

## HAWKER SIDDELEY HUNTER F.6A XG225

Built by Hawker Aircraft Co at Kingston in 1956 to contract 6/Acft/10345, serials batch XG225 -XG239. One of 415 F.6s built, 379 of them for the RAF – the greatest number for any Hunter version.

- 20 Oct 56 First flight; pilot David Lockspeiser
- 31 Oct 56 Awaiting collection following completion of routine flight testing.
- 1 Nov 56 To No. 5 Maintenance Unit, RAF Kemble, Glos for service acceptance.
- 26 Nov 56 To No.92 (East India) Squadron at RAF Linton-on-Ouse. Individual aircraft Code 'S'.
- 1 Mar 57 No.92 Squadron moved to RAF Middleton St. George.
- Sep 57 Squadron moved to RAF Thornaby.
- Oct 58 Squadron returned to RAF Middleton St. George.
- 19 Feb 59 Damaged in Cat.3 Flying Accident at Middleton St George. Repaired on site 23 Feb – 22 April by team from No. 60 MU.
- 23 Apr 59 Returned to No.92 Squadron strength.
- 9 Jan 61 To Marshall's at Cambridge for repainting. No. 92 Squadron, commanded by S/Ldr B.P.W Mercer, A.F.C, had been given permission to form its own nine-aircraft aerobatic team, known as the 'Blue Diamonds', their Hunters painted in royal blue highlighted by a white cheat line, wingtips, code and serial, the squadron badge being worn on the nose with red/yellow checks either side of it. They became the official RAF aerobatic team. One of their characteristic formations was the diamond-nine, hence the team name Blue Diamonds. Another signature formation for the team was the looping break for landing.  
Photo –RAF Gate Guards (Jim Simpson) p.31. Repaint completed 30 January 1961.
- Feb 61 Squadron sent to RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus to train for the forthcoming display season.
- 3 Mar 61 XG225 suffered Cat 3 damage in a flying accident. Team sent out by Hawkers for repairs.

- 2 Jun 61 Returned to Squadron in UK following repair, the squadron having moved to RAF Leconfield in May 1961.
- Sep 61 Blue Diamonds displayed at the SBAC Show, Farnborough, Hants.
- 6 Nov 61 Work by No. 60 MU at RAF Leconfield for modification to Hunter F.6A standard, with strengthened wings to enable greater loads to be carried, especially in the ground-attack role, bringing it close to FGA.9 standard. Modification kits supplied by Hawkers.
- 23 Nov 61 Modifications complete.
- 26 Nov 61 Returned to No.92 Squadron.
- April 63 No.92 Squadron began to re-equip with the Lightning F.2, being the last front-line unit flying the Hunter F.6.
- 23 May 63 XG225 joined the other supplanted Hunters in storage at No.19 MU, RAF St. Athan, Glamorgan.
- 9 Jan 64 To No.229 Operational Conversion Unit at RAF Chivenor, Devon, with code '27'
- 10 Mar 64 Damaged in flying accident. Repaired by team from Hawker Siddeley  
12 Mar – 22 April 1964.
- 19 Jan 66 To No.23 Maintenance Unit.
- 3 Jun 66 To No.5 Maintenance Unit, RAF Kemble, Glos.
- 7 Jul 66 Returned to 229 OCU at Chivenor.
- 3 Feb 67 Routine inspection discovered damage around gun blast deflectors, and repaired by a team from Hawker Siddeley 10 Feb- 17 Feb 1967.
- 4 Aug 74 No. 229 OCU disbanded, its aircraft being taken on charge by the Tactical Weapons Unit at RAF Brawdy in South Wales, teaching ground attack techniques. XG225 was allocated to 'Shadow' unit No. 79 Squadron, coded '27'.
- 18/31 Dec 75 Fitted with updated avionics

- 11 Apr 80 To No. 237 OCU at RAF Honington as one of 16 assorted Hunters collected to maintain Buccaneer pilot currency during a fatigue-induced temporary grounding of the Buccaneer fleet following the fatal loss of an aircraft in Nevada during a 'Red Flag' exercise. Photo of XG225 with this unit – RAF Gate guards (Jim Simpson) p.32.
- 7 Jun 80 Flew in four –ship display and formation of 14 Hunters for the RAF Honington open day.
- 9 Sep 80 Flew to RAF Kemble, Glos for long-term storage, prior to Honington's last single-seat sortie on 13 October 1980.
- 27 Aug 81 Declared non-effective stock.
- 31 Aug 81 To No.2 School of Technical Training, RAF Cosford, Salop.
- 15 Feb 82 Allotted Maintenance serial 8713M
- By June 1984 transferred to Weapons Squadron, a division of the SoTT, as their only complete airframe initially.
- 1988 Transferred to RAF Cosford as gate guard, replacing a Vampire T.II; displayed on parade ground by April 1988 still with No 237 OCU markings, code 'S'.
- 2004 To RAFM Cosford as gate guard by March 2004; formally gifted to RAFM by MoD August 2004.

**TEXT; ANDREW SIMPSON**

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