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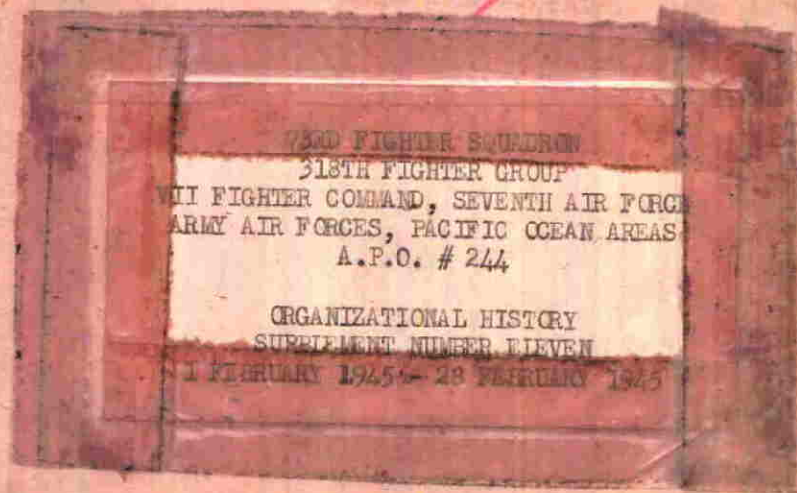
FEB 1945

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73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON
318TH FIGHTER GROUP
VII FIGHTER COMMAND, SEVENTH AIR FORCE
ARMY AIR FORCES, PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
A.P.O. # 244

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY
SUPPLEMENT NUMBER ELEVEN
1 FEBRUARY 1945 - 28 FEBRUARY 1945

P.R.C.

1. DATE OF ARRIVAL AT AND DEPARTURE FROM EACH STATION OCCUPIED IN THIS THEATRE:

NEGATIVE.

2. LOSSES IN ACTION (KILLED, WOUNDED AND MISSING):

CAPT. CYRUS M. BIRNEY, KILLED IN ACTION OVER IWO JIMA,
10 FEBRUARY 1945.

3. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

SEE APPENDICES #1 AND #1-A.

4. ORGANIZATION:

NEGATIVE.

5. STRENGTH, PERSONNEL:

FIFTY-NINE (59) OFFICERS.
TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-TWO (242) ENLISTED MEN.

6. STRENGTH, AIRPLANES:

1 FEBRUARY 1945: FIFTEEN (15) P-47D-11-RE
SEVEN (7) P-47D-11-RA
TWO (2) P-47D-20-RA
ONE (1) P-47D-21-RA
TEN (10) P-38L-0

28 FEBRUARY 1945: FIFTEEN (15) P-47D-11-RE
SEVEN (7) P-47D-11-RA
TWO (2) P-47D-20-RA
EIGHT (8) P-38L-0

7. LOSSES, AIRPLANES:

ONE (1) P-38L-0 - LOST OVER IWO JIMA ON 10 FEBRUARY.
ONE (1) P-38L-0 - CRASHED UPON LANDING FROM ESCORT
MISSION TO IWO JIMA ON 15 FEBRUARY.
ONE (1) P-47D-20-RA - CRASHED UPON LANDING FROM COMBAT
AIR PATROL MISSION ON 17 FEBRUARY.

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SECRETORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAFNARRATIVE

After a well deserved leave of absence, Major HUSSEY returned to the Squadron and resumed command on 18 February, relieving Captain NELSON who in turn had relieved Captain MULLIGAN from the 333rd Squadron as acting C.O. Three enlisted men returned to the States on furlough and two went back on re-assignment. One of the latter was 1st Sgt. STEELE, and S/Sgt DEES has assumed the duties of 1st Sgt. The enlisted replacement situation appears about to be taken care of with four (4) replacements already in the Squadron and thirty-one (31) more enroute to join.

Flying time showed a decline in February over the preceding month which is partially due to the complete absence of enemy air activity over Saipan resulting in a reduction in our schedules. This was the first month in a considerable length of time that we did not have a single enemy air raid. The Barflies logged a total flying time of 1276:25 of which 257:50 was combat time and 1018:35 made up of C.A.P., training, etc. The combat time was flown on fourteen (14) missions of which five (5) were long range jobs of various types to Iwo Jima and Truk, seven (7) to Pagan, and two (2) to Anatahan - for detailed information on missions, see appended mission reports. On one of the last missions flown to Iwo Jima, the Squadron lost another pilot, Captain CYRUS M. BIRNEY, when the P-38 he was flying failed to return - the exact cause of this loss was not determined although there was evidence to indicate that it was due to enemy action. It was on this same mission that seven (7) enemy planes were shot down, resulting in teletypes being received

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(Organizational History, 73rd Fighter Squadron, AAF, Continued)

which have been re-produced and attached as Appendix #2. On another Iwo mission during the month, a low level strafing attack, Lt. AMON had the right boom of his P-38 nearly severed by A/A fire but flew the plane back without difficulty. On the last mission participated in by land based fighters against Iwo Jima, before that Jap stronghold was invaded, Lt. BESCHE crash landed his P-38 at the conclusion of the mission due to a malfunction of his landing gear -- the plane was damaged beyond repair but Lt. BESCHE was uninjured. A P-47 was completely destroyed on 17 February when Lt. SPIVEY had a tire blow out on landing, the plane crashing into the control tower on Kagnan Point Field and burning. Lt. SPIVEY escaped from the plane uninjured but three men sleeping in a shack at the base of the tower were killed and four others injured.

With our engineering officer, Lt. CANTWELL, back in the states attending a technical inspector's school, the Engineering section continues to do a good job of "keeping them flying" under the direction of our new assistant engineering officer, CWO ALDRIDGE. The percentage of planes in commission for the month was 93% and while in a way, this figure speaks for itself, it does not tell the entire story. This good record was made despite a doubled flight schedule during a portion of the month and the arrival of twenty-six (26) P-51's of the 47th squadron for use of servicing facilities and maintenance equipment. The supply situation for this section continues to be quite a problem and promises to be even more so when the new P-47N's arrive since a large number of parts are not inter-changeable with the P-47D's. Due to the inability to replace auxiliary equipment, this equipment is being overhauled and re-conditioned as far as possible.

The Armament and Ordnance sections are now both being directed by Lt. WALLACE, Ordnance Officer, in the absence of Lt. WILKINSON of Armament who, like Lt. CANTWELL, is in attendance at a technical inspector's school back in the states. Armament

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(Organizational History, 73rd Fighter Squadron, AAF, Continued):

completed their pet project during February, the shop trailer, with chief credit due Sgt LISS. They also serviced all planes of the 47th Squadron, 15th Group, with new ammunition. Seven men of the 7th AAFCCU were attached to the squadron for a nine day course of instruction in Gun Sight Aiming Point Cameras. Our armament section was selected to bore-sight a P-51 type aircraft for a motion picture being made for AAF Headquarters in Washington. The Ordnance section also completed their trailer during the month and installed an accelerator stop assembly kit in eight P-36's and seventeen P-47's. The modification just described will eliminate all stoppage caused by the accelerator. A small arms inspection conducted by Ordnance found all weapons in the squadron to be in good condition.

Our Communications section was particularly helpful to the 15th Group during their stay here on Saipan, furnishing them with tools, spare parts, and the use of the section's well organized shop facilities.

The Transportation section has completed the painting and processing of all vehicles and has also completed their shop trailer which is now ready to mount second echelon equipment and tools. The ordnance section of the 364th Service Group has filled nearly all our transportation's back orders on first echelon tools but has not been able to replace worn out tires, which is a major concern. One vehicle a day is being turned into the service group for third echelon work and while it is not too complete, it is of some value.

The Supply section (Administrative) continues to function in a very capable manner. In addition to taking care of the squadron's routine requirements, this section secured the lumber for, and caused to be built, an addition, in the nature of a storage room, to our new "250 man messhall". This project came under the Saipan "Base Development Plan". This section also noted with

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(Organizational History, 73rd Fighter Squadron, AAF, Continued):

considerable interest and enthusiasm the new "Clothing and Equipment" Form #32 dated 8 May 1944 brought in by recent replacements. While overseas forces have not yet been able to obtain this form, it is hoped that they soon will, as it appears to be a great improvement over the one now being used.

The health of the Squadron during February was generally good according to information from the Medical Detachment. The majority of treatments given were for "Athletes' Foot" with a few cases of Upper Respiratory infection and Ear infections. Nearly all personnel, both Officers and Enlisted Men registered slight gains in weight. All Enlisted Men had a physical examination early in February to classify men according to their physical ability and results were entered on Form 20's.

The Barfly morale appears to be better than it has been in several months notwithstanding the fact that the rotation plan has been cut back heavily. After an uphill struggle, the Barfly softball entry in the Lightning League (Kagman Point Field teams) emerged victorious and will take part in the play-off for the island championship. A Squadron league was also formed. Play in the latter has started and the competition is keen. Engineering personnel provide the nucleus for two teams, the "Thunderbolts" and "Lightnings", the communications section team is called the "Static Bugs", armament and ordnance make up the "Bombers" and a fifth team the "Commandos" includes men from S-2, order ly Room, medical detachment, personnel supply, operations, and transportation. To round out the league, a sixth team is composed of officers and named the "73rd Bents".

A group of 73rd pilots received awards (See Appendix #1) on 22 February with Generals DOUGLAS and MOORE making the presentations. Another appendix,

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(Organizational History, 73rd Fighter Squadron, AAF, Continued)

#1A, is a true copy of an extract from orders giving credit for battle participation to the Squadron.

With Saipan being rapidly expanded and consequently losing many aspects of a forward area, there has been something of an under-current of restlessness in the organization. This condition will take care of itself if the strong indications of a move in the offing prove to be a fact.

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CHRONOLOGY FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

- 1 February: The following listed Enlisted Men leave for 30 days furlough to the U.S.A.:

Sgt WILLIAM W. EAKLEY
MARVIN D. HAGEMAN
EDWARD A. MARTIN

- 2 February: The following listed Officers leave on DS to Oahu:

1st Lt. ROBERT H. RESEB
2nd Lt. JOHN E. DANIER
JOSEPH J. DE VONA

- 6 February: Captain WILLIAM R. WILSON Jr fr dy to DS with AAFPOA, APO 953 per par 5, SO 31, Hq 7th AF.

1st Lts. JOHN W. CANNELL and RICHARD W. WILKINSON fr dy to DS with AAFPOA per par 10, SO 30 Hq 7th AF.

- 8 February: Following listed Officers on DS to Oahu Rest & Rec Center:

2nd Lt. ROY H. WEBSTER

1st Lt. JULIUS E. SMITH fr dy to DS with AAFPOA, APO 953, per par 1, SO 34, Hq 7th AF.

- 10 February: 2nd Lt. DANIEL P. RILEY fr temp dy with Hq 7th EC to trfd to 19th Troop Carrier Sq APO 953 as of 8 February per par 10, SO 33 Hq AAFPOA.

2nd Lt. LLOYD A. WILLIAMSON, fr temp dy with Hq 7th EC to trfd to 316th Troop Carrier Sq., APO 964, as of 8 February per par 10, SO 33, Hq AAFPOA.

Captain CYRUS M. BIRNEY Jr., failed to return from an escort mission to Iwo Jima. Airplane was last seen at 1800 feet over Iwo after being attacked by enemy fighter plane.

- 12 February: Following listed Enlisted Men join Squadron as of 11 February:

T/Sgt CLYDE W. JOHNSON
ALLEN RUGER
S/Sgt LEROY G. LARSON
ROBERT H. SMITH

Captain HERBERT W. MARTIN fr dy to DS with Hq XXI Bomber Com'd, APO 234 per par 11, SO 38, Hq 7th AF.

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13 February: Captain LEWIS A. NELSON returns from U.S.A.

15 February: Following listed Enlisted Men fr dy to trfd in gr to PMA unasgd and atchd unasgd to Cas Dep CPEC, APO 954 for RO gp shipment to U.S. as rotation pers., per par 1, SO 39, Hq 7th AF.

1st Sgt SAMUEL R. STERNIE

T/Sgt PAUL E. WELDON

S/Sgt PHILLIP N. DESS assumes temporary duties of 1st Sgt.

2nd Lt. VICTOR G. BESCHE damaged one enemy A/C while on escort mission to Iwo Jima. He later crashed upon landing at Kagman Point Field due to malfunction of landing gear. Pilot unhurt and plane damaged beyond economical repair.

16 February: Captain WILLIAM R. WILSON Jr. fr DS with AAFFOA to TDY Foster Field Texas to attend course in Ftr Gunnery per par 1, Ltr O, Hq AAFFOA.

Captain CYRUS M. BIRNEY Jr. change in status from missing in action to killed in action.

17 February: 1st Lt. JULIUS E. SMITH fr DS with AAFFOA to TDY Bryan Fld Texas to attend Instrument Pilot Course per par 1, Ltr O Hq AAFFOA.

Captain KARL W. MULLIGAN rel'd as actg Sq Comdr and Captain LEWIS A. NELSON assumed comd in the absence of Major HUSSEY.

2nd Lt. J.T. SPIVEY crashed into the Control Tower at Kagman Point Field when a tire on his plane blew out as he was landing on return from Combat Air Patrol. Pilot unhurt, plane burned up and is a total loss.

18 February: Major JOHN J. HUSSEY returned from DS with Hq and Hq Sq 7th AF, Svc APO 953 (Lv continental U.S.) to dy.

Captain NELSON relinquished command upon return of Major HUSSEY.

20 February: 1st Lt. JOHN W. CANTWELL fr DS with AAFFOA to TDY AAF Inspectors Course (Engineering and Supply) per par 1 Ltr O Hq AAFFOA

1st Lt. RICHARD W. WILKINSON fr DS with AAFFOA, APO 953 to TDY AAF Inspectors School AAFTAC, Orlando Fla. to attend a Tech Inspectors course (Armament) per par 1 Ltr O Hq AAFFOA.

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22 February: Following promotions listed as per par 3, SO 13 Hq 318th
Ftr Group dtd 21 February 1945:

To Staff Sergeant:

GEORGE W. DEADWILEY
JONAH KLEINBERG

To Sergeant:

ANDREW J. EDMAR
ROSS C. JOLIVETTE
RICHARD S. ROGER
KENNETH H. STEINER

JACK BOGDAN
JOHN P. LEMCO
JAMES A. LISS

To Corporal:

EUGENE W. BURNAN
LEWIS F. COHEN

24 February: 31 Enlisted Men asgd fr atchd unasgd 119th Repl Bn per par 1,
SO 47, Hq 13th Repl Dep APO 969, eff 22 Feb 1945. Men enroute
to join Squadron.

26 February: Sgt FRANK DE MARCO fr sk hosp (ID) Det of Pnts, to trfd in gr
to Medical Installation, U.S. per evacuation O #125, Hq CPFC,
APO 958, eff 12 February 1945.

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ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY73D FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAFAPPENDIX #1

The following pilots received the medals as indicated below per General Orders #28, Hq., Seventh Air Force, APO #244, dated 22 February 1945. The presentation was made on the 22nd of February by General Douglas and General Moore.

<u>PILOT</u>	<u>AWARD RECEIVED</u>
Major Hussey	2nd, 3rd and 4th Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters to Air Medal.
Major McCown	2nd Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal.
Captain Nelson	Distinguished Flying Cross, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal.
1st Lt. Amon	1st Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal.
1st Lt. Galt	Distinguished Flying Cross.
1st Lt. Byers	Distinguished Flying Cross.
Captain Wilson	Distinguished Flying Cross.
1st Lt. McCaul	1st Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal (Posthumously).
1st Lt. Kane	Air Medal.
1st Lt. Reser	2nd Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal
1st Lt. Smith	Distinguished Flying Cross
1st Lt. Snyder	Distinguished Flying Cross, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal.
1st Lt. Spencer	Distinguished Flying Cross.
2nd Lt. Besche	Air Medal.
2nd Lt. Clark, L.C.	1st Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal (Missing in Action).
2nd Lt. Cumpstone	1st Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal (Posthumously).
2nd Lt. Greek	1st Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal (Posthumously).
2nd Lt. Miller	Distinguished Flying Cross, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal.
2nd Lt. Redfield	Air Medal.

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES
PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
APO 958

APPENDIX 1A

GENERAL ORDERS)

NO.

16)

E X T R A C T

5 February 1945.

CREDIT FOR BATTLE PARTICIPATION

1. So much of paragraph 1, General Orders No. 71, HUSAFPOA, 1944, as reads "during the period 7 December 1943 (air) or 31 January 1944 (ground) to 10 June 1944, inclusive" is amended to read "during the period 7 December 1943 (air) or 31 January 1944 (ground) to 1 December 1944, inclusive."

* * * * *

3. The following units are added to the listing in paragraph 1, General Orders No. 71, HUSAFPOA, 1944:

* * * * *

73rd Fighter Squadron

* * * * *

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL RICHARDSON:

CLARK L. RUFFNER,
Brigadier General, GSC,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

/s/ ERNEST E. MC MAHON,
/t/ ERNEST E. MC MAHON,
Lieutenant Colonel, AGD,
Assistant Adjutant General.

DISTRIBUTION: "G" plus
Each unit listed (2)

A TRUE EXACT COPY OF EXTRACT:

John N. Blair
JOHN N. BLAIR,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Intelligence Officer,
73rd Fighter Squadron, AAF,
APO # 244.

APPENDIX 2

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Following teletypes forwarded to this Squadron on 12 February 1945.

FROM: CTF 93
TO : CF AAFPOA/CINCPAC (ADV)
DATE: 10 February 1945

POSSIBLY FORESTALLING EMPIRE DAY CELEBRATIONS IN MARIANAS BY JAP AIRCRAFT
OUR FIGHTERS OVER IWO TODAY DESTROYED FOUR BETTYS AND THREE ZEKES. DAM-
AGED ONE BETTY. ALL AIRBORNE. ONE DESTROYER STRAFED. LOW ALTITUDE PHOTO
COVERAGE COMPLETED. REGRET TO REPORT LOSS ONE P-38, PILOT PROBABLY LOST.

FROM: CINCPAC ADV HQ
TO : CTF 93
INFO: COMNAAFPOA
DATE: 10 February 1945

WELL DONE.

FROM: CTF 93
INFO: CTU 93.1.1 / CTG 93.2
FROM: COMNAAFPOA
TO : CTF 93
DATE: 12 February 1945

MOST COMMENDABLE IS YOUR OBSERVANCE OF EMPIRE DAY AT IWO. A WELL DONE TO
ALL PARTICIPANTS.

APPENDIX # 373RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF.RESULTS OF MONTH'S MISSIONSAPPENDIX # 3TYPE OF MISSIONMISSIONSTWO JIMA*
SORTIES ABORTSTARGET*
SORTIES PAGAN
SORTIES ABORTSAWA TAIHAN
SORTIESF-38 Provisional Sq:

Escort

3

10 6

Escort & Fighter
Sweep

1

2 2

Fighter Sweep

1

4

Other Missions - F-47D's:

Armed Reconnaissance

6

19

4

Fire-bombing

1

12

Fighter Cover for
Rescue Missions

2

8

TOTALS

14

12 8

4

31

4

8

Planes completing Missions:-

55

Total Abortives :-

12

Total planes dispatched :-

67

*As missions to Iwo Jima and Truk are for longer than 3-1/2 hours duration they are therefore credited as two sorties each. Therefore, the total Accredited sorties for month is 71

EXPENDITURES FOR MONTH

50 caliber ammunition 4,580 rounds
Napalm bombs dropped (Wing Tanks) 8.5 short tons
20 mm 540
552 rounds

C O N F I D E N T I A LC O N F I D E N T I A L73D FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.P.O. # 214

27 February 1945

318th Fighter Group Mission #2-38
73d Fighter Squadron Mission #2-9

1. (A) Four P-47D's
(B) None
2. (A) None
(B) None
3. Armed Reconnaissance of Pagan Island.
4. Lts. BYERS, DANNER, GRAHAM, HEAGNEY. (Violet 64)

Takeoff: 1550

Over Target: 1650

Landed: 1750

The flight made two (2) passes over the runway at minimum altitude - runway and taxi strips were non-operational. Twenty to thirty personnel, unidentified, were observed in entrances to caves adjacent to coconut groves in the Northwest portion of the island. Search of remainder of island was made with negative results. No A/A fire received.

5. (A) Enroute .4 to .5 cumulus from 1500 feet to 6500 feet. Over Target and 50 miles from base on return .8 cumulus from 1500 feet to 6500 feet.
(B) Loud and clear.
6. None
7. No ammunition expended. 300 gallons of gas consumed.
8. None.

HUSSEY

C O N F I D E N T I A LC O N F I D E N T I A L

C O N F I D E N T I A LC O N F I D E N T I A L73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF.
APO # 244

24 February 1945

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 2-36
73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 2-8

1. A. Three (3) P-47D's.
B. None.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Armed Reconnaissance of Pagan.
4. Lts. STEVENS, SELFIDGE, SPIVEY (VIOLET 61).

Take-off: 1430

Landing: 1525

Flight encountered a weather front and hard rains approximately 75 miles out and Lt. STEVENS, after probing un-successfully for an opening, brought the flight back to base, pancaking at 1525.

5. A. Frontal condition 75 miles north of Saipan.
B. Loud and clear.
6. None.
7. No ammunition expended. 300 gallons of gas consumed.
8. None.

HUSSEY

C O N F I D E N T I A LC O N F I D E N T I A L

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73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

23 February 1945

318th Fighter Group Mission #2-# 34
73rd Fighter Squadron Mission #2-7

1. (A) Two (2) P-47D's
(B) None
2. (A) None
(B) None.
3. Fighter Cover for Rescue Operations.
4. Lts. SPIVEY, SCHUH (Violet 69)

Take off: 0800

Over Target: 0820

Landed: 0945

Flight observed LCI about 100 yards off North shore of Anatahan - appeared to be stationary in water. They also located, and identified by its' tail, the wreckage of a B-29 but there was no sign of any survivors.

5. (A) Enroute and over target - 2 cumulus from 1500 feet to 3,000 feet.
Wind Northeast, 5 miles per hour.
(B) Good, none with LCI.
6. None.
7. No ammunition expended - 300 gallons of gas consumed.
8. None.

HUSSEY

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HEADQUARTERS
318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

21 February 1945.

CONSOLIDATED MISSION REPORT

P-38 Provisional Squadron Mission # 2-6
318th Group Mission # 2-30

1. A. Eighteen P-38Ls.
B. None.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Fighter sweep on Moen Island and escort of four PB4Y-1Ps on photo reconnaissance mission to Truk.
4. Capt. WOLFE; Lt. MONYELLE; Capt. OBERT; Lt. DeYONKER (Violet 31) (333d)
Capt. OTTENSTEIN; F/O JAMES; Lts. DUERSCHMIDT, RIVAS (Violet 34) (333d)
Capt. NELSON; Lts. BYERS, SHEPARD, MILLER (Violet 32) (73rd)
Capt. VOGT; Lts. DELP, LIEBGOTT, LUSTIG (Violet 33) (19th)
Capt. SLEPECKY; Lt. RICKARD (Violet 35) (19th)

Takeoff from Kagman Point Field: 1536 (20 February)

Landed at Guam: 1630 (20 February)

Takeoff from Guam: 0635 (21 February)

Time over Target: 1045

Landed at Kagman Point Field: 1400

All flights rendezvoused with the four PB4Y-1Ps over the harbor and proceeded to Truk at 9,000 feet. Approximately 260 miles from the target, Capt. OTTENSTEIN's flight climbed to 25,000 feet and two of the photo planes climbed to 23,000 feet. The balance of the fighters climbed to 12,000 feet.

Upon reaching Truk atoll, Capt. WOLFE's flight, Capt. NELSON's flight and Capt. VOGT's flight made a strafing run across North Field, Moen, from northeast to southwest. Capt. OTTENSTEIN and his wing man provided escort for one of the photo ships and Lt. DUERSCHMIDT and his wing man provided escort for another photo ship, on their runs over Truk. Capt. SLEPECKY and his wing man remained over North Pass, covering the two remaining photo ships.

No enemy A/C were airborne but approximately seven enemy A/C were observed by the strafing P-38's. They were parked in the bunkers south of North Field, Moen Island, some appeared to be inoperational. At least five of the parked aircraft were successfully strafed; the pilots observed tracers hitting the fuselages and wings. It is believed that these planes had been degassed as they did not burn. One fire was observed in the vicinity of the parked aircraft as the pilots completed their strafing run. No other targets were picked up on Moen Island. Capt. VOGT and Lt. DELP strafed wharf installations on Falas Island. Their tracers hit the wharf but no fires were started.

Heavy, medium and light A/A was observed coming from south and southwest of the runway. It was all meager and inaccurate. The heavy A/A consisted of seven bursts approximately 2,000 feet below the altitude of the photo planes.

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P-38 Provisional Squadron Mission # 2-~~7~~ - Continued.

All Planes rendezvoused over North Pass and proceeded on course toward base, with one of the PB4Y-1Ps. 200 miles from Saipan, the photo plane gave the P-38s a vector and the fighters then proceeded to base alone.

5. A. .5 to .8 cumulus enroute and return, 1,500 to 8,000 feet. Over Target, .4 cumulus, 2,500 to 6,000 feet; .10 cirrostratus at 27,000 feet.

B. Loud and clear. Could not contact Dumbo.

6. Undetermined.

7. 608 rounds 20 mm. 3,380 rounds .50 cal. 13,680 gallons of gas.

8. Approximately fifteen various size surface vessels (not over 5,000 tons) were observed in the fleet anchorage south of Moen Island. Condition and type undetermined, but appeared to be inoperational. Several 30 foot boats were seen north of Moen Island. A large column of smoke was also observed rising from Tol Island.

SANDERS

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C O N F I D E N T I A LC O N F I D E N T I A L

73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF.
APO # 244

21 February 1945

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 2-29
73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 2-6

1. A. Twelve (12) P-47D's.
B. None.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Fire-bombing of Pagan Island.
4. Lts. HARBOUR, DE VONA, STEVENS, O'HARA (VIOLET 20).
Lts. GALT, KESER, AMON, MATTISON (VIOLET 19).
Lts. KANE, BARNHILL, BABCOCK, GRAHAM (VIOLET 61).

Take-off: 0900 Over Target: 1000 Landing: 1120

The flights dropped all fire bombs, with the exception of four (4) which hung up and were later jettisoned in ocean, in coconut groves on the northwest side of island. This area has shown considerable track activity and signs of cultivation. Results were generally good with large quantities of smoke in evidence. No A/A fire received.

5. A. 3 to 4/10 cumulus from 1,500 to 3,000 feet.
B. Loud and clear.
6. Undetermined.
7. 24 fire bombs (165 gal tanks with 100 gal of mixture). 3,000 gallons of gas.
8. None.

HUSSEY

C O N F I D E N T I A LC O N F I D E N T I A L

C O N F I D E N T I A L

C O N F I D E N T I A L

73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

21 February 1945

318th Fighter Group Mission No. 2-27
73rd Fighter Squadron Mission No. 2-5

1. (a) Six (6) P-47D's
(b) None
2. (a) None
(b) None
3. Check ICI positions and search for crashed B-29 and/or survivors.
Fighter Cover - not observed. Operations
4. Lts. KANE, HESCHE (Violet 13)
Lts. BARNHILL, AYLER (Violet 69)
Lts. SPIVEY, BRYANT (Violet 14)

Violet 13 - Takeoff: 1415	Over Target: 1445	Landed: 1605 (2/20/45)
Violet 69 - Takeoff: 1545	Over Target: 1605	Landed: 1815 (2/20/45)
Violet 14 - Takeoff: 0615	Over Target: 0640	Landed: 0815 (2/21/45)

Lts. KANE and HESCHE first spotted the ICI about 20 miles South of Anatahan at approximately 1430. They continued on to the island and searched for one (1) hour without seeing any trace of wreckage or survivors. As they left the island, the ICI was again observed, this time about 3 miles from Anatahan.

Lts. BARNHILL and AYLER saw the ICI about 1 mile from Anatahan as they approached the island. They spent approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours over the island searching the terrain carefully but without seeing any trace of wrecked B-29 or survivors. They reported that even the two native villages appeared deserted. In the meantime, the ICI had reached the island but never landed. It went in at various points along the coast almost to the shore and would then go back out for 50 yards or so, repeating this maneuver many times particularly along the north coast. Just prior to starting back for base (due to being low on gas), an unsuccessful attempt was made by the ICI to transmit a blinker code message.

Lts. SPIVEY and BRYANT arrived at Anatahan at about 0640 and observed the ICI motionless in the water about 200 yards off the West coast and were unable to establish any radio contact with it. They searched the island for one (1) hour with negative results - no sign of any activity whatever was observed.

5. (a) Enroute and over target - .2 to .4 cumulus from 1200 feet to 4500 feet.
(b) Good except none with ICI.
6. None.
7. No ammunition expended - 1580 gallons of gas consumed.
8. None

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73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

18 February 1945

318th Fighter Group Mission #2-24
73rd Fighter Squadron Mission #2-4

1. (a) Four (4) P-47D's
(b) None
2. (a) None
(b) None
3. Armed Reconnaissance of Pagan.
4. Captain NELSON, Lts. SCHUH, YAEGER, TITUS. (Violet 13)

Take-off: 1545 Over Target: 1650 Landed: 1810

The flight made three (3) low level passes over the runway and adjacent areas - runway and taxi strips are non-operational. They then searched remainder of island with negative results. No A/A fire received.

5. (a) Both enroute and over target - .3 cumulus from 1500 feet to 3000 feet.
(b) Loud and clear.
6. None.
7. No ammunition expended - 760 gallons of gas consumed.
8. None.

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318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

15 February 1945

CONSOLIDATED REPORT

P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 2-5
318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 2-22

1. A. Fifteen (15) P-38Ls. (Two did not reach the target)
B. Three (3) ZEKES
2. A. One (1) P-38L damaged while landing.
B. One (1) ZEKE damaged.
3. Escort B-24s and fighter sweep -- Iwo Jima.
4. Maj FOJTIK; Lts. GOFF, BOWEN, GEORGE (333d Sq) (Violet 31)
Maj WILLIAMS; Lts. MATHIS, GRAY, MARCINKO (19th Sq) (Violet 32)
Maj ROESER (Gp Hq); Lt GALT (73rd); Capt VOGT, Lt MORRIS (19th) (Violet 33)
Capt MULLIGAN; Lts. BESCHE, BARNHILL (73rd Sq) (Violet 34)

Takeoff: 0715 - Over Target: 1125-1215 - Land: 1540

Violet 32 and 34 rendezvoused with three navigating B-24s over Marpi Point at 1,500 feet. They proceeded to their IP (a point northeast of Iwo Jima). Capt. MULLIGAN turned back from about 225 miles out due to his right fuel boost pump going out. He pancaked at 0945. Lt. BARNHILL became lost from the formation as they passed through an overcast approximately 600 miles out. He returned to base, escorted by Buzzard 3, pancaking at 1415.

After reaching the IP, the remaining five P-38s left the two B-24s and headed for Iwo Jima on the deck. Arriving over the target at 1125, Major WILLIAMS observed two ZEKES at 14,000 feet over the west coast of the island and one ZEKE at 7,000 feet over the center of the island. While climbing to intercept the two ZEKES at their altitude, the ZEKES made an attack on Major WILLIAMS' flight. The Jap pilots were aggressive and experienced. Major WILLIAMS' flight went into mutual support, and as the flight leader got on the tail of one of the ZEKES, he observed a ZEKE on the tail of a P-38. He immediately broke contact and went to the aid of the other P-38 pilot. As Major WILLIAMS got within range, the Jap broke contact and headed for the protection of the island's gun defenses. Upon sighting automatic weapons fire from the island, Major WILLIAMS broke off his attack and searched for the other two ZEKES. Lt. BESCHE, being the only pilot left in his flight (Violet 34), had joined Major WILLIAMS' flight. He saw one of the ZEKES break away out to sea and gave chase. He got on the ZEKE's tail and started firing from maximum range, closing to approximately 250 feet. He observed his tracers hitting all over the ZEKE, but it did not smoke or burn. The ZEKE finally dove under Lt. BESCHE's wing and he lost him.

After the above action, Violet 32 and 34 orbited the target area

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P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 2-5 -- CONTINUED

4. CONT'D

until the strike force of B-24s completed their bomb run. They then proceeded to the rendezvous point, Minami Rock.

Violet 31 and 33 rendezvoused with the strike force of B-24s over East Field and proceeded to their IP (Minami Rock) at 10,000 feet. Upon reaching the IP, they left the bombers and proceeded to the target, climbing to 21,000 feet. They orbited the target area and soon heard Major WILLIAMS call in three ZEKES. They searched the entire area, but evidently none of the ZEKES came up through the overcast (which was at about 10,000 feet), because the search was negative. Major ROESER and Lt. GALT, hearing someone call in a ZEKE circling one of the airfields, dropped down through the overcast to investigate. They circled the island twice at 500 feet but saw no planes or other enemy activity. There was no shipping in the vicinity of the island. Violet 31 picked up the strike force of B-24s 40 miles west of Iwo and escorted them on their bomb run. The bombers were at 18,000 feet and the fighters at 24,000 feet.

After the bomb run, all P-38s rendezvoused at Minami Rock. Three B-24s from the strike force provided the navigation escort on the trip back to base.

Heavy and medium A/A was meager to moderate, inaccurate, and continuously pointed.

5. A. Good enroute and return except for a front encountered approximately 60 miles north of Saipan. Clouds averaged .2 scattered cumulus, 2,000 to 8,000 feet. Over target: poor; solid overcast at 10,000 feet.
B. Loud and clear
6. None
7. Ammunition: 1,475 rounds cal. 50; 176 rounds 20 mm.
7,100 gallons gasoline
8. One twin-engine aircraft observed on Airfield No. 2. Several large fires and long columns of black smoke observed between Airfields No. 2 and 3, after the bomb run. Lt. BESCHE's hydraulic system went out over the target; when he pancaked, his landing gear collapsed and his plane veered to the left, off the runway, damaging a parked P-51. Damage to the P-38 extensive but reparable. Total estimated mileage: 1775 statute miles.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

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73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF.
APO # 244

12 February 1945

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 2-16.
73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 2-3.

1. A. Four (4) P-47D's.
B. None.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Armed Reconnaissance of Pagan.
4. Lts. GALT, BLACKWOOD, GRAHAM, F/O HANDLY (Violet 19).

Take-off: 1435 Over Target: 1535 Landing: 1645

The flight made four (4) passes over the runway from varying directions at 100 feet altitude. Runway and taxi strips are non-operational. They then searched remainder of island and strafed an area in palm grove on northwest side of island where a fire was burning indicating some activity. They also strafed some shacks in a wooded area just northeast of the runway.

5. A. Enroute: 4/10 cumulus from 2,000 to 2,200 feet.
Over Target: 4/10 cumulus from 3,000 to 3,100 feet.
B. Loud and clear.
6. Undetermined.
7. 1,120 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition. 800 gallons of gas consumed.
8. None.

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318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
APO # 244

10 February 1945

CONSOLIDATED REPORTP-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 2-4
318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 2-13

1. A. Ten (10) P-38L's.
B. Two (2) ZEKES
2. A. One (1) P-38L
B. Two (2) ZEKES
3. Escort two squadrons of B-24's on bombing mission to Iwo Jima.
4. Lts. AMON, BENNETT (H), REDFIELD, F/O WALKER (Violet 33) - (73rd)
Lt. KANE, Capt. BIRNEY (Violet 34) - (73rd)
Capt. OTTENSTEIN, F/O JAMES, Capt. OBERT, Lt. DUERSCHMIDT (Violet 35) - (333d)

Takeoff: 0935 - Over Target: 1430 - Landed: 1813

The three flights rendezvoused with the bombers over Kagman Point Field and proceeded on course to Iwo Jima at 9,000 feet. They climbed to 18,000 feet one-half hour from the target. At Minami Rock, the formation headed northeast of Iwo Jima to the IP, which was 2 miles north of the island. Enroute to the IP, just east of Iwo Jima, one ZEKE was called in, heading toward the island at 14,000 feet. Capt. OTTENSTEIN nosed over to attack but the ZEKE passed under the fighters and circled to the left. Capt. OTTENSTEIN made a pass and observed hits on the ZEKE. Then F/O JAMES got on the ZEKE's tail and opened fire at 200 feet. The ZEKE immediately exploded into a mass of flaming wreckage. The pilot did not have an opportunity to bail out. Capt. OTTENSTEIN, Capt. OBERT, and Lt. DUERSCHMIDT witnessed the destruction of the ZEKE.

Capt. OTTENSTEIN's flight then rejoined and continued to escort the bombers, who were proceeding to the IP. Upon reaching the IP, the formation turned around for the bomb run. Violet 33 and 35 remained at 18,000 feet and Violet 34 (Lt. KANE and Capt. BIRNEY) climbed to 22,000 feet to provide high cover. As the formation approached the island for the bomb run, Lt. AMON spotted one ZEKE coming almost head on at his altitude. He fired one burst before pulling up as the ZEKE split-essed. After leveling off, Lt. KANE saw the ZEKE diving down and was unable to locate his wing man, Capt. BIRNEY. Capt. OTTENSTEIN saw this ZEKE dog-fighting with Capt. BIRNEY. He observed the ZEKE fire at the P-38 which started to smoke and shortly disappeared out of sight but seemed to be under control. Lt. AMON, while escorting the bombers on their run, heard someone call in that a P-38 was going down and almost immediately thereafter heard Capt. BIRNEY ask for a vector without giving any explanation. Lt. AMON called Capt. BIRNEY and told him to wait a minute. He then called BUZZARD 1 and requested that a vector be given to Violet 34-2 (Capt. BIRNEY). No further communications were received from Capt. BIRNEY.

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P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 2-4 -- CONTINUED

4. CONT'D

After the ZEKE's engagement with Capt. BIRNEY, Capt. OBERT and Lt. DUERSCHMIDT observed the ZEKE heading for Iwo Jima, at 18,000 feet. Both pilots attacked and observed hits on the ZEKE. The ZEKE started to smoke and Lt. DUERSCHMIDT followed him, giving him a long burst. The ZEKE burst into flames at 11,000 feet and fell off, out of control. The pilot did not bail out. Capt. OTTENSTEIN and F/O JAMES saw the ZEKE crash in the water.

The bombers had completed their bomb run by the time the above action ended and the fighters therefore proceeded to rejoin and head south. They picked up the B-24's on the route home.

Heavy, intense A/A was observed. It was inaccurate and seemed to be coming from all over the island. It was barrage type over the island and continuously pointed following the bomber formation.

5. A. Good enroute, over target and return. Clouds .5 to .6 cumulus, 1,500 to 6,500 feet.
B. Poor between the fighters and bombers.
6. None
7. Ammunition expended -- 1,565 rounds 50 cal. - 105 rounds 20 mm.
Total gasoline consumed -- 8,000 gallons
8. One large ship observed just northeast of Iwo Jima, heading north. Three to four large ships observed along northwest coast, which appeared to be anchored. One medium ship observed just off the south tip of the island. Further identification of shipping was not possible due to high altitude of the fighters. Escorting a large formation of B-24's slows down P-38's to a point where gasoline reserve becomes a serious problem. It is recommended that two or three navigating bombers be used. Dumbo made no contact with Capt. BIRNEY.

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HEADQUARTERS
318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

STATEMENTS OF PILOTS
(318TH FTR. GRP. MISSION REPORT # 2-13)

F/O HARRY W. JAMES, T-3008
(Violet 35-2)

While escorting B-24's at 18,000 feet, Capt OTTENSTEIN and I spotted one ZEKE at 15,000 feet heading east toward Iwo Jima. As Capt. OTTENSTEIN made a pass, the ZEKE turned to the left. I then got on the ZEKE's tail and opened fire at 200 feet. The ZEKE immediately exploded into a mass of flaming wreckage. Several phosphorous bombs were thrown out with the wreckage, and these also exploded. The ZEKE was painted very dark green or black. The red roundels on wings and fuselage were smaller than usual.

Shortly after, I observed Capt. OBERT and Lt. DUERSCHMIDT attack a second ZEKE which was heading for Iwo Jima. The ZEKE started to smoke after both pilots made an element pass, and split "S'd". Lt. DUERSCHMIDT followed the ZEKE and I saw it burst into flames at 11,000 feet. I observed it crash in the water north-east of the island.

/s/ Harry W. James
/t/ HARRY W. JAMES
F/O, Air Corps.


1st Lt. WAYNE A. DUERSCHMIDT, O-807269
(Violet 35-4)

While escorting the B-24's to IP, north of Iwo Jima, I heard one ZEKE called in. I observed Capt. OTTENSTEIN make a pass on the ZEKE, which was heading toward the island at about 14,000 feet. Then F/O JAMES got on the ZEKE's tail and opened fire at about 200 feet. The ZEKE immediately exploded into a mass of flames.

Shortly after, someone called in a second ZEKE heading for Iwo Jima, at 18,000 feet. We started to climb to intercept. Capt. OBERT and myself made an element pass from 90 degrees. The ZEKE started to smoke and Capt. OBERT broke off the attack. I followed the ZEKE and gave him a long burst from 30 degrees. The ZEKE burst into flames at 11,000 feet. The pilot did not bail out. The ZEKE took no violent evasive action other than a split "S". It was painted a very dark drab color and had no other markings except the red roundels on wings and fuselage.

/s/ Wayne A. Duerschmidt
/t/ WAYNE A. DUERSCHMIDT
1st Lt., Air Corps.

A TRUE COPY:


FREDERICK H. DEAMANT
Major, Air Corps.

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73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.P.O #244

9 February 1945

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION NO. 2-11
73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION NO. 2-2

1. (A) Four (4) P-47D's
(B) None
2. (A) None
(B) None
3. Armed Reconnaissance of Pagan.
4. Lt. GALT, Lt. Col. COX, Lts. GRAHAM, AYLER. (Violet 19)

Take-off: 1505

Over Target: 1600

Landed: 1700

The flight encountered a cloud layer when about 150 miles from Saipan which extended from 5000 feet nearly down to the deck. As they proceeded, and when approximately over Pagan, the cloud layer thickened, Pagan being entirely closed in. The flight made a 180 degree turn and Lt. GALT went down through a small break in the clouds over Farallon DePajaro in an effort to see if it would be possible to reach Pagan below the overcast. He found this to be impossible, so brought the flight back to base.

5. (A) Enroute .6 - .9 cumulus from 500 feet to 5000 feet.
Over target solid overcast at 6,000 feet.
(B) Low and clear.
6. None.
7. No ammunition expended - 1040 gallons of gas consumed.
8. None.

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318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

6 February 1945

CONSOLIDATED REPORT

P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 2-2
318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 2-8

1. A. Fourteen (14) P-38s (None reached the target)
B. None
2. A. None
B. None
3. Escort one squadron of B-24's to Iwo Jima.
4. Major FOJTIK, F/O JAMES, Lts. DUERSCHMIDT, FOSTER (Violet 31) - (333d)
Major WILLIAMS, Lts. MATHIS, GRAY, MARCINKO (Violet 32) - (19th)
Capt. MULLIGAN, Lts. BENNETT, REDFIELD, F/O WALKER (Violet 33) - (73rd)
Lt. KANE, Capt. BIRNEY (Violet 34) - (73rd)

Takeoff: 0810

Landed: 1338

The four flights rendezvoused with the B-24's over Kagman Point Field at 0820. The formation proceeded on course to Iwo Jima, climbing to 14,000 feet. When they reached Pagan, they encountered a solid overcast, the top of which was 10,000 feet. As they proceeded north, they ran into a second solid overcast, the base of which was 14,000 feet. The formation continued, flying between the two overcasts. At 1110, when approximately 100 miles from the target, the weather closed in completely and the planes were bucking a head wind. They then turned around and headed for base.

5. A. Poor enroute and return. Clouds between base and Pagan -- .7 cumulus, 2,000 to 10,000 feet. Clouds north of Pagan -- .10 cumulus, tops, 10,000 feet and .10 alto cumulus, base 14,000 feet.
B. Loud and clear.
6. None
7. 7,700 gallons gasoline.
8. None

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73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF.
APO # 244

3 February 1945.

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 2-4.
73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 2-1.

1. A. Four (4) P-47D's.
B. None.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Armed Reconnaissance of Pagan.
4. Lts. SHEPARD, CECI, SPIVEY, HORNER (Violet 63).

Take-off: 1440 Over Target: 1535 Landing: 1655

Lt. Spivey landed early at Isley Field (at 1500) --Hydraulic pressure leak. Couldn't get wheels up.
Lt. Horner carried life-rafts.

Flight came in on island from southwest and searched for Radar installations on south tip of island. Continuing on the same run, the flight flew over the runway from west to east at the minimum altitude. Observed several brush fires northeast of east end of runway. Made one more pass on the runway and then searched the remainder of the island with negative results. Runway still non-operational. No Activity observed. No A/A fire received. Searched the chain of Islands on return to base with negative results.

5. A. Enroute -- 3 to 4/10 cumulus from 1,500 to 6,000 feet.
Over Target -- 2 to 3/10 cumulus from 2,000 to 5,000 feet.
B. Loud and clear.
6. None.
7. 900 gallons gas consumed.
8. None.

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318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

3 February 1945

CONSOLIDATED REPORT

P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 2-1

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 2-3

1. A. Twenty (20) P-38L's (Four were spares and did not proceed to the target)
B. Four single-engine aircraft.
2. A. One (1) P-38L (Operational)
B. None
3. Escort Five (5) F-5's on photo reconnaissance mission to Iwo Jima.
4. Capt. OTTENSTEIN, Lt. DUKET, Capt. WOLFE, Lt. BALKUM. (Violet 31) - (333d)
Lts. ERBELE, RIVAS, BOWEN, MONYELLE. (Violet 33) - (333d)
Lts. AMON, BESCHE, BABCOCK, HEAGNEY. (Violet 32) - (73rd)
Capt. MULLIGAN, Lt. BENNETT. (Spares) -- (Violet 35) - (73rd)
Capt. SLEPECKY, LEFFORGE, Lts. DUNN, BARRETT. (Violet 34) - (19th)
Lt. REDFIELD, F/O WALKER. (Spares) -- (Violet 36) - (73rd)

First Wave: -- Takeoff: 0850 - Over Target: 1230 - Landed: 1600

Second Wave:-- Takeoff: 0958 - Over Target: 1335 - Landed: 1624.

The first wave, composed of Violets 31, 32, 33, and 35, rendezvoused with four F-5's and three B-29's over East Field at 0900 and proceeded to the target at 10,000 feet. The two spares, Capt. MULLIGAN and Lt. BENNETT, turned around one hour out and pancaked at 1118. The remaining two flights continued to Iwo Jima with the F-5's and B-29's. They began dropping to the deck 200 miles from the target. When approximately 70 miles east of Minami Rock, Lt. DUKET called in, stating that he was in trouble. Immediately after, he dropped his second external tank, called "MAYDAY, MAYDAY", ditched, then the plane hit a wave and nosed over. One of the B-29's turned around and orbited the position where the pilot went in.

The rest of the formation continued to the target. The remaining two B-29's orbited Minami Rock while the P-38's escorted the F-5's on their photo runs. Lts. AMON and BESCHE escorted one F-5 on its photo run from southeast to northwest, just north of the south volcano. Lt. AMON observed one automatic weapons position and directed his strafing at it. Apparently, he was not successful in silencing it for his plane was hit on the right boom just in front of the rudder as he came off the target. The boom was almost completely severed. Lts. BABCOCK and HEAGNEY escorted one F-5 on its photo run from southeast to northwest across the area between Airfields No. 1 and No. 2. Both pilots strafed automatic weapons positions just east of the south part of the runway No. 2. The F-5 appeared to be hit by automatic weapons fire over the middle of the island. It burst into flames and crashed in the water 800 yards west of the shore opposite Airfield No. 1. Capt. OTTENSTEIN escorted the same F-5 that Lts. BABCOCK and HEAGNEY escorted, but made his strafing run

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P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 2-1 -- CONTINUED

4. CONT'D

on the F-5's right. He strafed an automatic weapons position just southwest of the east Boat Basin. The pilot observed his tracers entering the position and believes that the installation was damaged. Capt. OTTENSTEIN also observed one ZEKE parked just north of Airfield No. 2. Capt. WOLFE and Lt. BALKUM escorted one F-5 on its photo run just north of airfield No. 2. Capt. WOLFE strafed the caves near the radio station northwest of Airfield No. 3. His fire entered the caves but he was over the vicinity before he could evaluate the damage. Lt. BALKUM strafed the radio station and observed his tracers hitting the installation. However, no fires were seen. When Capt. OTTENSTEIN, Capt. WOLFE and Lt. BALKUM completed their runs across the island, they orbited the position where the F-5 had crashed before proceeding to the rendezvous point. The pilots thought they observed an oil slick in the vicinity.

Lts. ERBELE, RIVAS, BOWEN and MONYELLIE escorted one F-5 on its run across the east shore of the island, from northeast to southwest. They did not strafe. Continuously pointed medium antiaircraft from positions along the east coast from the boat basin to the south volcano, was moderate to intense and inaccurate. It was meager to moderate and accurate to inaccurate from positions east of the south tip of Airfield No. 2 and from positions north of the south volcano. Light A/A intense, accurate to inaccurate.

After the above action, the flights rejoined and rendezvoused with the B-29's at Minami Rock. They then proceeded on course for base.

The second wave, composed of Violets 34 and 36, rendezvoused with one F-5 and three B-29's over East Field at 1010. The entire formation climbed to 10,000 feet and proceeded on course 300 degrees. The spares, Lt. REDFIELD and F/O. WALKER, returned to base one hour from Saipan, pancaking at 1207. The formation started to let down to the deck 150 miles from the initial point which was located 60 miles southwest of Iwo Jima on a vector of 240 degrees. At the initial point the flight changed course to 60 degrees and headed into the target. The B-29's left the formation and proceeded to the rendezvous point -- Minami Rock. As the formation approached Iwo Jima, one single-engine enemy aircraft (possible TOJO) was observed at 600 feet, flying due east over the island. At about the same time, one A/A gun fired a single burst over the center of the island. It is believed this method is employed to alert Iwo Jima.

The F-5 made its photo run along the west coast with the four P-38's echeloned to his left. While making the run, Capt. SLEPECKY observed three single-engine enemy aircraft at 8000 feet over the island. Due to the distance involved, identification was difficult. Two single-engine planes were observed on the ground, in the southwest parking area of Airfield No. 1. The flight encountered meager to moderate, continuously pointed, inaccurate, medium A/A. Fire was observed to emanate from positions at the base of the south volcano and along the coast west of Airfield No. 1. After completion of the photo run, the flight rendezvoused with the B-29's at Minami Rock and proceeded to Base.

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P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 2-2 - CONTINUED

5. A. First Wave: -- Good enroute, over target and return, except for a solid overcast 200 miles from the target. Clouds, .4 scattered cumulus, 2,000 to 10,000 feet.
Second Wave:-- Poor enroute; clouds .8 to .9 from 22 degrees North to Iwo Jima. Over target and return; clouds, .7, 4,000 to 8,500 feet.
- B. First Wave: -- Poor between P-38's and B-29's. Only one B-29 could be contacted. The other two could transmit but not receive.
Second Wave:-- Loud and clear.
6. Undetermined.
7. Ammunition: --- 333d: 42 rounds 20 mm. 1,280 rounds .50 cal.
73rd: 261 rounds 20 mm. 1,500 rounds .50 cal.
19th: None
Gasoline: ---- 14,100 gallons.
8. Captain LEFFORGE (Violet 34-2) received some damage to his tail assembly upon dropping the 300 gallon tank at the initial point.
Photo runs, with exception of lost F-5, completed as scheduled.
Three day Dumbo search for Lt DUKET proved unsuccessful.

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