



Senior Telemaster - The Gentle Giant

WITH A 2.4m (8') wingspan, the Senior Telemaster is an impressive looking radio controlled aircraft. Not only that, it is now available to buy as an Almost Ready to Fly kit for around \$300. That's a lot of aircraft for a reasonable price by any standards and, being an ARF, all that is required to go flying is several hours assembly and setup.

The Telemaster is not a new model. The original, a German designed RC plane, dates from the late 60s. There were 3 wingspan size variants; the Junior 1.24m (4'), Standard 1.8m (6') and the mighty Senior 2.4m (8').

The Senior Telemaster was unique and very popular in this era due to its size. Back then, most model aircraft were limited to a wingspan of less than 2m due to the restriction of power to weight ratio with the engines available at the time. Though the Senior Telemaster was big in comparison, its design and lightweight construction enabled the model to perform remarkably well on the equivalent of a 45 size glow engine.

A versatile workhorse, one of the original Senior Telemasters was reported to have been used to carry a pilot line across a ravine for the setup of telephone cables in Germany - a task normally carried out by a full sized helicopter. This exercise was possibly the first where a model aircraft was employed in an industrial situation.

More commonly, the Telemaster is regularly rigged to tow advertising banners or undertake glider tows. Aerial photography and lolly scramble drops also feature as regular tasks.

There are many reviews available on the Senior Telemaster as it has been around for such a long time which is a testimony to the reliability and popularity of the design. It is a stable, docile plane in the air and the size makes it easy to see. It's a great first large model and this is why my husband, Pete, decided to buy one.

When he brought it home, my first impression was "It's a really big box!", quickly followed by "Where on earth are you going to put it once it's built?" Needless to say, once we had the parts out of the box, we really appreciated what a large model it was going to be.

The fuselage was cavernous, with plenty of room for fitting all the control components in. The wing, being 2.4m long, fortunately came in two sections. Just as well, as when joined, the wing can not be stood vertical in our lounge!

Being such a big aircraft, Pete was not entirely confident about the fact that the huge wing is only held on by several large rubber bands. Though it appears this was the original design and therefore a successful method of attachment for decades, he decided to build in wing mounts and screw in anchor points. Apart from this change, the rest of the build was pretty standard.

This ARF kit is not for a beginner. The instructions are fairly

Contributed by Janice Angus

limited and not the most helpful. The kit appears to be designed for an electric powered aircraft but he had decided to run it on a glow engine. Always a fan of "more power is good", by putting in a 2 stroke, 120 ASP engine there is no chance of this model being underpowered, especially as a 60 sized engine was recommended.

The sheer size of the plane made it a bit more challenging to build, particularly in an area of limited space, such as our lounge.

Checking the balancing points for the Centre of Gravity of the plane is definitely a two person operation. Figuring out how to attach the struts for easy assembly and breakdown took some thought and ingenuity but a system of clevis pins and R clips were a practical, quick release solution.

After a couple of tanks of fuel through the brand new engine as a run in, and assistance with tuning, we had the motor running sweetly. The plane was ready to go, and we just had to wait for the weather to settle down so the maiden flight could take place. The opportunity came at the beginning of October.

Our fellow club member, Trevor Miller, a very experienced model flyer, had agreed to do the maiden flight for Pete. It's always a bit of a nerve racking time for both builder and flyer as you can never be quite sure how a new plane will perform.

Fortunately, and true to expectations, the plane flew beautifully. Take off was impressive, with the plane in the air before Trevor even had to apply much throttle. It pretty much took off itself once the speed got up. In the air, it was docile and steady. Turns were more effective on the rudder, with aileron turns being slow and gradual leaving plenty of time to anticipate your next manoeuvre and enjoy the flight.

The Senior Telemaster is known for being a floater and when landing, used up most of the strip to get back on the ground. A successful first flight and hopefully the start of many hours of enjoyable, stress free flying for Pete.



A floating landing approach, typical for the Telemaster.



Janice Angus with a large handful of airplane.

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