

PRODUCT REVIEW

and simple to use. It might not be the prettiest menu system to look at, but it keeps things clear and does the job well. Still, it's nice to have the 'help' feature to fall back on if needs be.

Beginners may also be attracted by the simulator's co-ordination trainer mode. This involves a simple string of individual movements set against a plain background for the user to copy in a 'Simon Says' style. The mode awards bronze / silver / gold stars according to how accurately you manage to copy the movement. The mode is designed to help the user get to grips with the basic movements of the models and which stick does what on the transmitter. It's a nice idea in theory, but in practice it's all too rudimentary to be of any real benefit. A proper tutorial within the environments you actually use in the simulator proper would have been much more beneficial. As it stands, the co-ordination trainer doesn't really offer anything that jumping straight into the main mode with a trainer won't teach more efficiently.

Minor niggles aside, what this all means, of course, is that the eXtreme64 simulator caters for both

tempt you, including a Lancaster, Spitfire, Corsair, P-51 Mustang, Hurricane, etc. That's not all, though. Fancy taking a 3D model through its paces? You can. Those who like to dabble with the odd biplane or triplane are also catered for. There's even a flying wing in there, as well as a MiG 17 to satiate jet aficionados. The user can choose from 40 fixed-wing models in all, including a couple of more unusual examples such as the Lockheed F117A. Oh, and I almost forgot: there's also the



opportunity to test your off-water skills with the likes of the float-equipped sea Beaver. Helicopter fans needn't feel left out; there are six choppers to choose from, including a trainer set-up. As if all that isn't enough to be getting on with, slope



into '3D' and 'Photo' sections. The 3D areas are relatively basic to look at, but they do the job. The 'photo' backdrops, on the other hand, look wonderful - you fly your model in what is essentially a 360° panoramic real-life image. You've got a choice of Cwmbran (snowy field), Pontypool (bright, summery field) and Rhossili (beach), and they're all great to look at. However, they aren't without their problems - there's no collision detection with the scenery. So, if you fly into some distant trees, for example, the plane will just keep flying into oblivion.

Although the 3D area visuals are relatively basic to look at, they do the job.

Use your Futaba, Hitec or JR tranny to control the on-screen models by hooking it up with these leads (sold separately).



Ideal for novices and veterans alike, RC Flight Master includes a number of variables to make flights as easy or challenging as you see fit.

Users can also perfect their off-water flying - ideal for practice if you're planning your first real-life 'off the drink' session.

novices and veterans alike. Learners can simply load up the software, pick a trainer and practice the basics, whereas those of you who know a thing or two can select a more ambitious model and tinker with the myriad settings before really getting down to the good stuff.

As for the models available, the choice is nothing less than impressive. In fact, the biggest obstacle to overcome with this piece of software is deciding on what to take to the virtual patch first. A variety of old favourites are there to

soarers are included, with a total of seven different gliders to test out. To say the model choice is extensive would be a gross understatement. And that's without even mentioning the weird White Knight / Space Ship One mode...

As you'd expect, the various models all handle suitably differently, so even the most experienced pilot is likely to find something new to have a play around with here. There are a few different areas you can choose to fly in, and these are split

That said, while this does detract from the realism somewhat, you'd have to be somewhat out of control in the first place to collide (or not, in this case)



At £59.99, RC Flight Master is one of the cheaper sim packages out there and offers good value for money.