



ROB CASO



The Albatros is one of the most recognizable German WWI aircraft, and was flown by many of Germany's great aces of the period. The D.III's beautifully streamlined, cigar shaped, monocoque fuselage was way ahead of the technology of the day, and its reliable Mercedes engine and twin Spandau machine guns provided German pilots with a decided combat advantage. It's no wonder that names like von Richtofen, Udet, Lowenhardt and Boelcke are high on the list of prominent Albatros aces.

Maxford USA now offers a colorful model of the Albatros that

comes with all the functional RC hardware and a nice set of scale accessories that includes a dummy scale engine and machine guns. The 1/9-scale Albatros is not a small model, and at roughly 30 ounces, it's just right for park pilots. The 11-page instruction manual is informative, well written and neatly illustrated. It's wise to familiarize yourself with the manual, locating and examining the various parts before you begin assembly. It's also helpful to gather the needed equipment listed in the manual, like servos, a motor and ESC.

Biplanes are notorious for being a bit tricky to assemble, but Maxford has eliminated much of this as the undercamber wings

come in right-and-left pairs with the interplane and cabane struts already installed. The rigging is also factory installed, and these features are highlights of the model. The model's colorful film covering comes drum-tight and wrinkle free, which will impress anyone who has ever covered an undercamber wing or a model with a round fuselage.

I started assembly with the motor installation, soldering the connectors to the ESC and battery. It's a good idea to set up your radio now, punching in the model's name and binding the receiver for 2.4GHz fliers. Install the motor without the propeller, and stick a piece of masking tape to the motor's output shaft. Test its

SCALE PARK PILOT

Himax motors are top-quality, powerful motors that come with everything you need. It's helpful to use JIS (Japanese Industrial Standard) tools.



Rob cuts closely around each marking.



The dummy in-line engine really looks the part, right down to the valve springs. Highlight its detail by dry-brushing the details with silver paint.



Here are the MPI Himax motor, Castle Thunderbird-18 ESC and Hitec HS-55 servos installed in the fuselage.



Rob Caso revs up his Maxford Albatros brushless motor prior to takeoff.





rotation and switch any two wires if the motor spins in the wrong direction.

Connect the servos to your receiver outside of the model, turn on your radio to center the servos and test their movement. Now is a good time to install the E-Z connectors on the servo arms.

Not all small models carry a functional rudder, but the Maxford Albatros has one, and flying with it is a lot of fun. Good pilots learn to fly the rudder. Make sure the rudder is vertical and then glue it in.

Assembling the wings and tail is detailed in the instructions and very easy to do. Make sure to snug the fasteners for the struts and rigging, then it's on to attaching the propeller and spinner. The backplate for the large spinner, characteristic of the Albatros, is cleverly engineered to provide a secure mount.

Final scale details include applying the pressure sensitive decals and installing a pilot figure. No pilot bust is provided, so you can try cutting a profile pilot out of balsa. Use the photos on the box and in the manual to determine decal placement. Carefully cut around each decal for a neater appearance and making the decals easier to apply.

Before taking to the skies against the Royal Flying Corps, install the battery without connecting it to the ESC, then balance the model in accordance with the instructions; lean a bit toward the nose-heavy side. Connect the battery and check that all your controls move in the correct direction. The Albatros is lightly loaded, so wait for a calm day for your first flight. The model is a floater, but it needs throttle to maintain altitude.

The recommended surface throws yield graceful, scalelike maneuvers. The model doesn't do anything in a hurry unless you want to. Biplanes have a lot of lift, but a lot drag, too, so time your flights to allow for a few missed landing approaches. Plan your maneuvers, and be smooth and deliberate on the controls.

Perform all vertical maneuvers after a shallow dive to gain speed, which is the way the real aeroplane was flown. Keep the power up for landing and use the elevator to float the model in. As you near the ground, reduce the power and let the model gently settle in.

The Maxford USA Albatros is a great first biplane. It's delightful to assemble and fly, and it looks wonderful in the air. It's a sure attention getter at the field. ➡