

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 7032Air Ministry News ServiceEAGLE SQUADRON DESTROY THREE HUNS

Weather restricted the scale of Fighter Command operations today but on one sweep over France this afternoon, the third American Eagle squadron, in a wing led by a Scot, W./Cdr. Rankin, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, destroyed a Me.109 and two F.W 109s and damaged others.

The two F.Ws were shot down by a flight sergeant from Georgia. He attacked them in quick succession and after seeing one hit the sea, saw the splash of the second plunging into the water.

A pilot officer from Oklahoma, sent the Messerschmitt crashing into the sea immediately after having damaged another.

"At various times we saw between 30 and 40 Huns," said Wing Commander Rankin. "About 12 or 15 tried to jump on us as we started back for home and the fight was pretty fierce while it lasted. There was a dog fight for a minute or two and then the Huns scattered and made off home in ones and twos.

"We chased some back towards France and I gave one a long burst but did not see what happened because three more came down and my No.2 and myself had to break away.

"Later, more Huns had a crack at us and fighting lasted until we were about 12 miles from the English Coast."

In other words, the Nazi pilots prefer to wait until our Spitfires are on the way home, in the hope that they are running short of petrol and not able to manoeuvre so freely.

Pilots of the third Eagle Squadron have now destroyed four enemy aircraft since moving into Fighter Command's "front line" a week or so ago.

Two of our aircraft are missing from this operation.

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