It's nice to see scale aircraft that have not been over represented by manufacturers and the Beechcraft Model 17 “Staggerwing” by FMS definitely fits this category. The United States was in the middle of the Great Depression and Walter Beech worked with Ted Wells to produce an aircraft for businessmen. The biplane that they created became known as the Staggerwing due to the strange inverse wing stagger used by Beechcraft to increase pilot visibility. The prototype was used much like the modern executive jet is today, minus the cameo appearance in rap music videos. This aircraft had all the luxury of an enclosed cabin, retractable landing gear and long cruising distances. Luxury is a good way to describe the model produced by FMS. The model we received from Diamond Hobby was the Army Air Corps model with 30 amp ESC, brushless 3536-850Kv motor, the above-mentioned retractable landing gear and flaps. The model is almost ready to fly, requiring only a radio system and battery. FMS recommends a 3-cell 11.1 volt 1800mAh 25c LiPo, but after inspecting the ample battery compartment, I decided to use the ever popular 3-cell 2200mAh batteries that I had on hand. The battery compartment is located in the cabin of the aircraft and the seats are removable for ease of battery placement.

Author's Opinion

I had to do a double-take when I first looked at the unique design of the Beechcraft Model 17 Staggerwing. That’s just what other pilots will do when you show up to the airfield with the 1100mm model (the actual wingspan tops out at 1030mm), produced by FMS. This golden age of aviation biplane comes equipped with flaps and retractable landing gear and is made out of durable EPO foam. The model is almost ready to fly, requiring only a radio system and battery. FMS recommends a 3-cell 11.1 volt 1800mAh 25c LiPo, but after inspecting the ample battery compartment, I decided to use the ever popular 3-cell 2200mAh batteries that I had on hand. The battery compartment is located in the cabin of the aircraft and the seats are removable for ease of battery placement.

NEED TO KNOW

Manufacturer: FMS
Distributor: Diamond Hobby
Type: Sport scale ARF
For: Intermediate sport pilots
Price: $199.99
Minimum flying area: Large field
Needed to complete/Included: Requires a minimum six-channel radio system, 3S 11.1V 1800mAh LiPo battery and charger.

The unique design makes this 1100mm aircraft stand out from the rest
The motor and ESC provide plenty of power to perform some not-so-scale maneuvers or pull back on the throttle for easy cruising.
FMS paid close attention to detail by adding small parts to the model, like spring flying wires and a unique propeller/spinner combo.
This model attracts a lot of attention at the airfield, so be prepared to talk with people about this luxury aircraft.
Choose between two attractive paint schemes and fly the civilian air model or get that warbird look with the Army Air Corps trim scheme.

Pros

The Staggerwing is one of the few biplanes with retractable landing gear and FMS made sure to include them with this very complete ARF aircraft.
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Cons

The instruction manual is less than clear on some of the required assembly steps.

Key Features

- The motor and ESC provide plenty of power to perform some not-so-scale maneuvers or pull back on the throttle for easy cruising.
- FMS paid close attention to detail by adding small parts to the model, like spring flying wires and a unique propeller/spinner combo.
- This model attracts a lot of attention at the airfield, so be prepared to talk with people about this luxury aircraft.
- Choose between two attractive paint schemes and fly the civilian air model or get that warbird look with the Army Air Corps trim scheme.

A Staggerwing with lots of swagger

The prop adapter found on this model is a unique design. While there are more bolts that the traditional thread-on type, it is easy to keep the prop dead center and tightened down properly.
Extra attention went into the design of the fabric covering used on the prototype. It has faux-molded ribbing depicting the lines on the wings. The EPO foam fuselage easily to mounts that are pre-installed and tied to provided springs and connect to their respective locations. The wires are manufacturer. Except for the flying wires, all the parts before assembly, it was nice to see that servos, gear and all the electronics were installed. The model we received came with two spots on the wing that must have been the motto at the factory because decals were affixed to the wings right out of the box also. After unboxing, it was very apparent that FMS wanted the build to be easy and to have the pilot flying this beautiful plane the same day they received it!

**ASSEMBLY TIPS**

The Beechcraft Staggerwing came pre-built and almost ready to go. Inspecting all the parts before assembly, it was nice to see that servos, gear and all the electronics were installed. The model we received came with two spots on the wing that...
Flying the Staggerwing was simply enjoyable. FMS put in the work to make an attractive aircraft that looks as good as it performs. The Staggerwing’s narrow gear stance definitely does not make it a beginner plane, but intermediate pilots will enjoy praise it elicits from others at the field. Every time that I took the Staggerwing out, other pilots would marvel at the fact that this model included retracts. Even with less than clear instructions, assembly is straightforward and can be completed within an hour or two. Additionally, most of the work has been finished by the factory using quality parts. The large battery compartment can easily fit larger than recommended batteries for longer flight times or to accommodate what the pilot has available in their battery box. The Beechcraft Staggerwing is sure to be a hit with scale aficionados.

CONTACTS
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HOBBYKING hobbyking.com
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For more information, please see our source guide on page 105.