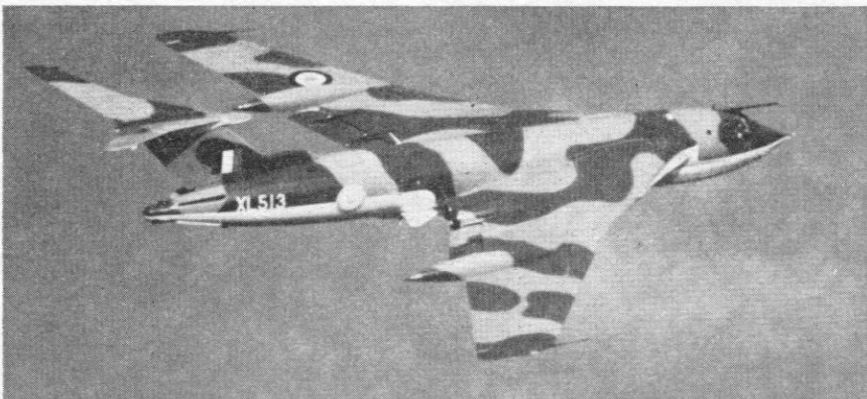


## V-bomber "Meet" at Wittering



**VICTORS**—TOP LEFT: XL158 of 139 Squadron was used to demonstrate the loading and unloading of Blue Steel. TOP RIGHT: The "Fasces" in No. 139's badge is taken from that of 28 Squadron, to which No. 139 was attached when it first came into being in Italy in March 1918; note ECM bulges on fuselage. LEFT: XL513, the first Victor to be seen camouflaged—and with only one upper-wing roundel

AT THE FEBRUARY Bomber Command "meet" at R.A.F. Wittering no fewer than seven V-bomber squadrons were represented. Among the aircraft was the first camouflaged Victor B.2 allocated to No. 139 Squadron, but not at that time bearing any squadron insignia. No. 139, the first Victor B.2 squadron, was re-formed at Wittering on 1st February 1962, and had previously existed as a Canberra B.6 squadron at Binbrook before disbanding at the end of 1959.

In addition to the camouflaged aircraft, No. 139 was represented by XL158, still

in anti-flash white, and demonstrating ground loading and unloading of the Blue Steel missile.

Chosen for the "scramble" demonstration were four Vulcan B.2s from Bomber Command's most recent V-bomber station—Coningsby, in Lincolnshire. These were XM601 and XM603 of No. 9 Squadron, XM602 of 12 Squadron and XM604 of 35 Squadron. Originally, Nos. 9 and 12 Squadrons were Canberra B.6 units at Coningsby before disbanding in 1961. Following the reconstruction of Coningsby as a V-bomber base in 1962, these two

squadrons re-formed there as Vulcan B.2 units, and were soon joined by the third squadron, No. 35. It will be remembered that No. 35 was the last Canberra bomber squadron within Bomber Command, disbanding at Upwood in October 1961.

In the "static park" were a further two Vulcan B.2s, XM597 of 12 Squadron and XL443 of 83 Squadron, plus a Victor B.1, XA927, of 10 Squadron from Cottesmore. No. 90 Squadron, the second of Bomber Command's Valiant tanker units was represented by XD813 from Honington, where it had re-formed as a Valiant bomber squadron in 1957. Previously No. 90 had existed for six years at Marham, as a Canberra B.2 unit after re-equipping from Washingtons.

No. 100 Squadron, the other unit sharing Wittering with 139, was not on show for, the next day, three of its aircraft were to depart on a journey to New Zealand. No. 100 is no stranger to Wittering as, during its Lincoln and Canberra period, it spent six years at this airfield, before disbanding in 1959.—"PUFFIN".

**VULCANS**—RIGHT: XM602 of 12 Squadron ("Fox head" badge) about to scramble. BELOW (left to right): "Horse's head winged" badge of 35 Squadron commemorates co-operation with the cavalry in W.W.I. Known officially as an "attire", No. 83's red deer's antler badge has six points to commemorate the six D.F.C.s awarded to squadron members for one operation in June 1918. Incorporated into No. 9's badge in November 1936, the bat was chosen to symbolise night flying

