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HEADQUARTERS

EIGHTH FIGHTER COMMAND

SECRETARY No. 1532. C

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ENCOUNTER REPORT

LT COL HAROLD J. RAU

A. Combat
B. 6 April 1944
C. 78th Fighter Squadron (Group Leader)
D. 1050
E. Salzweidel, Germany
F. Visibility heavy
G. Ju 88, 0/1 T/2 (possibly Ju 88a) and Me 109
H. S U/I T/E (possibly Ju 88s) Destroyed
I. Ju 88 Destroyed
J. Me 109 Destroyed
K. Locomotive Destroyed - shared with Lt Black

1. I was leading the Group and took the group down to the deck to strafe an a/b near Salzweidel, Germany. We came down from 3000 ft. out of the sun and made repeated passes at the a/b.

On the first pass I picked out the first of three planes in a row. This plane may have been a Ju 88 or a transport and appeared to be fast balled. I fired from 300 yds to 75 yds dead astern and observed strikes over entire fuselage and root sections. On my next pass over the field I saw that this plane was completely in flames.

On my second pass I fired at the second plane in the line. This was the same type plane as the first one destroyed. I fired again from 300 yds to 75 yds from dead astern. There were strikes all over the fuselage and wing roots. On my third pass I saw this plane was in flames.

On my third pass over the field I fired at a Ju 88 which was the third plane in the line. I fired from 300 yds to 75 yds dead astern and this plane immediately burst into flames. I then started across the field and saw another t/c plane like the first two. I pulled up to 500 ft. and then down on this plane to help it. I fired from 300 yds to 75 yds, saw strikes on fuselage and wing roots and this plane burst into flames. Flak defenses were then operating so we left the area.

I then proceeded to a barracks area about 10 miles from the a/b and made two passes strafing barracks buildings as a pass strafing a camouflaged area that may have been an ammunition dump. No fires were observed.

I flew 10 or 15 miles west and saw two trains, one northbound and one southbound. I called Red Leader to take the southbound train and I attacked the northbound train from 60 deg. I gave the engine a long burst and saw strikes all over the engine, boiler and wheels. The train slowed down but did not stop. I made a 180 deg turn and made another pass and saw strikes all over boiler. Clouds of steam poured out from boilers and train stopped. My wingman stated that he was also firing on this locomotive.

A few miles further west while flying at top cover at 3000 ft. for planes on the deck, someone called that we were being bounced from the rear. I broke left and saw approximately 6 Me 109s. I had zoomed up to 4000 ft. and saw an Me 109 at 2000 ft. zooming up after a P-38 that was above me. I made a pass at this plane and he apparently never saw me and pulled right in front of me. I gave him a long burst, smoke poured out and the plane burst into flames. The pilot was probably killed and the plane continued up and crashed into a P-38. Both planes went down in flames.

CLAIM: 3 U/I T/E (probably Ju 88s or transports)
Destroyers
1 Ju 88 Destroyed
1 Me 109 Destroyed
1 Locomotive Destroyed - shared with Lt Black

Barracks Buildings damaged.

(Over)

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By: JCM NARA Date 5/11/11
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J. Ser No. of A/C: 42-57722
A/C Markings: MC-R
Ammunition Expended: 1200 rds 30 Cal
17 rds 20 mm

/s/ Harold J. Rau

Harold J. Rau,
Lt Col., A. C.

/s/ Edward J. Steiner

EDWARD J. STEINER,
Capt., A. C.
Intelligence Officer

A TRUE COPY:

[Signature]

GERALD F. COSTELLO,
Captain, Air Corps,
Asst A-2, 67 FW.

(D-3)

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