



Above: Seen in its dispersal at B.6 MN798 XM-Y of 182 Squadron was one of the first production Typhoons with the 18-inch Sky rear fuselage band moved forward to accommodate the larger tailplane.

Right: The yellow inscription on this Typhoon at B.5 reads 'Northern Rhodesia Squadron' – identifying 245 Squadron. Note the black spinner which became more evident on 121 Wing Typhoons as the campaign progressed. The RP rails are rust-coloured, except for the outer 'beam' which has black-painted rails. The pilot, explaining the Typhoon armament to Canadian Army visitors, is wearing khaki battle-dress. This had been ordered for 2ndTAF aircrew following issues of 'mistaken identity' because RAF uniforms could look uncomfortably similar (particularly in dusty conditions) to German 'field grey'. Some Allied soldiers were not familiar with RAF uniforms.



A vital factor in keeping 2ndTAF squadrons up to strength were the locally based Repair and Salvage Units which dealt with any repairs beyond the scope or capacity of the squadrons' maintenance facilities.

After a wheels-up landing at B.9 on 1 August 1944, MN413 I8-T was recovered by 419 R&SU. It was apparently beyond their current capacity and returned to the UK for repair by Marshall of Cambridge. That company and Taylorcraft at Rearsby, held Typhoon repair contracts and played a major role in keeping the Wings up to strength.

The unusual view from above shows typical wear and tear on the non-slip walkway; the square (arrowed) near the trailing edge is the second step for cockpit access – the first being the retractable footstep pulled down from the fuselage (see page 22).

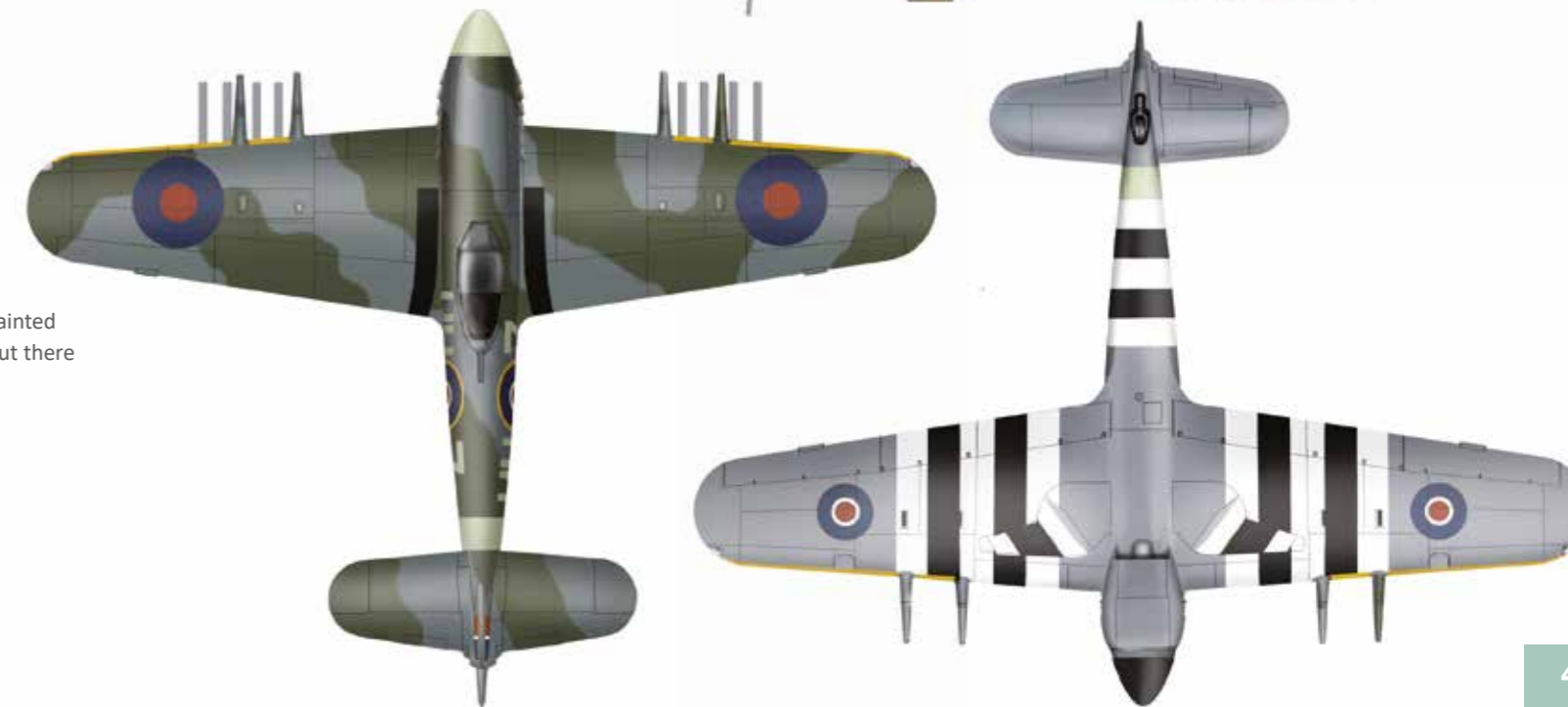


A requirement to increase the fire-power of 2ndTAF Typhoons, resulted in a double RP- two standard rounds, each missing two fins. - linked by 'Duplex saddles' (left). They remained together when fired. However AFDU trials showed the combination of extra weight and drag, combined with the instability of the installation, rendered the configuration unsuitable for operations - particularly from ALGs.

Despite the 'thumbs-down from AFDU, the 2ndTAF went ahead with a very limited operational trial. This was conducted by 121 Wing's Wg Cdr Charles Green and three pilots from 175 Squadron. They flew six sorties on 10, 11 and 12 August. Touching down (below) at B.5, MN470 HH-Z was one of the Typhoons involved.



TYPHOON IB MN470 HH-Z, 175 SQN, B.5 AUGUST 1944



Modeller's notes

- Day Fighter Scheme
- D-Day stripes under fuselage and wings
- Starboard undercarriage door incorrectly painted
- Port undercarriage door shown as similar but there were many variations
- Eight Duplex RP
- Large tailplane, overlaps Sky band
- Three-blade propeller
- Black spinner
- RP omitted from underside plan



Above: In the UK, the 2ndTAF had a major repair facility – the Forward Repair Unit - located at RAF Odiham. This is an early Typhoon (from the R-serial range) but poor record keeping during the Normandy campaign has made identification difficult; R8843 seems most likely. Jacked up for armament harmonisation, it displays the anti-shimmy tail-wheel tyre and a small triangular patch above the fin-flash, which is the FRU's trade-mark badge.

Left: On 13 July 1944 Plt Off Johnny Rook's MN860 OV-G was badly shot up by a Bf109 but he managed to return to base. His aircraft was attended by 419 R&SU who carried out some repairs (note the rear fuselage patch partly obscuring the 'G') but full repair was completed in the UK.



Inset: After the abortive attempt to introduce '16-RP' armament, the use of Duplex RP on the inner pairs of rails was authorised. This configuration seems to have been used by 609 Squadron alone, as seen here on MN178 PR-V. Also of note are the 'miniature' (approximately 9-inch) D-Day stripes under the rear fuselage. It would appear that these can be explained by MN178's previous service with 263 Squadron in 10 Group – Spitfire squadrons in this Group have been recorded with the reduced-size stripes.

