

Mosquitos on the Stockholm run

When B.O.A.C. first conducted wartime flights between Sweden and the UK, they were operating a fleet of Lockheed Hudsons and Lodestars. The arrival of the Focke Wulf Fw190 on airfields in Denmark and Norway made these flights very hazardous, so B.O.A.C. requested faster aircraft to give the crews a chance to outrun their most lethal opponent. In December 1942, B.O.A.C. took delivery of their first Mosquito – a single Mk.IV (carrying the registration G-AGFV) which made its first flight to Stockholm on 4 February 1943, and paved the way for further deliveries of Mosquitoes, these being based on the FB Mk.VI. Six Mosquito Mk.VI aircraft, registered G-AGGC - G-AGGH, were received in April and May 1943. A further three aircraft, G-AGKO, G-AGKP and G-AGKR, were received in April 1944 as replacements for aircraft lost in accidents. This decal sheet include decals for the first batch of six Mk.VIs.

In addition to carrying vital war materials like ball bearings, passengers were carried on a mattress on the closed and locked forward bomb doors - a thermos flask of tea being the only in flight service, but at least it was free.

The sole Mk.IV was originally painted in the standard Civil Land Scheme of Dark Green and Dark Earth upper surfaces with Sky (or "duck egg blue" as it was referred to) lower surfaces. As B.O.A.C.'s aircraft were mainly flying over water on the route to and from Sweden, the airline made a request to the Air Ministry to paint the aircraft in "sea colours" on the upper surfaces, i.e. Extra Dark Sea Grey and Dark Slate Grey. Although the Air Ministry weren't completely convinced by B.O.A.C.'s arguments, this request was granted, and the first six Mosquito Mk.VIs were delivered in these colours. After a few months in service, B.O.A.C. made a new request to paint the undersides black (Night) – this too was approved, and the aircraft had their lower surfaces repainted in Night in August (except from G-AGGF which crashed on 17 August after only four flights to Stockholm and had been written off). The three attrition replacements were delivered in Extra Dark Sea Grey, Dark Slate Grey and Night.

Registration letters on the fuselage and wing upper surfaces were Medium Sea Grey for 'GC - 'GH while 'KO - 'KR had Night letters. The letters for the lower surfaces were Night on Sky camouflage and Medium Sea Grey on a background of Night.

The directives specified that aircraft with Night undersides should have Red and Blue identifications stripes on the undersides. However photos reveal that Red, White and Blue stripes (decals B - E) were carried, at least on the initial batch of aircraft. It is believed that the BOAC Speedbird logo on the nose was painted in black with a silver border. However a set of dark blue and silver logos is also provided, should new information prove otherwise.

Modelling notes

Excellent kits of the Mosquito Mk.VI have been available some time. The best kit overall in 1/48 scale is the Tamiya kit. The decals will also fit other kits without modifications. For a B.O.A.C. Mosquito Mk.VI the armament should be removed and the cannon ports filled. Note that the propellers were of the narrow chord type and that all aircraft feature unshrouded exhausts. 50 gallon slipper tanks were carried as standard.

These decals have been designed after extensive research in the National Archives and the British Airways Heritage Collection, as part of research for a forthcoming book on the Stockholm run. B.O.A.C.'s sole Mosquito Mk.IV aircraft was marked differently, so these decals can not be used for modelling that aircraft. B.O.A.C.'s Mk. IV is featured on Vingtor Decals sheet No. 48-106. The decals are also available in 1/72 scale.

Decal application

The decals have a very thin carrier film and need to be handled with care. Individual decals should be cut out and soaked for a few seconds in lukewarm water. Slide the decal from the paper over to the model's surface without wrinkling. Avoid moving the decal excessively to avoid tearing the film and washing off the adhesive. The carrier film might at first seem rigid and difficult to lay down over complex surfaces, but using decal solutions like Micro Set and Micro Sol will make them snuggle down over detail and make them look painted on when completely dry. For best results, decals should always be applied to a gloss surface.

It is recommended to first apply the identification stripes to the wings and fuselage and let these dry completely before applying the registration letters. The stripes will help you in aligning the letters.

Thanks

Thanks to Jens Håkon Brandal for help with the instructions.

Decals for Norwegian military aircraft
are available from

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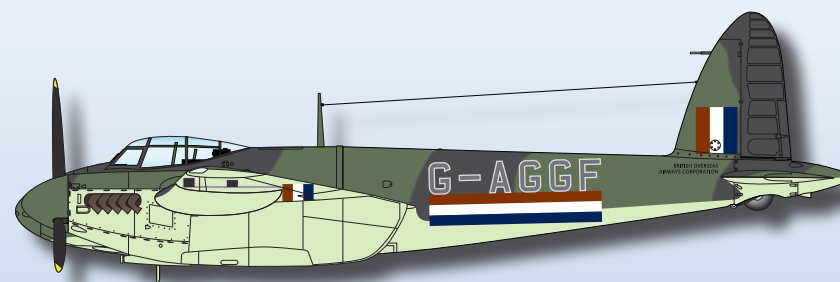
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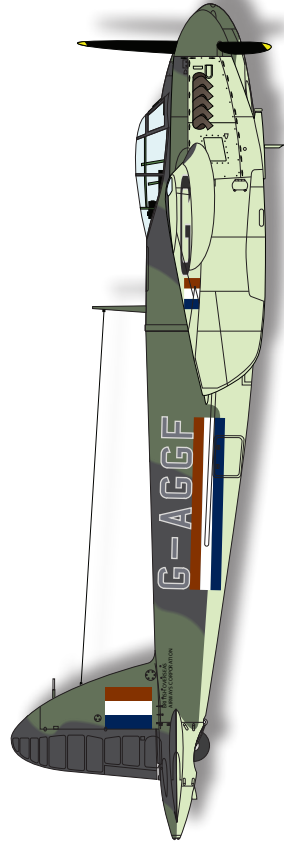
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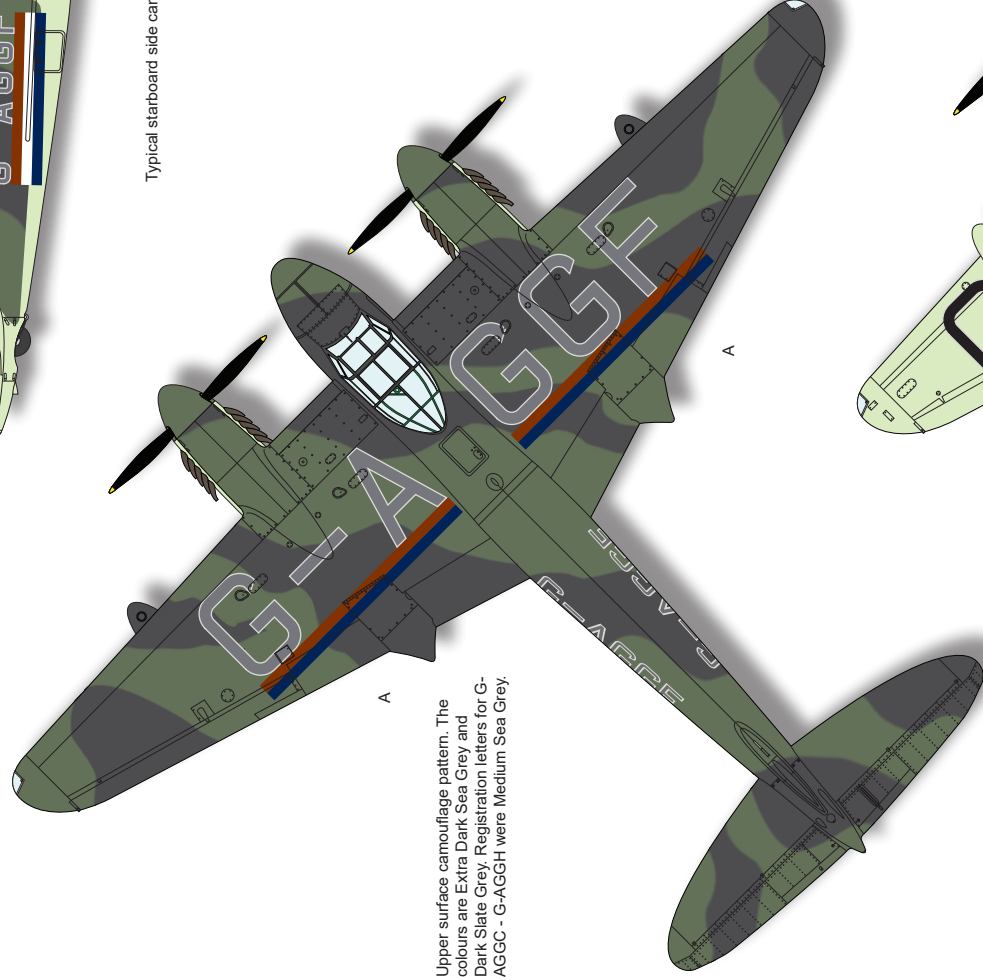
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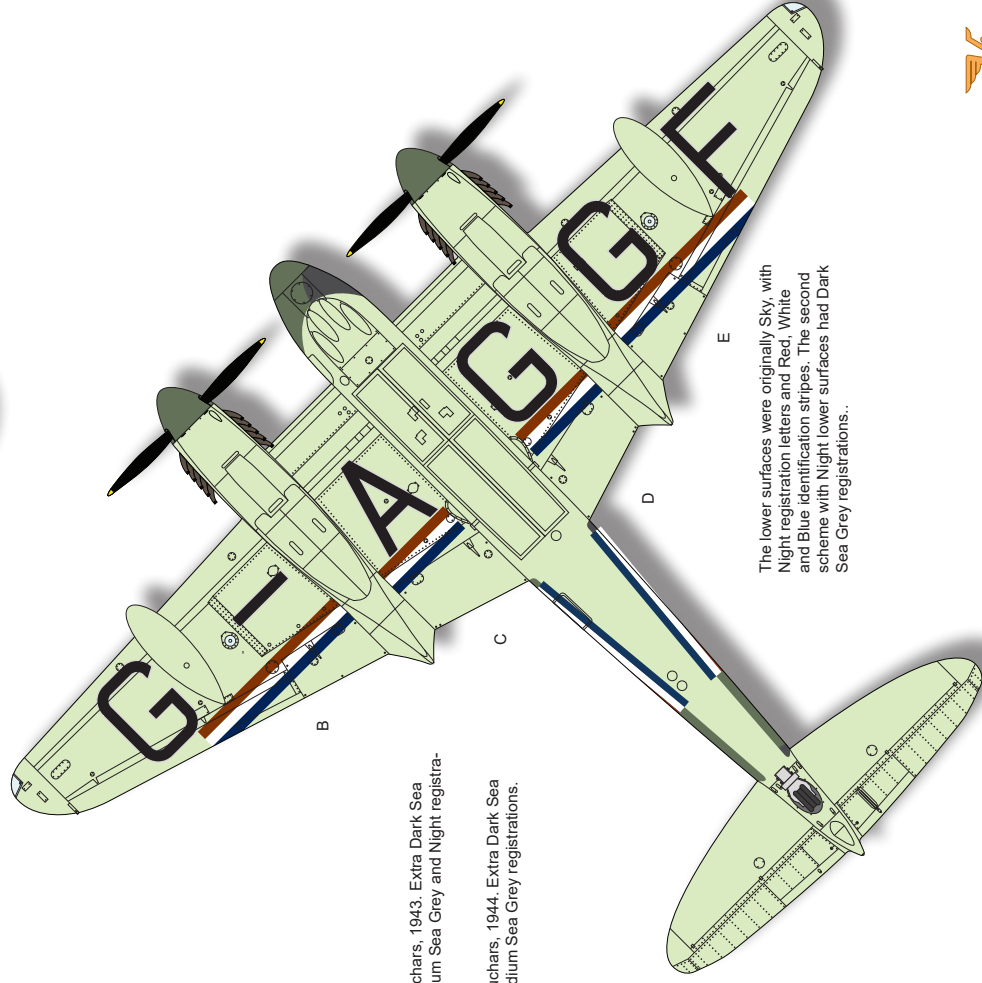


Typical starboard side camouflage pattern.



Upper surface camouflage pattern. The colours are Extra Dark Sea Grey and Dark Slate Grey. Registration letters for G-AGGC - G-AGGH were Medium Sea Grey.

Position of BOAC "Speedbird" on the nose. Starboard side is similar.



The lower surfaces were originally Sky, with Night registration letters and Red, White and Blue identification stripes. The second scheme with Night lower surfaces had Dark Sea Grey registrations.

Front page:
de Havilland Mosquito Mk.VI, G-AGGF, BOAC, Leuchars, 1943. Extra Dark Sea Grey, Dark Slate Grey and Sky camouflage with Medium Sea Grey and Night registration letters.

de Havilland Mosquito Mk.VI, G-AGGC, BOAC, Leuchars, 1944. Extra Dark Sea Grey, Dark Slate Grey and Night camouflage with Medium Sea Grey registrations.