

Hawker Typhoon
By Roy Vaillancourt

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I first started flying at Top Gun in 1994 with one of my Hawker Sea Furies. Since then I have been participating in this event nearly every year with a few breaks. I even did one year (2004) as a static judge sitting in for Lee Henderson while he attended to some family matters. But over the years the plane that has come to be my favorite is the Hawker Typhoon. It gradually made its way to the building table after I completed a FW-190 A8 for the 1998 season and the 10th anniversary of Top Gun. The FW-190 finished 2nd in the "designer class" that year.

I have always been drawn to the big and heavy fighters and the Typhoon is certainly this. I also have been partial to the whole Hawker line and have done the Sea Fury, Tempest and Hurricane, too. But of the bunch the Typhoon is my favorite. I knew it wasn't done much and that very short nose presented a challenge that was just begging me to attack.

My Typhoon has a wingspan of 97 inches and weighs 47 to 48 lbs. It is powered by a Quadra Q-75 and uses a Zinger 24/12 wooden prop. It is built of mostly conventional materials such as balsa and ply, etc., as well as a few fiberglass and plastic parts. It has many functioning features that in addition to the normal flight controls include retractable landing gear (mains and tail wheel), fully proportional flaps, operating landing lights (9.8 volt 1100mah battery), sliding canopy, and operating pilot's step. The pilot's step is tied in to the canopy so that when the canopy is open the step is down and when the canopy closes the step retracts. The retracts are electric units that started life as Hank Likes units. I redesigned these and saved just the frame work from Hank's units and fabricated all the mechanisms and struts myself. The motors were obtained from one of my military suppliers from my day job and they operate off a 14.4 volt 700 mah battery. The tail wheel unit is also a mechanical unit that I designed and fabricated and is operated by a 180 degree servo. Naturally being in the designer class all other parts were fabricated personally as needed. The big Hawker is guided by a JR 8103 radio with the 2.4 GHz Spectrum module and Rx system and carries a 6.0 volt 2400mah battery. It is painted with PPG lacquers including all markings.

The Typhoon has done very well for me over the years. It first flew at Top Gun in 2000 where it finished a respectable 5th in "designer class" despite many teething problems that year. It returned to Top Gun for the 2001 and 2002 seasons and finished 3rd and 4th respectively. While I was competing with the Typhoon I started preparing a second FW-190 (but this time an A5 version) for Top Gun 2003. But this FW-190 never made it to the event. A few off years followed while I rebuilt the FW and the Typhoon returned to Top Gun in 2008 for the 20th anniversary edition. Here the trusty old bird finished 4th in the "masters" class and even managed to win the runner up slot for "best military model". Not bad for an eight year old model...What an honor.

This big brute of an airplane has become my all time favorite and is still flying today.