HURRICANE Mk.I BLOCK 3 (HAWKER) P3265-P3984

The third Hawker order of 544 aircraft. Delivered between February 1940 and July 1940. Production was shared between Hawker at Kingston/ Brooklands, and the Langley works near Slough - just west of what is now Heathrow airport.

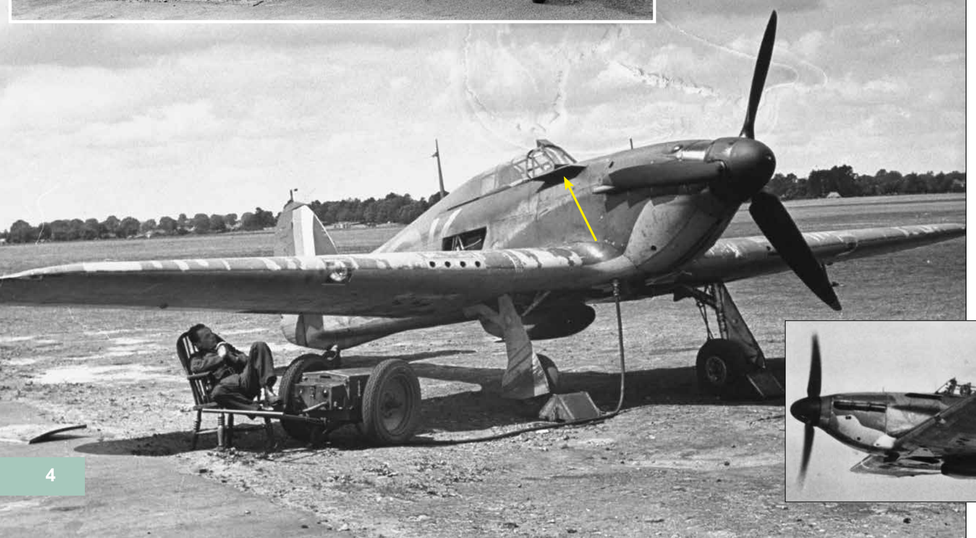
Early P3 series Hurricanes with factory applied b/w undersides, large fuselage roundels, 5 spoke wheels, internal windscreens, and Rotol props. All these have streamlined aerials and early gun sights. Although very new, considerable wear on the cowlings is obvious.

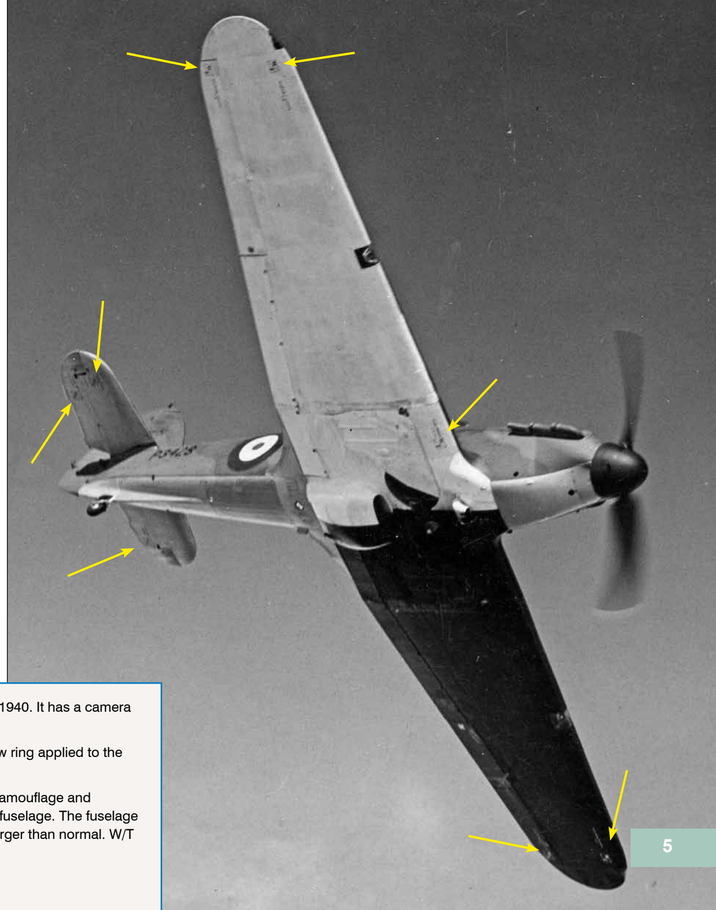
Right: P3268, DU-M of 312 Squadron after force-landing on 11 October 1940. This appears to have a DH spinner, with wooden blades, so could be a Rotol bullet spinner.

Below: Three images of P3300, which was delivered to the CFF (Combined Forces in France) on 17 May 1940 and lost a few days later. The MU applied fin flash is based upon the original instruction to have the colours in equal sized rectangles. In this case, they measured the bottom of the fin and divided it into three. The aircraft has the later style exhausts and a wooden Rotol prop. The interior of the flaps have not been painted black and white. Note the lack of any tape over the gun ports.

P3408 VY-K was delivered to 85 Squadron on 30 May 1940 and left the squadron on 10 October 1940 having fought its way through the Battle of Britain. It's an interesting aircraft as it was photographed both in July 1940 (left and below left) and later in October 1940 (below inset). The most obvious difference between the two is the addition of underwing roundels, which came in around 15 August, but note that the fuselage roundel has been changed also. There was no official reason to do this so it was probably just on the whim of the C/O for a forthcoming squadron photographic session.

The high and wavy demarcation between upper and lower camouflage is something that is seen on 85 and 17 Squadron Hurricanes, both based at Debden at the time. Clearly it was the local interpretation of the new orders in June 1940 to apply Sky undersurfaces over the old black and white scheme. The patchy leading edges are possibly in Sky or a grey and note that the gun ports are not covered at all with red doped fabric or tape. Note the exhaust shield (arrowed) fitted for night flying.





Above: P3424 AK-P of 213 Squadron after crash-landing in France on 31 May 1940. It has a camera gun in the starboard wing.

Top: P3426 of 85 Squadron, down near Arras on 20 May 1940. Note the yellow ring applied to the original factory roundel, making it very large.

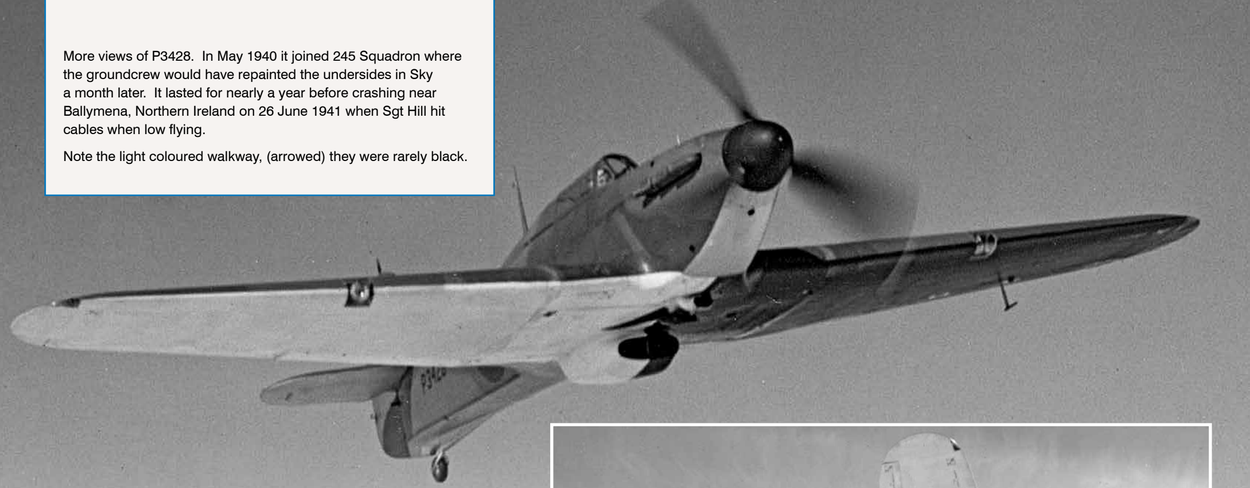
Right: P3428 during a factory test flight in March 1940 showing the standard camouflage and markings of the time. Undersides were black and white wings with Aluminium fuselage. The fuselage roundel was standard size but only three colours, not four, making it appear larger than normal. W/T stencilling is visible in several places (arrowed)

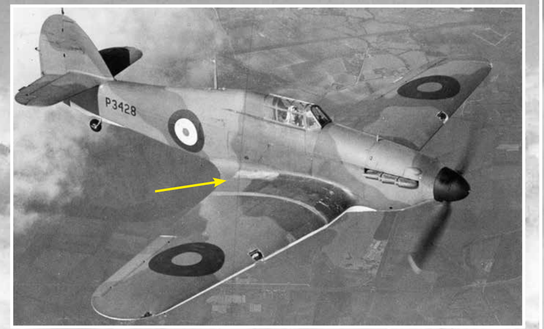
The factory-fresh P3428 in the hands of test pilot Philip Lucas in March 1940. The W/T stencilling (A) is particularly noticeable and would normally be obscured by the operational markings as RAF groundcrew or even Maintenance Units rarely repainted them.

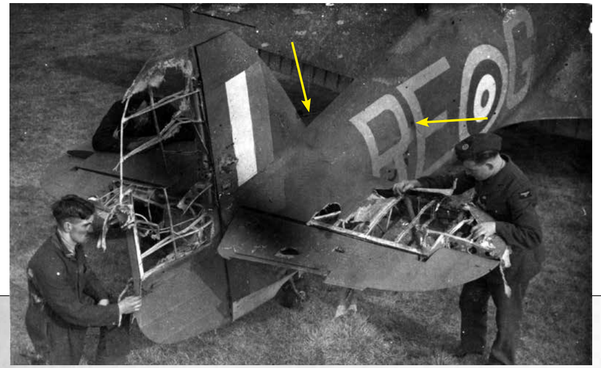
The streamlined aerial mast (B) was now standard, as were the later ejector exhausts (C), the internal armoured windscreen (D), the extra access panel (E) on the starboard side only and the formation lamp window (F).

More views of P3428. In May 1940 it joined 245 Squadron where the groundcrew would have repainted the undersides in Sky a month later. It lasted for nearly a year before crashing near Ballymena, Northern Ireland on 26 June 1941 when Sgt Hill hit cables when low flying.

Note the light coloured walkway, (arrowed) they were rarely black.



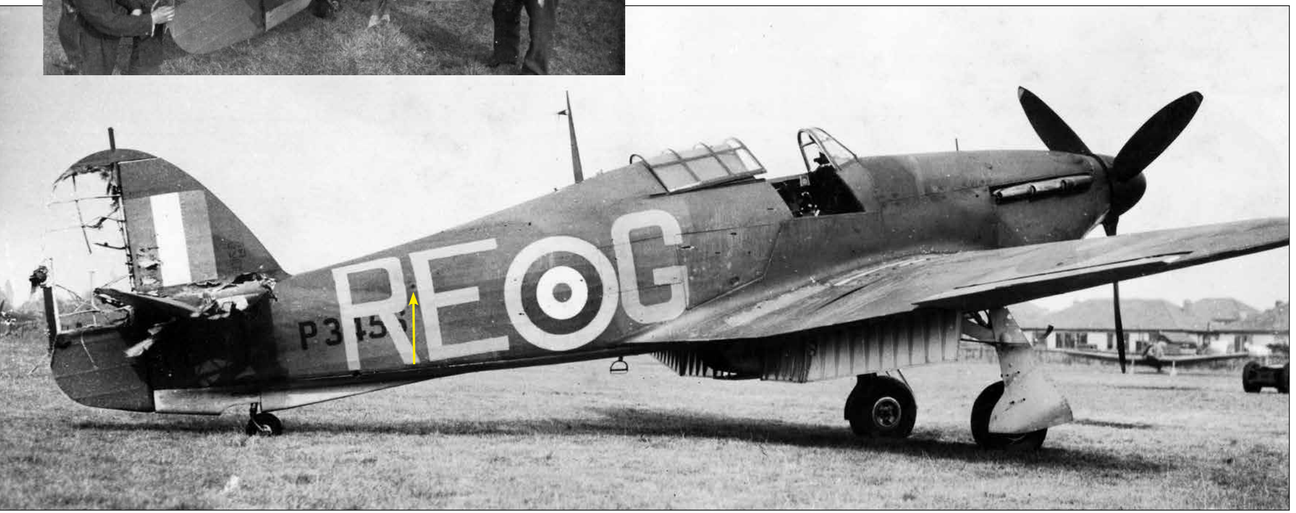




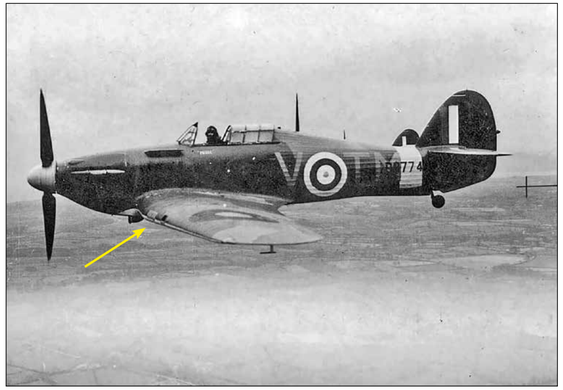
P3456 RE-G of 229 Squadron photographed at Northolt after being shot-up on 15 October 1940. It had already been repaired twice before, but was patched up again and issued to 245 Squadron.

Since leaving the factory, (looking like P3428 on the previous page), P3456 has received a new fuselage roundel, new fin-flash and has worn and painted over previous TP-J codes. Most stencilling has disappeared but one has been reapplied in front of the fin-flash. Interestingly, it has never been fitted with a rear view mirror.

Close examination of the print shows that this aircraft was fitted with the new IFF MkII, indicated by wires running from the leading edge of the tailplane to a point between the R and the E on the fuselage, (arrowed).



Below: P3541 was delivered to an MU in early May and sent to France in mid-May, being lost almost immediately. It is tempting to presume therefore that it is in factory finish with four colour roundel and fin flash. However, P3648 in the bottom picture was on a factory test flight when it came to grief on 15 May 1940. This shows that the factory was still applying the large three colour roundel to the fuselage with no fin flash at the time. Interestingly though, both the internal armoured windscreen and cockpit armour plate were factory fitted by this time.



Above: P3774 TM-V of 504 Squadron, post Battle of Britain and P3757 YO-G of 1 Squadron (RCAF) after it ran into a hedge at Northolt on 18 August 1940. Both of these aircraft were in the small batches that were fitted with fabric wings. The small gap between the landing light and guns is clearly visible on P3774 (arrowed).

Both aircraft were delivered in June 1940 so it's likely that the 4 colour fuselage roundel is factory applied.

Two views of P3522 GZ-V of 32 Squadron. It was completed in April 1940, so fin flash and Sky undersides were applied on the squadron. It has a VHF radio still fitted (no wire between mast and fin) despite orders to revert to HF radios in June 1940. P3522 was damaged at Tangmere on 13 August 1940, but quickly repaired and issued to 213 Squadron on 9 September. It met its end when Sgt Bruce flew into a cloud obscured hill at Caldbergh Moor, Yorkshire, on 10 January 1941. 20-year-old Eric Bruce had 17 hours on Hurricanes and died in the wreck that was not located until 12 days after the crash. His mother later had a memorial erected near the site.

HURRICANE P3522 GZ-V, 32 SQUADRON, JULY 1940

Modeller's notes

Aircraft:
Later streamlined aerial, no triangle
Late armoured windscreen
Late single pronged pitot tube
Reflector gunsight
3 bladed Rotol propeller
Metal wings
Two piece cowling ring
Late ejector exhausts
No Venturi tube

Colours:
'B' camouflage scheme
Sky undersides
Normal sized blue/red roundels on upper wings
NO roundels underneath
Black spinner
Large code letters
Large Factory applied B/W/R fuselage roundel with yellow added