



Sheet No. 56 War Diary, 525th FIGHTER BOMBARDIER SQDN. Pomigliano, Italy
(Station)

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by WILLIAM H. BLACKWELL,
Capt., Air Corps, S-2.

DAY

EVENTS

14 (Cont'd) Lt. Johnson's plane was hit over the target and he was forced to bail out. His parachute was seen to open and his descent was followed to 1,000 feet or less, and it is believed that he landed safely.

Lt. Brinley led the second mission of the day, made up of 4 planes each from the 525th and 526th Squadrons. The objective was to cut the railroad tracks near ORTE. Four direct hits were scored on the tracks and two hits on 15 to 20 oil cars, resulting in a large explosion and clouds of black smoke. 2 motor trucks were destroyed (1 flamer), and 5 damaged by strafing. A factory was also strafed.

The last mission was led by Lt. Wood. 3 direct hits were scored on the CAPRANICA railroad station and several more hits and near misses on the tracks at various points. The weather made bombing and observation difficult, and the damage to the railroad station was unobserved. 1 motor truck was destroyed north of FURBARA A/D.

Four pilots also flew a mission with the 527th Squadron today, but could not get in to the primary target because of bad weather, and dropped their bombs on FURBARA A/D instead.

Nine new pilots reported to the squadron today. They are 2nd Lts. Robert L. Anderson, David S. Baker, Russell J. Bell, John E. Borrello, Graydon S. Brown, Richard A. Davis, Howard G. Decker, Jr., James G. Finlayson and Felix F. Simmons.

The squadron baseball team, very appropriately nicknamed the "Travellers", and under the managership of Lt. Joe Clark, today won their first game of the season, from the 332nd Service Group team, on the latter's field by a score of 7 to 3. The opening battery for the Travellers was Johnny Wetzell and Louie McGraw. Wetzell pitched airtight baseball, allowing only one hit, during his four innings on the mound, and was relieved by Gene Gumbert in the fifth, who finished the game. Dick Gibbs replaced McGraw at this point and finished the game behind the plate. Gumbert handled the first base job before going to the mound, Surney Bielick was on second, Alex Papalás at short, and Ken Barnes at the hot corner. Terrebonne, Edwards, and Moose was the starting outfield. Roush and Shifley replaced Edwards and Moose in the fifth and finished the game at center and right. The squad is practicing daily and with more experience, should develop into an interesting and colorful team. The home diamond is almost completed, and several games have already been scheduled for the near future.





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DAY EVENTS

15 Capt. Kasun led the only mission flown today. The 8 plane formation bombed railroad tracks between VITERBO and CAPRANICA. One possible break in the track was secured, as well as several near misses. Two motor trucks were destroyed, 1 with a trailer carrying several personnel, many of which were killed, and 7 motor trucks were damaged by strafing. A gun position at MONTEROSI was silenced, 1 tank car and 1 Fiat were strafed and damaged, and a factory was also strafed.

Capt. Richard D. Lister left for home today. He was the last of the pilots who came overseas with the squadron. He has an admirable record, and has flown 78 missions during the Sicilian and Italian campaigns.

16 Railroad tracks were again the target for both missions flown today. The first was led by Lt. Ryan, and 3 direct hits as well as several near misses were scored on the tracks between NARNI and ORTE. Strafing results: 2 motor trucks destroyed and 8 damaged. 15 railroad cars strafed with unknown results.

Lt. Dolny led the second mission, and the tracks near ORTE station were bombed with two hits and several misses which were fairly close, possibly causing damage. 1 armored scout car and 1 motor truck were destroyed, and 2 motor trucks were damaged.

17 Lt. Brinley led today's mission, a formation of 8 planes. Two direct hits were scored on the tracks, and two more were believed to have been direct hits. A motor convoy of 12 vehicles was heavily strafed moving into SUTRI. 5 trucks burst into flames, 7 more were badly damaged and probably destroyed. Another motor truck was destroyed and a motor truck and a Fiat were damaged, at various points on the way out. 3 piles of boxes were also strafed.

The Travellers, squadron baseball team, today met and defeated the team representing the 415th Night Fighter Squadron, by a score of 8 to 7, on the home diamond. Hoyt Smith made his debut as a hurler in this game, pitching four innings before being relieved by Gumbert. Louie McGraw and Dick Gibbs shared the catching duties.





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DAY EVENTS

18 Lt. Watson led 6 planes on another mission to bomb railroad tracks today. A 30 to 35 car train was bombed with a direct hit in the middle of the string of cars, causing an explosion. Another 20 car train was bombed by two aircraft with hits in the middle of the cars, causing additional explosions. Both trains were stationary and without locomotives. One motor truck was destroyed and one damaged by strafing.

19 No missions were flown today. The movie "Girl Crazy" was shown in the stadium near the Pomigliano Railroad Station.

2nd Lt. Andrew M. Harrison, only recently assigned to this squadron, was killed when his plane crashed while on a practice flight.

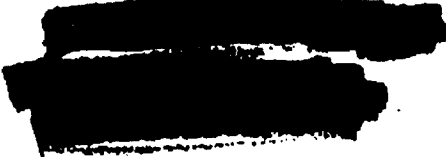
The Travellers today ran their winning streak to three in a row, as they downed the 332nd Service Group team by a score of 13 to 3. Batting around the entire lineup in each of the first three innings, the Travellers scored 12 of their runs, added another in the fourth, and coasted on to an easy victory. Ken Barnes, making his initial appearance as a pitcher, held the visitors scoreless and allowed only three hits during his four innings on the mound. He was relieved by Gumbert, who finished the game.

20 Capt. Kasun led the first mission today, to bomb the tracks between ORTE and ATTIGLIANO, but bad weather prevented the flight from getting to this target, and the rail line between VITERBO and CAPRANICA was bombed instead. Several direct hits were scored on the tracks, causing breaks in at least three different points.

Lt. Wood led the second mission and as on the first, the alternate target was bombed because of bad weather north of the Tiber River. The town of ITRI was covered with a good pattern of bombs, including several direct hits on roads in the town.

The Travellers' winning streak came to an abrupt halt this afternoon, as they were stopped by the 415th Night Fighter outfit by a score of 8 to 2. Aided by several errors early in the game, the visitors took an early lead, and were never threatened. Hoyt Smith started on the hill for the Travellers, but after two shaky innings, during which he allowed six runs on only 3 hits, he gave way to Wetzel, who fared no better, and Gumbert finished the last three innings.





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(Station)

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by WILLIAM H. BLACKWELL,

Capt., Air Corps, S-2.

DAY EVENTS

20 (Cont'd) We had chocolate cake for supper this evening. A movie "The Kansan", with Richard Dix, was shown at the Marigliano Theatre. Capt. Leo D. Robinson left the squadron today to return to the States on rotation. S/Sgt Glen Cline also left for home. Both have been overseas for almost two years.

21 Lt. Ryan led the first of two missions flown today. The formation was assigned to bomb the railroad tracks in the vicinity of ATTIGLIANO. Several bomb hits were seen on the tracks, and other near misses which were close enough to damage the roadbed. The flight strafed on the way out, destroying one motor truck and damaging another on roads just north of Lake Vico. 20 or more railroad cars were strafed in MANZIANA station, and several cars left smoking.

Lt. Angell led the second formation, attacking the same target as the first mission, earlier in the day. The first two planes in the formation, Lt. Angell and Lt. Palmer, scored direct hits on the tracks, and the rest of the bombs were misses on the secondary railroad to MONTEFIASCONE. 10 bombs were returned to base.

22 Lt. Watson was the leader of an 8 plane formation to bomb railroad tracks at ORTE this morning, but the flight ran into rain and black clouds as they neared the Tiber River. The cloud cover also obscured the alternate targets, and all bombs were returned to base.

Capt. Blackwell and Lt. Duncan left for Rest Camp today, but Lt. "Tiger" Palmer made up for this absence at the 16th Evac by taking two of the nurses out in celebration of his 80th mission. A number of the officers in the squadron have been going to town to the Red Cross in the evening to eat ice cream and then await the singing of the pretty vocalist there. Her rendition of "Knock Me A Kiss" has set a number of the pilots on their heels.

The Travellers lost a loosely played slugging duel to the 526th Squadron team this afternoon by a score of 16 to 12. The game might have been called a parade of pitchers, as four pitchers took a turn on the hill for the home team during the seven innings of play. Wetzal started and was relieved by Smith in the third. Barnes came in in the fourth and lasted until the sixth, when Gumbert took over and finished. Gibbs and Edwards did the catching.



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DAY

22 (Cont'd) Capt. John W. Hendrickson was today assigned to Group Headquarters, as Group Engineering Officer.

23 Railroad tracks in the area of ORVIETO was the target for both missions today. The first formation consisted of 8 planes and was led by Lt. Ryan. Two definite breaks in the tracks were secured as the result of direct hits, and near misses caused possible damage to a bridge.

Lt. Ryan led the second mission also, and secured only probable damage to the tracks. One hung bomb was salvoed, and a direct hit scored on a highway.

Word was passed around this evening that the "Canino" mission was to be run tomorrow, accompanied by a 0415 briefing. With 8 aircraft scheduled for the flight in this squadron, Lt. Mathis surmised that "both" pilots returning would be stood down for a couple of days.

24 The Canino Landing Ground made up the target for an early mission this morning. Lt. Dolny led the 3 plane formation. 10 to 15 revetment areas, some of which had planes or material in them, were thoroughly strafed. If they were planes, all were definitely damaged. 15 planes taxiing on the field were strafed and some possibly damaged. Lt. Brinley got his sights on a ME-109 circling the field with his wheels down, and got in a good burst at him. Lt. Watson, coming in close behind, got a good 10° deflection shot at the enemy plane, and fired a burst into his fuselage. The plane began smoking and burst into flames, after which the pilot bailed out and the plane crashed not far away.

Lt. Horrigan led today's second mission, an 8 plane formation to bomb railroad tracks. Lt. Purdum scored a direct hit at one point, causing a definite break in the track and several near misses at another point.

The mission was not the big success it was hoped to be, but probably much more damage was done by strafing than could be observed by the pilots. Using the new explosive bullets, most of the pilots fired over 1200 rounds. Lt. Watson is now the "ace" of the squadron, with one victory and one probable.



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(Station)

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by WILLIAM H. BLACKWELL,

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DAY

EVENTS

25 Railroad tracks were again the target for both missions flown today. Lt. Hook led the first formation of 8 planes and bombed the tracks between NARNI and ORTE. Breaks in the tracks were secured at two different points, and near misses caused possible damage at a third. One motor truck was destroyed by strafing.

Lt. Brinley was the leader on the second mission. Three definite breaks were secured, with two probable direct hits at another point. All 8 aircraft thoroughly strafed 25 or more railroad cars at one place and 30 at another. Two flangers were observed in the first string and all cars seemed to have material in them. Trucks mounted on six flat cars were strafed and damaged at another point.

A big raid on Naples was made last night during the middle of an entertaining movie. The AA boys claimed 5 planes, but the spectators on the ground did not see it that way.

An improvement in the food has been noted the past week.

26 Rain and bad weather forced a standdown for the entire day.

One officer and 15 enlisted men of the Ordnance unit were today assigned to the squadron.

27 Rainy weather continues. No missions.

Lt. Shaunty was assigned to MATS and will leave for Algeria as soon as possible.

28 It wasn't until early this evening that we learned of our coming move from the comfortable apartments which we have occupied for the past several months, to Marcianise Airfield near Caserta. Our orders are to be ready to leave by noon tomorrow and everyone is busy packing personal equipment.

Today marks the 1st anniversary of the Group's departure from the States. The Group Officers are having a party and dance tonight, and the enlisted men are also planning a party.

Capt. Louis was assigned to Group Headquarters today.

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Capt., Air Corps, S-2.

DAY

EVENTS

30 All of the day was well taken up with the task of moving the squadron to our new location at Marcianise Airfield. This field is located about 3 miles out of Caserta, on the Naples-Caserta highway. It is fairly well laid out and our bivouac area is only about 200 yards from the line and dispersal area.

Early in the morning, men were up and about, packing their personal belongings, and getting ready to move. There were many late sleepers though, for on the night before, April 29th, the Group Officers threw a big party in their new Officers' Club. This, incidentally, was both opening and closing night for the Club. The occasion for the party was the first anniversary of the Group's having left the States.

A tent detail preceded the main body of the squadron to our new area, and set up a number of tents. Operations and Intelligence are in a small building near the line, one of the very few buildings on the field. The line sections are nearby, and most of the planes are only a couple hundred yards away.

Our bivouac area is devoid of trees but there are some nearby and along the roads. The mess was quickly set up and provided a good evening meal. Our Italian KP's and barber came along with the squadron. As you walk down through the tent area, you are liable to be accosted by one of Taffy's offspring, with a tug on your trousers leg or a little nip at your heels, for all of the six pups are owned by men in the outfit, and are full fledged "members" of the squadron.

During the month 359 sorties and 683:55 combat hours were flown by the squadron.

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DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9

AD 314.7

SUBJECT: Historical records.

To: Commanding General, XII Tactical Air Force, APO, Hawaii.

1. Outline history of the Squadron from its activation on 1 May 1944 to 1 June 1944:

a. Present assignment: 48th Fighter Squadron, 48th Fighter Bomber Group, XII TAC.

b. Changes in Organization:

(a) Capt. Clinton, George W., O-351775, assigned and joined the Squadron as Flight Surgeon 5 May 1944.

(b) Capt. Newkum, Bill J., O-310350, Squadron Executive Officer, departed 11 May 1944, to U. S. on rotation.

(c) 1st Lt. Love, Robert W., O-311275, departed the Squadron 11 May 1944, to U. S. on rotation.

(d) Capt. Mcurray, James W., O-561711, appointed Squadron Executive Officer and Squadron Loss Officer 12 May 1944.

(e) 1st Lt. Purdie, L. W., III, O-747901, appointed Assistant Squadron Operations Officer 31 May 1944, vice 1st Lt. W. C. Wood, Jr., USA, 25 May 1944.

(f) 2nd Lt. Angell, Joe W., O-1702926, appointed Flight Leader, 30 May 1944, vice 1st Lt. Robert J. Herrihan.

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(g) 1st Lt. Hook, Wendell (M.I.), D-57170, appointed 1st Flight Leader 30 May 1944, vice 1st Lt. John S. Watson, relieved.

(h) 1st Lt. Watson, John S. Jr., D-19573, appointed 1st Flight Leader, vice 1st Lt. Wendell Hook, relieved.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted.

1. Month of May 1944.

- (a) At beginning: 39 officers; 233 enlisted men.
- (b) Net increase: 0 officers, 1 enlisted men.
- (c) Net decrease: 7 officers; 6 enlisted men.
- (d) At end: 32 officers; 233 enlisted men.

d. Stations.

(1) Marcianise Airfield, Italy, throughout month of May 1944.

e. Movements.

- (1) Nil.

f. Campaigns.

- (1) Italian.
- (2) Duration: Still in progress.

g. Operations.

- (1) Campaign: Italian.
- (2) Nature of Operations: Dive and low level bombing of railroad tracks, roads and road intersections, bombing and strafing enemy movements by rail and road, enemy positions and airfields.
- (3) 93 missions and 538 sorties for the month of May 1944.
- (4) Results of the most important missions:
 - (a) On 7 May 1944, Capt. Kasun led a 12 plane formation to posthole the highway from Terni to Narni. This was typical of the successful postholing missions run by this squadron, all of which were part of





3.

The plan to cut off enemy supply lines, destroy enemy communications, and observe a vulnerable stretch of road, and see that the road was not used for level wide bombing attacks. Three distinct crashes were heard on the road, and at least 11 bombs were dropped. After the three flights had returned, they strafed road cars and the houses and considerable success, destroying 7 motor vehicles, many by strafing, and 10 other vehicles.

(b) On 25 May 1944, this squadron and other units were ordered to rear of road nets in the hill valley directly behind the main enemy front line. This mission would directly interfere with enemy supply and communications if successful, and would disrupt any attempt of withdrawal. In addition to the plane elements, and at ten minute intervals, the pilots of this squadron accomplished their mission with outstanding results. Lts. Wood and Brown dropped their bombs on the town of Calacorsa, while Lts. Farrell and Decker were bombing a road in front of the lead vehicle of an enemy convoy. The latter two pilots strafed the vehicles which were lining up, getting 3 m/t flamed, 1 m/t destroyed, and 4 m/t damaged. Lts. Estall and Anderson and Lts. Watson and Correll also bombed the town of Calacorsa, securing a large road block in the center of town. The total damage inflicted by all of these pilots while strafing after bombing was, 14 motor vehicles destroyed, 18 motor vehicles damaged, 1 jeep, 1 bus, 3 motorcycles and 1 horse drawn field piece damaged.

(c) On 25 May 1944, the enemy began a withdrawal from the Anzio beachhead battle area. The missions for that day originally called for road blocks in strategic towns, carrying out a reconnaissance of road nets after bombing. The squadron was originally scheduled with three missions, calling for road blocks in Frosinone and Velletri, but subject to a change of target when called over the radio by "Changer". Lt. Nelson led the first plane mission, with a primary target of Frosinone. Just before reaching the target, "Changer" called Nelson and told him to bomb m/t between Cori and Sessa. Lt. Nelson and the rest of the formation found their target, and despite a hail of anti-aircraft fire, which damaged Lt. Nelson's plane, bombed and strafed a large enemy convoy. Besides creating road blocks, the combined attack resulted in 21 m/t and 1 motorcycle destroyed, and 21 m/t damaged. The next mission was alerted immediately and took off at ten minute intervals, in two plane elements, with motor trucks as the primary target. Lts. Wood and Anderson created a very effective road block with their bombs, while Lts. Neil and Decker bombed the town of Ceccano. All of these flights strafed with excellent results. Lts. Henderson and Correll were contacted by "Changer" and found a bumper to bumper convoy stretching as far as they could see, near Cori, Italy. They bombed and strafed these vehicles with amazing results, leaving the valley alive with flaming vehicles. The entire mission destroyed 41 motor vehicles and damaged 36. When the mission returned, the following pilots volunteered to lead another mission, Lts. Angell, Simons, Pierson, Brown, Purdum, Borello, Dolny, and Finlayson. Their amazing bombing and strafing attack resulted in 50 motor vehicles, 1 command car, 1 jeep and a weapons carrier destroyed, and 27 motor vehicles damaged. Lt. Dolny was hit by flak and bailed out in friendly territory.



