

From :- No. 607 Squadron. A.A.F. R.A.F. INDIA.

To :- Headquarters, Air Command South East Asia.
 Headquarters, 3rd Tactical Air Force.
 Headquarters, No. 221 Group.
 Headquarters, No. 170 Wing.
 Headquarters, No. 165 Wing.

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OPREP SERIAL NO 272.
SORTIE REPORT SERIAL NO. 1 for MAY 1944.

Date :- Day 6th May. 1944.

I. 12 Spitfires VIII "V" "R" "N" "P" "G" "C" "B" "A" "T" "H" "D" "K".

II. "V" F/Lt. Coons. }
 "R" W/O. Neville. }
 "N" P/O. Stuart. } "PING-PONG" Section.
 "P" P/Sgt. Farrell. }
 "G" F/O. Clark. }
 "C" P/Sgt. Turner. }
 "B" W/O. Curnock. } "RED" Section.
 "A" W/O. Townsend. }
 "T" F/Lt. Coombes. }
 "H" P/Sgt. Haley. }
 "D" W/O. Longley. } "BLUE" Section.
 "K" P/Sgt. Moore. }

III. Interception Patrol for reported 20+ bandits at 8,000 ft, bombing BISHENPUR RD Area.

IV. IMPHAL Main.

V. Thin layer of cloud 8,000 ft; 10/10s at 12,000 ft. Visibility poor.

VI. 07.30 IMPHAL Main.

VIII. 08.30 IMPHAL Main.

P.A: 07.22 from Readiness.

P.B: At approximately 07.40 saw 2 OSCARS at about the same height and heading S E towards TULIHAL .

P.C: On receiving information that BISHENPUR RD area was being bombed PING-PONG leader headed the Squadron in that direction making height to 8,000 ft. At approximately 07.40 hrs PING-PONG leader sighted two OSCARS flying at 8,000 ft, in S.E, towards TULIHAL almost line abreast going away from our formation.

PING-PONG I (F/Lt Coons) picked the one to port and opened fire from 500 yds closing to 200 yds all guns making his attack from line astern. E/A turned to starboard and went over on his back. PING-PONG I saw a big ball of flame come from the E/A's engine and saw it going down, breaking off engagement in case of other E/A in the vicinity. PING-PONG I continued to TULIHAL but then returned to base as his R/T was u/s and he was on his own.

PING-PONG II, (W/O. Neville) saw his No.1 making his attack on E/A and when NO.1 broke off he went in. Just after opening fire he noticed a large sheet of flame coming out of the belly of the E/A and a long line of white (presumably petrol) also from the belly of the E/A. PING-PONG II opened at 150 yds making a 1/2 starboard 1/2 ring deflection closing to 75 yds and noticed strikes on starboard wing root and cockpit. Pieces flew off from around the cockpit and as PING-PONG II was closing in he was flying through flame and debris. PING-PONG II broke off to port while E/A was still turning slightly to port and still burning.

It is considered that this E/A which was seen to go down by the remainder of the Squadron, was put out of action by PING-PONG I before PING-PONG II's attack and therefore is claimed destroyed by PING-PONG I. PING-PONG III (P/O Stuart) went into attack the starboard OSCAR opening fire at 300 yds and closing to 100 yds all guns making a 30° starboard attack. PING-PONG III saw strikes on the cockpit and fuselage and engine cowling as he was closing in and further strikes on starboard wing and wing root. At about 150 yds the Starboard wing burst into flame and E/A started to go in a spiral dive to starboard. PING-PONG III broke off at 100 yds while E/A was still flaming and going down just S.W. of TULIBAL. This also was witnessed by other members of the Squadron and E/A is claimed destroyed.

BLUE II while doing a starboard turn saw 2 oscars come down out of the clouds firing at him with trace going in front of his A/C. He broke down losing contact with the E/A but rejoined own formation.

BLUE IV reports seeing a bomber with one engine on fire going down. PING-PONG IV (P/Sgt. Farrell) was late in taking off and flew in direction of Squadron but at about 5,500 ft. He saw an OSCAR diving down from 2 o'clock and as he went down past and underneath, turned to starboard and had a short burst at it from 350 yds, being unable to close E/A turned sharp to port and began to climb. PING-PONG IV turned in same direction and opened fire from 300 yds making a 30° starboard attack as E/A was climbing and closed to 200 yds. Not seeing any strikes. PING-PONG IV broke off attack as he suspected E/A might be a decoy and climbed to join formation, forming up behind BLUE I.

9 A/C led by BLUE I continued and orbited TULIBAL at 9,000 ft. Four A/C went down to 5,000 ft but saw no E/A. Squadron was then vectored South to Palal. The four A/C at 5,000 ft went very fast on this vector to 10 miles North of TAMU where they received information of bandits travelling S.E. 5 mls West of Palal. This proved to be the remainder of the E.A. Squadron then continued to TAMU at 10,000 ft and BLUE I saw 3 A/C on the strip which nobody could identify. He went down with PING-PONG IV and both fired at what proved to be bandit burnt out Hurricanes. Squadron then reformed led by RED III and returned to base, no further information being available.

F.D: 2 OSCARS destroyed (P/Lt. Coons 1. P/O. Stuart. 1)

F.E: - F.F: H I L.

F.G: "V" 300 x .303 A.P.
 300 x .303 Incen.
 100 x 20 M.M. Seq.
 Starboard cannon: Breach block arrested against underside of rounds

"R" 120 x .303 A.P.
 120 x .303 Incen.

"N" 240 x .303 A.P.
 70 x .303 Incen.
 65 x 20 m.m. Seq.
 Starboard cannon: Telescope round in B.F.M.

"T" 60 x .303 A.P.
 60 x .303 Incen.
 40 x 20 m.m. Seq.

"P" 240 x .303 A.P.
 240 x .303 Incen.
 140 x 20 m.m. Seq.

F.H: Cine camera guns fitted in "B" "Q" "H" "R" & "V" Combat films taken in A/C "V" & "P".

F.J: Controlled by 9 Ops ; R/T Good except PING-PONG I. was unable to transmit I.P.F. Fitted and adjusted. Interception made by visual.

J. A. ...
 Squadron Leader, Commanding.
 607 Sq. RAF