

E-Flite Blade mSR Review

by erkrystof - Thursday, September 10, 2009

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Taking a look at the E-Flite Blade mSR - A single rotor helicopter that is an excellent step beyond co-axial flight, and even performs well outdoors for being such a micro heli.

Hey you! Yeah, you! Thanks for checking out this article on the mSR. I can see in my logs it is one of the most popular articles I've written so far, and I would love to hear if there are any questions or things you'd like added here. Feel free to post a comment at the bottom or click the Contact Us link and send a message! -*Eric R. Krystof*

Now, I am getting to the point where I'm realizing that E-Flite has done two things very well:

1) Embedding themselves into the LHS market. At least in Omaha. The Horizon/E-Flite alignment with Spektrum even furthers this punch. For the computer geeks out there, this strikes me as Wintel big-time. (Windows/Intel) I need parts? I drive over to the LHS and hang out with the guys. For me, it's HobbyTown USA in Omaha Nebraska at the Irvington Exit.

2) Creating great entry-level helicopters (I can not comment on E-Flite airplanes). E-Flite has been the first set of helicopters I've owned, not only because of the terrific LHS support I'm blessed with, but because a lot of the E-Flite helicopters are **great** for beginners. Now, I'll hear arguments against the first Blade CP, and I may give a few points here and there, but all in all – great helicopters to learn on, and if you're learning from step to step (coaxial -> single rotor fixed pitch -> single rotor collective pitch), I'll argue that the mSR is a great step for learning the differences between coaxial and single rotor fixed pitch helicopters.

We'll save where E-Flite drops off and the more advanced helicopters take off for another day...

Now, be warned, it's a tiny little bird, the box is only a bit more than a foot long:



Blade mSR Box

This is the bind-n-fly (BNF) version. I picked up two, one for me, and one for Pops. We both have [Spektrum](#) transmitters already, mine is a [dx7](#) and he's rocking the [dx6i](#). So, that's why the contents listed here *don't* include the transmitter. Otherwise, what you see is what you get for both BNF and RTF (Ready-To-Fly) versions:

What's in the box!?



Blade mSR Contents

You see the mSR. Then you see that huge black box next to it. Although I *love* the mSR, that black box is a godsend. Finally, E-Flite has given us a single cell charger that you can plugin **or** use batteries with, and it's a 4-port charger to boot! Between my [ParkZone Vapor](#), [E-Flite Blade mCX](#), and the mSR, I have plenty of these little single cell li-po batteries and it's about time I can charge them without using batteries.

That bit is almost as exciting as the mSR itself. Although we get a few spare parts (some linkages, canopy grommets, flybar, and extra tail-blade), the mSR does NOT come with an extra main blade. Although I've yet to demolish mine, it's only a matter of time and I did pick up an extra main blade for that 'magic moment'.

Notice the flybar is underneath the main blade. I'm not sure if this was a stability factor or not, but it definitely reduces the likely hood that you'll break up the main shaft tips (which is possible with the mCX) where the shaft meets the flybar. So, goodie for us, I suppose.

Now, some might see the little motor on the tail and think, 'Well, belt driven I wasn't expecting, so this one's a no-go for me'. Think again. I am a great fan of belt driven tails, but for something this light and

of this size, the little tail rotor does an *excellent* job of keeping up with the gyro's signals and your rudder inputs.

We also get an extra battery, which is nice. I end up getting about 6 minutes per battery, so with the 4-port charger you'll be able to keep up with your cycling.

Have we...met before?



Blade mSR and mCX comparison



Blade mSR and mCX comparison

Just a few fun shots of the mCX compared to the mSR. The control unit is exactly the same it seems to me, just a little different wiring and probably micro-controller programming on the board.

Binding / TX Settings

Binding is the same as the mCX. There's no bind plug required. Turn the helicopter on first, wait for the rapid repetitive LED, then turn your transmitter on in bind mode (for programmable transmitters, create a new slot in your transmitter's memory first!). Voila. Bound.

Recommendations I've read for ease of transmitter setup say to use your transmitter in 'Aero' (Airplane) mode to make the setup easier. You can certainly do this if you like, this is how Pops flies his on the dx6i. I went the 'Heli' mode route, which means I had a little more extra setup. Why did I do this? Well, I wanted to be able to use the typical single switch for changing my D/R and Expo. Pops has the flexibility of choosing Expo individually, I wanted the ease of just having to flick one switch (i.e. stunt mode) to get a different set of curves.

D/R and Expo help smooth out the control of the unit. Without any Expo at all, this bird is **squirrely**. I

can fly either way, but I wanted a little Exponential to start out.

The big thing to note that is if you bind the mSR in Heli mode, make sure you choose 1 Servo 90 Degree setting. This is the bare minimum to perform a heli mode binding, anything else is just whatever customization you want.

Fly, you little fool, Fly!

Flying this thing is a blast, indoors or outdoors. For those switching from a coaxial, a word of advice, be very gentle. You're used to being able to put the stick all the way forward and having your mCX, CX3, whatever, moving forward at a (actually quite slow) specific pace. The mSR will move that fast with the stick barely forward at all.

Ease into it. No sudden movements. Calm, Cool, Collected takes the prize, gets the worm, finishes the race, gets the girl, slays the dragon... you get the idea.

The gyro in this unit is such that you can really hover this thing quite easily with little to no stick movement for a few seconds. Think mCX on steroids, without any worries about drug testing.

It lives up to its name for its size. It's fast and agile. It's also very light, and even being a single rotor where you can point it into the wind, it will 'feel' like a paper airplane if you've flown anything bigger and heavier. Takes a little getting used to, but not very long.

All in all, it's a fun little guy to fly. I do prefer my bigger helicopters, but Pops and I had fun bringing ours outside and having a little fun. Ahhh yes, that reminds me... DURABILITY. This thing can take a beating. Numerous crashes due to pilot stupidity and nerves for both his and mine, and they both run just like they did before the ahem... 'technical issues'. (Did you know that the sun can get in your eyes even if it's behind you?)

Enjoy the video of some of our initial runs, and if you're looking for a neat addition to your collection, or a gift that has a little more oomph than a coaxial, consider the mSR.



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