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DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9

65th Fighter Squadron

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89-1-65-41
Sept. 1944

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P.R.C.

September 1944

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DOD DIR 5200.9

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RSI Cont No
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S E C R E T

SQ-FI-65-H.I.

SEPT 49

DESIGNATION SHEET
HISTORICAL RECORDS

(H)

COMMAND : XXII Tactical Air Command

WING : -

GROUP : 57th Fighter Group

SQUADRON: 65th Fighter Squadron

OTHER :

OUTLINE HISTORY X

WAR DIARY X

~~S E C R E T~~

~~SECRET~~65th Ftr Sqdn.
Outline History Sept 1944~~SECRET~~DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9By Auth CO
65th Ftr Sqdn.
5, October 1 944.SIXTY-FIFTH FIGHTER SQUADRON A.A.F.
A.P.O. 650

5, October 1944

AG 514.7

SUBJECT: Historical Report.

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

1. Outline history of the Sixty-Fifth Fighter Squadron for the period 1, Sept. 1944 to 30, Sept 1944.

- a. Present designation: Sixty-Fifth Fighter Squadron, Fifty-Seventh Fighter Group. XII Air Support Command.
- b. 1. No change in designation.
2. No change in assignment.
3. No changes in attachment.

Subordinates units: None

Commanding Officer: Lt. Colonel Gilbert O. Wymond Jr., O-431591.

Changes in Staff Officers :

1st Lieutenant Roscoe E. Ford, O568171, is appointed Personnel Equipment Officer, additional duty.

1st Lieutenant Caruthers Dwing Jr, O565313, is appointed Air/Sea Rescue Officer, additional duty.

Captain Marvin D. Parkhurst, O580793, is appointed Graves Registration Officers additional duty.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted:

1, Sept 1944: Commissioned—47	Enlisted—245
Net increase: Commissioned— 0	Enlisted—18
Net decrease: Commissioned— 0	Enlisted— 0
30, Sept 1944: Commissioned—47	Enlisted—263

d. Stations:

1. Alto L.G. Corsica, Date of arrival—28 March 1944.
2. Ombrore L.G. Italy, Date of arrival—11, Sept 1944.

e. Movements: Moved from Alto L.G. Corsica to Ombrore L.G. Italy, arrived at Ombrore L.G. on 11, Sept, 1944.

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

g. Operations:

- a. Campaigns, Italy, South France.
- b. Nature of operations: Dive-bombing, Bomber Escort, Starffing, rocket firing.
- c. Number of missions—36 Number of sorties—273
- d. Most important missions: All missions were equal in importance.

h. Losses in action: John A. Wittenberger, 1st Lieutenant, 0686793.

i. Awards and decorations: None.

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

RS528

(SECRET)

Sheet No.-1- War Diary

65th Fighter Sq., 57th Ftr. Gp.
Prepared by Caruthers Ewing Jr., 1st Lt. A.C.

Month of September 1944

DAY

EVENTS

1. No flying except for one training mission.
2. Three combat missions and one A.S.R. search mission. The first mission of 8 a/c, led by Lt. Eubanks was up at 0630, to attack a pontoon bridge across the Po River with 500 lb. bombs and rockets. Heavy ack-ack was encountered over target. 7 a/c bombed 15 plus wooden barges 30 to 50 ft. long in line along bank of river. Dirt and smoke obscured observation of all bombs, but it is certain the following damage was done: 1 direct rocket hit by Lt. Eubanks, 1 direct hit with his bombs, on two barges scored by Lt. Lyke, 1 direct hit on 1 barge by Lt. Wilson, 6 a/c strafed in bomb runs. On the way back Capt. J.W. Smith was hit near La Spezia where fl't encountered light, heavy ack-ack, intense and accurate. He had to ditch a/c about 15 miles over sea. A.S.R. was called in on RT, formation circled him, a second mission of 4 a/c started out to relieve the circling planes. Before they arrived "BLACK TOP" called them in because the A.S.R. Catalina had successfully effected rescue. Capt. Smith is back O.K. A recon of the Italian coast, 4 a/c led by Major Hunziker took off, one a/c returned early due to mechanical trouble. The other three continued the recon, several instances the flight encountered heavy and light A/A. At 1110 hrs. an attack was made on a ship, about the size of a "Liberty Ship", being towed by a tug just outside of Genoa. Lt. Meyd got a direct bomb hit on the large vessel, Lt. Floerke hit the tug with one of his bombs, the other hit adjacent dock area causing damage. All planes carried 2x 500 lb. All a/c strafed in bomb run. The large vessel was left smoking, condition of tug unobserved. The last mission of 8 a/c took off at 1130 hrs to dive bomb, Modena - Bologna highway. Ea a/c carried 2 x 500 lb. with 8 to 11 sec. fuzes. Two complete cuts were secured other damage unobserved. 2 a/c returned early.
3. Three missions to-day. 8 a/c with 16 x 500 lb. G.P. bombs with instant. fuzes, were sent up at 1215 hrs., to attack trains loaded with M/T on the Asti-Turin Line. 2 a/c returned early located a train of 25 plus moving east, train stopped when attack east of Asti. Capt. Hiskok scored a direct hit on cars dest. 2 or 3, all a/c strafed the trains in repeated passes, damaging both engines, setting 6 cars on fire near the end of train and claiming 15 plus cars damaged. H/A intense and accurate from this target in Italy, 6 a/c were ordered off at 1535 hrs along with 6 a/c from 64 Sq. Escort was given without incident, bombing appeared good. The third mission of 8 a/c attacked the Pistoia - Bologna highway at 1805 hrs, the formation encountered H/A & L/A all along the road in spite of this 16 x 500 lb. G.P. bombs with 8 to 11 sec fuzes, were well placed close observation was poor but direct hits by Capt. M.B. Smith and Lt. Bradshaw, resulted in two cuts each on each end of a bridge north of Poretta - Terzi.
4. Again three combat missions were flown. 8 a/c were ordered off at 0635 hrs ea. a/c carried 2x500 lb bombs with 8 to 11 fuzes to create a road block and recon the area. L/A intense and accurate came from point of attack, 3 balls of fire possibly came by the planes in their bomb run. Three of the twenty millimeter guns were silenced by strafing in the bomb runs. Bombs fell in area but no cuts were observed. Lt. Grant fl't leader and Capt. Hare top section leader located a RR engine pulling 6 coaches moving east, just southeast of Turin. The train stopped when strafed by 4 a/c. The engine was destroyed, 2 coaches were damaged. Small arms fire was encountered from the target. In the same vicinity 2 more RR trains with steam up, but stationary were located. Each train consisted of five cars and engine facing in opposite direction on parallel tracks. Both RR engines were dest. and coaches damaged when

SECRET

Sheet No. 2 War Diary cont'd

DAY

EVENT

4. 2 a/c destroyed one RR engine moving north with 3 box cars. This train also stopped when attacked. A M/Y in the same area was attack, two trains one with an engine and steam up were observed. Both RR engines and two cars were strafed, destroying both engines and damaging the box cars. A very excellent show. Lt. Herrenbruck led the next show of 8 a/c ea. a/c carried 2x 500lb G.P. bombs. 8 to 11 sec fuzes. Target to dive bomb highway Forti - Parma. 6 cuts on road were observed, one near miss and one near miss on the approach to a bridge. A stationery train with engine and three box cars were attacked near Parma. The engine and three box cars were heavily damaged by strafing. The last show led by Capt. Hickok was ordered up at 1600 hrs. ea a/c carried 2x 500 lb. G.P. bombs with 8 to 11 sec. fuzes. The mission was, 8 a/c to dive bomb Firenzeuola - Imola highway. H/aA was encountered near Bondeno, Bologna and Licciana, no one was hit. Southeast of Imola all bombs were dropped from 1,000', all bombs dropped in area 4 to 5 good hits were observed, one house was destroyed and other near misses.
5. Our first mission to-day resulted in the loss of Lt. Wittenberger. He led an 8 ship show ordered up at 0845 hrs. Mission to provide a fighter sweep for bombers in the Milan area. After successfully accomplishing this without incident and when the bombers had left, he led his section in a strafing attack against 12 plus M/T on the road near Cortedlona, east of Pavia. Lt. Wittenberger secured two flamers and Lt. Burgess credited himself with two flamers. Apparently Lt. Wittenberger then hit the trees with his right wing, flipped over crashed through some high tension wires, ploughed the ground and was not seen to leave the wreckage. The second mission of 8 a/c were ordered up at 1415 hrs. Lt. Eubanks led the formation, ea a/c carried 2x500lb bombs with 1/10 sec fuzes. The mission was an armed recce. 35 RR cars were observed and dive bombed in the M/Y at Grevaleona, Italy, 15 of which were tank cars. 10 cars destroyed and several others damaged a fire was started and three near misses on the cars cut the track. The third mission of 8 a/c were off at 1800hrs ea. a/c carried 2x 500 lb bombs, 1/10 sec fuzes. The mission to dive bomb highway near Cuneo. H/A & L/A from Cuneo. Bombs were dropped at 2,000' in a dive through a hole in a 10/10's overcast at 7,000' on the highway running northeast from Vicatorte, Italy, resulting in three direct hits on road.
6. Stood down for training and repairs.
7. No Operational flying to-day.
8. To-day we had two weather recces and one armed recce. The first show was up at 0635 hrs. 4 a/c to recce area Florence - Bologna - Po river to Piacenza. GAVU west of Piacenza. The second weather recce of 4 a/c was up at 1320 hrs. Weather reported improved. The last mission was up at 1730 hrs. 8 a/c to recce south of Po river. Ea a/c carried 2x 500 lb. bombs 1/10 sec. fuzes. 2 a/c returned early but were sorties. The formation bombed at Castel San Giovana, results were very good. 1 M/T was dest. by bombing a roof was blown off a building, 2 cuts on road observed and 10 plus M/T damaged by strafing. 4 M/T were strafed near a pontoon bridge some 12 miles west of Piacenza. 1 Bus dest. and 3 damaged.
9. Our "A" party left to-day. Two missions were flown. Our first mission was ordered off at 1350 hrs. to bomb M/Y at San Agostino. The formation of 8 a/c, ea. carried 2x 500 lb. bombs 1/10 sec fuzes, encountered L/A intense but inaccurate from the target area. One direct hit one box car and one near miss cut the tracks, Two hits in the M/Y unobserved. The second mission was ordered up at 1800 hrs. 8 a/c ea. carried 2 x 500 lb bombs, 1/10 sec fuzes to cut the RR line between Gappi and Modena. One plane carried six rockets. The bombing resulted in three cuts. H/A & L/A was encountered near Poretta - Terma. Lt. Nicholson's plane received several flak holes.
10. Two missions to-day. The first one was up at 0900 hrs to dive bomb with 16x 500mlb bombs, 1/10 sec. fuzes, the Modena - Bologna Electric RR line.

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Sheet No. 3 War Diary, cont

DAY

EVENT

10. Five cuts were effected and one bomb knocked the dirt from under the tracks. 3 a/c strafed an electric engine with 12 plus cars. The train was stationary and engine left smoking, 2 a/c strafed cars 5 damaged. L/A intense was encountered over target area. Two Fiesler Storchs were seen east of Pistoia. Maj. Hunziker led the show, Colonel Wymond Jr. flew top section leader. The second show was of 8 a/c, was up at 1300 hrs. to carry out an armed reconce east of the Italian-French border and south of Turin. 16 x 500 lb bombs were carried with 1/10 sec fuzes. At 1420 hrs about 6 or 8 miles northwest of Asti, 10 plus flat cars and box cars loaded with one or more M/T or tanks on ea. car were all flamed from bombing and strafing. 5 cuts were observed and one directly in the spur of junction. Lt. Herrenbruck led leader section on 4 strafing passes. Capt. Hickok leader of red section located more cars just north of where the bombs were dropped, he led his section on several strafing passes. In the meantime more cars were observed south of where the bombs were dropped and more strafing passes were made. The total score in addition to the 10 plus cars and M/T was: 8 empty box cars damaged, 4 box cars flamed, 1 large baggage type black car one of three strafed by Lt. Richardson, was a flamer one cut on tracks and yard building damaged.
11. 8 a/c took off at 07:45 on an armed reconce, with 16 500 lb bombs, 1/10 sec fuzes, of the Alessandria to Piacenza area. It had been reported that Jerry Division was moving in that area. A locomotive with 15 plus flat cars loaded with two or more M/T or light tanks on each and 5 empty box cars was located S.E. of Voghera. a 10/10s overcast hampered the bombing. The results of the bombing and strafing was: 1 Engine Dest., 2 bombs hit on two box cars dest. them and cutting the tracks, 5 box cars were dam., 2 M/T on flat cars were flamed, 12 others dam, one near miss on a round-house. probably dam. The next show was an armed reconce of 8 planes carrying 16x 500 lb bombs with 1/10 sec fuzes. The flight was off at 1300 hrs. and dropped its bombs on a small M/Y of three rail lines, at P.P. (O-5492) near Nizza. The bombing was 100%, 7 sets of bombs cut the lines in 7 places, and all 3 lines had one or more cuts each. The 8th set of bombs cut the single track line about 1 mile west of M/Y, 3 a/c strafed 12 gondola cars loaded with gravel & 15 plus empty box cars on bomb runs results unobserved. The third show of 8 a/c carrying 16x 500 lb bombs with 1/10 fuzes, were up at 1730 hrs. to dive bomb M/T reported west from Piacenza to Oghera. Weather was 10/10 from 3,000 - 12,000' and M/T could not be located, a 2 spur M/Y, S.W. of Broni was bombed 4 cuts were observed, two on ea. track.
12. Two shows to-day. The first one of 8 a/c was up at 0900 hrs with 16x 500 lb. bombs to D/B gun positions No. 4 & 5 in area NW. of junction at L-808006, H/A & L/A came from the target area through 3/10s clouds at 3,000'. Lt. Richardson led his section on No. 4 scoring one hit and his section got another in the area. Resulted in silencing the gun. Maj. Manda leader of Red section, concentrated on No. 5, his section got two hits and observed a large flash in or near the gun, it had stopped firing, building near by were damaged from the bombing and strafing. The second mission of 8 a/c was up at 1915 to D/B troop concentrations reported near Bevera and Trucco, with 16x 500 lb. bombs Instant. fuzes. H/A & L/A was encountered at (T-0590) and L/A from Albenga, albraten target since a solid overcast obscured the primary target. In the M/Y two track cuts were effected by two a/c, 2 a/c bombed storage houses, a gun post was dest. when bombed with frag bombs. Frag bombs were dropped on a barracks south of Albenga. 2 e/a were seen near the bomb-line but lost them in the clouds, e/a at 6,000' going north.
13. The first mission of 4 a/c was up at 1015 to conduct an armed reconce east of Genoa and to Turin area with 8x 500 lb. bombs 1/10 nose, 1/40 sec tail fuzes. Bombs were dropped on 10 M/T moving north just south of Tortona, all a/c strafed. 1 staff car was a flamer and 4 M/T were damaged by strafing another M/T was dest. from strafing of scattered M/T in that area. Many horse-drawn wagons loaded with hay and a number of bicyclists were observed. On the way home the formation at 9,000' observed a large

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Sheet No. 4 War Diary, con't.

DAY

EVENT

13. wake was observed to be from a large launch. 3 a/c went down on the deck to investigate and there was only a wake and oil slick. Was this submarine ours or Jerry's? The second mission of 8 a/c was up with 16x 500 lb bombs with 1/10 sec fuzes, to recce Piacenza- Alessandria RR line. Overland they encountered bad weather 10/10s at 9,000' with rain and visibility 1 to 3 miles. In spite of this handicap, Lt. Eubanks led the formation in an exceptionally accurate attack on M/Y at Serravalle. 13 bombs hit in the yards effectively several cuts were made 3 to 5 box cars dest. Sparks and balls of fire shot everywhere from the electric line. Lt. Hendricks dest. a brick repair or storage shed.
14. Two missions: First mission up at 0900hrs. 8 a/c carrying 14x 500 lb bombs 2 bombs were ARDX others G.P. with 1/10 sec fuzes, on an armed recce west of a line from Pistoia - Modena to Genoa - Milan. Weather over the area made observation impossible but 4 a/c located and bombed a small RR bridge about 6 miles east of Bedonia, damaged noeth approach. 4 a/c bombed a 3 track M/Y at (P-7157), which contained 5 plus RR cars. 4 bombs hit in the yards other near misses observed. The second mission of 8 a/c, with 16 x 500 lb. bombs, 1/10 nose 1/40 sec tail fuzes were sent on an armed recce for pontoons in Po River. No suitable pontoon targets were found, but between Viadana and Guastalla some barges and boats were located and which they bombed and strafed with the following results: 2 barges 150' long Dest. and 3 damaged, 2 boats 75'- 100' long dest., 1 electric engine pulling several cars were strafed by 3 a/c and engine severely damaged. The train was in a haze and trees and when a/c pulled up from target Red crosses were noticed on tops of cars, no futar atteak was made, only damage observed was to the engine.
15. One mission was scheduled but did not get off.
16. First mission of 8 a/c up at 1100 tonD/B RR station at Uergato, several hits in the buildings were observed but dust obscured the results, 1 cut was made in north end of M/Y. H/A was encountered from target. The second show of 8 a/c with back early, went with bombs on an armed recce Alessandria to Vercelli area. They encountered H/A intense and accurate, when they bombed and strafed M/T getting 3 M/T from bombs also cutting the road and added another M/T dest and 1 M/T damaged from strafing. Lts Holmes and Coleman collected flak holes in thrie a/c.
17. 8 a/c with 16x 500lb bombs encountered L/A intense and accurate but secured cuts on road rail line Martara to Novara. 4 a/c got 5 M/T flamers by strafing. The second show of 8 a/c on ana armed recce Vercelli to Norana with bombs. Formation was up at 1200 hrs. Two trains with engines were bombed and strafed, 1 cut in track, 10 plus RR cars Dest. 2 RR engines Dest.
18. Grosseto A/D #2 operations (Italy): 8 a/c were ordered off at 0830 hrs. to conduct an armed recce ea a/c carried 2 x 500 lb bombs. The formation experienced H/A north of Bondeno. 1 cut on the south approach to the bridge at Badia. Near Galto on the Po river, 5 M/T were strafed and 3 flamers were observed. Lts Grant, Hewitt and Capt. Hickok ea. getting one flammer.
- Setting down in our new quarters located some 5 miles from the A/D at Marina Di Grosseto. Everyone is in a building, most of them have running water and are new. Food promises to be better than in Corsica, and it has been rumored that ice cream will be served to Officers and EM on alternate days. The whole neighborhood is mined if the signs mean anything. There was atleast one MINE, because it went off about a mile away from our area, blew a cart, donkey and man to kingdom come, the blast went hundreds of feet in the air. C'est La Guerre.
19. Three missions: First 8 a/c, up at 0630hrs., armed recce of Po River, carried 16 x 500 lb. bombs with 1/10 & 1/40 sec fuzes. H/A intense and accurate from vally NW of Gallicano. The RR bridge running NE-SW at Marcario, a three spare, single track job. North approach was damaged the middle span was knocked out by leader section (Col. Wymond, Lts. Carnahan, Florke, Burgess, Holmes)

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Sheet No 5 War Diary, Con't.

DAY

EVENT

19. Red section scored near misses of the road bridge to the right, 4 bombs failing to detonate. The next mission was ordered to D/B "Artillery Trains", at L-753097. The formation of 8 a/c carrying 16x 500 lb. bombs, encountered H/A moderate and accurate just east of the target and MG fire from the target area. 12 bombs fell in the target area 2 bombs fell short and were near misses. There definitely were some sort of installations, - appeared to be gun emplacements. 4 a/c strafed. The third mission was an exact repeat of the preceding mission.
20. Rain with a capital "R". The result of all this is to render Grosseto A/D #2 unserviceable. Same up until the middle of next week.
24. Planes moved to Grosseto Main A/B, with the 86 Ftr. Grp. Sqdn non-operational for rest of month. Officers moved to a new location at Castiglione Di Marina, a gorgeous villa of a Maquis. Uncle BUD was killed and a short special account will appear on him.
- 30

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(SECRET)

Sheet No. -6- War Diary

65th Fighter Sq., 57th Ftr. Gp.
Prepared by Caruthers Ewing Jr., 1st Lt. A.C.

Month of September 1944

DAY

SPECIAL EVENT

29. "Uncle Bud", famous mascot of the Fighting Cock Squadron was killed in line of duty on September 29th on the eve of the anniversary of his 27th month overseas, it was announced by Lieut. Colonel Gilbert O. Wymond Jr., squadron commander. The distinguished bird which had been awarded several honorary decorations, accompanied the squadron on its departure from the United States on July 1, 1942, traveling via Stratoliner and army Air Transport across the South Atlantic, Africa and Palestine to the Island of Cyprus. It participated in the illustrious march of the Eighth Army from El Alamein to Tripoli, and in the entire Tunisian campaign as well as the Sicilian and Italian campaigns to date. While Uncle Bud's demise was caused by a speeding jeep, it can hardly be called an ignominious death as it is said that he was proceeding to the attack on an Italian rooster when disaster overtook him.
- Fighting Cock Squadron men feel his loss as keenly as they would that of any of their other comrades. As a memento mori, Uncle Bud's remains are being mounted and will be as highly cherished as the five battle honors and three Presidential citations which have been awarded the squadron.

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