



WE PICK THE TOP PLANE, RADIO, DRONE, AND INNOVATION OF THE YEAR!

BY THE *MODEL AIRPLANE NEWS* CREW

The editors of *Model Airplane News* spend many hours reviewing and highlighting hundreds of great products including airplanes, radios, hardware, and other related gear so that we can report what we find to our readers. Each year, after all the dust settles, we highlight and recognize those items that we think have risen to the top. Evaluations are noted, and the editors and the contributors that actually put the product through the paces consider everything from price and quality to engineering, strength, and the overall value you get for your money.

The task is always demanding as, each year, all the products that come through the *Model Airplane News* doors continue to push the bar up to higher levels. So after much discussion, consideration, and debate, here are this year's top four winners!



Plane of the Year

Hangar 9 Model 12 Viking

This year's Plane of the Year goes to the Model 12 Viking 120cc aerobatic biplane by Hangar 9. The full-size Model 12 Viking is one of the most powerful biplanes ever designed for use on the airshow circuit. Hangar 9's giant-scale version has been expertly designed and built, and when it's powered by an appropriate 100 to 125cc gas engine, it delivers amazing 3D performance.

Construction is laser-cut built-up wood, and all of the parts fit precisely together to produce a rugged and lightweight airframe that can take the rigors of high-performance maneuvers. Also included are a painted fiberglass cowl and wheel pants as well as a colorful UltraCote trim scheme. Two-piece plug-in wings and a large fuselage hatch makes transportation and maintenance user-friendly. Including prehinged control surfaces and all

necessary hardware, the Viking can accept a large variety of exhaust options, including mufflers, canisters, and tuned pipes.

With performance to match its terrific scale looks, we are proud to call the giant-scale Hangar 9 Model 12 Viking our Plane of the Year.

\$1,399.99 | hangar-9.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- + Lightweight, rugged construction
- + Excellent parts fit
- + Awesome scale looks
- + Amazing flight performance



Radio of the Year

Spektrum DX6e

HIGHLIGHTS

- + Budget price
- + 250-model memory
- + Easy-to-navigate program menu
- + SD card-compatible

Our pick for Radio of the Year goes to the Spektrum DX6e. With an amazing collection of high-end pro-level features, the DX6e radio system is far from being just another budget radio. A feature-rich 6-channel radio, it uses the same DSMX technology and AirWare programming found in the higher-priced transmitters. Easy to use and set up, the DX6e is a great choice for the newcomers to the hobby as well as experienced RC pilots. Beginners can grow into it as their skills improve and their airplanes become more involved, and sport pilots will appreciate all the cool bells and whistles.

With an impressive 250-model memory and built-in telemetry, the DX6e has programming for four model types: airplane, helicopter, sailplane, and multirotor. It also has an SD card slot (card not included), so you can share model-memory setups with just about any other Spektrum radio user. The screen display has an easy-to-read layout and includes model name, a timer (activated by the throttle stick), battery-voltage icon and readout, the four main trim-position bars, a radio-on timer (total time the radio has been switched on), and a large model-type icon (a graphic image of the type of model, such as helicopter, quadcopter, glider, or airplane).

A cool new feature is being able to choose the type of icon you want to show on the display screen. Everything from sport and scale models, to World War II warbirds, jets, helis, quadcopters, and other multirotors are easy to select and display. And of course, there's a menu full of advanced features and settings to maximize your aircraft's performance.

If you define value by measuring how much you get for your dollar, then the Spektrum DX6e is a solid investment for anyone looking for a serious programmable radio.

\$179.99 (AR610 receiver included) | hangar-9.com





Drone of the Year

RISE Vusion Extreme Race Pack



With so many drones on the market today, it took a while to decide on a winner for this category. But when you want excitement, drone racing jumps to the top of the list—and from our reviews, the RISE Vusion Extreme Racer took the top honors.

Including everything you need to hop into drone racing in one complete package, the RISE Vusion comes with a monitor, goggles headset, transmitter, airborne video camera, and built-in 5.8GHz first-person-view system. The RISE Vusion has high-quality molded construction and includes LED lights. The outrigger arms are quick and easy to replace, and they snap into receptacles. The power system features 2280Kv outrunner motors paired with OneShot speed controls. Power comes from an included 3-cell 1500mAh LiPo flight pack, and it even has a mating plug

already soldered on. A balance charger with an AC adapter, a spare set of propellers, and four AA batteries for the radio are also part of the package.

The transmitter has dual rates to increase or decrease stability and agility as well as a switch for flight modes. Mode 1 is the most stable, featuring self-leveling, and allows the drone to tilt approximately 30 degrees. Mode 2 also has auto-level attributes but permits up to 45 degrees of tilt. Mode 3 disables the self-level feature and lets the model fly at any angle and perform aerobatics. If you want to experience the excitement and challenge of drone racing with an everything-included package and basic plug-and-play simplicity, the RISE Vusion is a great choice.

\$350.00 | explore-rise.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- ✦ Nothing else to buy
- ✦ Durable and rugged construction
- ✦ Great value
- ✦ Choice of flight performance

Innovation of the Year

Yuneec Breeze

HIGHLIGHTS

- + Easy to fly
- + Very user-friendly
- + Excellent photo and video quality
- + Easy app control

To win in this category, the product must have made significant advancement in the RC hobby and truly be at an advanced level of performance. The Breeze quadcopter camera drone from Yuneec hits these marks and delivers a great user experience at a reasonable price. It comes fully assembled and requires the downloading of the Breeze Cam app. Then, all you have to do to get it in the air is charge the batteries (two packs are included). The Breeze's camera is mounted in the back so that it is always facing the pilot, ready to capture photos or video selfies. Any smartphone will give you touchscreen control of the Breeze using the Breeze Cam app, and by using the various flight modes, you can capture complex shots with little or no drone-flying experience. About the only thing easier than

sharing images on social media with this quad is flying it; it is, without a doubt, one of the easiest quads to fly that we have ever reviewed. A perfect first drone for anyone, the best part of the Breeze is that it's loaded with lots of great features usually available only with higher-priced quads.

The Breeze has a Selfie mode that makes it easy to hover the drone in just the right position for the best aerial images and videos. Other modes include Pilot mode, for complete control over the drone, and Orbit mode, which allows the Breeze fly around you or any other object. Made for everyone, the Breeze is stable, safe, and easy to fly. If you want a camera drone that takes good images and allows you to share them, the Breeze is for you. ✈

\$379.00 | yuneec.com

