

HAWKER – SIDDELEY DOMINIE T.MK.1 XS709
ACCESSION NUMBER X005-5915

- 1964 Built by Hawker Siddeley Aviation Ltd at the former De Havilland factory at Hawarden, Chester, to contract KU/E/10, announced in September 1962 and awarded April 1964. One of 20 of the type built as navigation trainers to replace the Meteor NF (T) 14 in that role, including serials block XS709 – XS714. Constructor's number 25011.
- 30 Dec 64 First flight at Hawarden, this being the first of the type to fly.

Given Class B marking G-37-65, signifying an aircraft undertaking trials for Rolls-Royce.
- Feb 65 Photographed at Hatfield. Aircraft Magazine March 2011 p.44.
- 30 Mar 65 (Tuesday) Delivered to RAF as the first of its type delivered. Initially flew in natural metal fuselage/Day-Glow training red bands on nose and tail colour scheme, quickly replaced on the type during 1965 by the red/white/grey scheme. Photos as delivered in silver scheme – Flight International 15 April 1965 p.612; Flight International 13 May 1965 p.743/4.

To A&AEE, Boscombe Down, for evaluation trials programme covering performance, handling, and equipment compatibility. Photographed in 'nose up' attitude in front of the 'blower tunnel' at Boscombe Down – Aeromilitaria Autumn 2011 p.137.

No 1 Air Navigation School, RAF Stradishall, Suffolk. Following formal introduction into service of the Dominie in December 1965, the first navigators to qualify for their wings on the Dominie passed out in April 1966, with Dominie deliveries continuing up to August 1966. Stradishall initially operated ten Dominies for high/fast training, supplemented by eleven Vickers Varsitys for low/slow training, with Dominie students receiving some 45 hours of flying instruction spread over 21 sorties, half of them at night, with later exercises, each with two students working on a transverse navigator's bench at the rear, flying to Malta or Gibraltar via Nice or Istres. Photo – Aviation World (Air Britain) Autumn 2011 p.113.

To College of Air Warfare, RAF Manby, Lincs – one of six Dominies on strength there, with black College of Air Warfare titles along the upper fuselage, used for practicing or evaluating new or unusual navigation techniques and for low-level tactical navigation training.

Returned to No. 1 ANS, which disbanded in August 1970, its flying assets passing to No 6 FTS.

- 1970 No 6 FTS, RAF Finningley, Yorks, individual code 'M'. Provided initial airman aircrew training for Air Electronics Operators, Air Engineers, and Air Loadmasters.
- 18 Feb 75 Navigator's logbook of PO, later W/Cdr, David J Gledhill records 1.35 hour familiarisation flight as first navigator. Further flights undertaking specific training exercises on March 4/11, April 7/28th 1975. See Navigator's logbook X006-3337.
- 8 Sep 76 Navigator's logbook of Wing Commander Colin Eames records 3.20 hour North Sea route flight as screen navigator. Pilot Flt Lt Clemenson.
- 2 Nov 76 Eames LB – 3.10 hour flight as Screen Navigator, Central Route. Pilot Flt Lt Bennett.
- 22 Oct 76 Eames LB records 3.25-hour 'Central Route' flight as screen navigator – pilot Flt Lt Richardson.
- 11 Apr 78 Eames LB records 1.50 hour flight as navigator – pilot Flt Lt Naylor.
- 8 May 78 1.40 hour flight to Manchester- Eames LB – screen navigator. Pilot Flt Lt Elkington.
- 8 Jun 78 3-hour remedial instruction flight to Aberdeen – Eames LB (Screen Navigator); pilot Flt Lt Gray.

January 2015 e-mail from Ron Handfield who joined Dominie Squadron 6 FTS 1 Jan 79 and left Feb 82 provided details of a number of typical flights;

	captain	crew	duty	hours
02-May-79	Flt Lt Sykes	self	crew training	1hr20min
17 Aug 79	self	Wg Cdr Angela	air test	1hr40min
05 Nov 79	self	Sqn Ldr Roome (Dave Roome was a fighter pilot with no procedural flying before this)	airways trainer	1hr45min
07 Dec- 9	self	Flt Lt Willis	sct	1hr45min

26 Feb 80	self	Flt Lt Marriott fy Brawdy fy	1hr40mins
01 May 80	self	Flt Lt Broadbent type conversion	1hr30min
18 Jun 80	self	Flt Lt Roman sct	1hr30min
23 Jun 80	self	Flt Lt da-Costa air test and convex	1hr30min
26 Jun 80	self	Flt Lt Glyde dual to solo	1hr
27 Jun 80	self	Flt Lt da-costa engine air test plus some training?	1hr40min
11 Jul 80	self	Flt Lt Glyde convex	1hr55min
08 Aug 80	self	ditto functional cx functional cx wa on Glyde's ability to captain the nav training exercise	2hr50min
02 Oct 80	self	? Long pilot assistant cx (the a/c operated with one pilot the other seat being pilots assistant or training rear crew)	1hr30min
02 Oct 80	self	? Harman type convex	2hr
04 Nov 80	self	Flt Lt Broadbent night cx FltLt Charlton	.30mins .30mins
08 Dec 80	self	Flt Lt Baily night cx Flt Lt Adam	.50min .20min
23 Jun 81	self	Flt Lt Barton convex	1hr30min
1 -Jul 81	self	Flt Tt Galloway irt	1hr45min
23-Jul-81	self	FltLt Barton night cx	.25mins
11-Sep-81	self	Flt Lt Baily formation	.35mins

- 28 Feb 83 Non standard North Scottish, 3.00 duration, Flight Lieutenant Baker
- 3 Feb 83 North Scottish, famil Sgt Soundy, 2.25 duration, Flight Lieutenant Armitage
- 12 Feb 83 South West, 0.45 duration + 2.15 night, Flight Lieutenant Bagguley
- 1983 Used in final year of Dominie solo displays at air shows.
- 5 Dec 83 Central, 3.05 duration, Flight Lieutenant Steven
- 23 Jan 85 2.15-hour training flight, S/Ldr Mike J. Grout logbook, followed by 1.45 hour flight that same day.
- Sept 95 Following closure of RAF Finningley that month, the Dominie Squadron of No 6 FTS moved to RAF Cranwell, Lincs.
- Nov 95 Finningley units reformed within No 3 FTS, RAF Cranwell, XS709 still with individual code 'M'
- 1 Nov 96 Navigation Squadron of No 3 FTS at RAF Cranwell redesignated No 55 (Reserve) Squadron, with eleven aircraft on strength. It served as the flying arm of the Navigator and Airman Aircrew School, which on 1 November 2001 combined as part of the squadron to provide all the flying training for the RAF's rear crew.

From 1992/93, eleven of the Dominie fleet (including XS709) received a major mid-life upgrade to what was initially designated T.Mk.2 standard, though later generally referred to still as T Mk 1, replacing obsolete V-Force era equipment with installation of a modern avionics suite, new systems installation, new longer nose profile to accommodate Super Searchwater radar and cabin layout for up to five students/instructors, the work being done under contract by Racal and Marshall Aerospace at Cambridge Airport. The aircraft carried a navigation console designed to mirror that in a fast jet, the first updated aircraft (XS728) flying on 31st August 1994.

From c. 1997, flying in high-visibility all-over black livery with white fuselage top, and fin code 'M' Photo – Air Forces Monthly March 2011 pp.9/10.

The Dominie's role with No 55 (R) Squadron was to train WSOs (Weapons Systems Officers – formerly the Navigator role for commissioned officers) and WSOps (Weapons Systems Operators – non-commissioned aircrew, the former Air Electronics Operator, Air Engineer, Air Signaller and Air Loadmaster roles, with ALM fixed

wing training undertaken on Dominies since March 2002) for Nimrods and rear seat aircrew on the Tornado GR4, together with training rotary/transport/flight refuelling crews.

Most training was in UK airspace over land and sea, with some flights to Europe, with around 160 students passing through annually by 2005.

By now the longest-serving active aircraft type on the RAF's inventory, the retirement date for the Dominie was brought forward by two years due to cancellation of Nimrod MRA4 in October 2010 and the planned reduction in size of the Tornado GR4 fleet and final retirement of the Tornado F.3 due in 2011.

- 17 Jan 2011 Final WSO course on the Dominie, course 512, returned to Cranwell after a final overseas training exercise. The course had finished a month later than planned due to the severe weather in the UK in December.
- 19 Jan 2011 (Wednesday) Made final Navigational Exercise ('Nav Ex') over Wales that morning, touring West Wales – Haverfordwest, Cardiff, St Athan, and Swansea.
Part of the training programme on the Dominie had included low level radar and low level navigation, usually as part of a high-low-high flight profile training sortie of two or three hour's duration, with the Welsh valleys being an ideal location.
- 20 Jan 2011 Held on ground as 'Air Spare' for final six-ship retirement formation flypast ('Banquet Formation') for the Dominie at RAF Cranwell, Lincs on that day (a Thursday).
- 11 Feb 2011 (Friday) Flown from Cranwell into RAF Cosford, Salop by F/Lt s Andy Preece and Andy Owen for preservation by RAF Museum.

The aircraft departed Cranwell at 10.42 and touched down at 11.37 after two passes over Cosford airfield – a high speed run and a climbing break, followed by the final landing, shutting down some five minutes later after taxiing round to the flight line. Photo on approach – Air Forces Monthly April 2011 p.6. Photo landing; Aeroplane April 2011 p.7; Photos after shut-down; Aircraft Magazine April 2011 p.12; Flypast May 2011 p.7.

Following defueling and removal of items such as fire extinguishers, handed over to RAFM 15 February 2011. Photo stored outside MBCC, June 2012 – Wrecks and Relics 23rd Edition.

Total flying hours 16,130.10 – the lowest in the surviving fleet.

Photos on external display – Flypast October 2011 p.19; Royal Air Force Museum News 2011 Summary p10.

Seven other Dominies were advertised for sale by the Disposal Services authority on 7 February 2011, with six going to a private owner at Cotswold airport (Kemble).

TEXT; ANDREW SIMPSON

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