

by Thayer Syme

While overshadowed by the legend of the Red Baron's triplane, it has been argued that the Fokker D.VII was the best of the World War I fighters. True or not, the Fokker D.VII was the only German aircraft specifically mentioned in the terms of the Allied armistice that ended WWI. All remaining examples were to be surrendered "in situ to the allied and United States troops." It has been said the D.VII made a mediocre pilot good, and a good pilot great.

Rough and Ready Aviation has created a unique line of WWI scale park flyers that offer a high quality alternative to the spate of "me too" profile aerobatic foamies. Proudly made in the USA, the Fokker D.VII is designed for a small brushless outrunner, Li-Poly batteries and micro radio gear. The attention to detail and quality of the finished product really sets



ROUGH AND READY AVIATION

# Fokker D.VII

Patrol the park with this unique warbird

these models apart from other profile park flyers. The designers have carefully considered each part of the airplane and creatively addressed several problematic areas. In the end, you will have an airplane that may cost a few extra dollars, but is uniquely yours, and outlasts and outperforms the competition. In my mind, these are not expendable 3D aerobats to simply exercise your thumbs, but gratifying semi-scale models that make use of modern technologies to maximize your park flying experience. Let's take a closer look, shall we?

## SPECS

**PLANE:** Fokker D.VII

**MANUFACTURER:** Rough and Ready Aviation

**DISTRIBUTOR:** Rough and Ready Aviation

**TYPE:** WWI profile park flyer

**FOR:** Intermediate pilots and builders

**WINGSPAN:** 34/28.63 in.

**WING AREA:** 349 sq. in.

**FLYING WEIGHT:** 11.5 oz.

**WING LOADING:** 4.7 oz./sq. ft.

**LENGTH:** 27.5 in.

**RADIO:** 4 channels required: flown with a Futaba 9CAFS transmitter, GWS 6-channel Naro receiver with E-Cubed R/C M-72L antenna, 4 GWS Pico Servos

**POWER SYSTEM:** E-flite Park 370-1080 brushless outrunner motor, APC 9x3.8SF prop, Castle Creations Phoenix-10 brushless speed control, 3S 850mAh Li-Poly battery

**FULL THROTTLE POWER:** 10.65 amps, 110.8 watts: 9.63 W/oz., 154.1 W/lb.

**TOP RPM:** 7,580

**DURATION:** 15+ minutes, mixed flying

**MINIMAL FLYING AREA:** Ball field

**PRICE:** \$72

**COMPONENTS NEEDED TO COMPLETE:** 4-channel radio w/4 micro servos, brushless outrunner, Li-Poly battery, foam friendly glue and paint.

## SUMMARY

The Rough and Ready Fokker D.VII features an innovative design and a preassembled fuselage to provide a rigid lightweight airframe with minimal effort. The machine-cut Depron parts come unfinished, so that you can personalize your model to suit your own preferences. The light wing loading and abundant power let you realistically float your Fokker about the park at lower throttle settings, or "punch it" and climb vertically. The Fokker's fantastic flight performance, precise control and realistic appearance make this one park flyer you will want to keep around for a long time. With everything you need to get flying, Rough and Ready Aviation offers one-stop shopping for added convenience.

PHOTOS BY WALTER SIDAS



## IN THE BOX

The Rough and Ready Aviation Fokker D.VII is constructed primarily of machine-cut 6mm Gray Depron foam. The tail surfaces are cut from 3mm foam to save weight. Carbon fiber tube spars are included to reinforce the wings for flight loads, while still minimizing excess weight. The custom-machined and pre-

formed aluminum landing gear is rigid, holding the lightweight wheels in precise alignment. This ensures ground handling that cannot be equaled with bent wire gear.

To stiffen and strengthen the fuselage, as well as reduce the clutter of the equipment installation, the fuselage is assembled from three layers of Depron, with hollow cavities

in the core to accommodate the radio equipment, power system and wiring, and to lighten the fuselage. To save you time, the fuselage is constructed at the Rough and Ready Aviation facility in precision alignment jigs. The pushrod sleeves and an aluminum motor mount are also installed during the fuselage assembly. All necessary additional hardware



## ROUGH AND READY AVIATION FOKKER D.VII



### AIRBORNE

Delivering on the promise of the original WWI fighter, the Rough and Ready Aviation Fokker D.VII is an easy-flying warbird that will inspire confidence for the low time pilot, and really shines in more experienced hands. Quite simply, it is a delight in the air.

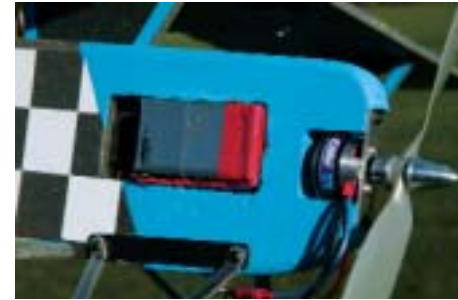
The D.VII can be easily hand launched, but with its low profile wheels, stiff landing gear and light wing loading, it also will take off from the average grass field without trouble. Just point it into the wind, hold some up elevator, and smoothly advance the throttle. Ease off the elevator as it starts to roll, and it will rise off when ready to fly.

At minimum power, the Fokker D.VII will float around realistically, as if waiting to intercept a flight of Sopwith Camels over your local aerodrome. It will fly surprisingly slowly. I found that as I keep pulling back the power, it would defy gravity while hanging on those big wings. Add some throttle and ease the stick forward, and you will also be impressed with how fast the Fokker flies. Despite the extra wing and struts, it has surprisingly little drag. This translates directly into the Fokker's ability to fly in a breeze. This is not a plane restricted to the calmest conditions; it will easily handle 5-10 mph winds.

The Rough and Ready Fokker can more than hold its own in the swirling dogfights that come to mind when thinking of WWI fighters. When set up as recommended, the controls are well balanced and very responsive. The E-flight outrunner has plenty of power, and effortlessly pulls the Fokker through large loops. Yeah, you can 3D a bit, it will hover and do very respectable harriers, but it feels silly. Instead I try to keep it "on the wing" as much as possible, twisting and turning as if trying to maneuver behind a hapless foe, or outwit a more experienced pilot.

The Fokker D.VII will do any of the standard aerobatic maneuvers; loops, rolls, snaps and spins are all fair game. Remember though, that the original was designed almost 90 years ago. You can't expect that it will handle like a modern aerobatic ship; and I would be disappointed if it did. I like the individual personality of each different model in my fleet. Like many biplanes, the Fokker exhibits some roll coupling with rudder, but you can easily overpower it with ailerons if you want to hold the wings flat in a turn, or slip it in for a landing. Add full power, full rudder with opposite aileron and some up elevator, and you will see a flat spin so tight that it looks like it will chew off its own tail! Juggling pitch and power will let you hold altitude in this maneuver.

The Fokker has no tendency to tip stall unexpectedly and is viceless in the pattern when it finally comes time to land. Its light wing loading lets you slow up and gently set it back down in the grass without ending up on its back. I like to carry just enough power to keep some prop wash on the tail so I can maintain positive control all the way to the ground.



The Rough and Ready Aviation Fokker features a laminated fuselage, pocketed to locate and partially hide the equipment and wiring. The E-flight outrunner offers exceptional performance for this fighter.

such as mylar hinges, pushrods and EZ-connectors, Velcro fasteners for mounting the battery and receiver are included, as is a comprehensive construction manual. This kit is very complete, and clearly represents the desire to deliver a quality product to the end user.



### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Pay attention to any excess weight you might be adding when assembling your Fokker D.VII. Careless glue and liberal paint application can noticeably increase the weight of any model. I used foam-friendly CA and Foamhesive when assembling my Fokker. Foamhesive remains semi-flexible, allowing loads to carry through joints for maximum strength.

The markings on my D.VII are a mixture of self-adhesive trim film and latex paint. The camouflage was applied by simply dabbing on a thin layer of paint with a few differently shaped bits of sponge. While not an accurate depiction of any actual aircraft, it does give a convincing stylistic impression of the markings of the day. Do not get carried away feeling you have to cover every square inch with an impermeable coating. In fact, Rough and Ready recommends not painting the underside of the flying surfaces at all. This will help differentiate the upper and lower flying surfaces, as well as save time and weight. Think light while designing your scheme, and don't forget the internet as a research aid. A quick image search for "Fokker D.VII" turned up over 5000 results.

A 5-6 channel radio will let you drive the ailerons from separate channels and fine tune the control response electronically. As always, check the balance before your first flight. If you have properly assembled the kit, and used the recommended equipment, the CG should be spot on without any additional ballast.

Be sure to bring an extra battery and perhaps some glue to the field. You won't want to cut your flying session short unnecessarily. Though the Depron construction is lightweight and resilient, mishaps can happen. Fortunately, Depron can be quickly and easily repaired at the field without undue "uglies."

### CONCLUSION

Rough and Ready Aviation has a real winner with the Fokker D.VII. The fuselage prefabrication and precision cut parts ensure accurate alignment, proper CG and help get you flying quickly. At the field, its excellent flying characteristics and a unique personal color scheme complete the package, making the Fokker D.VII a treasured addition to the collection of any WWI enthusiast. ☺

### Links

**Foamhesive**, available exclusively from Billy Hell RC, [www.billyhellrc.com](http://www.billyhellrc.com), (615) 400-9731

**Futaba**, distributed exclusively by Great Planes Model Distributors, [www.futaba-rc.com](http://www.futaba-rc.com), (800) 682-8948

**Rough and Ready Aviation**, [www.roughandreadyaviation.com](http://www.roughandreadyaviation.com), (530) 432-7962

For more information, please see our source guide on pg. 169.