

Cellmeter

<http://www.hobby-lobby.com/cellmeter.htm>

For any of you out there using Lithium batteries here is a gadget that I've used the past 6 months and found absolutely invaluable. The "Cellmeter" offered by Hobby Lobby, connects via the balance taps to your battery and gives a readout of percent charge, cell balance, and individual cell voltage of each cell in the pack to a thousandth volt.



How many of you have mixed up the discharged lipo with the fully charged one and suffered the consequences of an immediate dead stick?? Well I have on more than one occasion and this quick and easy meter has nearly eliminated that dumb mistake. Also, as I think everyone knows, the balance of each cell is absolutely important to prevent over discharge of individual cells, which effectively destroys the pack eventually.

Though there are different cell balancers out there, they don't give you the "visual" of what the cells are doing which I have found really helpful.

By conveniently checking your pack before charging you can balance it with a "Blinky" (Astroflight), or other cell balancer and prevent the progressive destruction of your battery. By checking after the charge you know you are fully charged and balanced for your next flight.

My battery lives have been markedly prolonged which is a good thing since they are so darned expensive! There is a bar graph display on the meter which gives you the percent remaining "in the tank" and by checking that after a flight you might be surprised at how much (or how little) you have left-both very helpful in setting your timer on future flights. If 30% is still showing after a flight, and I had set the timer for 10 minutes, then I reset for 2 or 3 minutes and have another go around. After a while you actually start having a more visual love affair with your batteries!

The down side is the expense-a hundred bucks or so, though I just saw one with lesser whistles and bells for \$29.99, made by Innov8tive Designs. No personal experience with that one at all but I plan on getting one soon and will give you an update on that more affordable one.

Check em out! *Greg Knecht*