

# TARGET VICTORY

WEEK ENDING  
OCT. 14,  
1944

A REPORT OF, BY AND FOR  
COMBAT FLYING PERSONNEL

CONFIDENTIAL

## TOP FIGHTERS JOIN 2BD



**LT. COL. KRUZEL: 361ST**

Younger groups not content to ride a back seat, are setting own records.

### RECORD GROUPS, HIGHEST AGES PAVE LIB RAIDS

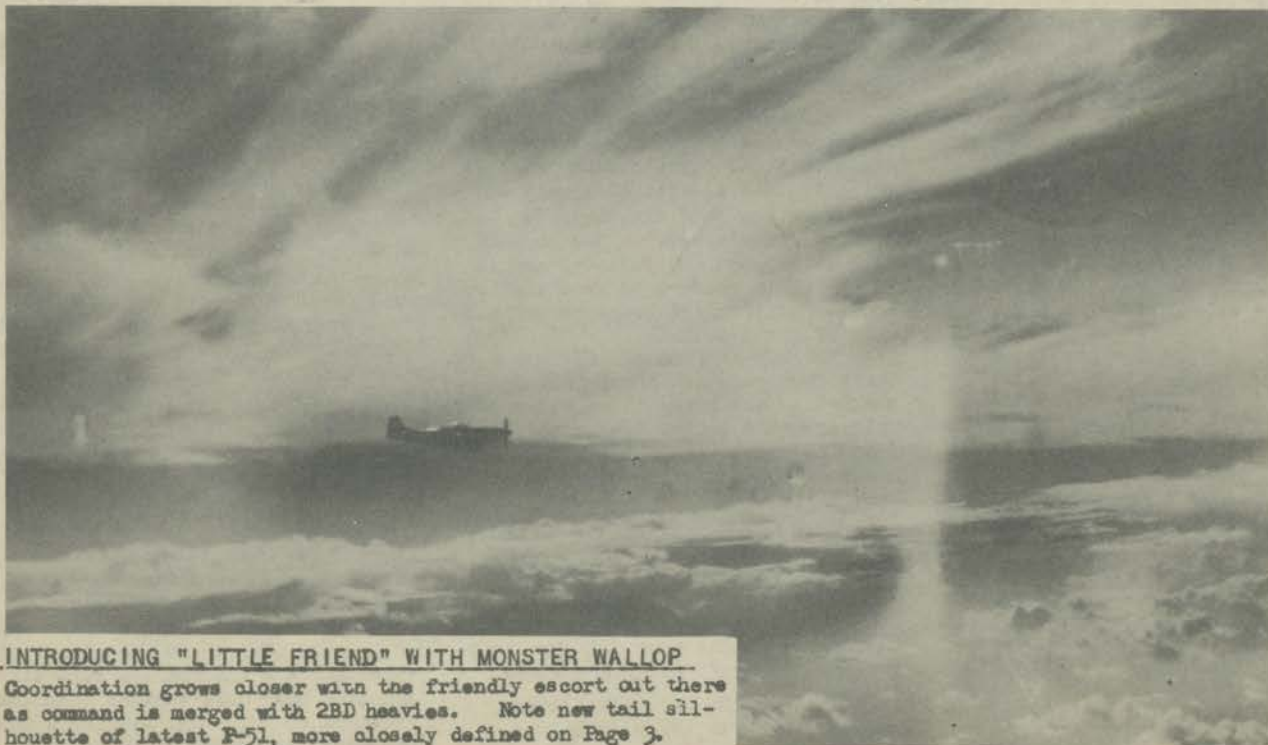
That fightin' partnership of the skies, 8th Air Force bombers and fighters vs. the warcenters of Reichland, now tightens even more invincibly, as five of unquestionably the greatest fighter Groups in any theatre unify command with the ever more-powerful 2nd Division Liberators.

Santa Claus arrived bright and early this year for the Lib crews, bringing a roster of escorts for their final-phase raids over Germany that reads like the aerial Hall of Fame. Presented in numerical order of Groups, let their records testify for them:

#### 4th FIGHTER GROUP (P-51, Red Nose)

Is there any crew member who does not know that the 4th is the pioneer U.S. Group in England, formed over two years ago from the three Eagle Squadrons?

Since then, each squadron has itself destroyed more enemy  
(Continued on page 2)



#### INTRODUCING "LITTLE FRIEND" WITH MONSTER WALLOP

Coordination grows closer with the friendly escort out there as command is merged with 2BD heavies. Note new tail silhouette of latest P-51, more closely defined on Page 3.

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### "BIG FRIEND TO LITTLE FRIEND"

Every moment a bomber is over enemy territory the most welcome sight he can find in the sky is the presence of friendly fighters. When the instant comes that the bomber is crippled and must lag behind, every crew member holds his breath, more than likely mutters a fervent prayer, and when a flight of fighters moves up toward him gasps, "Thank God, they're ours!"

Legends spring from the hearts of all the bomber boys who have experienced at least one moment when their future lay in the palm of one hand. The biggest friend in the world is that fighter pilot who is known to him only as "little friend".

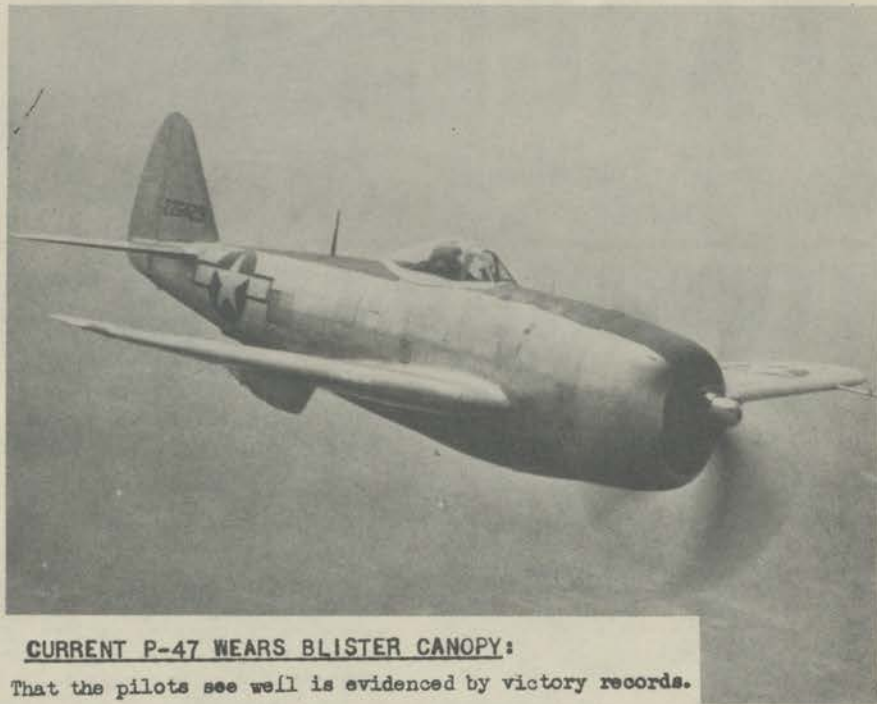
Returned safely to his base, he's inclined to pinch himself for reassurance, and wants to leave no stone unturned that might identify that "little friend" to him, so he could express an infinitesimal fraction of the gratitude that wells in him. Maybe some day he does find out, and tries callously to explain something too big for his words. More often he never learns who it was, and in comparing stories with others of similar or greater experience decides to call it part of a day's work.

But "big friend" does not forget. He hopes somewhere, someday to return the favor. "Big Friend to Little Friend ... thanks ..."



**COL. DAVID SCHILLING:**

His 56th Fighter Group now holds ETO's top record for total victories.



**CURRENT P-47 WEARS BLISTER CANOPY:**

That the pilots see well is evidenced by victory records.

## TOP FIGHTERS JOIN 2BD

(Continued from Page one)

aircraft than all three of the Eagle squadrons put together. This Group was first to pass the 400, 500, 600 and 700 marks, and presently credits 709, of which 487 were destroyed in the air. They have flown, successively, Spitfires, P-47s, and P-51s.

At the moment in total victories they're second only to the 56th Group, next discussed. "However", says a spokesman for the Mustang leaders, "this is a temporary circumstance in which the 4th acquiesced simply to encourage the Schilling boys (we keep telling ourselves!)." The competition reigns hot and furious, and it is no little comfort to know that both top competitors are today combat buddies of the 2BD Libs.

The 4th is immoderately proud of their Commanding Officer, Col. Don Blakeslee, who holds three years of uninterrupted combat operations, amassing something like 1300 combat hours. Some of their other noted personalities:

Capt. John T. Godfrey -- destroyed more enemy aircraft than any other U.S. pilot -- 36 (18 in the air, 18 on the ground). Now a P/W.

Capt. Don S. Gentile -- 23 in the air, 7 on the ground. Now testing new jet craft at Wright Field.

Lt. Col. Claiborne H. Kinnard, Jr., acting C. O., is AAF-trained, has 21 destroyed; Maj. Duane W. Beeson (23 destroyed); Maj. James A. Good-

son (30 destroyed); Lt. Ralph (Kid) Hofer, had 28½ when killed over Budapest on the Britain-Russia shuttle.

### 56th FIGHTER GROUP (P-47, Red Nose)

Col. David C. Schilling's boys have rolled their victories to the top of the ETO -- 723 as it stands now, 559 of them in the air. They organized as P-47 specialists in the USA and fly them still, as obviously they have every reason to do.

Among their Air Force records is the greatest total destroyed in 1 day -- 79. Former C. O., Col. Zinke, now is with the 479th Group. Produced such aces as Lt. Col. Gabreski (31 victories), now a P/W; Maj. W.M. Mahurin (21 air victories), now in the States; Maj. Gerry Johnson (16), Major Robert S. Johnson (27 in air); Maj. Fred J. Christensen, Jr. (22 in air); Col. Schilling has 28½ at present.

### 355th FIGHTER GROUP (P-51, White Nose)

Arrived in ETO when friendly fighters were scant and far too short of range. But there was plenty of fighting, and the bombers were still shooting down more enemies than the fighters could. Col. William J. Cummings (the "Wild Bill" of Philippines

(Continued on Page three)



**P-51 ACQUIRES NEW IDENTIFICATION FEATURE:**

Mustang's tail has been redesigned to give the famous fighter greater lateral stability. The fin now extends forward, fairing into the fuselage. The new tail is being added to ships currently in service as well as newer models.

**RECORD GROUPS, HIGHEST ACES PAVE LIB RAIDS (CONTINUED)**

(Continued from Page two)

and Australia) brought the 355th over and still is Commanding.

Named Capt. Henry W. (Tex) Brown (30 victories) is a 355th ace; as was Lt. Col. Kinnard, now with the 4th Group; Capt. Robert E. Woody, Group's first DFC, now in the States. Lt. Col. Gerald J. Dix, Lt. Col. Thomas H. Hibbard, Lt. Col. Everett W. Stewart, are all veterans of the Pacific theatre.

The Group holds 503 victories, 262 of them in the air. Destroyed 51 enemy planes in one day near Munich. Recently escorted heavies on 8th A.F.'s fourth shuttle mission to Russia, which dropped supplies to Warsaw.

**361st FIGHTER GROUP  
(P-51, Yellow Nose)**

The "Yellow-jackets", commanded by Lt. Col. Joseph J. Kruzel, (whose credits include three Jap Zeros as well as FW and MEs) are one of the youngest Groups in the ETO. But not content to gawk at the veterans of the Wing, they're racking up a neat set of records all their own.

They hold the ETO record for most enemy planes shot down by a squadron on a single combat mission — 18 in the air, plus 3 on the ground and 8 others damaged in the air, all on Sept. 27. High scorer for the day was 1st/Lt. William R. Beyer who shot down 5 in the air.

First "hero" of the outfit was

1st/Lt. Dale F. Spencer, who single-handed attacked and "in 28 seconds", as his buddies recount, destroyed 4 Me 410s queuing up on some B-17s. The bomber group gave Spencer a whale of a party to show their appreciation.

Latest distinction, 1st/Lt. Urban L. Drew became the first American pilot to shoot down two Jets in the air — both on Oct. 7. The Group now has 244 victories, an imposing list for their period of operation.

**479th FIGHTER GROUP  
(P-51, Clear Metal)**

Newest of the Wing, until recently flew P-38s, have a dynamite C.O. in Col. Hubert Zemke, the Missoula, Mont. ace (28 credits) who led the 56th to top status. Col. Zemke, incidentally, has victories scored in all three, P-38s, P-47s, P-51s.

Received two commendations while under C.O. Lt. Col. Kyle L. Riddle, for important role in invasion, and for getting into operation in 11 days after arrival at their base, an 8th Air Force record. They have 120 enemy planes caught on the ground, 70 in the air. 55 were destroyed, 31 damaged in one day, Sept. 5. Fighter pilots concur that ground victories average more difficult due to the disproportionate fire power the opposition can offer. With extended fighter range, however, it is now possible to penetrate to key Luftwaffe bases and with deft maneuvering to catch the Swastika Characters whether they choose to come up or not, and the

479th is not disposed to wait for the Nazi's choice of days to do battle. When the Huns did come up on Sept. 26, the 479th shot down 29, and on the 28th got 13 more while escorting bombers.

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The Amazing work of these five ace groups is coordinated by the top-rated 65th Wing, under command of Brig. Gen. Jesse C. Auton.

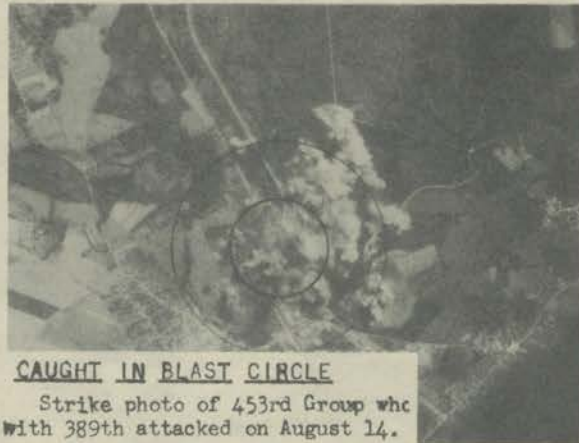


**FOUR ME'S IN "28 SECONDS"**

1st/Lt. Dale F. Spencer (361st) downed 4 ME's attacking a formation. Witnesses claim it was over in half a minute. Bomber crews threw a party for him.



ANIZY R.R. BRIDGE: TINY TARGET  
Resistant to lighter-bomb attacks, steel cantilever bridge faces high altitude threat from 2000-pounders.



CAUGHT IN BLAST CIRCLE

Strike photo of 453rd Group who with 389th attacked on August 14.

Too small a target, one might say, for high altitude bombing. But closeup inspection on the ground shows that a miss was nearly as good as a direct-hit, and decidedly more effective than many small-bomb hits.

The Anizy R.R. and Flames highway bridges in France had to be demobilized on August 14. The 389th, 445th and 453rd attacked from altitude, and to all appearances they had not done their best work. Now our on-the-ground closeups reveal that despite no direct hits, the bridges were knocked out to enemy use, by shocking power from the 2000-lb. blast of near misses alone. German bridges currently may expect the same rough treatment, plus many direct hits.

# HUNLAND BRIDGES

## ARE FELLED EVEN BY HEAVY NEAR HITS



2000-LB. HIT CLOSE BY:

No direct hits gave Photo Reconnaissance assurance of damage, but bridge was "out". Footing moved 13 inches, all rivets sheared.



BOTH APPROACHES CUT OFF:

Crater in roadbed on West-bound approach took four 24-hour days to repair. East-bound crater needed 15 days.



FISMES HEAVY HIGHWAY BRIDGE: DESTRUCTION FINAL

From overhead view, bridge looked passable. Closeup showed arch fatally cracked, permitting bicycle and jeep crossing only. U.S. Army Engineers were preparing to complete demolition and install new structure.



BLAST TORE CONCRETE:  
Large chunk of solid concrete  
blasted away from the arch.



2000-LB. CRATER: 64 FEET  
Near hit dug in 30 feet deep, 64 feet  
across, filled with underground water.

# BEST HIT BY A GROUP THIS WEEK



LOW LEFT HIT LEFT OF  
MPI, BUT A-1 DAMAGE  
FOR BOTH SQUADRONS

## BAD WEATHER VICTORS AGAIN—392<sup>ND</sup>

### CLOUDS GUM UP WEEK'S AVERAGES BUT SQDN. HITS 90%!



#### LEAD SQUADRON BULLSEYED:

Bursts centered in target ring for "hot" Mickey leaders. Repair and marshalling facilities were heavily damaged, plus destruction of Rolling Mills and Shops at Klockner Works.

Wrestling with "Alto-Gu" from L.P. to M.P.I., 392nd got in the victory of the week at Osnabruck marshalling yard — repeating a performance they displayed at Hamm in the last bad-weather stretch two weeks ago.

Bombing averages dimmed down with the heavy cloud spell, and no Groups were observed to approach record hits, despite a sensational high average for the entire Division in visual attacks the previous week. The 392nd Group, however, appear to be our champion cloud-punchers — they stood out like sirloin steak on an ETO menu.

Lead Squadron, with 1st/Lt. J. S. Lawrence, lead bombardier, and 1st/Lt. Morris as Mickey operator, hit 90% in 2000 feet, 50% in 1000, bright work in any weather! Their follow-up Low-Left, 1st/Lt. Russell D. Williamson, lead bombardier, got just 10% into the pay circle, but the pattern rode right along the vital marshalling center and into Klockner Aero-Engine Works, an equally high-priority customer.

Special congratulations are due to these two-time rough-weather winners, because the threatening winter delay is Hitler's best friend, and to beat him we must maintain our highest peak in cloud bombing.

# BEST RUNNER UP OF THIS WEEK



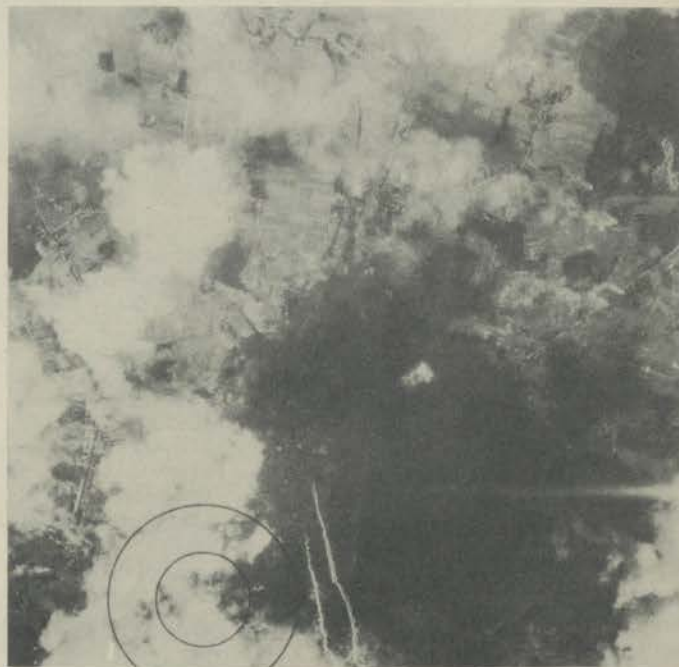
SENSATIONAL PRU SHOW.  
MARSHALLING YARD ON  
RIGHT, AERO-ENGINE  
WORKS AT UPPER LEFT

## 489<sup>TH</sup> SUPER-PFFS OSNABRUCK! MARSHALLING YARD AND AERO-ENGINE DOUBLE - DAMAGE!

The now-you-see-it, now-you-don't type of cloud feinting proved more distracting than on-the-level 10/10 -- but 489th followed through a coordinated PFF run that clipped Osnabruck both in the chin and the solar plexus simultaneously! Not that there wasn't a smack of luck in their double-header damage -- their high scoring bombs were rivalled by the "misses" for victory value. The sharp hits scored on the marshalling yard and the remainder blasted on adjoining industrial targets including the Klockner Aero-Engine Works.

With their hits split thus, the accuracy on the Osnabruck MPI rates just 50% in 2000 feet, 15% in 1000 for Low Left (the best squadron), with F/O W. Hardin, lead bombardier, 2nd/Lt. Robert B. Knox artfully operated the Mickey. Lead squadron (1st/Lt. D. E. Gerrold, lead bombardier) counted only 5% on the assigned MPI, but paid off well for damage on the industrial center.

It takes excellent PFF to come this close, but every Group should equal or surpass this accuracy level on near-future attacks. We must all do everything we can to hold our pathfinder accuracy close as possible to the visual bombing average -- it will hasten victory by weeks!



### PFF FOUND THE MARK:

Lead's pattern is seen to average long of MPI, most of Low Left's hit very close in. PRU shows that composite damage is excellent.

# SNARFU OF THIS WEEK

"Tried to Go Around  
Again, on 3 Engines"



## 1st Attempt Must Be Made Good

When one engine went out while forming, this aircraft had to abort its mission, so dropped bombs in the channel and returned to base. The ship was sluggish, bomb bay doors were stuck in open position, and the approach to runway was long, so the pilot attempted to regain airspeed and make another attempt.

The ship munched in, stalled 20 feet above ground. Fortunately the entire crew got out uninjured.

On all non-4-engine landings, the first attempt must be made

good -- do not try for a second approach.

Pilots understand this, but still try it, as a recent 8th Air Force accident survey shows this is still one of the most important heavy-bomber errors that should be corrected.



TARGET:  
VICTORY'S

NOMINATION FOR  
OUTSTANDING

"MAN OF THE DIVISION"

1ST/SGT. V.B. DRYDEN  
SGT. N. COHEN  
SGT. J. FLISNICK

Aircrews are proudly raising the "V" signal this week to three MFs of the 491st Bomb Group -- who with quick action and resourcefulness saved the lives of several crew members trapped in a burning bomber.

Leaping into a jeep when the stricken bomber crashed four miles from their base, Sgts. Dryden, Cohen and Flisnick made a wild cross country dash directly for the site of the crash. Upon arriving they found a furiously burning wreckage, with exploding ammunition accenting the danger of the situation.

Without hesitation, Sgt. Dryden and the other men proceeded to chop a hole in the rear section of the fuselage, using an axe which they carried in the jeep. Then entirely disregarding the peril to their own lives, they entered the burning plane and in bucket brigade fashion removed as many of the surviving crew members as possible. Emerging from the plane, they carried the wounded men to a safe distance, while the fire fighters, who had subsequently arrived on the scene, battled to bring the blaze under control.

The three have been recommended for an important decoration. Sgt. Joseph Flisnick's home is Elmira Heights, New York; Sgt. Nathan Cohen is from Philadelphia, Pa.; and 1/Sgt. Vance B. Dryden comes from Black Creek, Wisconsin.



467TH SPIKES OSNABRUCK:

Lead squadron of Group expertly placed 50% within 2000 on M/Yd.

LET'S BRING 'EM BACK  
SAFE