



Jeff Troy

Flight Report

Tribute Fx 3D ARF

Here's the latest version of one of America's favorite E-flite foamies

The original George Hicks Tribute was one of the first successful, commercially available “foamies” — electric-powered, flat foam, RC airplanes. The Tribute was also one of my all-time favorite sport models. I could get one built in just a few hours, then take it out to practice maneuvers that I wanted to improve, and use it as a test bed for different airframe or power configuration ideas and modifications. After several years of consistently high quality production and record breaking sales, E-flite has finally discontinued the Tribute, and replaced it with Mr. Hicks' all new Tribute Fx 3D ARF.

The Fx is a definite step upward. While the original was a great model for fun or sport, it suffered a few drawbacks from its lack of rigidity. The new model retains its flat foam empennage, but its improvements include a molded fuselage and airfoil wing that do not bow, flex or twist in flight. Performance is vastly improved, and that's a really significant statement because the original was certainly no slouch.

Assembling the Tribute Fx is fun, and the process goes faster than it did with the original. I chose E-flite's



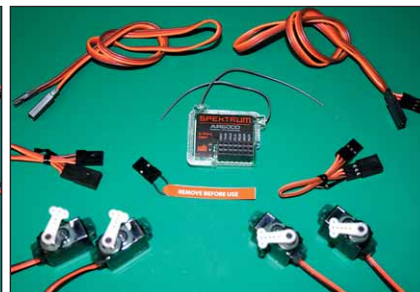
High Power Outrunner Setup, which recommends the Park 450 Brushless Outrunner, E-flite's 20A ESC and a Thunder Power 3S 1320mAh LiPo pack. I also chose my Spektrum (love those 2.4GHz RC systems) DX7 with an AR6000 receiver and four E-flite S-75 Sub-Micro Servos.

Assembly begins with installing the aileron servos and linkage, then mounting the wing to the fuselage. I use the Woodland Scenics Low Temp Hot Glue Gun to secure the

servos, and E-flite's Foam Safe CA for all other foamie construction. The rudder and elevator servos mount in the rear of the fuselage, and use 18-inch extensions to reach the receiver. All these are easiest to install before the wing. Installing the horizontal stabilizer completes the entire airframe assembly.



HM's review model uses an E-flite Park 450 Brushless Outrunner Motor, an E-flite 20A ESC and a Thunder Power 3S 1320mAh LiPo battery. RC system selected is the Spektrum DX7 and AR6000 receiver, four E-flite S-75 servos, two 3-inch and two 18-inch extensions.



The landing gear is formed from music wire, still one of the most effective ways to produce long-lasting and functional gear legs for a sport model. Wheels and pants fit perfectly, and nylon retainers keep things in place.



Specifications

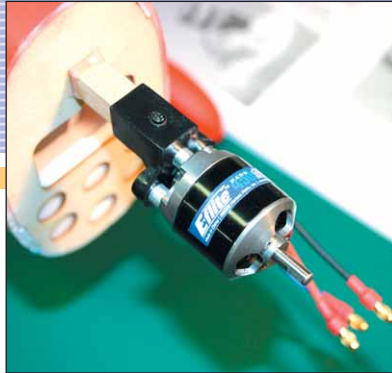
- Specifications
- Wingpan: 39 inches
- Length: 44 inches
- Area: 345 square inches
- Weight: 17.5 – 19 ounces
- RC: 6-channel with 4 sub-micro servos and a speed control

ARF Kit Features

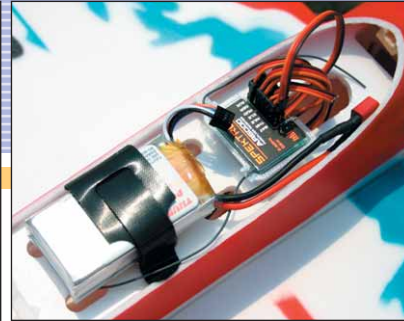
- Molded Fuselage and wing
- Flat foam empennage
- Painted cowl and wheel pants
- Motor mount and spinner
- Fasteners package
- Control rods and linkage
- 28-page assembly manual

The Fx comes with an E-flite Outrunner Stick Mount to handle the Park 450. Long mounting screws and four aluminum spacers are provided so the motor hub can clear the mount. The finished assembly attaches to the stick with a sheet metal security screw, and the connectors to the ESC are already factory-installed on the motor leads. The ESC has female inputs for the speed control, and requires soldering a male Deans Ultra Plug to the battery. The Thunder Power LiPo pack also requires soldering for the female Deans Ultra Plug.

Once the soldering and servo installation are done, the rest of the Tribute Fx almost falls together by itself. Hook & loop material is provided for the receiver and LiPo pack, and a complete set of pushrods, control horns and brass pushrod connectors is also provided. The cowl secures with four Phillips head screws, and E-flite even



Stick Mount. The receiver and battery are immediately accessible beneath the Tribute Fx molded canopy. Magnetic canopy catch keeps access easy.



E-flite Park 450 outrunner mounts cleanly with the Tribute Fx's included

throws in a lightweight plastic spinner that neatly complements the shape of the cowl.

Flying the model is really fun. ROG from grass is no problem, at

all, and the model is capable of performing anything a competent pilot commands. Recovery from violent 3D maneuvers is instantaneous, and as noted earlier, the bow and twist issues of the original Tribute are gone forever.

Like its predecessor, the new Tribute Fx is one of my favorite grab-and-go models. It looks great and flies even better, not a bad deal for a model that I took from "box to blue" in less than three hours. For more information about the Tribute Fx, E-flite servos and power options, Spektrum RC gear and Thunder Power LiPo batteries, see the ads on pages 5 and 57, visit www.horizonhobby.com on the Web, or telephone the folks at Horizon Hobby in Champaign, Illinois, at 800-535-5551. **HM**



The Fx flies a lot like the original Tribute, but much better. The new model shows none of the bow and flex issues of the original design.