



ROBIN Gyrocopter

Jack Barnard concludes his review of this exciting r/c model autogyro by Kalt, Japan

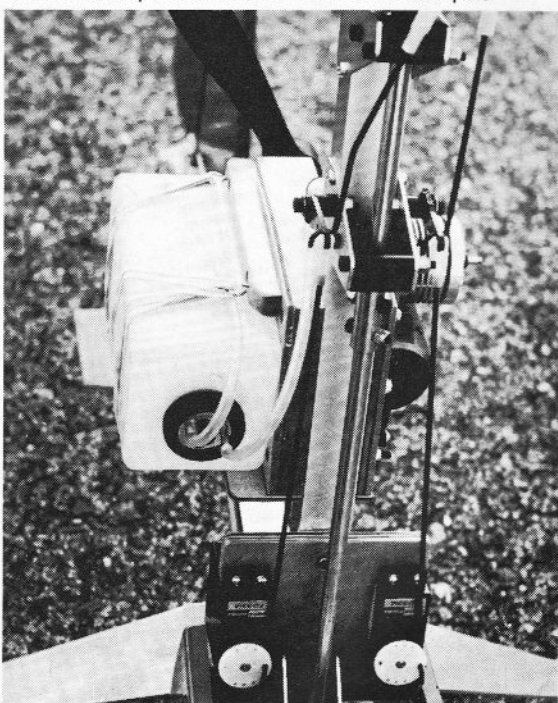
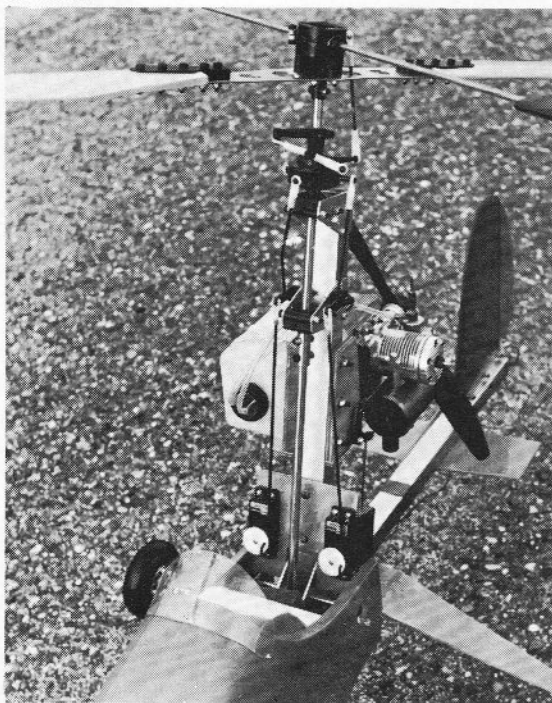
In Pt. 1 of this review I covered the building of this interesting model – now to the fitting of the R/C gear and the flight tests.

I chose to fit the **Futaba FP-5LK R/C** gear, and can only say that, following the instructions, I had no problems at

all, as it all fell into place. The servo boards had to be cut to suit the servos; the receiver and power pack I encased in foam packing and positioned in the 'pod' – well forward to bring the C. of G. to the correct position. Everything worked as it should – or so I thought, and I

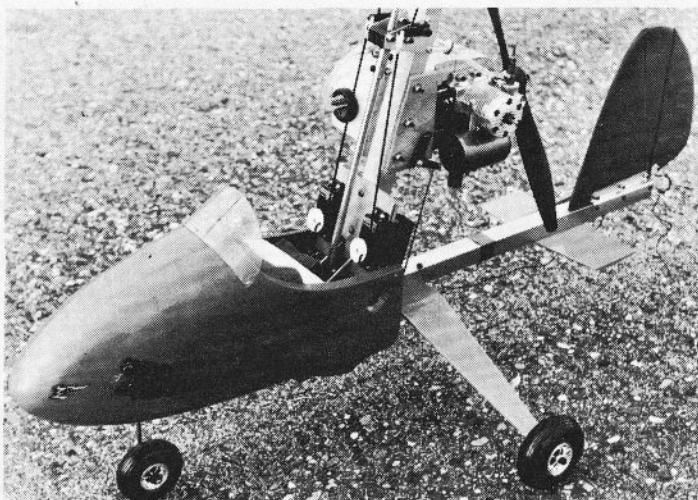
Below, the connecting rods from the cyclic servos can be quite clearly seen in this picture, also the connections from the swash plate. The throttle and rudder/steerable nose leg servos are positioned in the base of the pod.

Below; this close up shot shows how the short connecting rod (which joins, via a single arm crank, the fore and aft cyclic servo rod) has to be bent in order to produce an ideal connection to the swash plate.



Right; I was rather concerned regarding my positioning of the Rx. aerial. To dangle it did not appear to be the answer as it could quite easily foul the wheels during the take-off run; but would it pick up interference from that metal main boom if placed in the position shown? The short answer is 'no', not a glitch from the Futaba FP-SLK gear (this is the A.M. version — I understand F.M. versions of this set are now available from Ripmax stockists).

The Rx. and power pack are well encased in foam inside the pod — the strip of balsa, which can be seen holding the foam in position, is not fixed but merely 'sprung' into the flexible pod. Bottom right; a final check up of the fly-bar before 'firing it up' for that final flight.



The Kalt Gyrocopter is imported by Slough Radio Control, 273 High Street, Slough, Bucks. Kit price £79.95 (The fire-breathing dragon on the nose is one of a range of self-adhesive designs by Powermax).

waited for suitable weather conditions for the ultimate test — the first flight.

The chosen day was one of those which herald the approach of a hard winter. My fingers were frozen and by the time the engine had reluctantly started I was wishing I had obeyed my instincts and stayed in bed! I believe that I would have been very happy if the H.P. .40 had refused to start and I could have returned to my fireside! A few minutes later I wished I had not bothered to get up that morning at all!

To proceed; I am normally a very careful flyer, carrying out radio checks etc. very meticulously before attempting to fly a new model. Why I failed to do so on this occasion I will never understand. Perhaps it was because I was about to tackle something which I have to admit I was rather nervous of doing, flying a single rotor autogyro for the first time, and I failed to spot a very stupid mistake, one which, by the way, I had ridiculed others for making.

The H.P. .40 was behaving itself beautifully, and I taxied the model around for a while before turning it into wind and opening up to full power for take-off. The rotor spun, the model tracked straight, requiring only a very small rudder correction, and lifted off perfectly. When it had reached about twenty feet I moved the cyclic control for a left bank — it turned right! I closed the throttle, centralised the controls and the *Robin* sat down hard on its right side.

I was very lucky in that the model had sustained only minor damage, but it was back to the workshop for repairs. Experienced helicopter modellers will have already realised my stupid mistake; I had reversed the lateral cyclic pitch — I realised it as the model hit the ground! A stupid mistake for which I have no answer. I have built seven helicopters with similar controls and should therefore have known better.

I was very lucky indeed not to have a complete write-off on my hands. It does, however, say a lot for the strong construction of this model that it required only minor repairs, and was once again ready to take to the air. I was now fully confident that the Kalt *Robin* would fly well.

Its next flight was incident free, and I had a lot of fun. It flew beautifully, but I flew it as I would a fixed wing

model, carrying out power-on landings, as I would normally. I would be very interested in hearing from anyone who has built and flown the *Robin* as I am sure I am not yet flying it as an autogyro ought really to be flown. I feel that it has a tremendous potential as a 'crowd puller' and that engine off landings etc. plus aerobatics are possible.

I can only say — it is an excellent kit and the model flies beautifully. I believe the only satisfactory question which could be put to any reviewer of a new model is "would you buy and build another?" My answer would most certainly be 'yes', and I look forward to a lot of flying and experimentation with my *Robin*. It has far exceeded my expectations.

I became so confident on subsequent flights, in fact over confident, and promptly made another stupid mistake. The *Robin* has to be landed into wind, any major drift on touchdown and over it will go. One has to be ready to correct drift with rudder before touchdown. I failed to do so during a power-on landing and tipped it sharply — I now need new rotor blades and fly-bar. Spares are apparently readily available, a quick phone call to the distributors and my spares were in the post.

As I have already said, I would be very interested in hearing from readers who have built and flown the *Robin*. As far as I am concerned it is my No. 1 sport plane — a very nice model indeed. If you are looking for something different, an out-of-the-rut sportsplane, I can most certainly recommend this one.

