

AAFFOA - HIS
UC - 1

DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9

Organizational History, 45th Fighter Squadron, 15th Fighter Group, VII
Fighter Command, Seventh Air Force, Army Air Forces, Pacific Ocean Area,
APO #86.

P.R.C.

June 1, 1945 - June 30, 1945

1. Date of arrival at and departure from each station occupied in this theatre.

Negative.

2. Losses in action.

On 1 June 1945, 2d Lt LAURENCE J. LORTIE, O-715563, was MIA on VLR escort mission to Osaka, Honshu.

3. Awards and Decorations.

Major ROBERT W. MOORE, O-663078, was awarded the Silver Star, the 1st and 2d Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters to the Distinguished Flying Cross, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal.

Capt HAROLD D. COLLINS, O-663020, was awarded the Air Medal.

Capt JAY W. SLATER, O-811849, was awarded the 1st Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal.

1st Lt WESLEY E. BROWN, O-811849, was awarded the Air Medal.

4. Organization.

Negative.

5. Strength.

1 June 1945 - 58 Officers, 4 Flight Officers, 245 Enlisted Men.
30 June 1945 - 58 Officers, 5 Flight Officers, 245 Enlisted Men.

6. Strength - Airplanes by types.

1 June 1945 - 26 P-51Ds.
30 June 1945 - 26 P-51Ds.

7. Losses - Airplanes by types.

6 P-51Ds.

GENERAL

The month of June was marked by notable changes in personnel in the Squadron, bad weather for flying over the target, and the suspension of existing rotation policies. Major ARTHUR H. BRIDGE, Commanding Officer,

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9

00055520

5-1382-57

AAFFOA - HIS
UC - 1

~~SECRET~~

returned to the US for reassignment and was replaced by Capt HAROLD D. COLLINS who was transferred from the 78th Fighter Squadron. Capts GEORGE H. HUNTER and WILLIAM J. FISHER returned to the States and were replaced by Lts J. PATTERSON and SHERREN. Major ROBERT W. MOORE was attached to the Squadron and left for duty to a rocket school in the US.

The weather caused more long range missions to be cancelled than were run, and the majority of casualties in the Squadron were due to bad flying weather rather than enemy activity. When it was announced that the rotation policy was suspended and another to be inaugurated, the morale of the men took a decided slump. Most of the men have been in the CPA campaigns and feel that it is time they were returned to the States. After thirty plus months on small islands they are looking for relief and replacements. Seeing none coming, and little chance of immediate reassignment they feel the lack of a definite policy on getting them back home.

MEMORANDA OF SECTIONS

Armament Section.

Work did not vary greatly from that of last month owing to bad weather over the Japanese Mainland as well as between this base and the target.

The Squadron received additional new aircraft this month equipped with the new E-14 gyro gun sight which is providing a number of headaches due to lack of trained personnel to perform maintenance work on the sight.

The Section has drawn and erected a new 16' x 32' tent in which the shop is now housed. This new tent not only provides more sheltered working space, but also provides a dry place in which to store our spare parts and tools.

The modification kits for the breech blocks were received and installation on all guns is now completed. This will undoubtedly eliminate any

~~SECRET~~

AAFFOA - HIS
UC - 1

SECRET

future stoppages from this source.

Two men left on furlough from the Section this month. Lt HUGH S. EDGERTON to the US and Sgt JACK A. GIANLOMBARDO to Hawaii.

At this writing there still isnt a firing-in range provided for this Group. This problem cannot be over stressed as bore sighting definitely does not take the place of the firing-in range. The condition should be remedied at the earliest possible time.

Communications Section.

The month of June with improved weather saw an increase in VLR missions and an accompanying increase in radio maintenance. As in previous months the average number of radio failures of any nature on VLR missions averaged between two and three per mission. No amount of preventive maintenance had any effect on lowering this figure and the few 100% missions were rather a case of good fortune and coincidence. Only in failures caused by dirt and dust was an advance scored. Early in the month a maintenance policy was arrived at whereby each SCR - 522 was brought into the shop at least once a week for a thorough cleaning and tube check. The resultant decrease in relay trouble was gratifying.

Study of the maintenance records shows that the majority of failures are due to underrated parts and a general unsuitability of SCR-522 design for this type of mission. Parts failure is not confined to any particular part or circuit, but rather is unpredictable and general. The dissimilarity of part failures presents difficult subject matter for unsatisfactory reports. The conclusion drawn by this department is that the SCR-522 was designed for close range command operation and not for continuous eight hour operation at maximum ranges. Overheating alone causes many failures.

In order to facilitate preflight inspection of the AN ARA - 8 coaxial cable connections, a modified side inspection plate was installed in one

SECRET

AAFFOA - HIS
DC - 1

aircraft. The modification was made by T/Sgt Paul Jaroscak and features the substitution of four dzus fasteners for the twelve screws of the present installation. If the modification is accepted it will allow quick inspection of coaxial cable connections, looseness of which has been responsible for almost all AN ARA - 8 failures. Also this month all "T" connections were painted with liquid seal.

During the month the section had its first two inspections at APO #86. Both 15th Fighter Group and VII Fighter Command gave the section a rating of excellent.

For the first time in many months the section received two promotions. S/Sgt John Basnik was raised to T/Sgt and Cpl Nicholas Murray became Sgt. There were no other changes in section personnel.
Engineering Section.

The first points covered by this section during the month of June was inspections by higher commands. In the early part of the month the Tech Inspector, 15th Fighter Group was investigating and looking over the Squadron setup. Several days were spent checking over airplanes and hangar equipment. A report received by this organization is being reviewed and complied with at this time.

Several days later the Air Inspector and his staff were here on a Fighter Command inspection. The inspection covered forms, tech orders, fuel service equipment, hangar and maintenance equipment, and the airplane itself. Points regarding the forms were discussed by the inspector and this office were not cleared up. However, when the report was received this organization was written up. Statements regarding rust and corrosion were made but a clear setup on correcting this condition outside of the Tech Order has not been put into effect.

S E C R E T

4

AAFFOA - HIS
EC - 1

~~SECRET~~

Several airplanes in the past thirty days were lost by this section. One was a crackup probably due to torque pulling the airplane to the side of the runway. This airplane crashed and burned but the pilot was saved. Another wreck was caused when the airplane cut out on takeoff. The aircraft crashed and ran off the end of the runway. So far the cause of the engine cutting out has not been determined but at this time it is believed to be caused by a leaking fuel selector switch. Investigation is still under way. One accident was caused by the right brake freezing, so on landing the airplane it ground looped. Another was caused by dropping the airplane in, buckling the right wing.

At the present time airplanes are being sent to the 396th Service Group for rocket installations. They are usually away from the squadron for a period of three or four days. Net results will be observed in the days ahead.

Supplies have continued to come through in good shape. Very few cases of airplanes being grounded for parts have been recorded this month.

A new idea under discussion at this time is a central island supply. Since this project is still under the discussion stage, planes are rather indefinite. This section opposes the plan as too complicated, requiring more paper work, and an increase in transportation requirements. Another plan under discussion is an engine buildup section. Where the men will come from has not been worked out but plans are to draw men out of the Squadron. This will cause an additional shortage of men in this section.

Intelligence Section.

The month of June was notably outstanding for its change in officer personnel and for no change in the bad weather conditions we were meeting over the Empire.

The Squadron Intelligence Officer was promoted from 1st Lt to Capt. The

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

AAFFOA - HIS
US - 1

Assistant S-2 Officer was put on DS to VII Fighter Command as acting I & E Officer. During this time Capt Lightbown was transferred to 15th Fighter Group and 1st Lt Wheelwright appointed Intelligence Officer. Lt John T. Burdock joined the Squadron and was assigned as Assistant S-2. Capt Lightbown stayed on in the Squadron until the end of the month when Lt Wheelwright came back and the line-up officially changed.

On 1 June the Squadron took off for an escort flight to Osaka but was forced to return due to weather condition. Lts Barry and Lortie were reported missing in action. Six days later Lt Barry was picked up by a submarine which happened to surface in the vicinity in which his life raft was floating. Nothing more was heard from Lt Lortie. Weather prevented the accomplishment of anything more than one Bonin Island strike until 7 June when the Squadron once again escorted B-29s to Osaka. Weather on this mission was unfavorable to Fighters en route to target, but the Squadron accomplished its mission. One Wick was sighted during the twenty minutes spent over the target. This was the first time that fighter opposition was so meager, and set the pace for future missions wherein air opposition would be non-existent over the Jap homeland.

The following day a mission to Honshu aborted one hour out on course due to weather. On the 10th of June a fighter sweep over the Tokyo area revealed only 15 enemy aircraft sighted, most of these were in the distance and out of range of attack. It was not until 23 June and three weather abortive flights that the Squadron had another successful mission. On 23 June the Squadron was to hit Shimodate A/F, but poor visibility over target caused them to make for the secondary target, Kasinugaura A/F. Again only one plane was encountered, leading the pilots to believe that the enemy is nursing his dwindling air force against the day of invasion.

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

AAFFOA - HIS
UC - 1

Two more VLRs were run in June, neither of which was successful from the point of view of accomplishment. Planes are found on the fields to be dummies and interception is at a minimum. Intelligence sources continue to brief on the number of planes on each field, yet when the pilots fly over the fields, there is nothing to be seen.

Normal intelligence training was accomplished during the month of June. New pilots receive orientation to this theatre, the history of the Group, and also of the Squadron. Air, Sea Rescue and the other intelligence material called for by directives from higher headquarters is covered. Two hours were devoted to recognition, notably JMSI, and one lecture was given by His-I to pilots who had not already received same. With the schedule running a mission every day it is difficult to get pilots together for routine training, but with more space being made available it is believed that this situation will be considerably eased.

Medical Section.

During the month of June the health of the Squadron remained good. Personnel are now quartered in pyramidal tents with adequate flooring and Quonset huts are in use as pilot's quarters. A quonset hut mess hall has been erected for the Squadron and another for the consolidated officer's mess.

A steel hut containing tubs for hot baths is being used by the pilots following long range missions. Medical Department personnel are in attendance to give massage following the bath.

During the month sick call was held at the 15th Group Dispensary which also provided a ward for quarters cases. A tent is being used for the ward and attempts are being made to secure another hut for the ward. Routine immunizations were continued during the month. The dispensary on the line was

SECRET

AAFFOA - HIS
UC - 1

moved to the Group maintenance area where it will continue to serve as an auxiliary dispensary and crash station.

The pilots were given a brief informal lecture on night vision, use of the "G" suit, and oxygen equipment.

Ordnance Section.

During the month Cpl Ira Frumberg departed for the Mainland via furlough. This reduced the enlisted strength of the Section to eleven. Sgt May has been on Squadron detail all month and will probably be kept on the job for considerable time.

During the latter half of the month a storm caused damage to this Section. The Ordnance tent fly was blown over which we replaced with a new and larger tent. Personnel Supply issued a squad tent, a more stable structure which offers more room.

Two inspection teams visited us during the month. The 15th Fighter Group inspected and later on the VII Fighter Command spent two days with us. Minor discrepancies were noted in both cases and have been corrected.

Modification kits for our aircraft cal. .50 machine guns were issued to us this month and have been installed. The modification is intended to stop accelerator stoppages.

We are now conducting small arms inspections once weekly to be sure that all officers and men give their weapons the proper care and maintenance.

Operations Section.

During the month of June, the Squadron was able to accomplish more flying than has been possible in the last five months. The local weather has been very good so many training missions were flown, mutual support and four ship tactics being stressed.

The presence of fronts between Iwo and Japan made it possible to complete

SECRET
8

AAFPOA - HIS
 NC - 1

only four long range missions. Attempts to get through these fronts resulted in several abortive missions of over five hour duration.

No accidents or loss of aircraft occurred during the month of June due to enemy action, but weather and engine failure were the cause of two P-51Bs being destroyed. These accidents occurred June 1st on a abortive long range mission. 2d Lt LAURENCE J. LORTIE, O-715563, was flying forth position in a flight that was forced to go on instruments when an attempt was made by the group to fly through a front. Lt LORTIE was not seen or heard from after entering the clouds so it is believed that he became separated from his leader, lost control of his airplane, and spun in. 2d Lt ARTHUR A. BURRY, O-714860, became separated from his flight in the clouds but was able to break out in the clear after doing a 180 degree turn. His engine cut out completely, and immediately after this he had to bail out. Lt BURRY was unable to make visual or radio contact with any aircraft in the vicinity. He spent six days in a life raft and was picked up by a roving submarine. His physical condition was fair although he became slightly delirious on the last day. Lt BURRY was sent to Oahu for a rest leave, but unless his mental attitude toward long over water flights undergoes a complete change, it would be advisable to reassign him.

Takeoff and landing accidents plagued the Squadron throughout the month. 2d Lt ROBERT W. THORNTON, O-825511, lost control of his airplane on takeoff and crashed. Fire resulted when the 110 gallon wing tanks (external) exploded and Lt THORNTON was seriously burned. His condition would have been much worse had he not been wearing gloves and oxygen mask. 2d Lt EDWARD F. BATES, O-715441, had engine failure on takeoff. He set the plane down on the runway but was unable to keep from running off the end. The aircraft was

SECRET

AAFFOA - HEB
UC - 1

SECRET

damaged to the extent that only a few parts were salvagable. Full 110 gallon wing tanks were carried but no fire developed. 2d Lt JOHN M. MAROHY ground looped on landing causing extensive damage to the aircraft. The right brake was locked due to material failure, so no pilot error was involved. Several other accidents occurred during the month requiring minor repairs to aircraft.

Four dive bombing missions and strafing missions to Chichi Island were accomplished. These make excellent training flights for the new pilots that joined the Squadron.

Another month has passed without anything being done toward setting up a bare sight range. It seems that something as important as this would receive the attention of the persons responsible for it. The possibility of flying actual instruments is ever present because of the adverse weather conditions that prevail in this area. The majority of pilots in the Squadron are not proficient enough as instrument pilots and under the present conditions have no opportunity to improve their technique. Also checks cannot be given when the instrument cards become invalid. Each Squadron should have an AT-6 to use for the purpose of instrument flying instruction.

Maintenance of the taxi strips to the runway has been exceedingly poor. Several aircraft have had the rudder cap damaged when taxied through holes, and it is impossible to avoid them all.

Personal Supply Section.

The first laundry service we received was very unsatisfactory. There were many shortages and bags were returned with the laundry slips inside, making it necessary for the men to look through every bag in order to find their own. However, a change was made the next week and, although it facilitates handling, it is very unsatisfactory, six men consolidate their clothing and send it in one bag, while officers still send theirs separately

SECRET

10

AAFFOA - HIS
UC - 1

SECRET

and it comes back wrapped in paper, the laundry slip on the outside.

This section has operated shorthanded all month, one man being placed on detail erecting Quonset huts and another detailed to check lumber at the yard; the lumber was for tent flooring and frames, a total of 40000'. Due to other duties, such as KP, CQ, and other details, many times only one man was available for duty in Supply.

A great amount of trouble has been experienced in requisitioning Corps of Engineers equipment. Many items have been turned down, such as wire for extending communication lines in the area and additional nails that were necessary to finish tent floors, requisitions, in most cases, take several days before any action is taken on them. Much time is taken by this section trying to obtain transportation, if a vehicle was assigned this section it could operate much more efficiently.

A requisition was submitted for waterproofing, to the QM two months ago, and up to the present time has not been procurable. Serviceable tents that were leased in lieu of new tents, at APO #951 have become unserviceable due to the lack of waterproofing; they all leak badly.

Lt DONALD J. KOENIG is now in charge of this section having replaced Capt JAMES W. HAGLUND who was Supply Officer for a period of more than two years.

Tech Supply Section.

This month brought a change in section heads. Capt HAGLUND was relieved and Lt HOWARD assigned the duty of Supply Officer.

There were two inspections this month by higher echelons. Both 15th Group and VII Fighter Command inspected and found minor discrepancies. These have been corrected.

Although our planes are getting lots of hours and are wearing out, the

SECRET

AAFPOA - HIS
UC - 1

SECRET

problems of supply are actually getting less due to the increased efficiency of the 386th Service Squadron.

Transportation Section.

Several improvements were made in the Section Area this month. The drive and parking area were covered with a hard dirt surface. We consider this a very valuable improvement as it will eliminate wear and tear on vehicles entering and leaving the motor pool. A new grease rack and a dispatch office were built.

Maintenance was good. The daily first echelon preventive maintenance was followed closely. Two vehicles underwent 6000 mile maintenance inspection and two vehicles were sent to third echelon for repairs.

Pfc Gundiff returned to the Section from extended squadron detail and Pfc Hartgraves came back to us from the hospital.

Command Post Section.

At the start of the month Capts Bruce S. Campbell, Capt George H. Dunlap, Capt William J. Fisher, and Capt George H. Hunter were relieved and assigned to AAFPOA Rest and Recreation Center, APO #953 pending return to the US. Capt Lightbown was assigned to 15th Group and Lt Donald J. Koenig came to us as an addition, a ground officer. On a VLR mission 1 June Lts Arthur A. Burry and Laurence J. Lortie were MIA; Lt Burry was later rescued by submarine, Lt Lortie is still MIA.

Cpls Andres G. Paganan and Harold A. Gaiese applied for discharge under the provisions of the 40 Yr old bill.

The month saw Major Bridge, Commanding Officer, leaving us for reassignment to the Mainland. Major Robert W. Moore, attached from the 78th Squadron assumed command and later passed this over to Capt Harold D. Collins who is serving as CO while Major Moore is attending rocket school in the US.

SECRET

12

SECRET

AAVFOA - HIS
UC - 1

The following men were promoted to Capt: 1st Lt Jay W. Slater and 1st Lt Joe D. Walker. The following 2d Lts became 1st Lt: Ceil A. Dennis, Lloyd C. Edwards, Robert R. Garey, Gerald F. Gowan, and Alvan E. Roberts.

During the month the VII Fighter Command Inspection & Correction Team examined our records; most everything was found to be in good condition

On 21 June a severe storm, Typhoon variety, visited the island; damage was considerable. When things cooled down the day room was draped over the new mess hall, the CP storage tent down, and the booth and screen of the "Little Theater" were gone. Damage on the line was confined to the Armament and Ordnance Sections.

SECRET
13