Flight Report

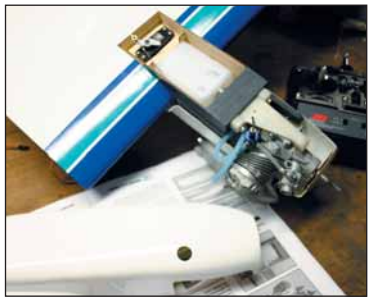
Jeff Troy

DUAL ACE

Seagull's new sport twin captures the glamour of civil aviation's most popular, light executive multis.

Twin engine power on four-channel RC, scale-like appearance, master woodworking craftsmanship, spectacular film covering and great flyability from a 20-hour project? Hard to believe, but Seagull Models' new Dual Ace has all that and more, and it comes at a very reasonable price.

This is a first-class kit. Everything needed to complete the model is included, except of course for the two engines, a four-or-more-channel radio system with seven servos, small portions of 30-minute epoxy and thin CA, two propellers and a few lengths of standard fuel line.



Nacelles and RC bay are designed for effortless radio installation. Engine mounts are included, and come factory installed. Pushrods are also factory installed, and even the fuel tubes and stoppers are assembled and ready to fit into the tank.

The airframe components come factory built from select laser-cut balsa and lite ply parts, and they're colorfully covered in durable polyester film. Closer inspection of the kit contents reveals a fiberglass nose cone and tail cone, painted in three colors to match the fuselage covering, and two pairs of upper and lower nacelle parts, also molded in fiberglass and professionally painted in gloss white.

The engine mounts are factory built from light ply, and they come painted with the engine mounting beams already installed. Although not a ready to fly, Seagull's Dual Ace offers a high degree of fabrication. The elevator, rudder and nose gear pushrods come already installed in the fuselage, the fuel tank tubes and stoppers are factory assembled and ready to install, and even the windshield is fastened in place.

Assembly begins by securing the hinges with thin CA, then mounting the vertical fin and horizontal stabilizer with 30-minute epoxy. Slots assure perfect alignment of the tail surfaces, and modelers can move on to

Specifications

- Wingspan: 70 inches
- Area: 862 square inches
- Length: 59 inches
- Weight: 11 pounds
- Power: Two .46 two-stroke or .52 four-stroke glow engines
- RC: Four-or-more-channel system with seven servos

Features

- Factory-built airframe components
- Factory covered in rugged film
- Fiberglass nacelles, nose and tail cones
- Complete hardware package
- Pushrod, horn and linkage package
- Wheels, engine mounts and spinners
- Approximate 20-hour assembly
- 28-page instruction manual

Engine accessibility is excellent without removing the fiberglass nacelles. Needles, glow plug and fuel lines can all be easily reached for startup or service. Tach is a good idea, and a short glow driver is needed for the port engine.

the wing panels and engine mounts while the epoxy cures.

The engine mounts are keyed into recesses in the wing panels for perfect alignment, and again, 30-minute epoxy is the order of the day. The nice thing is that this is the last of the adhesive steps, and it's all nuts and bolts from here forward. when the epoxy on the mounts has fully cured, the engines and fuel tanks can be installed. I chose a pair of Evolution .46 NT two-strokes, smooth and powerful ABC engines that require no break-in for reliable operation, a very nice feature in a twin-engine airplane, where consistent engine performance is critical to safe and pleasurable flight.

Once the engines and tanks are in, the fiberglass nacelle halves are fitted, first the lower, then the upper halves. Relieving the shells for the engine protrusions goes quickly because the parts can be marked for cutting without removing anything. Just hold the lower shell against the cylinder head and rough cut to fit. Take a little more material away with each pass until a perfect cutout is achieved, then repeat the procedure for the upper nacelle halves. Fit the propellers and spinners and it's good to go. Very nice.

Before the upper nacelle half is fastened down, the radio system needs to be installed. I chose the new six-channel JR SPORT RC system with three additional ST47 (47-ounce) standard servos, making a total of seven servos in the aircraft. I also replaced the 700mAh battery with a 1500mAh pack. In addition to what comes with the JR SPORT system, three Y-Harnesses and one additional 12" will be required to complete the RC installation.

Takeoff is a confidence builder, quick, effortless and straight down the chute. Climbout is stable and very much "on the wing."

Dual Ace is very impressive in flight, and there's nothing quite like the authoritative sound of a multi-engine RC model.

I set the control surface throws as recommended in the manual, and added 40 percent exponential to the elevator and ailerons in both high and low rates. Balancing the model had me moving the battery forward and adding a small weight box ahead of the forward bulkhead.

The payoff for my 15 total hours on the bench is a really well-mannered airplane that looks like a scale light executive twin but flies like a pussycat — and it makes me look pretty good.

Harris Malkin agreed to handle the maiden flight while I did the camera routine. We ran three tanks of Byron 15 percent fuel through the engines and used a tachometer to get them into sync. Although we had very little wind, a storm front was rapidly approaching and it was finally time to see how the Dual Ace would perform.

Takoff was a straightline, almost anti-climactic after all the concern over "twin syndrome." Airborne, the model is smooth as silk, and visibility, even against a horribly overcast sky, is outstanding. Harris and I both flew the Dual Ace at the high rate surface settings, and the performance was crisp but never twitchy. This airplane is an ideal subject for any intermediate to expert RC pilot.

I found Seagull Models' Dual Ace to be a very enjoyable aircraft, on the bench and in the air. The quality of the kit and the in-flight performance are both rewarding, and it's all but impossible to beat the impressive sound of two engines running in sync as this big and colorful bird takes a hot, low flypast across the runway. **HM**

Setup is quick. Hex socket screws hold the canopy, and four nylon bolts secure the wing panels, which slide over the joiner.

Seagull Models' Dual Ace is a great looking "executive" twin. Seagull is exclusively available through Horizon Hobby, Champaign, Illinois.