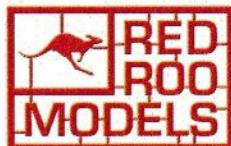


RRD7288



Australian Pilots in Westland Whirlwinds

For the 1/72 scale Special Hobby kit



P7062 HE-L 263 Squadron in which Flight Sergeant Francis Leslie Hicks was killed in a training exercise on 19 February 1943.

Australian Pilots and the Westland Whirlwind

Although the bulk of RAAF aircrew in Europe served in Bomber Command, many Australians served in RAF fighter squadrons. Here are three of them from 137 and 263 Squadrons who flew Westland Whirlwinds.

1. Francis Leslie Hicks 408207 P7062 HE-L 263 Squadron February 1943

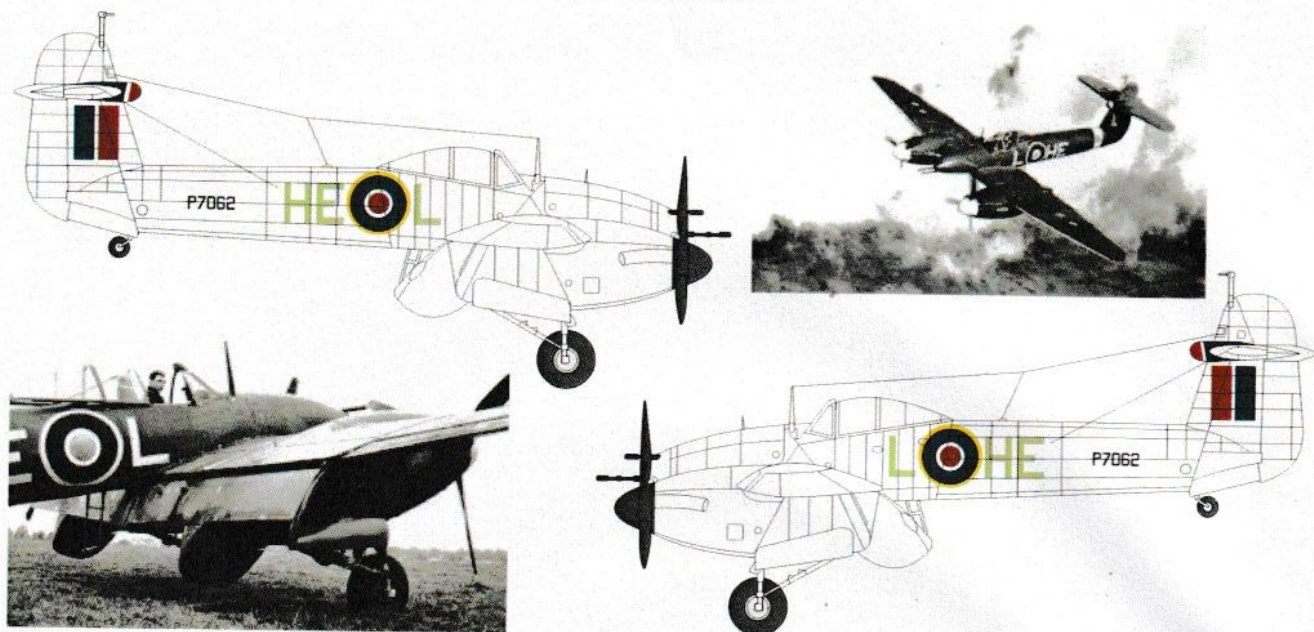
Flight Sergeant Frank Hicks was born in Latrobe, Tasmania in 1912. He was employed in civilian life as a carpenter and enlisted in the RAAF in April 1941. He graduated from flying training in Canada in October 1941 and passed through fighter OTUs, ending up in Hurricanes with 87 Squadron in April 1942. He joined 263 Sqn at the end of July 1942. He was sent on attachment to A&AEE at Boscombe



Down from 15 Aug to 31 Oct 1942. He does not appear to have flown any combat sorties with 263 Sqn and was unfortunate to be killed in a training exercise on 19 Feb 1943. Two sections of two Whirlwinds each were simulating attacks on Army transports on the Wroughton-Swindon road. Hicks in P7062 attacked the targets but perhaps pulled up too abruptly, half rolling half spinning and crashing into a field a few miles north of Wroughton airfield. Witnesses stated that the wing of Hicks' aircraft hit a tree causing the pilot to lose control and crash.

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The profile drawings show the position of the serial number and code letters in relation to the national markings on the fuselage. Refer to the kit instructions for camouflage and markings details. The aircraft was finished in Dark Green/Ocean Grey upper surfaces and Medium Sea Grey under surfaces.



P7062 HE-L 263 Squadron in which Flight Sergeant Francis Leslie Hicks was killed in a training exercise on 19 February 1943.

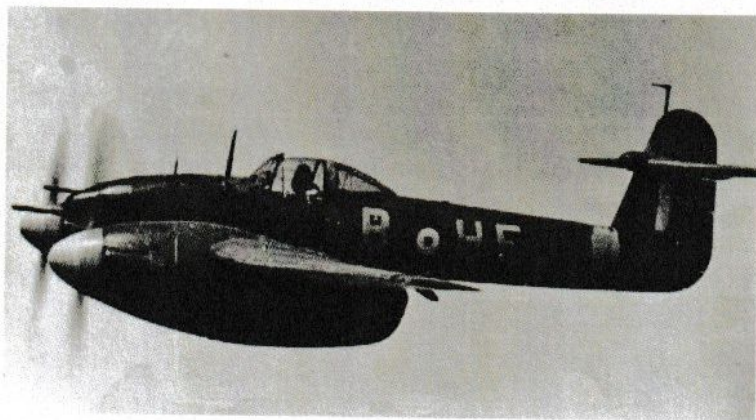


2. Maxwell Tydney Cotton 408204 P6981 HE-B 263 Squadron June 1943

Flying Officer Max Cotton was born in Swansea, Tasmania in 1921. He was employed as an agriculturalist and enlisted in the RAAF in April 1941. After flight training in Canada he went to 53 OTU and was posted to 87 Sqn on Hurricanes. He was posted to 263 Squadron flying Whirlwinds in July 1942. He took part in numerous operations, some at night. His sorties included bombing attacks on enemy airfields, railway objectives and against convoys. On three occasions his aircraft was

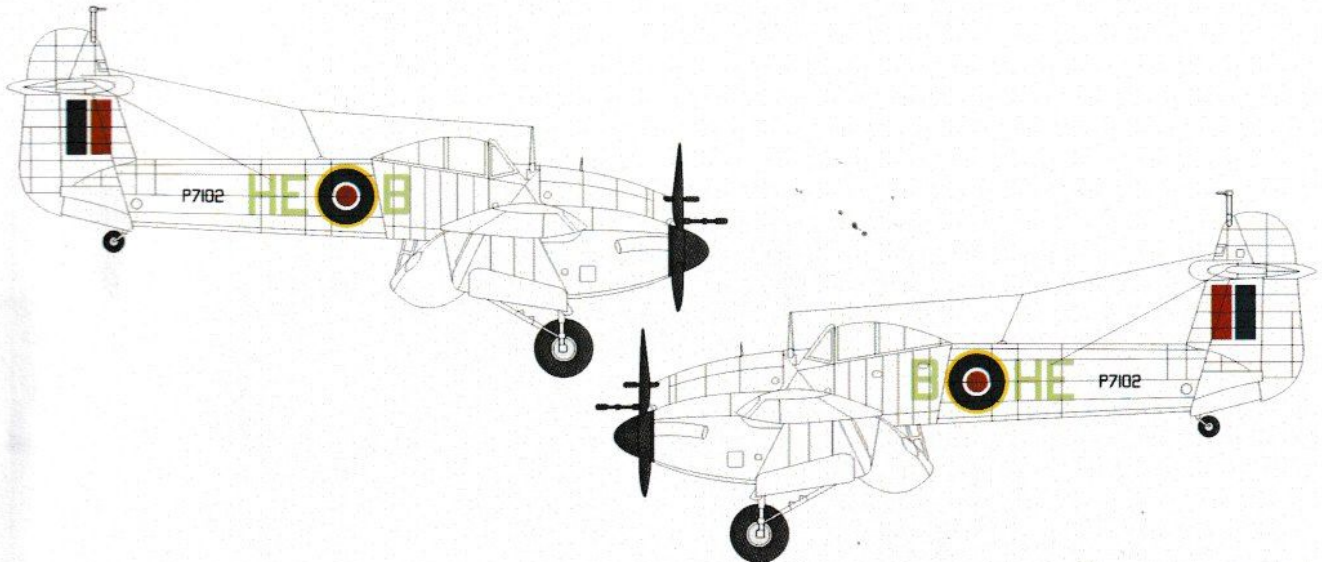
seriously damaged by anti-aircraft fire but he was able to return and land safely from all of them. He was noted for a disregard of intense enemy opposition and pressed home his attacks with great determination.

At 1543 hours on 15 June 1943, in P7000 HE-V, he led a section of four Whirlwinds in an armed reconnaissance in the Channel Islands area. They attacked a convoy of four minesweepers and an armed trawler. Cotton's aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire and disintegrated as it hit the water, killing him. Cotton was awarded a posthumous DFC for his sustained performance in 263 Squadron.

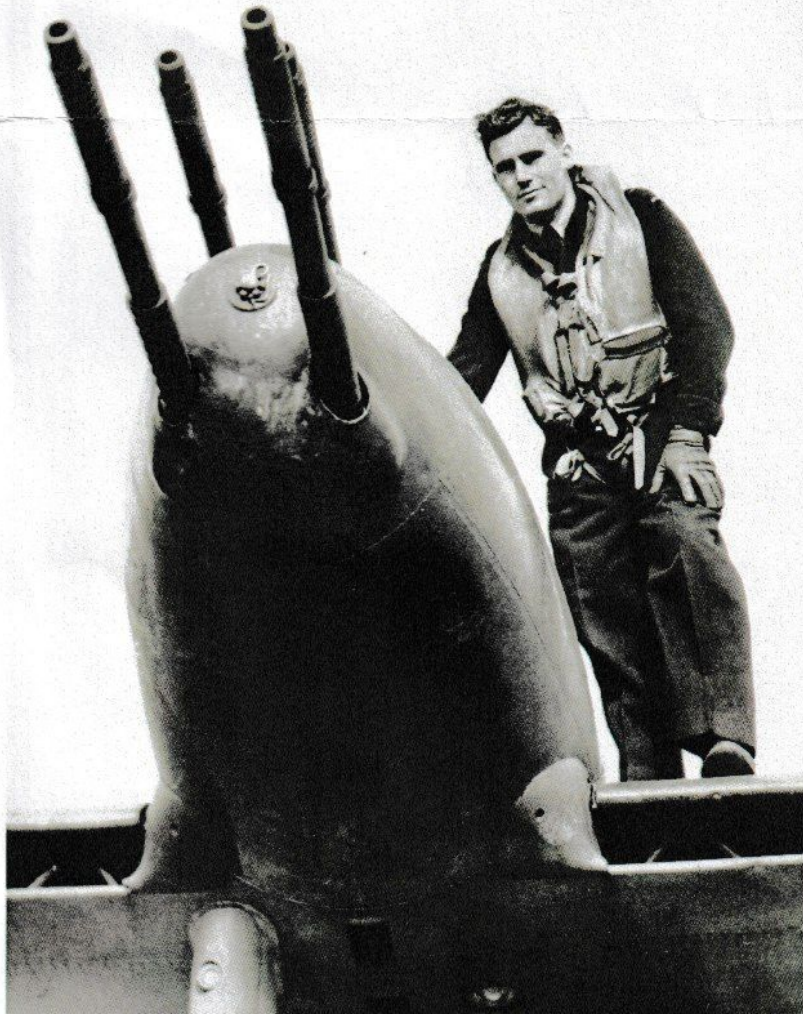


P6981 HE-B was taken on charge by 263 on 8.4.43. Sustained Category B damage on morning Roadstead sortie on 28.4.43 when flown by PO Max Cotton. The pilot was unharmed and the aircraft was repaired. This photograph of HE-B was taken prior to June 1942 before the introduction of the C1 roundel and shows the original A type with which it entered RAF service.

The profile drawings show the position of the serial number and code letters in relation to the national markings on the fuselage. Refer to the kit instructions for camouflage and markings details. The aircraft was finished in Dark Green/Ocean Grey upper surfaces and Medium Sea Grey under surfaces.



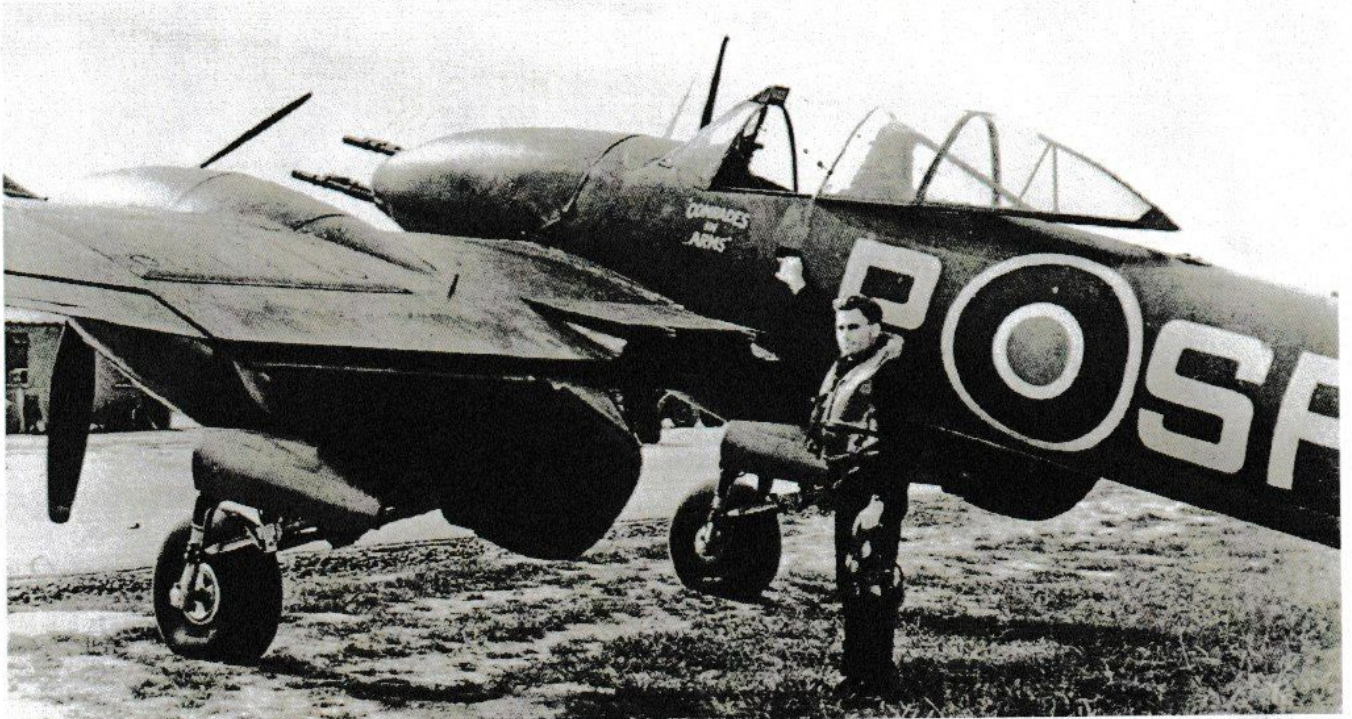
3. Edward Lancelot Musgrave 403528
P7102 SF-P 137 Squadron June 1943



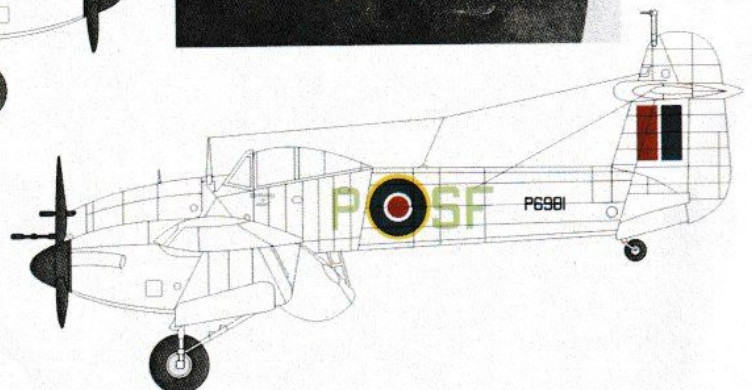
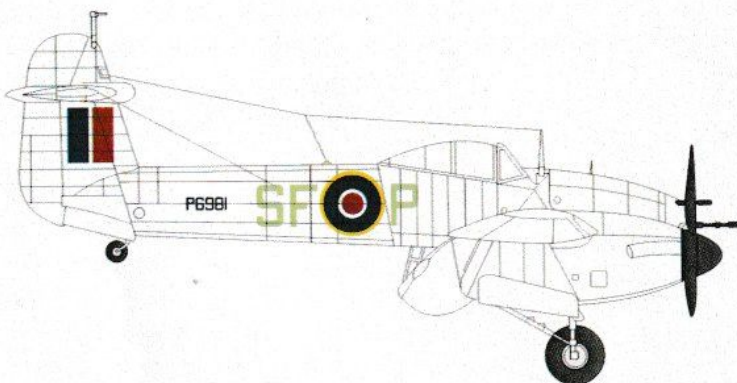
Flying Officer Eddie Musgrave was born in Sydney NSW in 1918. He was employed in civilian life as a salesman and enlisted in the RAAF in February 1941. He graduated from flying training in Canada in September 1941. After passing through No 3 Personnel Reception Centre at the Metropole Hotel, he joined 61 OTU at Heston in November 1941 for fighter pilot training. In January 1942 he was posted to 137 Sqn. After some months of familiarisation and training on the Whirlwind he commenced operational flying at the start of June 1942, flying 10 sorties in that month. As 137 stepped up its war on communications in Northern France and Belgium he flew a large number of operational missions including strikes on 7 locomotives. One night in February 1943, he took off in P7114 to search for ships in the Channel. Although the night was very dark Musgrave sighted a merchant vessel sailing close into the shore south of Boulogne. Skilfully approaching, he attacked but was subjected to heavy fire from the coastal defences and escorts. Diving

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through searchlight beams on shore he attacked, releasing bombs from a low level. Although his aircraft was damaged, he flew in safely to his base. Musgrave's courage, skill and determination in this attack and further operations resulted in the award of a DFC. On 18 May 1943 he flew P7063 from Manston to attack shipping off Gravelines, France. At 0132 hours he reported by radio that he was about to make a second attack. Nothing further was heard from him and he was presumed shot down.



P7102 was one of no less than 11 Whirlwinds which were presentation aircraft, paid for by subscription or donation. It was donated by Mr and Mrs Howard Ellis of Fiji, It was dubbed with the presentation name Comrades in Arms although it is believed it was intended to be Comrades in Arms - Fiji and New Zealand. This fighter served with 263 Squadron and then in 137 after June 1942. While it appears associated with Musgrave due to a photo session there is no evidence in the ORB that he progressed from sitting in it to actually flying it. The pilot most associated with it is FO Frederic Michael Furber, a Rhodesian, who flew it dozens of times from July to December 1942, to the point where it was almost his personal Whirlwind

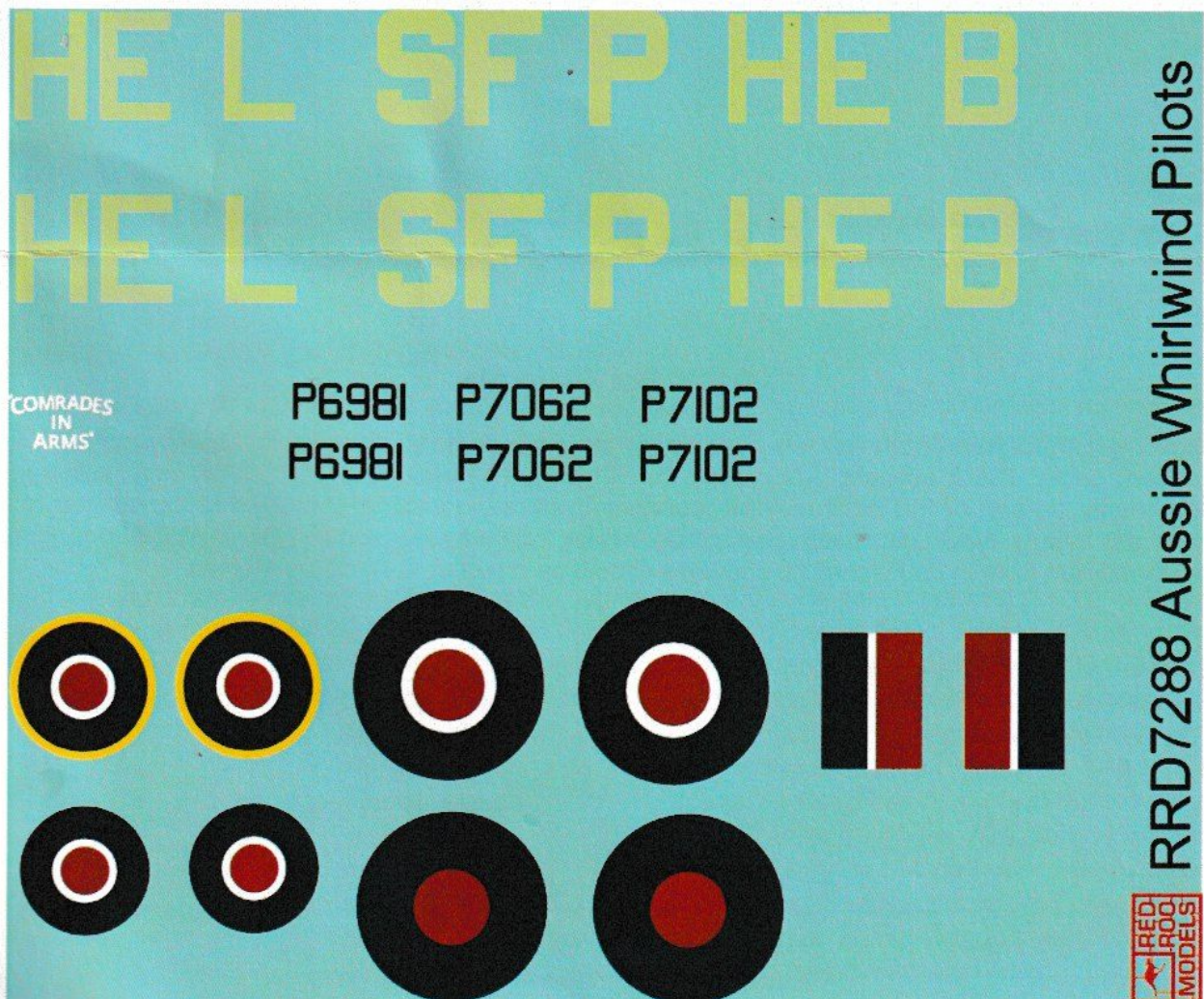


"Comrades in Arms" is shown in Grey in the profile drawing to aid the modeller in locating the decal correctly — it was painted on the aircraft fuselage in white. The aircraft was finished in Dark Green/Ocean Grey upper surfaces and Medium Sea Grey under surfaces.

Decal Application

Warning: When applying decals to the model be very gentle as the decal film is very thin and may tear if mistreated.

1. Apply a coat of gloss varnish to the model and allow to thoroughly dry before applying the decals.
2. The decal sheets provided in this kit are screen printed and laser printed. The small laser printed decal sheet is a continuous film decal and will require trimming of individual decals. When you are ready to start applying the decals, we recommend that you cut as close as possible to the item you want to use to achieve the best result.
3. Soak the decal in warm water to which a drop or two of dishwashing liquid has been added. Leave the decal for a short period of time and then slide the decal off the backing paper onto model surface.
4. Once on the model and in the right position, lightly press down on the decal with a Q-tip to soak up excess water. You may then use your favourite decal settling solution and allow to dry. Allow any creases or bubbles to dry thoroughly before piercing with a pin and applying more settling solution to help the decal conform to the surface. Repeat the process as required.
5. Apply a coat of gloss varnish over the entire model once the decals are thoroughly dry. This ensures that the decals are sealed to the model's surface and carrier film is camouflaged.



Use these decals for the three aircraft covered by these decals. Use the kit instructions for camouflage pattern, and colours.

Bomb Racks

It is correct to fit the bomb racks and bombs for all three options. Bombs and racks are included in the kit. Bombs were painted Bronze Green with a stripe around the nose denoting the filling. Hicks' P7062 may have carried 250lb practice bombs painted white or buff.

References

137 Squadron RAF Operational Record Book.

263 Squadron RAF Operational Record Book.

Westland Whirlwind Mk.I, Mk.I Fighter-Bomber by Michal Ovcacik and Karel Susa; 4+ Publications 2002, Prague, Czech Republic. ISBN-10: 8090255965, ISBN-13: 978-8090255968.

Westland Whirlwind Described by Bruce Robertson, Kookaburra Technical Publications, 1966 (1st edition) and 1971 (2nd edition), Dandenong, Australia. ISBN-10: 0858800047, ISBN-13: 978-0858800045.

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Red Roo Models
PO Box 113,
Glen Waverley, Vic 3150
AUSTRALIA

Web: www.redroomodels.com
Email: redroo@redroomodels.com