

Indoor
helicopter
flying for
anyone!

HOBBY LOBBY

Co-Co Lama 2

by Greg Vogel

SPECS

HELICOPTER: Co-Co Lama
MANUFACTURER: Esky-Hobby
DISTRIBUTOR: Hobby Lobby
TYPE: Micro electric heli
FOR: Beginner to intermediate flyer
FLYING WEIGHT: 7.75 oz.
LENGTH: 14.25 in.
ROTOR SPAN: 13.5 in.
ROTOR AREA: 143 sq. in.
DISK LOADING: 7.80 oz./sq. ft.
RADIO: 4 channels required; flown with the

included ET204D transmitter, 4-in-one mixer/ESC/gyro/receiver, and two servos

POWER SYSTEM: two 180 motors, 7.4V, 800mAh Lithium battery

HOVER POWER: 3.75 amps, 27.8 watts, 3.58 W/oz., 57.3 W/lb.

MAIN ROTOR RPM AT HOVER: 1,575

DURATION: Approx. 10 minutes

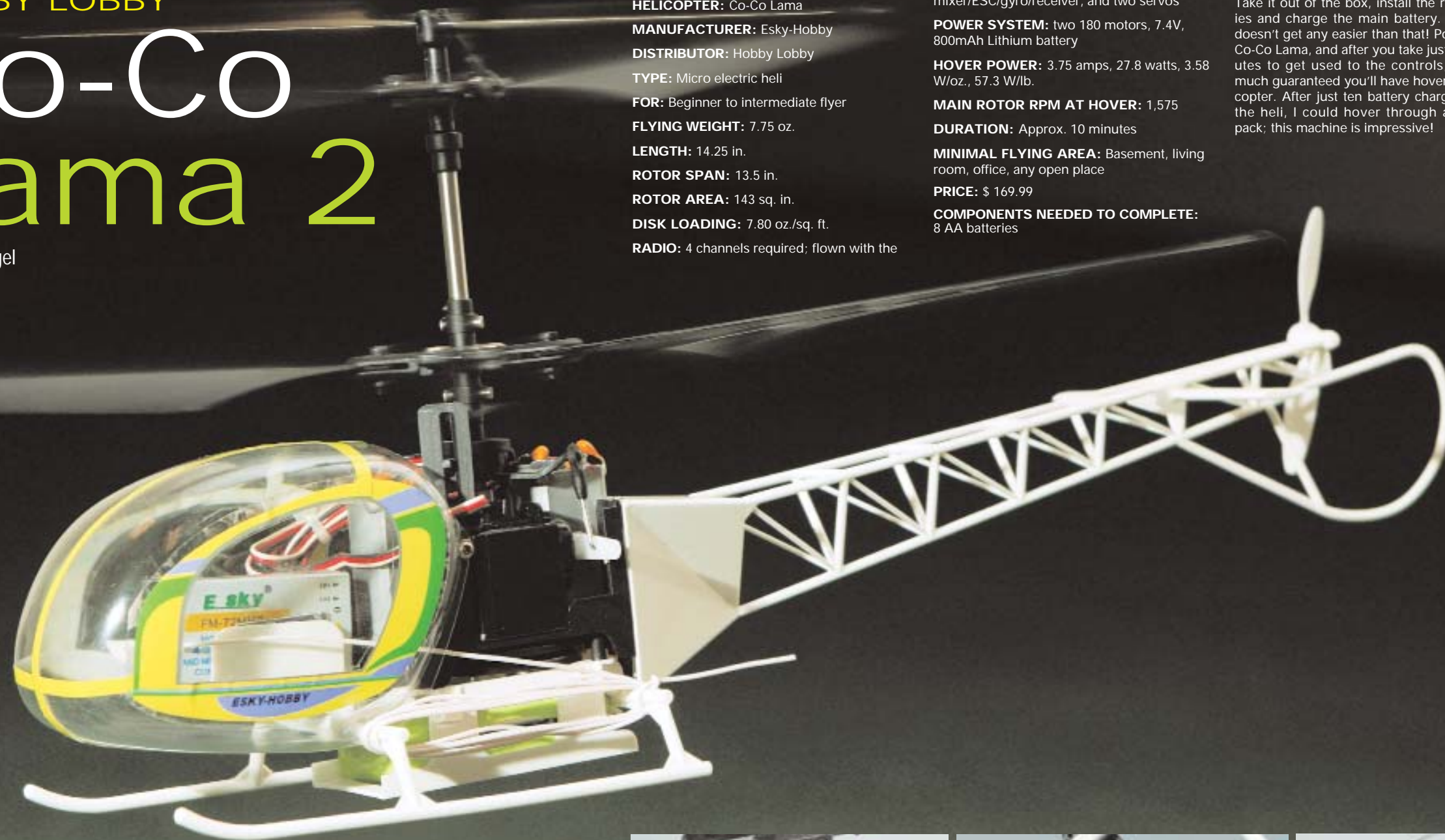
MINIMAL FLYING AREA: Basement, living room, office, any open place

PRICE: \$ 169.99

COMPONENTS NEEDED TO COMPLETE: 8 AA batteries

SUMMARY

Take it out of the box, install the radio batteries and charge the main battery. That's it; it doesn't get any easier than that! Power up the Co-Co Lama, and after you take just a few minutes to get used to the controls, it's pretty much guaranteed you'll have hovered the helicopter. After just ten battery charges through the heli, I could hover through a complete pack; this machine is impressive!



Here is the perfect motivation to clear out your basement, organize your garage or clean out that spare bedroom. The Esky Lama 2 from Hobby Lobby is the perfect size heli to operate indoors in any of the aforementioned spaces. The co-axial design means it has two sets of blades that counter rotate, making the heli extremely stable and easy to fly. It's so easy that you could have literally no flying experience, pick up the Lama 2 and have it hovering within minutes.

The Lama 2 is a basic co-axial heli design with two motors, each controlling one set of blades. The guts of the heli are all nestled in a plastic fuse with a Lexan canopy and ABS boom to replicate the style of a real Lama heli. The Lama 2 arrives totally assembled with electronics installed and radio trimmed with only fine tuning left to be done on your first flight. The package is complete, and the machine overall is impressive; let's talk about flight.



Left: The servos directly drive the swashplate for immediate control. Center: The drive motors are mounted inverted for easy access to the main gears under the fuselage. Right: The swashplate drives the lower rotor while the upper is balanced with a weighted flybar. This design provides exceptional stability in a hover.



AIRBORNE

Coaxial helicopters are supposed to be easy to fly, and the CoCo Lama is no exception. After a little charge time, I took the Lama 2 to an empty office and throttled it up. I was inches off the ground, and the heli was swaying side-to-side and front to back. *Fly RC* editor Thayer Syme was on hand to check out the first flight and reminded me to get the heli higher up off the ground. I followed his advice and gave the Lama a little more left stick. Higher up in clean air, the Lama was less affected by the wash from the blades. It was easy to trim out and hover with minimal stick correction. I did, however, notice that the ratchet on the throttle stick prevented me from finding the sweet spot to have it hover hands off eye level. The ratcheting gave it either just a little too much throttle so that it wanted to mate up with the ceiling, or not enough to keep from sagging toward the floor.

Despite the constant throttle tweaking, I found the throttle to be responsive as I tried jumping across boxes Thayer had so thoughtfully placed in my flight zone. Keeping the tail pointed towards me was simple with minimal left stick input, and as I swung across the ground, the Lama was stable. You're not going to break any speed records with the Lama, but it is a ball to fly something that can be moving forward, backward or side to side at a moment's notice. The Lama's movements are precise and simple.

Outdoors is a scary zone for small indoor helis such as the Lama 2, but the elements weren't going to keep me from trying. My first attempt outside was with a small breeze, and even though the wind was stable, I felt as though I were flying the heli through a tornado. The breeze just disrupts the path, and you find yourself finger dancing, trying to keep the Lama in place. My second attempt was on a calm day, and the open space was welcome. In my back yard, I was able to comfortably complete figure-8 maneuvers and spin the Lama with full left or right rudder control. Just as inside, forward and aft movement as well as side to side was slow and consistent and just the right speed to learn to fly and perfect your skills.

I was glad to find that I can fly it outside with the proper conditions, but I now know that when the wind comes up, it's time to head inside.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Attention new modelers: although the Lama 2 is assembled, you still need to route the antenna, which comes wrapped up inside the canopy. Unravel the antenna wire and wrap it around the landing gear. This will allow the heli to pick up the radio signal without interference. When you begin to fly, give yourself at least two to three feet between the heli and the ground so the turbulent wash from the blades doesn't disrupt the Lama's flight. Once you get the handle on fly-

ing, you can play closer to the ground, but it is easier closer to table height.

When you graduate to landing on boxes, table tops or other targets, be wary of flying near the edges. You will find there is a significant cushion as you fly over a table. As you get to the edge, that cushion goes away, so be ready to add power and transition across the edge quickly. This happens with all helicopters, not just the Lama.

CONCLUSION

The Hobby Lobby Lama 2 is a big hit at a small price; the instructions are a little rough, but with just a little prior modeling experience and/or some common knowledge, you'll be able to get the heli from the box and into the air in no time. I've let some first-time fliers try the Lama, along with some intermediate pilots and a few experts. Each had numerous successful flights, and all had a hard time handing the transmitter back; it's just that fun and easy! 🍀

Links

Hobby Lobby International, Inc., www.hobby-lobby.com, (615) 373-1444

For more information, please see our source guide on pg. 177.



The "4 in 1" unit is the brains of the CoCo Lama, combining the receiver with the motor speed controls, electronic mixer and gyro.



The Li-Poly battery uses a dedicated charge plug to ensure balanced charging and maximum safety.