

NINTH AIR FORCE MUSTANGS' FIRST BOMBING ATTACK HIT CREIL

U.S. Ninth Air Force P-51 Mustangs yesterday went into action for the first time as fighter-bombers in a series of low-level attacks on the railway yards at Creil, north of Paris.

The use by the Allied Expeditionary Air Force of the new model Mustangs as bombers was disclosed in this morning's communique issued by Air Ministry and E.T.O.U.S.A.

The far-ranging fighters, officially described as America's fastest war-plane, made their first appearance in Britain late last fall and since have established an extraordinary record as a combat fighter.

The Mustangs now join Thunderbolts in the Ninth Air Force fleet of fighter-bombers which will operate as low-level strafing and bombing planes during the combined invasion operation.

In their first attack yesterday, Mustang fighter-bomber pilots, guarded overhead by other Mustangs, said they left long lines of track at Creil "twisted like ribbons". One pilot reported a bomb burst near an overpass and another just north of the choke point of railroad lines leading into the yards.

Quotes from the Ninth Air Force Mustang pilot who participated in the first bombing follow:-

1st. Lieut. William I. Davis, 1404 Polk Street, Topeka, Kansas, said: "We didn't meet any opposition all day. When we got to the target we made a 360 degrees circle around it. I was flying in the second element and saw the first few bombs make a direct hit on the railroad tracks. I also saw bombs hit an overpass."

2nd. Lieut. Robert L. Young, 12, India Street, Nantucket, R.I. who went along as an observer, said:

"I observed hits on an engine shed and some in the yards, but the most beautiful one of all landed right in front of a railway building adjacent to the area.

Capt. R.E. Turner, squadron leader of Shawnee, Oklahoma and Oklahoma City, remarked that there was a beautiful aerodrome about two miles from the track, "just right for us to operate from when we get over there. I didn't see any enemy aircraft in the half hour we remained in the area except a few on the field. I noticed a lot of construction but no life at all.

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