

## HPI SAVAGE FLUX HP

■ RTR ■ ELECTRIC ■ OFF-ROAD

HPI DELIVERS  
ALL THE POWER  
YOU CAN HANDLE

WORDS MATT HIGGINS

» [mattheairage.com](mailto:mattheairage.com)

PHOTOS HOPE MCCALL

### TALK ABOUT FORESIGHT.

In 2006, when nitro reigned unchallenged in its supremacy, HPI released the E-Savage, which was a smaller, lighter and, of course, electric-powered version of its venerable fuel-burning Savage. Fast forward to today, and HPI once again electrifies its monster truck platform, but this time it's big. The Savage Flux HP is big in size and big on performance. In fact, some might say it over-delivers on the latter. HPI was ahead of the times back in '06 and now is ahead of the power curve in 2009. How so? The Savage Flux HP is capable of doing standing backflips and breaking most speed limits right out of the box. HPI states it can even reach 62mph with street tires and the proper batteries. With this type of power, we just had to find out for ourselves what this monster was like to wheel. Check it out.

### SPECIFICATIONS

**Type** 1/8-scale RTR 4WD electric monster truck

**Price** \$645 (varies with dealer)

**Top speed** 62mph\*

**Wheelbase** 12.3 in. (337mm)

**Width** 16.8 (427mm)

**Weight, as tested** 12.8 lb. (5,806g)

**Spur/pinion** 44/20

**Final drive ratio** 16.1:1

**Chassis** Twin alum. vertical plates

**Differential(s)** Sealed gear

**Suspension** Lower A-arms with fixed upper camber links

**Shocks** Oversize fluid-filled plastic

\*Manufacturer's claim

ONLINE EXTRAS  







FLUX HP

SAVAGE  
FLUX HP



HPI SAVAGE  
FLUX HP



IT'S INCREDIBLY POWERFUL, FAST AND STILL ENJOYABLY EASY TO USE.



The HPI TF-3 is a simple yet reliable transmitter. It's AM and features dual rate to adjust steering throw.



## FEATURES

### CHASSIS

The hallmark design element of the Savage lineup is the TVP, or twin vertical plate chassis. The Flux HP version of the Savage uses beefy gunmetal gray 2.5 aluminum plates that key into equally stout plastic bulkheads front and rear. The bottoms of the bulkheads are stiffened with aluminum plates in HPI's familiar purple anodiz-

ing that are further protected by plastic skidplates. Flanking the chassis are two long battery boxes that can accommodate 2S and 3S LiPo packs and up to 8-cell NiMH packs. The boxes are well vented to allow cooling air to enter and hot air to escape. Rounding out the chassis package are realistic front and rear bumpers and a roll bar that doubles as a handle. It's also worth noting that the overall chassis design

features a fairly low center of gravity. This should significantly help handling, as today's high-power electric packages can be quite heavy, most often even heavier than their nitro counterparts.

### SUSPENSION

Like the chassis, the Flux HP suspension is distinctly Savage, but this time, the 4-wheel independent suspension is damped by four (not the typ-

ical Savage eight) large fluid-filled shocks. The shock shafts are 3.5mm thick, so they are not likely to bend, and each shock also features a 2-stage spring setup. This allows the shocks to soak up small bumps and ruts and still handle the impact from big air. To further ensure the Savage Flux HP would withstand the abuse it will undoubtedly be subjected to, HPI took a page from its Savage XL. The uprights are





## PERFORMANCE

With two fully charged packs installed, the first thing I did with the Savage Flux HP was just punch it. Even with “only” two MaxAmps.com 2S packs and the 14.8 volts they put out, I was rewarded with an instant wheelie. HPI includes an optional wheelie bar, and I advise you to install it, or exercise lots of self control. Hammer on the throttle, and the tires bark, grab and the front of the truck points toward the sky. Very cool indeed. The power and acceleration of the truck will impress anyone. Case closed: the Savage Flux HP rips. It also has too much snap. After perfecting my Big Daddy Don Garlits-style launches (he’s a famous drag racer, too), I started testing the Savage’s high-speed potential. It is fast all around. I took some easy corners and started cornering faster and faster. It isn’t a sports car, but thanks to some fairly stiff springs, the big truck cornered well. Any crazy jerking of the steering wheel at high speed resulted in the expected tumble, but if you drive with any sense at all, the Flux HP stays on all fours with the proverbial shiny side up. I tested the brakes and they worked well. They’re completely adjustable, but the factory setting seemed spot on. They didn’t fade, and they weren’t set so strong that the truck did a front flip when I stabbed the brakes. While I didn’t experience a single glitch, I wanted the added security of FM or 2.4GHz as I easily hit speeds in the high 50s. The radar gun even got a pass at 58mph. I’m sure that with HPI’s recommended street tires and optimal conditions, I could have gotten its claimed 62mph. After getting a feel for the truck on pavement, I hit the dirt and just bashed on it. I know plenty of people will never get tired of just doing blazing-fast speed runs up and down their street, but the Savage Flux HP is really at home off-road. It felt fast on pavement and insane on rough terrain. HPI has been refining the Savage platform since it was introduced in 2002, and it shows in this latest offering. The shocks do a great job of keeping the truck controllable even at high speeds over rough terrain. The stock steering servo seemed more than up to the task, and the overall steering was very typical of a monster truck. It went where I pointed it and held its course when asked to. Jumping the Flux HP proved to be a lot of fun. With big tires and tons of power, it was easy to control in the air. I had the power to launch the truck sky high, and the Savage suspension was able to take it. After I had installed a matching set of MaxAmps.com 3S LiPo packs, I again started my testing from scratch, and you can basically take everything I said before and add an exclamation point to it. The power is just ridiculous. I tested the Flux HP’s ability to perform a standing backflip as HPI shows on its site. That’s no camera trickery. Backflips are pulled off with ease.

direct transplants from the big tire and overall oversize XL rig. The upper shock towers feature three mounting options, and overall, the Flux HP is light on tuning adjustments. That should be of no concern to its target audience of bashers and speed freaks.

### DRIVETRAIN

The durability theme continues into the drivetrain design. In addition to rubber-sealed ball

bearings, all-metal gears are used throughout. The spur gear, which is often a vulnerable spot, is machined out of steel. The gear differentials are sealed so different thickness silicone fluid can be added for tuning, and HPI spec’d what it calls its Super Heavy Duty Machined gears. Last in getting the power to the wheels are the also Super Heavy Duty dogbones and the 17mm hexes. An externally adjustable

slipper clutch further protects the drivetrain. HPI includes an optional 25-tooth pinion for those who want even more speed.

## INCLUDED ELECTRONICS & ACCESSORIES

The Savage Flux HP isn’t just electric but also brushless and LiPo ready. The Blur speed control features a built-in fan and the ability to handle up to two 3S LiPo packs. That’s 22.2 volts. We’ve come a long way from the times when RC cars couldn’t handle more than 7.2 or 8.4 volts at most. The Blur is also compatible with Castle Creations’ Castle Link setup that allows complete customization of the speed control via your computer. The Blur is wired to connect to dual battery packs via Deans Ultra Plugs. The second part of the brushless package is the Tork 2,200kV motor. In addition to cross-cut cooling fins, the Tork motor features two 8mm aluminum clamps and a 3mm aluminum mounting plate; traditional motor screws are not used. The two clamps keep the motor in position, eliminate flexing and allow gearing adjustments. HPI knew it couldn’t get away with a wimpy steering servo, so it selected an HPI SF-5 servo with metal gears and 124 oz.-in. of torque. The HPI TF-3 AM radio system is called into duty for the Flux HP. This simple 2-channel transmitter features the usual servo-reversing and trim as well as dual rate.

### PLUS/MINUS

⊕ Tons of power  
 ⊕ Savage lineage  
 ⊕ High quality

⊖ AM radio

## VERDICT

**The Savage Flux HP is a textbook example of the advantages of modern electric-powered RC. It’s incredibly powerful, fast and still enjoyably easy to use. It’s also built like a tank, so all the power won’t result in an instant or constant need to order replacement parts. As a basher, the Savage Flux HP delivers the performance and reliability that both newbs and RC experts will require and demand. It’s a solid offering all around. The Savage Flux HP makes great use of existing HPI parts and designs yet is still its own truck. Overall, it’s very worthy of having the Savage name.**

### SOURCES

HPI Racing [hpiracing.com](http://hpiracing.com)  
 LRP [teamassociated.com](http://teamassociated.com)  
 MaxAmps.com [maxamps.com](http://maxamps.com)