyond their teens and video games, the Blade CX will reward them with a very comfortable learning experience and exciting flight performance at the end of the curve. The CX may be stable and gentle, but it's no slouch when you open it up.



Twin 180 motors and the 4-in-1 FM receiver/mixer/gyro/ESC are factory installed. Lower view shows dual brass pinions and composite main rotor drive gear.



Power up gently and the Blade CX rewards you with a smooth lift and slow reactions to control inputs. Nail it and it becomes fairly aggressive, practically leaping from the ground

and into the air. It's no 3D machine, and it's meant for basic training and survival, but it rocks if you want it to.

Once the Blade CX is mastered, the next logical step is the Blade CP, a much more advanced, small electric RTF helicopter that's capable of conventional aerobatics out of the box, and most 3D maneuvers if the optional \$29.99 performance upgrade kit is installed.

For additional information about the Blade CX, the Blade CP, and the many other success-oriented models and accessories in the E-flite product lineup, see the ads on pages 5 and 27, or call Horizon Hobby in Champaign, Illinois, at 217-352-1958. **HM**



E-flite's Blade CX tracked correctly and flew nicely from the first lift. This Horizon Hobby exclusive is an ideal entry-level machine.