

HM Review

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Corgi Westland Whirlwind Mk10

Affordable diecast models like this well-made copter are still popular.

During 1950 the Royal Air Force purchased its first H-19 Chickasaws directly from Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation in the US, but Westland Aircraft quickly obtained a license to manufacture the type in Great Britain. Like the American models, the first Whirlwinds were powered by Pratt & Whitney radial piston engines. The Whirlwinds were assigned a number of roles, including coastal command, antisubmarine warfare and search-and-rescue missions.



One of the two included rotor heads allows the main rotor blades to be displayed in their folded position.

The first turbine-powered Whirlwind flew in 1959. The increase in power and decrease in weight of the turbine models greatly affected the payload of the helicopter, and it could carry up to 10 combat-equipped soldiers or six stretchers.

In theory, when used in the search-and-rescue role, the Whirlwinds were unable to carry out night missions as the helicopter was not appropriately equipped. In reality, night rescues were rarely, if ever, denied.

Over 400 Westland Whirlwind helicopters were manufactured in a variety of models. Many are still in use in the private sector, and a few have been regulated to complete but non-flying status and these are on display at a number of military aviation museums in England, Canada and the US.

The Corgi Aviation Archive Westland Whirlwind is a model of XJ729, a turbine powered Mk10 version that entered service with Royal Air Force No. 22 squadron in 1962 and remained on active duty until it was withdrawn from service in 1981. The full-scale helicopter was later



With such high-quality at an attractive price-point, the Westland Whirlwind will be very desirable.

sold into private ownership and was restored to its RAF SAR (Search and Rescue) colors. Based in Ireland, it is the only Mk10 version known to still be flying.

The model is a well-done copy of the full-scale machine, with a number of details like individual panels represented by moldings. The left side of the helicopter has the stainless-steel turbine exhaust stack in the correct location. The pilot's "foot wells" for climbing up and into the cockpit are represented by black paint. Front and rear landing gear are well detailed and properly painted with the shock absorber boots and tires black. Moving to the rear of the helicopter, the tail-rotor blade is a multi-colored affair as would normally be seen on a full-scale helicopter of this type, the purpose is to prevent unwary individuals from stepping into a spinning tail rotor.

The right side of the helicopter has a winch in the proper location, but it is a simple a cast metal replica



The markings are crisp and well executed. There are a number of fine details that can only be discerned through the use of a magnifying glass.

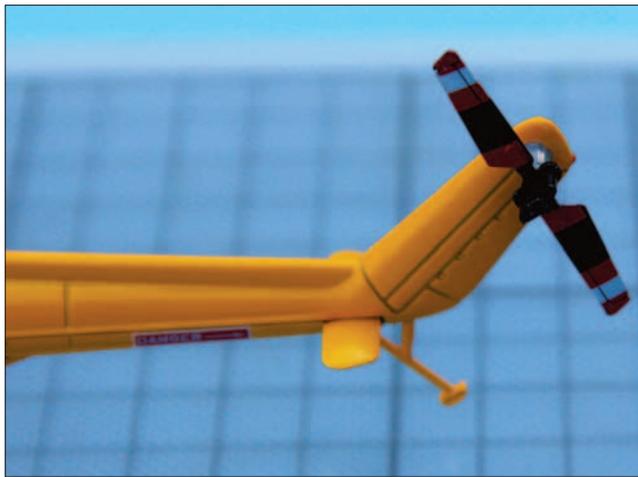
without any painted or working details (my only disappointment). The helicopter does have a working side door. A look inside the cabin reveals a detailed floor, military style seats on both sides and the proper bulkhead

between the turbine motor and cabin.

The cockpit contains both a pilot and co-pilot painted in military dress. The windows are crystal clear, including the correct tinted green windows on top of the cabin, but no further cockpit detail is noted. Located behind the pilot's compartment is a reproduced cover for the main-rotor gearbox.

The paintwork is perfect. In the US, most SAR aircraft are overall white with high-visibility orange/red trim. This is not the case with other countries around the world, and the International Safety Yellow used by Corgi is correct for Royal Air Force SAR machines. In addition, most working military aircraft are exposed to the elements, and this causes the paint to fade at the edges of individual panels. The results of this are that the green-yellow zinc chromate primer shows through. Whether intentionally or by accident, this has been replicated perfectly.

The markings are unbelievable, especially for such a small scale. There is no blur or overspray on any of the markings. Underneath the co-pilot's seat was something



Typical of aircraft that spend their time exposed to the elements, the zinc chromate primer is starting to show through the panel lines.

that could not be made out. A magnifying glass was brought to bear, and the words "Emergency Rescue" were seen. The letters are less than 1mm tall and the clarity is simply remarkable.

Corgi has thoughtfully added a few other features as well. Included with the helicopter are two main-rotor heads. One allows the main-rotor blades to be extended in the "normal" position while the

other places the blades in the folded or stowed position, something often seen when the helicopters were transported to locations beyond the flying range of the machines. Also included is a sturdy display stand for collectors who like to get their models off the landing gear and into a simulated flying position.

The Westland Whirlwind is a large helicopter. Even so, at 1/72 scale, it is a small model. Considering the small size and attractive price point, this is a very desirable piece for any collector of historical aviation. The entire series of Corgi diecast models are available through Hornby at www.hornby.com **HM**

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