

FORM "P"

F.O.C.R. 818/40.

FIGHTER COMMAND COMBAT REPORT.

TO: H.Q. FIGHTER COMMAND

FROM: H.Q. NO. 11 GROUP.

INTELLIGENCE PATROL REPORT.NO. 229 SQUADRON.

No. 229 Squadron - 12 Hurricanes - left Northolt at 1525 hours, and landed at Northolt at 1630 hours on 11/9/40.

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229 Squadron in conjunction with 303 Squadron were ordered to patrol Biggin Hill at 15,000 ft. At 1610 hours four large formations of enemy aircraft flying at 20,000 ft were observed in the region of Reigate flying towards London. The first wave of E/A turned back out to sea, and the Squadron proceeded to attack the third wave head on. No. 303 Squadron who were on their left, wheeled round and attacked the middle and rear of the enemy formation on the Starboard side of 229, and travelling in the opposite direction. The head of the enemy formation consisted of some 30 HE 111's in large Vics composed of smaller Vics of 5 aircraft. Behind there were 25 ME 110's, slightly higher than the bombers, and above all were 50 ME 109's considerably higher.

S/L Banham lead his Squadron to attack in sections line astern straight at the leading bomber formation. He fired at two HE 111's but did not see the result, and was then attacked by fighters. As each section attacked the enemy formation broke up, and a series of fights developed between the Hurricanes and HE 111's, and ME 110's with one or two ME 109's.

In the initial attack F/Lt. Rimmer probably destroyed a HE 111, which went down with Starboard engine on fire. He returned to base with slight face injuries, resulting from a ME 110 on his tail, which shattered his cockpit hood.

P/O Smith leading the last section also attacked a HE 111, and saw the Port engine in flames before breaking away on account of a fighter on his tail.

P/O Bary flew straight through the formation firing all his ammunition into several E/A but could not see the effect of his fire.

F/Lt. Smith after attacking the leading bomber section, broke away and followed one HE 111 which had detached itself from the formation. Two or three Spitfires were diving on this machine when he delivered a long attack from astern, and saw the HE 111 crash through a hedge in the Maidstone district. Two men got out.

P/O Bright first opened fire on the bomber formation and then on the ME 110 attacking S/L Banham. He then followed down one of our men descending by parachute until he was safe. Sighting a HE 111 at 6,000 ft with a Hurricane diving on it, he joined in with a diving attack and later with No. 1 attack from astern. Two minutes later he noticed E/A in flames on the ground just S.E. of Redhill, between two railway lines, probably at Outhill. This Heinkel made no attempt at evasive action.

P/O Dewar attacked with Yellow section and in breaking away blacked out, coming to about a mile away. He saw three HE 111's break away from the formation and attacked one which was 2000 ft. below him with no visible result. He then attacked another HE 111, and saw the Port engine stop and later the Starboard engine also stopped. The HE was last seen in a steady glide towards Beachy Head at 17,000 ft. After this engagement Dewar sighted a JU 86 heading East, losing height, with Port engine smoking; he attacked from starboard and after a two second burst had to break away owing to A.A. fire. This was between Maidstone and Chatham. This pilot before attacking the HE 111 had observed large enemy formations at 20,000 ft in which several very large aircraft were escorted by strong contingents of fighters.



P/O Dautrepoint (Belgium) after the initial attack by Blue section saw a ME 110 attacking P/Lt. Rimmer. He put in a short burst at this machine and broke away; he thinks the rear gunner was killed by fire from P/O Verity who also attacked. After losing contact he went East at 10,000 ft. and saw a DO 215 at 6,000 ft. pursued by several Hurricanes - its port engine was already smoking when he attacked.

Three men baled out and just afterwards the DO 215 went into a dive and crashed. Sgt. Hyde also attacked this machine, his attention being drawn to its position by A.A. bursts. He made a long attack from astern at short range, and saw the crew bale out and later the machine crash and burst into flames somewhere between Longfield and Edentridge. Sgt. Hyde as Green 3 had been previously guarding the rear of the Squadron with P/O Carver when they dived on the bomber formation. P/O Carver is missing.

P/O Dautrepoint and Sgt. Hyde then climbed together going N.W. until they saw a HE 111 in a 30° glide. P/O Dautrepoint turned and after catching up delivered a strong attack from astern. White smoke came from the Port engine, and the E/A tried to weave about. A Spitfire and a Hurricane were also attacking this machine. P/O Dautrepoint attacked again closing to less than 50 yds., and the E/A crash landed in a field about 10 miles East of the previous crash. Four men got out, one wounded.

P/O Verity after firing at 3 HE 111's in the formation next fired at a ME 110, which was about to attack P/Lt. Rimmer. He saw pieces break off the rear cockpit, and the rear gunner did not return his fire. This gunner had been dropping red Verity lights in an attempt to damage our fighters. This machine had a distinctive blue nose and was leading a formation of four.

P/O Ravenhill has been reported in Hospital, suffering from shock after baling out.

Nine Aircraft returned to Northolt at 1830 hours, and one at 1750 hours.

During these operations the weather was fine, with no cloud but slight haze at 5,000 ft. This combined attack on the enemy mass formation caused the bombers to disperse and turn back so that very few of them arrived over their objectives in London. Large numbers of bombs were jettisoned at the scene of combat.

This is the first time No. 229 Squadron has been in action apart from isolated interception raids since Dunkerque.

Intelligence Officer,  
No. 229 Squadron.

(G.W. Geldart) P/O