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Air Ministry News Service

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SPITFIRES DESTROY NINE OF GERMANY'S "CRACK FIGHTERS".

Sweeping a triangular area between Gravelines, St.Omer and Abbeville this afternoon spitfires of Fighter Command were met by a large force of enemy fighters.

In one of the biggest dog fights for many weeks they shot down nine F.W.190s. and severely damaged many others. Three of our fighters are missing.

Five of the victories were claimed by pilots of a famous Polish wing operating a Fighter Command, which swept the Le Touquet area. As they went in - the third wave of the afternoon - they were followed by about twenty F.W.190s. They turned to give battle and the sky above the once fashionable French resort was filled with whirling aircraft, their cannon and machine guns spitting in a general melee.

In a few minutes, five Germans had been sent crashing down to earth, one of them by a Polish wing commander, leader of the wing, who brought his total to six. The rest of the enemy broke off the fight.

The first wave circled the aerodrome at St.Omer, but there was no reaction until the wing was coming out, west of Calais. Then, at least twenty F.W.190s. appeared and attacked the wing, which broke up. Several dog fights began, in which two F.W.190s. were destroyed, and others severely damaged.

The second wave circled over Abbeville before seeing about twelve German fighters below them. They promptly went down to attack, and a flight lieutenant soon sent one spinning to earth in flames. The wing then reformed, went out over the channel, and recrossed the French coast, south of Berck. Fifteen Germans tried to jump one squadron which fought off the attack without loss.

"Those Huns we met seemed willing to mix it" said one of the Spitfire pilots. "We had a real party for four or five minutes".

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