

~~RESTRICTED~~

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65th Fighter Squadron

DECLASSIFIED  
DOD DIR 5200.9

S9-F-65-111  
Dec. 1994

P.R.C.

X

December 1944

DECLASSIFIED  
DOD DIR 5200.9

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RSI Cont No  
S07259

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MICROFILMED

6051-249A

S E C R E T

SQ-FI-65-#1 -  
1 Dec 44

DESIGNATION SHEET  
HISTORICAL RECORDS

(7)

COMMAND : XXII Tactical Air Command

WING : \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP : 57th Fighter Group

SQUADRON : 65th Fighter Squadron

OTHER : \_\_\_\_\_

OUTLINE HISTORY X

WAR DIARY X

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\_\_\_\_\_

P.R.C

65th Ftr Sqdn.  
Outline History December 1944.

By Auth CO  
65th Ftr Sqdn.  
25, January 1945.

SIXTY-FIFTH FIGHTER SQUADRON A .A.F.  
A.P.O. 650

DECLASSIFIED  
DOD DIR 5200.9

25, January 1945

A R 345-105

SUBJECT : Historical Data.

TO : Commanding General, XXII T.A.C.

1. Outline History of the Sixty-Fifth Fighter Squadron for the period 1, December 1944 to 31, December 1944.
- a. Present designation: Sixty-Fifth Fighter Squadron, Fifty-Seventh Fighter Group, XXII T.A.C.
- b. Changes in organization:
  1. No change in designation.
  2. No change in assignment.
  3. No change in attachment.

Subordinate units: None.

Commanding Officer: Lt. Colonel Gilbert O. Wymond Jr., O-431591.  
Changes in staff officers: 1st Lieut. John Sinclair-0857502 is appointed Unit Gas Officer.  
1st Lieut. Roscoe Ford is appointed Orientation Officer.  
1st Lieut. John Sinclair is appointed Fire Defense Officer.

- c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted:
 

1, December 1944:	commissioned—58	Enlisted—247
Net increase:	commissioned—1	Enlisted—1
Net decrease:	commissioned—0	Enlisted—0
31, December 1944:	commissioned—59	Enlisted—248

- d. Stations:
  1. Grossetto L.G., Italy. Date of arrival—11, September 1944.

e. Movements: None.

- f. Campaigns: Italy, duration September 18, 1943, still in progress.  
Southern France—August 15, 1944—finished.

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S E C R E T

## g. Operations:

1. Campaign-Italian.
2. Nature of Operations: Dive-bombing, bomber escort, area cover, a anti-flak diversion, rocket firing, strafing and Rover Joe.
3. Number of missions--87 sorties--611.
4. There were many important missions flown during the month of December, many locomotives and cars loaded with war materials were destroyed.

h. Losses in action: No one was lost during the month of December due to enemy action.

## i. Awards and Decorations: The following awards have been made during the month of December; Captain Kenneth J. Gustafson-0810561--DFC.

The following have been awarded the Air Medal; Lt Bradley H. Muhl-0827251, Lt Silvester H. Hendricks-0706588, Lt John F. Murphy-0827254, Lt Alvie H. Nicholson-0827257, Lt Dwight V. Orman-0827268, Lt Francis J. Middleton-1825486, F/O Jimmy R. Long-T62280, Capt Joe H. Keith-0661774.

The following have been awarded OLC to the Air Medal; Lts. Jack W Collins-0704666, Silvester H. Hendricks-0706388, William E. Lyke-0707713, Alvin H. Welbes-0707874--3rd OLC, Lindsey R. Douglas-0892142, Melvin L. Fiedler-0711979, Max M. Floerke-0711982, Clarence L. Hewitt-0706390, William R. Holmes-0708893, Thomas E. Bowers-0792797, Wilbur C. Crowe-0707615, Earl H. Evans-0679845, Capts. Martin C. McGilvary-0816132-5th OLC, Harry H. Meyd-0815741-5th OLC, M.B. Smith-0660299-2nd OLC.

For the Commanding Officer:

1 INCL: War Diary.

*Marvin D. Parkhurst*  
 MARVIN D. PARKHURST,  
 Captain, A.A.F.,  
 Squadron Historical Officer.

S E C R E T

(SECRET)

Sheet No. 1 - War Diary

Month of December 1944.

65th Ftr. Sq., 57th Ftr. Gp.

Prepared by  
Marvin D. Parkhurst  
Captain, Air Corps.

- | DAY | EVENTS   |
|-----|--|
| 1.  | <p>First show lead by Lt. Atwood with 8 a/c did not bomb because of weather. All bombs were jettisoned at 10,000' near Parma, Italy. All a/c returned safe. Second show was to rail bridge at Calcinate. On arrival at target the flight found it to be destroyed so bombed another bridge just east of assigned target. Center section destroyed by direct hit and two cuts in tracks by direct hits. Weather still bad but clearing. Some light flak was encountered. Third mission lead by Capt. Smith ordered on armed recce to Po valley near Milano. Bombed warehouse area with good results. Six direct hits on warehouse plus near misses and fired all rockets. On way home strafed and destroyed two M/T and set one house on fire. All a/c down safe. Last show for today was lead by Major Manda and was another recce. Bombed Voghera Marcelling Yards. 100 cars on siding - three direct hits on cars and 3 cuts in M/Y's. Some cars destroyed and damaged. 18 rockets damaged 6 or more cars. 6 rockets and strafing accounted for 6 warehouses damaged. On return to base our aircraft sighted single M/T and destroyed same. Light flak over Voghera.</p> |
| 2.  | <p>Eight Thunderbolts and Photo Joe lead by Lt. Burgess ordered to bomb Brenner Pass. Bombed from 1500' with one direct hit on rail line. Other bombs results undetermined. Photo Joe strafed 100 plus RR cars destroying two. West of formation strafed 25 cars with one flamer and eight damaged. Observed 200 plus cars on Bergamo-Brescia railline. Light and heavy flak was encountered over target with two aircraft holed. All a/c down safe. Eight a/c and Photo Joe ordered to Brenner Pass and after bombing to give area cover for B-25's. Dive-bombed from 1000' affecting 3 cuts by direct hits. 3 nearby buildings strafed with no visible results. Formation then proceeded to area cover but B-25's did not show up. Heavy flak over target. All down safe. Another area cover for 36 Mitchells on bridge near Padova area. Arrived at area at designated time but Mitchells on radio informed us they had already bombed. We returned to base.</p>  |
| 3.  | <p>First mission lead by Capt. Smith with 8 a/c and Photo Joe. Ordered to attack buildings and bridge at L-773456. Bombs jettisoned-weather. Returned to base. Two a/c on weather and armed recce. Formation flew at 10,000'. No bombs were carried. Strafing stationary van left smoking. 10 flat cars attacked with two cars claimed damaged. No flak. All down safe.</p>  |
| 4.  | <p>Take off at 0700 hrs to the old standby - Brenner Pass rail line. Bombed near Trento with results unobserved. 30 rockets fired into town. No results observed. One heavy gun position strafed and silenced. All a/c down safe.</p>  |

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Sheet No. 2.  
War Diary Cont'd

DAY

EVENTS

4. Next off at 0710 hrs. 8 a/c lead by Capt. McGilvary to bomb bridge and occupied buildings at I-773455. One direct hit on west end of bridge. No bombs in buildings but 14 rockets scoring hits on buildings. Also strafed area and buildings. Heavy and light flak from target area.  
This is to the Brenner Pass lead by Lt. Burgess with 8 a/c and Photo Joe. Bombed near small town north of Verona from 2000'. Two direct hits cutting rail line. One set of bombs in town destroying one building and damaging others. 25 rockets into town. Heavy and light flak at target.  
Brenner Pass again. Lead by Lt. Gustafson to the same area as previous show. 3 direct hits cutting tracks. 4 rockets in Repair shop seriously damaging same. Some M/T sighted in area but no attacks. All safe.
5. Four a/c lead by Capt McGilvary ordered on close support with Rover Joe. Weather 10/10 from deck to 10,000'. Our a/c could not make contact with Rover Joe. All a/c returned to base. 2-500 lbs were jettisoned. Others returned.
6. A day of rest-weather.
7. Back in full swing again today. First mission of 8 a/c - yes - Brenner Pass. Lead by Lt. Meyd the formation bombed near Trento. 3 a/c bombed rail bridge. One near miss damaging north approach. Other a/c bombed M/Y. One direct hit on train of 20 cars and locomotive. Destroyed 3 cars and damaged others. Two cuts in tracks. 21 rockets also in M/Y. Heavy flak with one a/c hit. All a/c down safe.  
Armed recce was second show to Lake Garda area. Bombed highway with two direct hits cratering highway. Heavy a/c followed 2 a/c returning early thru overcast. One a/c cat #1 from flak.  
Last mission found Po valley 10/10 at all altitudes so jettisoned bombs and returned to base.
8. Grounded by bad weather.
9. Eight a/c lead by Major Wanda ordered to bomb Cittadella Rail Diversion. Much damage to diversion by previous bombing. We got 3 cuts in line and possible damage to Rail bridge. Just southwest of target-train with 20 cars loaded with M/T was spotted headed Northeast. Attacked destroying engine and two cars were left burning. A second train was located and strafed and rocketed with engine being destroyed and cars damaged. Intense flak was encountered over target. Due to gas shortage all a/c landed at Rimini enroute to Grosseto base. All safe.  
Second show on armed recce to Western Po, lead by Lt. Gustafson. Attacked rail line south of Milano with 200 plus cars in one string on tracks. 2 Direct hits

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Sheet No 3.  
War Diary Cont'd

- | DAY | EVENTS  |
|-----|---|
| 9.  | <p>on cars and tracks. Four cars destroyed after bombing. Our aircraft strafed cars with many fires and explosions resulting in firing the cars. These fires spread and it is believed that the majority of this rolling stock was eventually destroyed. Black smoke rose to 1500' indicating these cars were loaded with gasoline and ammo. One M/T destroyed and others damaged in same area. Heavy and light flak was encountered in target area. All a/c safe.</p>  |
| 10. | <p>First mission lead by Lt. Burgess with 8 a/c and Photo Joe ordered to bomb the Brenner Pass Rail line. Bombed near Trento. 3 direct hits cutting the tracks. 2 bomb hits near river setting off brilliant blue flame. One a/c fired rockets into town. 20 cars strafed causing some smoke...8 a/c strafed train destroying locomotive and 5 cars damaged. Observed wooded area well defended by flak-believed to be dump. Heavy and light flak. One a/c hit by flak and 2 a/c landed at Pisa to refuel.</p> <p>2nd mission lead by Lt. Atwood-ordered to cover 7 Mitchells mission for Brenner Pass. We carried no bombs and flew at 15,000'. At 1115 hrs formation observed 8 ME 109's and four two engine aircraft possible jet propelled headed northwest at 15,000' over Lake Garda. 4 ME's made head on pass at our formation. 3 of the four attacking a/c continued to dive to the bombers but scored no hits. The other enemy a/c broke away to the north and was followed by Lt. Atwood getting in range for a short burst. He saw hits and pieces fly off enemy a/c as it continued to dive. One ME claimed damaged. Our a/c continued to formation. All down safe.</p> <p>3rd mission ordered to dive-bomb rail bridge in Padova area. Bridge partially destroyed previously. We scored direct hit on south approach. Ten near misses probably damaged tracks. Flak positions strafed silencing one heavy and light positions. One house rocketed. Two formations of unidentified a/c observed but no incident. All safe.</p> <p>Last mission was rail line Milano area. Bombed from 1500' scoring three hits on bridge destroying span and one direct hit on rail line. One rail car destroyed and 14 damaged by strafing. Radio station left burning from strafing pass. Heavy and light flak.</p> |
| 11. | Weather bad. Other Squadrons got missions.  |
| 12. | Weather again. No sorties for Group.  |
| 13. | <p>First mission ordered to bomb rail bridge at Nervesa. Weather prevented us from this target so bombed Parma M/Y. Three cuts in rails, 2 cars destroyed by direct hits and two buildings damaged. Strafing three locomotives-one destroyed, one heavily damaged and one damaged. Strafing workshop with much steam after strafing pass.</p> <p>Second mission could not bomb primary target-weather. So bombed dual guns near</p>   |

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Sheet No. 4.  
War Diary Cont'd.

- | DAY | EVENTS  |
|-----|---|
| 13. | <p>La Spezia. 10 bombs and 27 rockets in area. Results not determined. Heavy and light flak at target area.</p> <p>Third mission ordered to bomb oil refinery near Tortona. 10 bombs hit in the refinery area and one in town. The refinery appeared to be burned out but fresh dirt indicated work being done on underground tanks. No apparent damage done by strafing. Train in Tortona strafed destroying engine and five cars, others damaged. M/T on highway attacked and 3 M/T flamers, 4 smokers, and 2 damaged. Horse drawn vehicle strafed-one destroyed, one damaged. One high flying bogey sighted and believed to be jet job by trails.</p> <p>Fourth mission ordered to bomb Gestapo Hq and SS barracks near Massa. Did some damage to buildings and fired rockets in buildings. Went north in mountains to provide cover for 6 C 47's but they did not arrive. Returned to base. All a/c safe.</p>   |
| 14. | <p>First mission lead by Lt. Burgess ordered to bomb highway bridge at M-1226 obscured by overcast so bombed highway bridge at I-1874 knocking out one half of one span. Strafed and silenced one gun position. Sighted two Spitfires as we came off our target. One a/c flew through his own bomb blast-a/c Cat #2.</p> <p>Second show ordered to bomb Brenner Pass line and rolling stock. Brenner Pass closed in so bombed M/Y at Brescia. 8 bomb hits in M/Y among cars and on Warehouses. 29 rockets in bomb run. After bombing strafed locomotives and cars and destroyed 8 locomotives and 10 plus cars. Many damaged. Heavy and light flak. All safe.</p> <p>Third mission was on Gestapo Hq again and escort to C47's dropping supplies. Bombing very good destroying 8 buildings. All rockets and 10 strafing passes damaging ten houses. Contacted C47's and they carried out mission without interference.</p> <p>Fourth mission 4 a/c ordered on flak diversion for 49 Mitchells. Carried out mission but Mitchells bombed another target. All safe.</p> <p>Fifth mission escort for Mitchells but weather bad at Lake Garda. No bombing. All a/c down safe.</p> |
| 15. | <p>8 a/c and Photo Joe to Brenner Pass lead by Lt. Atwood which effected 3 cuts in rail line by direct hits. 11 rockets caused one smoke black smoke fire. One unidentified a/c at 25,000' over Pass believed jet job. All a/c safe.</p> <p>Second mission lead by Capt. Smith was close support on occupied buildings, very good bomb coverage. Strafed and rocketed area. Left smoke and saw enemy troops run from buildings to near by houses.</p> <p>Third mission an ammo dump. Good bomb coverage and then rocketed and strafed. One RR car exploded. One locomotive destroyed and two radio towers strafed. One a/c Cat #2 from debris of exploding car. All a/c down safe.</p>  |
| 16. | <p>One show today lead by Lt. Burgess went to Brenner Pass. Two direct hits effected cuts in rail line. Strafed four stationary M/T - damaged. Rocketed two M/T starting landslide which covered M/T destroyed. Observed personnel running from M/T. Some A/A fire was experienced.</p>   |

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Sheet No. 5.  
War Diary Cont'd.

- | DAY | EVENTS  |
|-----|---|
| 17. | 9 aircraft took off at 0745 but weather bad and returned to base. Second show of 4 aircraft ordered on close support but weather bad so bombed bridge north of Bologna. One crater in road. All safe. Third show took off but was forced to land at Florence with bombs - weather. Fourth show also landed at Florence - weather.   |
| 18. | Weather. No show.   |
| 19. | One mission was ordered to bomb rail bridge at Piacinza. Bombed from 1000' thru overcast. No results observed. Weather 10/10. All down safe.  |
| 20. | First show jettisoned bombs in Po Valley. Weather bad. Second show was a repeat performance of the first show. Third show lead by Capt. Smith was a Rover Joe mission. Capt. Smith in #40 was forced to bail out over bomb line due to broken fuel line. Was picked up by 5th Army troops and returned to Squadron. Others could not get to target or back to base. Weather. Landed at Florence.  |
| 21. | Weathered in for day - no missions.   |
| 22. | First mission was on rail bridge at Pricinza. One hit on bridge damaging and moved tracks. One cut on each approach. Nothing more to report. All down safe. Second show on Brenner Pass RR. Bombed from 1000' effecting two cuts in line and cratered nearby highway. 33 rockets fired in bomb run. One M/T destroyed and one damaged by strafing. All safe. Rover Joe with 4 a/c lead to a cluster of occupied buildings by smoke. Five buildings destroyed and two left burning by our bombing and strafing. Another Rover Joe with no success due to weather. Piacinza rail bridge again and this time we got it. Destroyed one span with two damaging near misses. Destroyed one M/T, three carts and three horses. Saw two large explosions in target area but sighted no a/c. Armed recce to Modena-Verona rail bridge north of Modena. Three near misses. Destroyed three M/T and two carts by 6 rockets and strafing. All safe. |
| 23. | First mission ordered to dive-bomb railline from Mantova east. Effecting two cuts in tracks and two direct hits in M/Y destroying two cars and damaging four and two cuts in tracks in yards. Strafed gun positions in area silencing them momentarily. Heavy flak was encountered. Four a/c to bomb rail line in Po Valley. One direct hit destroyed station house but not one hit on railline. Rocketed and strafed buildings with no results observed. Some flak. All safe. Three aircraft dive-bombed rail line in Po with only near misses. By rockets and strafing we destroyed 3 M/T and one light tank. Fourth mission of 4 a/c to bomb rail line from R3021 to R4524. Two near misses  |

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Sheet No. 6.  
War Diary Cont'd

DAY	EVENTS
23.	damaging tracks. No other results. All safe. 8 a/c ordered to bomb rail bridge at K9338. Bombed from 1000'. 2 direct hits on approach cutting tracks and one hit on bridge which damaged bridge. Forty rockets fired with no observed results.
24.	Weather grounded all a/c
25.	Christmas day but no days off for the wicked. First off at dawn with 8 a/c to attack Legnano Rail Diversion. One direct hit on diversion cutting rails. Weather quite bad and 4 a/c jettisoned bombs. All safe. This show of 8 a/c bombed occupied buildings at U937994. Bombing good with rocket passes and strafing in same area. Results difficult to determine because of terrain.
26.	First mission bombed rail line from Verona to Vicenza, two direct hits and one building destroyed. Two near misses. Heavy and light flak from target area. Second show bombed rail line south of Verona, one cut in tracks and one near miss. Strafed one M/T and passenger car-both destroyed. Third show same area as second show. Cut tracks in one place-no other activity noted. Last show for day was ordered to bomb a rail diversion at Peschiera. One direct hit on east approach which damaged bridge and cut rails. Three other rail cuts in area of target. Med bombers were observed near Modena dropping leaflets. All down safe.
27.	First mission bombed rail bridge at K6812-one direct hit destroyed one section of bridge. Four cuts in tracks on either side of bridge. 3 M/T strafed with no results. 4 a/c escorted 5 C 47's dropping supplies. No incident. 4 a/c repeated the 5 C 47's show. 4 a/c on flak diversion at Bologna, prior to attack by 24 Mitchells. Successful attack made on gun positions with rockets and strafing. Fifth Mission was 8 a/c attacked occupied buildings at U937994. All bombs in building area. All a/c strafed area. Lt. Gravens was killed shortly after take off when he was joining up in formation. His a/c spun in just south of the base. 6th show of 5 a/c attacked stores dump at U934993. All bombs in area which started on fire. All a/c down safe.
28.	First mission on rail line in F square. Effected 3 cuts in line and demolished house in town. Strafed factory in town leaving it burning. 4 M/T destroyed by strafing. Second show armed recce near Western bomblines. Observed scattered M/T and some troops. Landed without incident.

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Sheet No. 7.  
War Diary Cont'd.

- | DAY | EVENTS   |
|-----|--|
| 28. | <p>Third mission on rail line in F square with good results. Strafed M/T destroying 8 and damaging others. Set one building on fire. All returned safe. Fourth mission in F square again. Effecting 2 cuts in tracks. No strafing or rocketing. All back safe.</p> <p>Two ship armed recce to Po Valley. Destroyed 3 M/T and 4 horse drawn carts.</p>  |
| 29. | <p>8 a/c ordered to bomb highway bridge near bomblines. Not sure if we bombed right bridge but on bridge we bombed we scored two direct hits. Saw artillery fire on bomblines. All safe.</p> <p>7 a/c on highway bridge near Massa. One direct hit on center and one hit on each end of approach. Houses destroyed near bridge.</p> <p>Same area as previous show, with 8 a/c. Bridge hit and holed with one cut on highway on south approach. Rockets fired at bridge further damaging it.</p> <p>Massa area - highway bridge - no hits on bridge but near misses thru debris on road and bridge. Rockets fired in bomb run but no results observed.</p> <p>4 a/c with delay fuzing went out to skip bomb concrete bridge in Massa area. One direct hit damaged bridge - 5 strafing passes were made but no results observed. All safe.</p> <p>One a/c on recce of bridges in Massa area. A/C strafed barracks with hits observed. Back safe.</p> |
| 30. | <p>Early show to bomb line area for highway bridge. No direct hits were scored but near misses covered bridge with dirt. No flak. All safe.</p> <p>Another bridge with no results. Rockets were fired at flak positions but result unobserved.</p> <p>8 a/c on skip bombing of bridge. Six bombs destroyed one pillar of bridge but believe bridge is still serviceable. Houses in area destroyed by bombs and rockets.</p>  |
| 31. | <p>Last day of the year and plenty of ops. We are first off on a armed recce in the Western Po valley. Flight attacked locomotive and 8 cars. One near miss damaged tracks. All a/c strafed destroying locomotive and damaging the cars.</p> <p>4 a/c on armed recce to Alessandria. Rail line bombed effecting three cuts in tracks. One locomotive and cars destroyed by rockets and strafing. Flak heavy. One a/c hit. All down safe.</p> <p>8 a/c ordered to bomb bridge in K square with no results. One near miss. No movement seen.</p> <p>Last mission of the year was 8 a/c bombed bridge in F square. Very good bombing destroying sections in center of bridge. Strafed some soldiers. Killing or wounding them. 5 buildings damaged and one left burning. All safe. So long until a New Year. Get me a Tom and Jerry-Gus.</p>  |

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