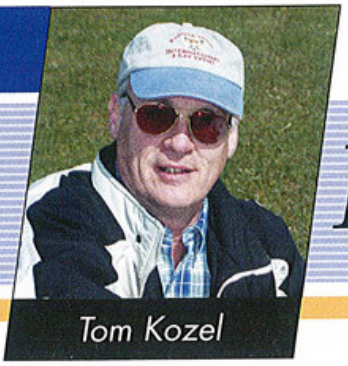


Tom Kozel

Flight Report

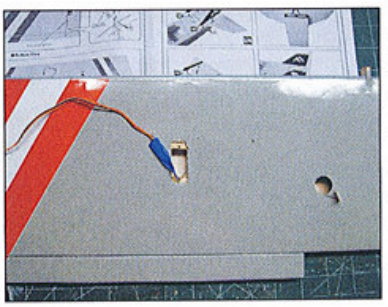
Jeff Troy's TAMECat EP

Building this model took Tom Kozel back to memories of the old days of hanging out in Jeff Troy's hobby shop.

The original F-14 TAMEcat was designed in the late 1980's in response to the perceived need for a modern looking trainer. When my generation learned to fly RC, we all had box-like trainers that tried real hard to look like the cardboard cartons they came in. They didn't do much to fire the imagination, but that was the standard of the time. After we earned our wings with these high wing clunkers, maybe we could finally move on to what we wanted in the first place — B-17's, Corsairs, Mustangs and Grumman Tomcats.

Boxy trainers don't fire inspiration, and help even less when it comes to making sales. Working behind the hobby counter in a major Philadelphia enclosed mall in the '80's, Jeff Troy saw all this on a daily basis. He kept asking himself why no one made a trainer that looked like someone would want to buy it. Since it was pretty clear that no one in the hobby industry was likely to trample tradition and design one, Jeff took the task for his own.

Jeff's prototype had to be a fighter. An old friend of ours, master scale modeler Dave Platt, was often quoted as saying "There are only two types of aircraft: fighters and targets." While this colorful gentleman's comment may be somewhat tongue-in-cheek, it's still a pretty good bet that most newcomers to our sport would find far greater inspiration if their first model looked a bit more like a hot jet fighter than a boxy "target" trainer. In 1989, the fighter of choice was the F-14 Tomcat, so that was it.



Self-aligning horizontal stabilizer and vertical fins are installed with 6-minute epoxy. Snaking the leads for the aileron servos is effortless thanks to two lengths of string that come factory installed in the F-14 TAMEcat's one-piece wing. Servo bays are factory cut.

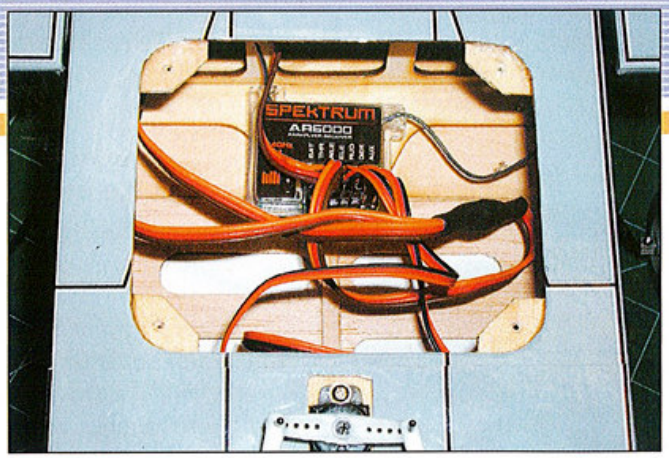
Jeff Troy's F-14 concept was to combine the easy handling characteristics of a basic trainer with the aggressive looks of a Tomcat fighter. The result was the TAMEcat, a cartoon-like fuselage resembling an F-14, with a large, high-lift, low-aspect

Specifications

- Wingspan: 39.5 inches
- Area: 273 square inches
- Length: 29 inches
- Flying weight: 24 ounces
- Motor: KM283010 outrunner
- Battery: 3S 2100mAh LiPo
- RC: 4-ch, 4 servos and ESC

ARF Kit Features

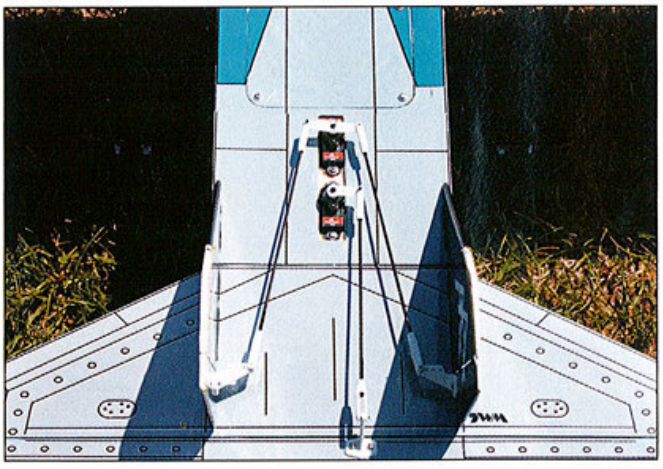
- Factory-assembled components
- Factory-painted fiberglass cowl
- TWM brushless outrunner motor
- Spinner and folding propeller
- Complete hardware package
- Control horns, rods and linkage
- 12-page instruction manual



Receiver mounts in a spacious compartment behind the wing.

ratio wing and just enough power to keep things comfortable. The design was refined after building and flying a few prototypes, and the final design was published in June 1990 as a construction article in the AMA's *Model Aviation* magazine. The F-14 TAMEcat was an instant success, selling more plans in the first month than any other AMA plan had in all their years.

Fai Chan of AirBorne Models, the U.S. distributor for The World Models in China, made arrangements to offer two versions of the F-14 TAMEcat as ARF models. The original 40-size, glow-powered F-14 TAMEcat Trainer will be available in time for the holidays, and the smaller, electric-powered F-14 TAMEcat EP is already shipping.



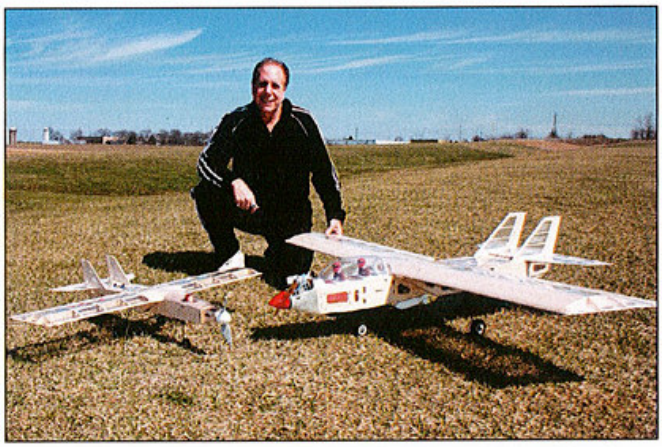
The TAMEcat's control linkages are a study in simplicity. Twin rudders operate through a single servo with a dual output arm. Pushrods run to a control horn on the inside of each rudder.

Both models feature factory-assembled, laser-cut wood construction with factory-applied film covering. Panel lines, rivet detail and other graphic enhancements are silkscreened right on the covering. A painted fiberglass cowl comes with each kit, and the 40-size model features a dummy bomb that rides under the fuselage. The EP model comes with the outrunner motor, and the nitro model comes with the fuel tank and steerable nose gear.

Jeff Troy's F-14 TAMEcat on Tom Kozel's workbench, complete with a copy of the original published design in Model Aviation.

The EP model retains the aggressive looks and easy handling of the 40-size trainer, although the brushless outrunner motor that comes with the kit allows the model to perform beyond the limits of a typical trainer. The recommended 3S LiPo pack, the outrunner motor and folding propeller all contribute to the TAMEcat's true excellence. Although a little fast at full throttle, the model can slow down enough to be used as a trainer if a buddy box system is employed. Substituting a 2S pack to reduce speed is not recommended; the motor will not develop the power it needs to perform properly in anything but dead calm.

The TAMEcat EP kit contents are neatly wrapped in numerous sealed, plastic bags that are taped to the box or packing dividers. Each bag is tagged with a number that corresponds to the step in which it is used. Assembly starts by hinging the ailerons to the wing with thin CA,



Jeff Troy with two of the clear-covered prototype F-14 TAMEcats from AirBorne Models. F-14 TAMEcat EP is on the left, and the 40-size glow-powered F-14 TAMEcat Trainer rests on the right.

followed by installing the aileron servos. AirBorne provides a length of string in each servo bay to thread the leads through the wing. Holes for the control horns are factory drilled in each aileron.

Fuselage assembly requires no more than installing the stabilizer and fins, then adding the motor and RC equipment. A powerful brushless outrunner motor comes in the kit, and all the modeler needs to add is the speed control and LiPo battery. The World Models (AirBorne) makes a nice 25A ESC and a 2100mAh pack that are ideal for the TAMEcat EP.

RC installation is completed by mounting the ESC and receiver in the instructed locations; double-sided foam tape is provided. A 6-inch extension is required to let the ESC reach the receiver, and a Y-harness is needed to connect the two aileron servos to the receiver.

All my flights with the F-14 TAMEcat EP were made with the recommended 2100mAh 3S LiPo battery, and the battery should be mounted at the rear of its compartment to balance the model at the CG point. With my control throws set as shown in the instructions, the model flew with only minor trim changes. A little down trim prevents climbing under full power.

Tom Kozel banks his F-14 TAMEcat EP following a low and slow flypast for the camera at the Lancaster County RC Club field.

The TAMEcat slows to a comfortable cruise. The controls are crisp and authoritative but not overwhelming. The flat-bottom wing gives the model plenty of buoyancy, and like any good boxy trainer, a touch of elevator when turning keeps the model steady.

The TAMEcat EP is quick and easy to assemble, and lots of fun to fly. It's a bit more aggressive than the original design, but unlike the original, the new EP model was not intended to be a basic trainer. It will loop, roll, stall and fly inverted as long as you like. As a second model, park flyer or sport airplane, the EP version exposes the clever TAMEcat design to a whole new RC audience.

For more information about Jeff Troy's F-14 TAMEcat EP and F-14 TAMEcat Trainer, see the ads on pages 47, 50 and 51, visit *www.airborne-models.com* on the Web, or telephone AirBorne Model in Livermore, California, at 925-371-0922. **HM**

F-14 TAMEcat EP climbs quickly from ROG or hand launch. 40-size F-14 TAMEcat Trainer is due for release in time for the holidays.