

OFFICIAL WAR SUMMARY NO: 861

Patrol activity continued during April 2 on the whole Tunisian battlefront. Further progress was made in the north where our patrols successfully engaged and inflicted casualties on an enemy patrol.

Air operations were restricted by bad weather over Tunisia. Enemy troops and motor transport north of Gabes were attacked on April 2. The enemy airfield at La Fauconnerie was bombed twice and fires were left burning. Fighters carried out offensive sweeps and patrols. Six enemy fighters were destroyed during the day and one enemy aircraft was shot down by H.M. trawler "Fluellen" in operations off the coast. Four of our aircraft are missing from all these operations.

Heavy bombers twice attacked Messina during the night April 1/2. The second attack, which took place at dawn, was carried out from 50 feet. Direct hits were scored on the ferry terminus and on the ferry boat. Heavy damage was inflicted also upon the ferry terminus and one ferry boat at San Giovanni. A German troop-carrying plane was shot down over the Straits of Messina. From these and other operations all our aircraft returned safely.

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At least three Japanese warships were sunk and others damaged during a devastating low-level attack by Allied aircraft on Silver Sound, Kavieng. One light cruiser, one heavy cruiser, and a large destroyer were sunk by direct hits. A direct hit and two near misses were scored on two other destroyers, causing at least severe damage. Two other warships, probably destroyers, were bombed. Darkness prevented observation of results. Simultaneously with the attack on the shipping, the aerodrome was neutralised by a heavy bomber attack. In consequence there was no attempt at interception and all our planes returned. Other attacks, include a hit scored on a six thousand ton enemy cargo-ship heading towards Rabaul, effective low-level bombing attacks on enemy barges, transport and supply dumps in Dutch New Guinea, and a barge sunk by our fighters at Watdek in the Kai Islands. Widespread raids throughout the area include an attack on Saumlaki which started large fires, and other attacks on Gasmata, Cape Gloucester, Madang, Finschafen, Open Bay and Mubo.

A Japanese destroyer, a large transport and two freighters have been sunk by U.S. submarines in the Pacific. In addition, one Japanese destroyer and two freighters have been damaged.

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American bombers, continuing their heavy pounding of the Japanese base of Kiska, in the Aleutians, raided the main camp area four times on Thursday. On April 2 U.S. planes attacked and set fire to a small Japanese cargo-vessel in the New Georgia Islands.

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In Burma R.A.F. bombers attacked the railway junction at Kanbalu on April 2. Good fires were started among storage buildings. Other bombers attacked a Japanese-occupied village on the Mayu peninsula. None of our aircraft is missing. Enemy aircraft attacked Mangdaw on April 2, causing very slight damage and only a few casualties. Three of the raiders were damaged by A.A. fire.

Yesterday fighter-bombers escorted by Spitfires attacked the enemy airfield at Abbeville. In ensuing combats our Spitfires, one of which is missing, destroyed five enemy fighters. Other aircraft attacked an enemy trawler off the coast of Holland and set it on fire. Our bombers bombed the docks at Brest and Mosquitoes, one of which is missing, attacked railway targets in Northern France and Belgium.

Yesterday morning enemy aircraft dropped bombs at a place on the South-East coast of England, causing damage and casualties, some of which were fatal. There was a little enemy activity near the East and South-East Coasts last night but there are no reports of any bombs having been dropped. One enemy aircraft was destroyed.

Last night our bombers made a heavy and concentrated attack on Essen. The weather was clear and good. Results were seen.

Twenty one of our bombers are missing.

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