

RESTRICTED

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SQ-FI-66-H.I
MAKAS

DESIGNATION SHEET
HISTORICAL RECORDS

R (m)

COMMAND : XXII Tactical Air Command

WING : _____

GROUP : 57th Fighter Group

SQUADRON: 66th Fighter Squadron

OTHER : _____

OUTLINE HISTORY X

WAR DIARY X

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12^{AF}-BI-HISECRET

ANA/cb

66th Fighter Sq.

OUTLINE HISTORY

SECRET

By Auth CO
66th Fighter Sq.
1 March 1945
C.C./Initials
31 March 1945

HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding General, Twelfth Air Force, APO 650, U. S. Army. Attention: A-2 Historian.

THRU : Commanding Officer, 57th Fighter Group, APO 650, U. S. Army.

1. Outline History of the 66th Fighter Squadron for the period 1 March 1945 thru 31 March 1945.

a. Present designation: 66th Fighter Squadron, 57th Fighter Group, XXII Tactical Air Command, Twelfth Air Force.

b. Changes in organization:

- (1) Change in designation: None
- (2) Change in Commanding Officer: None
- (3) Change of Staff Officers:

(a) Major Watson A. Stains Jr. appointed Acting Executive Officer.

(4) Changes in T/O: None

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted.

(1) Month of March 1945.

(a) 1 March 1945

1 Commissioned: 572 Enlisted : 245

(b) Net increase:

1 Commissioned: 112 Enlisted : 3

(c) Net decrease:

1 Commissioned: 72 Enlisted : 4

(d) 31 March 1945

1 Commissioned: 612 Enlisted : 244

d. Stations:

(1) Name of station: Grosseto L.G., Italy.

(a) Date of arrival: " A " party, 11 Sept 1944, " B " party, 21 Sept. 1944.

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12th F-44 BI-HISECRET

ANA/cb

66th Fighter Sq.

OUTLINE HISTORY

SECRET

By Auth CO
66th Fighter Sq.
1 March 1945
C.C./Initials
31 March 1945

HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding General, Twelfth Air Force, APO 650, U. S. Army. Attention: A-2 Historian.

THRU : Commanding Officer, 57th Fighter Group, APO 650, U. S. Army.

1. Outline History of the 66th Fighter Squadron for the period 1 March 1945 thru 31 March 1945.

a. Present designation: 66th Fighter Squadron, 57th Fighter Group, XXII Tactical Air Command, Twelfth Air Force.

b. Changes in organization:

- (1) Change in designation: None
- (2) Change in Commanding Officer: None
- (3) Change of Staff Officers:

- (a) Major Watson A. Stains Jr. appointed Acting Executive Officer.

- (4) Changes in T/O: None

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted.

(1) Month of March 1945.

(a) 1 March 1945

<u>1</u>	Commissioned:	57
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<u>2</u>	Enlisted	: 245
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(b) Net increase:

<u>1</u>	Commissioned:	11
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<u>2</u>	Enlisted	: 3
----------	----------	-----

(c) Net decrease:

<u>1</u>	Commissioned:	7
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<u>2</u>	Enlisted	: 4
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(d) 31 March 1945

<u>1</u>	Commissioned:	61
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<u>2</u>	Enlisted	: 244
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d. Stations:

(1) Name of station: Grosseto L.G., Italy.

- (a) Date of arrival: " A " party, 11 Sept 1944, " B " party, 21 Sept. 1944.

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ANA/cb

66th Fighter Sq.

OUTLINE HISTORY

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66th Fighter Sq.
1 March 1945
C.C.L. Initials
31 March 1945

HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

- e. Movements: None
- f. Campaigns:
(1) Name: Italian
(2) Duration: Still in progress
- g. Operations:
(1) Campaigns: Italian
(2) Nature of operations: Dive bombing, armed recce, weather recce and area cover.
(3) Number of missions and sorties for the period 1 March thru 31 March 1945.
(a) Missions: 113
(b) Sorties: 744
(4) Result of most important mission:
Mission #1302 of 17 March 1945
(a) Destruction of rolling stock and M/T
- h. Commanding Officer on important mission:
Captain Richard L. Johnson.
- i. Losses in action.
(1) Missing in action.
(a) Name: 1st Lieut. Philip T. Lehman
1. Date: 3 March 1945
(b) Name: 1st Lieut. Miller A. Anderson
1. Date: 21 March 1945
(2) Killed in action.
(a) Name: 1st Lieut. Gene Norris
1. Date: 3 March 1945
(3) The following named pilot was reported MIA in Outline History of February 1945 has since returned to his Squadron.
(a) 1st Lieut. Lincoln R. Sherwood
- j. Presentations of awards to past and present members of this organization.
(1) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement in combat against the enemy.
(a) Captain Arno H. Heying
(b) Captain William C. Tench

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66th Fighter Sq.

OUTLINE HISTORY

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HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

66th Fighter Sq.

1 March 1945

C.C./Initials

31 March 1945

(e) Lieutenant Carl J. Weisenberger

(7) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Lieutenant George M. Blackburn
- (b) Lieutenant Truman R. Heron
- (c) Lieutenant Eugene D. Kranzush
- (d) Lieutenant Aikens V. Smith
- (e) Lieutenant Samuel Z. Humnicutt
- (f) Lieutenant Glenn H. Boelling
- (g) Lieutenant Kenneth R. Lewis
- (h) Lieutenant Charles T. Paine
- (i) Lieutenant James B. Richards

(8) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 1st Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Lieutenant George M. Blackburn
- (b) Lieutenant Richard W. Kruse
- (c) Lieutenant Philip T. Lehman
- (d) Lieutenant Lincoln R. Sherwood
- (e) Lieutenant Truman R. Heron
- (f) Lieutenant James A. Jones
- (g) Lieutenant Eugene D. Kranzush
- (h) Lieutenant John P. Miller III
- (i) Lieutenant Aikens V. Smith
- (j) Lieutenant Louis O. Hays III
- (k) Lieutenant Matthew F. Heiman
- (l) Lieutenant Charles T. Paine
- (m) Lieutenant James B. Richards
- (n) Lieutenant John A. Bowman
- (o) Lieutenant Ray O. Fandel
- (p) Lieutenant Elvaughn E. Johnson
- (q) Lieutenant Robert B. Orcutt

(9) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Lieutenant George S. Carlton
- (b) Lieutenant Ignatius R. Markowski

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1 March 1945

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31 March 1945

HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

- (c) Captain George A. Mosites
- (d) Lieutenant Alfred R. Lyth
- (e) Lieutenant James L. Moody
- (f) Lieutenant Theodore Matula
- (g) Lieutenant Joseph Angelone
- (h) Lieutenant Charles E. McCreary
- (i) Lieutenant Gene Norris
- (j) Lieutenant Miller A. Anderson

(2) The following named enlisted man of this organization received the Bronze Star for meritorious service in direct support of combat operations.

- (a) Sergeant Herbert A. Katz

(3) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 6th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Captain Leon E. Jansen

(4) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 5th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Captain James P. Hartwig
- (b) Captain Quentin J. Goss
- (c) Lieut. Colonel Yates
- (d) Lieutenant Joseph Angelone
- (e) Lieutenant Miller A. Anderson

(5) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 4th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Captain George A. Mosites
- (b) Lieutenant Harold A. Swanson
- (c) Lieutenant Harold E. McDonnell

(6) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Captain Arno H. Heying
- (b) Lieutenant Harold E. McDonnell
- (c) Lieutenant Wayne S. Dodds
- (d) Lieutenant David T. Hutton

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ANA/cb

66th Fighter Sq.

OUTLINE HISTORY

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By Auth CO

66th Fighter Sq.

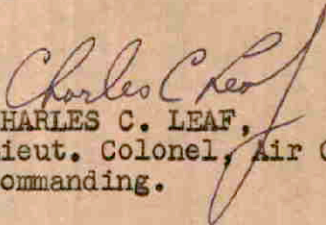
1 March 1945

C.C. Intials

31 March 1945

HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

2. Enclosed is the Unit Journal of Events of the 66th Fighter Squadron for the period 1 March 1945 thru 31 March 1945 and Special Account of Mission 1302 of 17 March 1945.


CHARLES C. LEAF,
Lieut. Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding.

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Sheet No. 1, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of March, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

- | DAY | EVENTS |
|-----|---|
| 1 | A " pea-soup " fog right down to the ground this morning forced us to cancel our scheduled flights, and after a standby until 1300 hours, we were released. A score of post-pay day card and dice games were played this evening and money changed hands several times until " lights out " at 2330 hours forced the participants to call a halt to the old army game. |
| 2 | Continued bad weather kept us grounded all morning but a patrol informed us of a partial break-up of the overcast and allowed us to send off two missions in the afternoon. The enlisted men's ballroom has undergone a transformation, and the colored lanterns and other home-made decorations helped to make the dance this evening a complete success. |
| 3 | A busy day to-day with six missions flown in close support of the Fifth Army drive on Mount Belvedere. Our good results were costly, as Lieutenant Philip T. Lehman was lost in enemy territory after receiving small arms fire. Lieutenant Norris met a tragic death to-day, after safely bailing out of his flaming aircraft near Montecatine, he suffered a fatal skull fracture when he struck a building landing in the strong wind. First Sergeant Pettis returned to the squadron this evening after thirty days of temporary duty in the United States. |
| 4 | Five missions to-day found us continuing our close support work on the Fifth Army front. Once more our results brought forth a message of commendation from Fifth Army Headquarters. Our two weeks' ration of canteen supplies was distributed this evening and everyone was enabled to restock his sadly depleted cigarette supply. Most of the men attended the dance in Group Headquarters building this evening and had a very pleasant time. |
| 5 | After our first two missions had returned from their successful attacks on railroad marshalling yards and rail traffic in the Central Po Valley, rainy weather forced us to cancel the remainder of our flight schedule. The rainfall which continued on into the night was the first in several weeks. |

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Sheet No. 2, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron

Month of March, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC

DAYEVENTS

This evening our Information and Education division showed two War Department films in the Squadron Ballroom. The first one, " The Quebec Conference " was very interesting, and the second film, " Landing on New Britain " made us thankful that we are in the European Theater instead of the South Pacific.

- 6 Four missions were flown to-day in continuance of our program of railroad interdiction in Northern Italy and brought back reports of extensive damage to bridges and rolling stock. Practically everyone has ordered several of the distinctive ash trays now being made with the insignia of the Twenty-Second Tactical Air Command embossed in full colors. A notice posted on the bulletin board to the effect that a survey will be held to convert non-essential personnel into the Infantry brought forth many comments.
- 7 Systematically whittling down the enemy's dwindling reserve of rolling stock, four missions to-day continued our attacks. Colonel Knight, the Group Commander, commended upon the neat appearance of the Squadron's living quarters after his personal inspection last Saturday morning. This evening practically everyone went to the Service Group Theater to see Noel Coward's successful farce, " Blithe Spirit," starring Anna-bella and a Broadway cast; the consensus of opinion was that it was a truly enjoyable show.
- 8 Once again the directive called for four missions to continue the concentrated drive against the Huns' " life line " in the Po Valley. Nine new pilots, many of them have yet to fly a Thunderbolt, joined the Squadron to-day. In a whirlwind finish, our fighting hoopsters nosed out the 46th Service Squadron by the score of 30-27. Last night's victory crowned our quintet Champions of the Grosseto League and entitled them to an invitation to the North Italy Zone Championship Tournament.
- 9 Like many others flown during the last month our four missions seemed routine to pilots who once again bombed communication lines in the Brenner Pass. However, our continuous and effective bombing has greatly assisted in keeping the vital Brenner

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Sheet No. 3, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of March, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

railway blocked every day for the last month, the first time this feat has been accomplished during the war.

- 10 Additional heavy blows were inflicted against the enemy's rail and highway lines during our three missions flown over the Eastern Po. General Cannon, Commanding General of the Twelfth Air Force, paid a surprise visit to the Group to-day and before he departed, he bestowed a battle field promotion on our Commanding Officer, who took off his gold leaf and became Lieutenant Colonel Leaf.
- 11 No variation in the day's directive and once again our Thunder-bombers pounded away at the usual targets, communication lines in the Eastern Po and Brenner Pass. A letter of commendation was recently received from the Commanding Officer of the 321st Bomb Group stating that the protection given their B-25's by our squadron on a recent mission was the most effective that they had ever witnessed.
- 12 One anti-flak show for B-25's and three dive bombing missions against communication targets rounded out a full day of activity. At a formation held to-day Brigadier General Israel decorated pilots of this squadron who had earned awards for meritorious achievements. S/Sgt. Lewis J. Adesso represented the squadron in the Rome Golf Tournament and except for a poor first round played in a hail storm, he made a very formidable showing.
- 13 Continuing the all out effort against Kesselring's life line we again concentrated our four missions on the Brenner Area and Northeast Italy with excellent results. Colonel Leaf, assisted by T/Sgt. Jake Amacher and Corporal Paul Johnson, is shooting a full reel movie which will depict our daily operational activities and squadron duties. As yet no name has been given this picture and Colonel Leaf has asked for suggestions from the men for an appropriate title.
- 14 An early morning haze, which usually burns off by ten o'clock has restricted our flying activity during the last few days. However we did manage three shows with good to

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Sheet No. 4, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of March, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

excellent results over familiar hunting grounds. Despite the every day flying activity, passes for both pilots and ground men continue with a limited number of flying personnel still enjoying the excellent facilities of the rest camp on the Riviera. Other men still find Rome a pleasant city while Naples, Florence and Siena are often visited.

15 The every day pounding of communication lines in the Po has resulted in a dearth of worthwhile targets. Pilots state that they just can't be found as was evidenced by reports from flight leaders of our four missions for the day. Captain Richard L. Johnson, Operations Officer, has recently returned from thirty days of temporary duty in the States having flown both ways.

16 Area cover as far as Udine was provided for B-25's enroute to Austria but the mission proved as uneventful as our other three shows flown against communication targets. After swamping their first opponent by a score of 76-30, our fast stepping quintet took an early lead in the second game of the North Italy Basketball Tournament. Our Blue Barons, visibly tired from their morning effort against a strong opponent, forced the issue for three periods against the heavily favored opponents P.B.S. Champions only to succumb to the last quarter whirlwind rush of the Negro Club in what was described as the outstanding game of the tournament.

17 In an all out day during which five missions were flown, our fighter bombers struck additional heavy blows against the enemy. Loco hunting was excellent and Captain Johnson and flight left sixteen severely damaged in one marshalling yard. The enlisted men have been testing their carbines at a local Italian firing range which has all the conveniences that a marksman could ask for. S/Sgt. Walter Glenn has posted the highest score to date - 144 out of a possible 150.

18 Flying with this squadron for the first time Captain James C. Hare, Acting Group Operations Officer, was forced to

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Sheet No. 5, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of March, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

ditch his aircraft in the Adriatic. The ever alert Air Sea Rescue was soon at the scene of ditching and Captain Hare was rescued with-out any visible affects. This weeks squadron dance proved to be the most successful undertaken to date. By a gradual process of weeding out, a much better class of signorinas is now attending this social affair.

19 Four missions totaling twenty-eight sorties kept everyone on the flight line busy from dawn till dusk with our main effort being concentrated against rail lines and rolling stock. Our rotation quota for this month consisted of two enlisted men, T/Sgt. Carl J. Volter, " A " Flight Chief, and Corporal Francis X Flaherty ; four men also returned to the States for thirty of temporary duty. An " I & E " meeting, which featured moving pictures on different phases of the Air Corps, was held this evening.

20 In five missions flown to-day, we destroyed scores of railroad rolling stock and a dozen motor trucks in an above average day of hunting. The weather at our base has been excellent and we have flown more operational sorties this March than during the corresponding month in any previous year. One of our oldest pilots, Captain Leon E. Jansen, is now temporarily a staff member of the Forward Fighter Control Unit and is looking up at the sky for a change.

21 We flew our first long range bomber escort in many months as cover to B-25's. Finding their primary targets, railroad bridges at Innsbruck, Austria, closed in they were forced to bomb communication installations in the Po and Brenner Pass. While enroute from the target of our first mission, Lieutenant Miller A. Anderson strafed what appeared to be a concentration of Tiger tanks on flat cars. His aircraft was hit by small arms fire and he was forced to bail out from a minimum altitude; his chute opened and although he was fired at all the way down, he landed in an open field.

22 Once again to-day a bomber escort to Austria was amongst the three missions flown. For the time being meat and fresh butter will be issued in small quantities but our cooks still manage to serve good meals. Ice cream is on

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Sheet No. 6, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of March, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

the menu at least once a week and another desert which has won the unanimous approval of the men is cherry pie with whipped cream.

- 23 Operational activity for the day consisted of five missions. When not actually on duty we have a number of diversions around town and the men are utilizing every opportunity to enjoy the various comforts available. The local American Red Cross Club beckons every afternoon and their Snack Bar is a good drawing card. The Service Group Shower Room is a daily "must" and everyone emerges from there with shining countenance, ready to tussle with local girls at some G.I. sponsored dance or visit one of the local movie houses.
- 24 In one of the hottest missions flown in days, a four ship armed recce to the Western Po uncovered many juicy targets. After the final count was taken, thirty three box cars were destroyed or damaged, five locomotives damaged, a storage tank set afire, and eighteen trucks and trailers left in flames. Sleeping bags have been issued to all ground personnel and their usefulness has a variance of opinion. Enlisted men have also turned in their blouses and are now sporting the new Eisenhower Jacket modeled from the British battle dress.
- 25 Our fighter bombers continued their saturation attacks against communication lines along the Brenner Pass and throughout Northern Italy with five missions being flown. In between the flights to-day Colonel Leaf gave a "gen" talk to the men on the line at which time he expressed his opinion as to future operations and disposition of the squadron after the fall of Germany.
- 26 For the first time in three weeks we were stood down due to rain and inclement weather over both base and target areas. Through hard work and perserverance on the part of crew chiefs our daily status report showed that all twenty nine planes were in the "in" column. S/Sgt. Lester Frost has been selected as one of the two representatives from this Group who will appear before a board as a candidate for Infantry Officer Training.

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Sheet No. 7, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of March, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC

DAYEVENTS

- 27 Rain continued all day and toward evening turned to a steady drizzle which dampened the men's spirits until "chow call." A delicious swiss steak, asparagus, and real coffee put everyone in a better frame of mind. The forced inactivity on the flight line to-day seems to be the cause for the momentary lull; everyone is so accustomed to our continued operations that should we be stood down, one finds he has too much "time on his hands."
- 28 The recent Allied successes in Germany have had a profound effect on the morale of the men. As our troops drove through France last Fall at a rapid pace, the end of the war appeared imminent to all. Then the "let down" came after this bitter disappointment; one finds the men to-day taking a very conservative and sane outlook on the duration of this bitter struggle and the problems of life itself.
- 29 Six enlisted men and one ground officer, who returned to the States for thirty days of temporary duty, arrived back in the squadron to-day. They had nothing but praise for the treatment shown them in Army camps and the expedient handling of affairs to insure them maximum time at home. However, they all agreed that their second trip up the gangplank was much harder to take than the first and that the benefit of the thirty glorious days was lost by the knowledge of having to return overseas.
- 30 "Spring cleaning and renovations" are now in order in both the quarters of the Officer's and enlisted men. It has always been Colonel Leaf's policy that our living conditions should be the best possible and although it usually involves plenty of hard work, the extra effort pays big dividends. The interior of the Officer's hotel has been painted, while the enlisted men have moved their day room, snack bar and bar to larger rooms in the annex. After a few changes, the vacated space will be used for a mess hall.
- 31 Lent officially ended to-day and it has been interesting to note the various ceremonies of the local Italians in observing this religious period. On Good Friday a long procession paraded through town past our living quarters and it seemed that every last Itie was there to witness the ceremony.

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Sheet No. 8, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.
Month of March, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

Special Account of Mission No. 1302 of 17 March 1945 from
Grosseto Main, Italy

A/C PILOT

75 Johnson
76 Peterson
86 Heron
99 Blackburn

4 P-47's of the 66th Fighter Squadron were ordered up on an armed recce in Area #4. All a/c carried 2 x 500' G.P. bombs, 1/10 sec. nose and 1/100 sec. tail fuses. Formation flew out at 12,000 feet and bombed Novara (E) M/Y at J-8264 from 1500' at 0900 hours, destroying 4 R. R. cars and damaging 10 and effecting 4 rail cuts. 4 R. R. cars were then damaged by strafing. In Novara (N) M/Y at J-8066 25 Loco's, 4 or 5 with steam up were strafed and 16 were severely damaged. 5 had been previously damaged. (1)one of the loco's was a diesel, 7 strafing passes were made and it is believed that this would be a suitable target for medium bombers. At J-8267 a loaded M/T was a flamer. A bus with top knocked off and loaded with barrels was a flamer at J-8265.

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