



Jeff Troy & Brandon Wright

Flight Report

Mini Funtana

Mini airplane — huge fun. E-Flite's model scores high marks in every RC flying scenario from lazy horizontal eights to extreme 3D aerobatics.

E-Flite's Mini Funtana is an outrageous airplane. Based on Hangar 9's series of glow-powered FuntanaS ARF kits, this model uses brushless electric power to deliver the same kind of performance that sport and 3D fliers have come to expect from its larger counterparts. The Mini Funtana rocks.

The level of quality fabrication and workmanship in this beautiful kit has little equal, whether in the realm of other factory-built and covered models or in the work of longtime modeler craftsmen. The all-wood airframe parts are laser cut and carefully constructed and sanded, then skillfully covered in bright yellow Hangar 9 UltraCote. The procedures that are completed by the purchaser are minimal, but even there, E-Flite has taken every step to assure the modeler's success. Hinge slots are factory cut and correctly aligned, wing roots fit snugly against the sides of the fuselage, the slots for the stabilizer and vertical fin are cut cleanly — even the holes for the servo mounting screws have been laser cut into the mounts.



Assembly goes quickly, and the 44-page instruction manual assures that every step contributes toward a fine flying machine. Assembly begins by installing the main landing gear, then joining the ailerons to the wing panels with CA hinges. The Stabilizer and fin are next, followed by hinging the elevators and rudder. It doesn't really take much more than an hour or two before the Mini Funtana is ready for the motor and RC installation steps.

Several items are necessary to complete the airplane. I chose JR's Airpack Micro with two additional JR 241 sub-micro servos to guide my model. Two 6" and two 9" servo extensions are required, and four of JR's extra long servo arms make a great contribution toward maximum 3D surface throw without the risk of surface flutter.



E-Flite's Mini Funtana uses a rugged carbon fiber wing joiner, and the one-piece carbon fiber landing gear provides a sturdy mounting point for the model's painted fiberglass wheel pants.



Specifications

- Wingspan: 37 inches
- Length: 36 inches
- Area: 329 square inches
- Weight: 168.5 ounces
- RC: 4-channel, 4 servos & ESC
- Motor: Geared 400 brushless
- Battery: 3-cell Li-Poly

ARF Airplane Kit Includes

- Factory-built and covered airframe
- Carbon fiber joiner and main gear
- Fiberglass cowl and wheel pants
- Crystal clear canopy w/ painted frame
- Gearbox, propeller and spinner
- Light foam wheels w/ nylon hubs
- Control horns and linkage rods
- All necessary hardware and fasteners
- 44-page instruction manual



Extras include JR's Airpack Micro, extra 241 sub-micro servos and long servo arm sets, an E-Flite Park 400/4200KV brushless motor, Thunder Power 3-cell Li-Poly battery and a Phoenix-25 brushless/Li-Poly electronic speed control from Castle Creations.

The airplane's recommended power system provides more than enough power for 3D flying while keeping the model's overall cost in line with its size. E-Flite's Park 400 brushless motor is very reasonably priced, and the 1320mAh 11.1-volt Thunder Power Li-Poly battery provides plenty of punch without breaking the piggy bank.

There's plenty of room for equipment inside the Mini Funtana. JR's (#JRPF640) Airpack Micro flight pack features the R610M six-channel receiver with a shrink wrap to replace the plastic case. Mini Funtana mounts its JR 241 sub-micro servos close to the control surfaces; pushrods are short to eliminate flex, and JR long servo arms assure maximum throw for extreme 3D response.



I rounded out my Mini Funtana's power system with the rock-solid Phoenix-25 brushless motor control from Castle Creations in Wellsville, Kansas. This tiny unit can handle the setup used in my Mini Funtana with ease, and in case I want to use it for another project at some later time, the Phoenix-25 is fully programmable for optimum operation with brushless-power airplanes or helicopters.

Setting up the radio system in this airplane is a pleasure, largely because of the high quality linkage parts that E-Flite includes in the kit. Each thin wire pushrod has a factory Z-bend at the control horn end, and inserts into a micro pushrod connector at the servo arm end. Connectors are high quality parts that hold the wire rods securely.

My friend Brandon Wright got into RC quickly and heavily, and I've watched his flying skills progress from apprehensive to aggressive in almost no time. I felt that Brandon would be the ideal pilot for the Mini Funtana, so the following is his account of the first few flights.



This one will fool you. Looks like the big FuntanaS 90, but the tail skid and lack of wing fillet extensions are dead giveaways. Mini Funtana can fly like it's on rails, but the rails run out at 3D time.



Mini Funtana has great lines, excellent craftsmanship and drum-tight UltraCote covering. Electric power keeps it squeaky clean.

The Mini Funtana is a great performing, electric-powered, built-up ARF. I was very impressed with its great flying characteristics and its ability to perform 3D maneuvers. The first takeoff was very short, but smooth, even though I was flying from a grass runway. Climbout was all but unlimited with the performance combination of the E-Flite Park 400 brushless motor and 12-6 propeller.

Once at 'feel' altitude, I did a couple of lazy trim circuits to gauge the model's handling, then went right for the hover. There was a slight breeze, but it didn't seem to affect the Mini Funtana in the least. The airplane remained nice and stable in a hover, with plenty of control surface authority. Those extra large JR servo arms have no trouble throwing the large control surfaces over to their maximum deflection; the model responds quickly to every command.

The Mini Funtana is very stable at low speed, and is surprisingly predictable during slow flight maneuvers for an extreme aerobatic model. I made a couple of low and slow passes down the chute, then began hovering the model just a couple of feet from the ground on the very first flight. The model is agile, but can be flown smoothly.

The Mini Funtana's wing can be mounted in either of two positions — rearward for sport flying or forward for extreme 3D. I chose the 3D configuration, but was a bit worried about a tail heavy airplane being hard to land. To my relief, it settled in nice and easy with a little power, and touched down on the runway in a smooth three pointer. I did a quick check to make sure that everything was okay, then went right up again for another 5 to 8 minutes.

It's amazing how slowly I can fly this airplane while still being totally in control. I can fly it right in front of myself at a crawling speed, and put it right on the ground in front of me with no problem. Flight time on the Li-Poly Thunder Power is extremely good. I had flown longer than 10 minutes with the first battery and it still had plenty left.

E-Flite's Mini Funtana is one of the best performing small electrics I have ever flown, and I highly recommend it. It flies great, it has lots of power, and it's easy enough for just about anyone from intermediate to expert to handle. E-Flite did a great job with this one, and I hope to see more airplanes like this from them in the future.

For more information about the E-Flite Mini Funtana, JR sub micro radio equipment, E-Flite brushless motors and Thunder Power Li-Poly batteries, see the ad on pages 6 and 7, or telephone Horizon Hobby in Champaign, Illinois, at 217-352-1951. **HM**



Takeoff is rock solid and silky smooth, even from a grass field. E-Flite's Mini Funtana from Horizon Hobby, Champaign, Illinois.