

RESTRICTED

65th Fighter Squadron

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MAY-1944
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P.R.C.

May 1944

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65th Ftr Sqdn.
Outline History | May 44By Auth CO
65th Ftr Sqdn.
6, June 1944.SIXTY-FIFTH FIGHTER SQUADRON A.A.F.
A.P.O. 650

6, June 1944.

AG 514.7

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding General, XII Air Support Command, A.P.O. 374.

1. Outline History of the Sixty-Fifth Fighter Squadron for the period 1, May 1944 thru 31, May 1944.

a. Present designation: Sixty-Fifth Fighter Squadron, Fifty-Seventh Fighter Group, XII Air Support Command.

b. Changes in organization:

1. No change in designation.

2. No transfer of units.

3. Commanding Officer, Captain Richard O. Hunziker., O-664187.

4. Changes of Staff Officers:

1st Lieut Lawrence A Buttacavoli, O1287660 is appointed Anti-Malaria Officer, additional duty.

Captain Richard O Hunziker is appointed Squadron Commander during the absence of Lt Col. Gilbert O. Wymond Jr.

Lieut James A Eaglen is appointed Operations Officers Officer during the absence of Captain Francis S Manda.

1st Lieut Stanley P. Lancaster is appointed Flight Commander "A" Flight.

1st Lieut Raymond H. Church is appointed Deputy Flight Commander "A" Flight.

1st Lieut Ivan I. Andrus is appointed Flight Commander "B" Flight.

1st Lieut Herbert M. Thomas is appointed Deputy Flight Commander "B" Flight.

1st Lieut James C. Mare is appointed Flight Commander "C" Flight.

1st Lieut William O. Moreau is appointed Deputy Flight Commander "C" Flight.

1st Lieut Roscoe E. Ford O568171, is appointed Supply Officer vice 1st Lieut Lawrence A. Buttacavoli.

1st Lt Roscoe E. Ford is appointed Unit Gas Officer vice 1st Lieut Edward J. Silke.

1st Lieut Roscoe E. Ford is appointed Fire Defence Officer vice 1st Lieut Donald F. Smith.

1st Lieut Roscoe E. Ford is appointed Squadron Orientation Officer.

1st Lieut James A. Eaglen is appointed temporary Squadron Commander during the absence of Capt Robert O. Hunziker.

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S E C R E T

- c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted.
 a. 1, May: Commissioned-50 Enlisted-231
 b. Net increase: Commissioned-1 Enlisted-25
 c. Net decrease: Commissioned-4 Enlisted-5
 d. 31, May 1944, Commissioned- 4 Enlisted-251
- d. Stations:
 Alto L.G. Corsica
 a. Date of arrival, 28th March 1944.
- e. Movements
 a. NONE
- f. Campaigns:
 a. Italy
 b. Duration: September 18, 1943, still in progress.
- g. Operations:
 a. Campaign-Italy
 b. Nature of operations-Dive-Bombing, Delousing, Strafing.
 c. Number of missions--66 Number of sorties--777
 d. Results of most important mission:
 1. Routine missions flown during month.
- h. Losses in action:
 1. 2nd Lieut William J. Drenick, 081355 was killed on take-off the 4th of May.
 2. 2nd Lieut William H. Owens was hit by ack ack and forced to bail out over enemy territory on May 24th.
- i. Lt. Col. Gilbert C. Wymond was awarded the "Silver Star".
 Lieut Gregory J. Herrenbruch was awarded the "Air Medal".
2. Inclosed are War Diary, Sixty-Fifth Fighter Squadron for the month of May 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:

1 Inc 1:
 War Diary

Edward J. Silks
 EDWARD J. SILKS,
 1st Lieut., A.A.F.,
 Squadron Historical Officer.

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S E C R E T

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Sheet No.-1- War Diary

65th Fighter Sq., 57th Ftr Gp.
Prepared by Edward J. Silks, 1st Lieut, AC.

Month of May 1944

DAY

EVENTS

1. 12 a/c with 24x500 lb bombs with 8-11 second delay fuzes took off at 08:30 to bomb and recon the Arezzo to Florence r.r. line. Due to solid overcast over target area they bombed a factory with good results. 6 of our a/c strafed in their bomb run. Light flak, intense and accurate encountered over the factory area.
- 13 a/c with 26x500 lb bombs with 8-11 second delay fuzes took off at 14:00 to ~~XXXX~~ bomb a r.r. tunnel. Got one hit on south opening of tunnel, one hit on top and the rest of the bombs were scattered close to the tunnel. Actual damage unobserved due to smoke and dust over target area after the first few bomb bursts. Col Wymond strafed an ammunition dump. He blew up one building with debris rising to 4,000'. The other aircraft at 6500' heard the explosion. An inspection after landing revealed few holes, buckled wings and tail surfaces on the Colonel's aircraft.
- 2-5. The following four days we ran two shows a day to cut r.r. lines and block railroad tunnels and bridges. Using 8-11 second delay fuzes permitted the pilots to go as low as fifty feet in their bomb runs scoring some surprisingly accurate hits.
6. 12 a/c carried 24x500 lb bombs with 8-11 second delay fuzes to bomb railroad tracks north of Montepescalli. Two definite cuts on tracks and three probables was the result.
7. 12 a/c with 24x500 lb bombs went out at 09:00 to dive bomb shipping in Elba Harbor. Got one direct hit and several near misses on small barges and started an oil fire in the dock area. Encountered heavy and light ack ack from target area.
8. Bad weather, a day of needed rest.
9. Sent out 12 aircraft with 24x500 lb bombs to recon weather and dive-bomb any suitable railroad target. Weather being fair, they hit a small marshalling yard at San Giovanni. All the bombs hit in the target area damaging box cars and cutting tracks. Difficult to ascertain the exact amount of damage due to smoke and dust after the first few bomb bursts. Observed two snappers in Siena area but they were too high to catch. French pilots of 2/5 squadron were assigned to us to absorb our way of flying and fighting. At first it was a bit difficult to understand French but few of them did speak English well and after a few days we found them to be a swell bunch. Their ground personnel hadn't arrived so a certain number of our men were assigned to make modifications such as bomb release handles and few other changes. On this day the French with four aircraft flew their first mission with us, acting as our top cover. Bombed a railroad marshalling yard with some good hits. The French gave us good cover.
- 10-14. Twelve missions were flown in these twelve days on targets consisting of marshalling yards, railroad bridges, tunnels and tracks, occasionally an anti-shipping recon along the coast of Italy. A mission led by Lt. Mare on the 13th is an interesting one to note; 12 ships carrying 24x500 lb bombs with 8-11 second delay fuzes took off at 14:20 to bomb the railroad line from Siena to Asciano and also give cover to 12 B-26's over Poggibonsi. One flight bombed a tunnel scoring two hits on top, one hit in west entrance and two bombs inside of tunnel which blew the top of tunnel out. Second flight bombed another tunnel further up with one aircraft slinging two bombs into tunnel destroying it completely. Three ships bombed a railroad bridge destroying it also. Third section bombed tunnel and bridge scoring one hit at east entrance of tunnel, one cut on tracks between tunnel and bridge and two direct hits on 150' bridge blowing tracks off. In addition to this they strafed ten railroad cars leaving three flammies and seven smoking. Also met bombers and gave them cover. A darn good show.

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Sheet No. 2 War Diary cont'd.

DAY.

15. 12 aircraft with 24x500 lb bombs bombed a railroad bridge. Bridge was knocked out by four direct hits. On their way back they strafed a stores dump. Observed a B-25 that was bellied in on Pianosa Island. Bombed another bridge at 13:45 destroying it completely with five direct hits. Two ships flown by Captain Munziker and Lt Eaglen were ordered up to destroy the B-25 which was observed previously on Pianosa. They missed the aircraft with their bombs so they strafed it setting it on fire. Later recon showed it completely burned out. The fourth mission of the day was sent out to bomb Port Ferrale in Elba. Two bombs scored a close miss to ship and one direct hit left ship burning and badly listing. Four bombs struck warehouse along side of dock. Got another hit on smaller boat in south end of harbor. One aircraft strafed 3-88 mm gun positions silencing them. Also strafed a radar station on top of hill.
- 16-19. Weather being exceptionally good permitted the squadron to fly nine missions in these four days with a score of the following damages; six tunnels completely blocked, eleven tracks cut, one railroad bridge destroyed, one barge destroyed, a factory and an airdrome badly bombed and a radar station missing.
20. Stood by on readiness-no missions assigned.
21. 12 aircraft carrying 8x500 GPs with 1/10 second delay fuses and 16x500 lb incendiary bombs were sent out to bomb a volcanic steam electric plant. Good hits in target area although no fires were observed.
- 22-31. Flew twenty-four missions in ten days with a damage score as follows; forty-two vehicles set on fire, twenty-eight vehicles damaged, one steam roller destroyed and two damaged, two railroad engines destroyed, eighteen box cars destroyed and seven damaged, seven bridges damaged, one vessel sunk and six more badly damaged, railroad tracks were cut in at least twenty-seven places.

Lt. Owens while on a mission to bomb the Sinalunga-Chieti railroad line got a direct hit behind cockpit and was forced to bail out. Observed chute to open.

The month of May 1944 has been one of the busiest months in the history of the "Fighting Cocks" with a total of sixty-six missions flown and a total of seven-hundred seventy-seven sorties.

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