

10 Group Rodeo 117

A.	18th April 1944	J.	1 Me 410 destroyed by F/Sgt J.Thould.
B.	263 Squadron		1 Do 217 K2 destroyed shared in quarters
C.	6 Typhoons lb L.R.		by F/Lt Rutter, F/O J.H.Purkis, P/O
D.	1614 and 1617 and 1622.		F. Green F/Sgt. W.A.Handley.
E.	S.W. of Paris. S.W. of Paris and	K.	1 He 111 damaged on ground by F/Sgt
	S.E. Paris,		W.A. Handley.
F.	10/10 cloud at 2000 ft. Vis 5 miles.		1 Military truck and its trailer dam-
G.	Nil.		aged and 1 large military car
H.	Nil.		seriously damaged by F/Lt L.W.F.
			Stark. D.F.C.

Six Typhoons Ib L.R. of 263 Squadron led by F/lt L.W.F.Stark, D.F.C. set course from Tangmere at 1517 hrs on 18th April to sweep anti-clockwise around paris and to destroy any Huns they could find.

They flew in sections line abreast, from port to starboard:- F/Sgt Thould Yellow 2, F/O Purkis Yellow 1, F/lt Stark Red 1, P/O Green Red 2, F/lt Rutter Blue 1, F/Sgt Handley Blue 2.

Crossing the Channel at 0 feet. They climbed to cross the French coast S.W. of Trouville at 8000 ft, above cloud. They dived to 0 ft, pinpointing on the railway West of Bernay cathedral; thence S.E. and E between Chartres and Dreux.

F/lt Stark fired a short burst at a large camouflaged truck with trailer on the road between Ablis and Rambouillet. He saw strikes on both, and then was a bright flash in the cabin of the truck, which stopped.

F/Sgt Handley fired a short burst and saw strikes on the fuselage of an He 111 parked in the N. dispersal area of an unidentified A/F between Chartres and Paris. This grass A/F, reported on the Tangmere Opflash as Ecrosnes, did not look obstructed: it had a belt of trees to the N of it, flak towers, blister hangers and lorries. It did not look like Nogent le Roi and the He 111 seemed solid and genuine.

Our formation continued S.E. of Bretigny where an Me 410 was seen ahead flying N.E. from starboard to port at 500 ft. F/O Purkis fired a short burst at extreme range without seeing results. F/Sgt Thould last saw his I.A.S. at 360 while still accelerating. He closed to 250 yards and fired from 10° starboard 10° below astern, closing rapidly to 150 yards. He saw strikes on the fuselage and set the starboard engine on fire. This e/a, which did not take evasive action or return fire, made what looked like a partially controlled attempt to crash land in a ploughed field, but was seen by Red 1 and Yellow 2 to disintegrate in flames on hitting the ground.

After reforming, they passed N instead of S of Villaroche A/F and saw a Do 217 flying W at 200 feet 10 miles E of Villneave A/F. F/O Purkis attacked first with a short burst from 25° starboard astern. He saw strikes on the fuselage. F/lt Rutter, P/O Green, and F/Sgt Handley made astern attacks from 350-200 yds, and saw strikes. The last pilot closed still firing from 200 yds to 80 yds. One of the many pieces which flew off the e/a lodged in the leading edge of his a/c. This e/a which was identified as Do 217 K2 by F/Lt Stark did not return fire and its only evasive action was to porpoise mildly between 500 and 200 feet. It went into a sudden vertical dive and crashed in flames. Meagre inaccurate light flak was fired from the area of this combat.

After reforming and flying N, F/lt Stark fired a short burst at a large grey camouflaged oar going N.E. between Paris and Soissons. A sheet of flame appeared in the back of it and it swayed violently into a ditch.

As time and petrol were getting short, F/lt Stark reduced the remaining tracks and flew N.W., In the Cormeilles, area F/Sgt Handley drew a burst across 10 - 20 soldiers, but make on claim.

a formation climbed to fly over Rouen at 11000 feet and after crossing the coast W of Fecamp at 9000 ft in a shallow dive at 400 I.A.S. returned to Tangmere at 1715.

Weather over France 10/10 cloud at 2000 ft. Visibility 5 miles.

Notes from CCG films:-

- (i) *F/Lt Stark also probably scored strikes on 217.*
- (ii) *F/Lt Stark's staff car was well + truly pranged.*
- (iii) *So was Handley's 111. It was solid.*

/over.

Our Casualties: Nil.

Enemy Casualties (i) In Air Combat.

1 Me 410 destroyed by F/Sgt J. Thould.

1 Do 217 K2 destroyed, shared in quarters by F/lt Rutter,
F/O J.B. Purkis, F/O F. Green and F/Sgt W.A. Handley

(ii) On Ground.

1 He 111 damaged by F/Sgt W.A. Handley.

1 Truck and 1 Trailer damage and 1 military car seriously
damaged by F/lt L.W.F. Stark. D.F.C.

SIGNED.

Armament Report

These 6 a/c were rearmed at Tangmere. A report on ammunition expended has not yet arrived at Harrowbeer.

C.C.G. were used and referenced:-

F/lt Stark.	263/64	(not switched on during first engagement).
F/lt Rutter.	263/62	
P/O Green.	C.C.G.	not fitted.
F/Sgt Handley.	263/61	
F/O Purkis.	263/63	
F/Sgt Thould	C.C.G.	Not fitted.

F/O.
Intelligence Officer,
263 Squadron.