



89TH ATTACK SQUADRON
MAY 1944

DESIGNATION SHEET

FIFTH AIR FORCE

V BOMBER COMMAND

310TH BOMBARDMENT WING (L)

3RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

89TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)

MONTHLY UNIT HISTORY

MAY 1944

89TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)

3RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

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SECTION I

CHRONOLOGICAL NARRATIVE

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CHRONOLOGICAL NARRATIVE
COMBAT OPERATIONS
MAY 1944

During the month of May 1944 the activities of the Squadron centered around its move from Nadzab to Hollandia. The ground echelon left Nadzab on 8 May; the air echelon remained behind and flew missions in the Newak area until 26 May. On that date it was moved to Hollandia and for the next few days were called on to fly three missions a day, giving ground support on Siak Island. During the month 178 sorties were flown, 240,080 rounds of 50-calibre ammunition were expended in strafing, and 124.6 tons of bombs were dropped. This is an increase over the month of April of 62,735 rounds of ammunition and of 13.9 tons of bombs. Fourteen type A-20G-20s were assigned to the Squadron on May 1, and twelve of the same type were in commission at the end of the month.

The first mission of the month was flown on 3 May, when 12 A-20s were led over the target at Newak Strip by a B-25 at 7500' altitude. The crews were instructed to drop their bombs when the bombardier of the B-25 released his. This was done, with the result that of the twenty-five 500/ bombs dropped, 18 were seen to explode in the sea. The flight had been led to the target at high speed, and this may have accounted for the fact that Lieutenant heading lost an engine on the return trip and was unable to maintain altitude. He crash-landed in a swamp without serious injury to himself or his gunner. (A full account of the survival of Lt. heading and his gunner is included in the LOCAL INCIDENT of Section II - page .) (1)

On 6 May two A-20s dropped supplies to the crew of the disabled plane. (2)

Nine A-20s took off on 7 May to hit the coastal area from Moem Point to But; however, weather turned the flight back when just north of Dumpu. (3)

Nine planes took off on May 9, and all hit the assigned targets between Nightingale Bay and Moem Point. The mission was successful, but lack of sightings and lack of assessment of damage made it seem unimportant. (4)

On 10 May, 2 planes again flew over the downed crew and dropped food, equipment, and reading materials to the survivors. (5)

Nine planes dropped a total of 306 para-fragmentation bombs on Newak and Boram on 13 May. The target was seen to be well covered by bombs, but as is usual with slow-falling parachute bombs, damage could not be assessed. One crew member was slightly wounded by ack-ack fire. (6)

(1) PFC 124-G, 308 Bomb sg.
(2) PFC 127 , 308 Bomb sg.
(3) PFC 129-F, 308 Bomb sg.

(4) PFC 130-A, 308 Bomb sg.
(5) PFC 131 , 308 Bomb sg.
(6) PFC 134-A, 308 Bomb sg.

Combat Operations, May, cont'd.

Para-fragmentation bombs were dropped again on 14 May, when nine planes attacked a suspected wireless station on Boiken Plantation. Ninety-nine bombs were dropped on the target area, among stores, but damage could not be assessed due to the type of bombs used. Again one crew member was slightly wounded by ack-ack fire. (1)

On 15 May, nine planes dropped a total of eleven 500 # demolition bombs and one hundred and thirty-eight para-fragmentation bombs on Boram Strip. One fire was started, but damage was otherwise unassessed. There was no ack-ack fire in the area. (2)

On the same day one plane dropped supplies to the downcrew, but the parachutes floated away from the camp and landed in the swamps. (3)

Nine A-20s were sent out to bomb and strafe Babiang and Karubian villages on 17 May, giving close support to our ground troops in the vicinity. Forty-six 500# bombs fell on the target, with unobserved results. (4)

On 19 May the coastal area from Boiken Plantation to Karawop Village was bombed and strafed, and the islands of Karasau and Yuo were strafed. Several fires were seen in the vicinity after the attack but otherwise the success of the mission could not be assessed. (5)

Twelve planes were sent out on 21 May on a coastal sweep from Suain to But. Sixty-one 500# bombs were dropped on targets of opportunity. Fires were seen following the attack, but were not claimed by any crew of this Squadron. (6)

Two villages on the Sepik River were attacked by nine planes on 22 May, with many shacks seen destroyed by bombing and strafing. Damage was otherwise unassessed. (7)

Nine planes flew a ground support mission to Suain on 24 May. Fifty 250# and 500# bombs were dropped on a Jap position, but damage was generally unassessed. (8)

On 27 May the Squadron flew three ground support missions at Biak Island, covering the landing there. Sixteen sorties were flown, and with the other squadrons of the Group dawn-to-dark cover was kept over our troops on the beach-head. Fifty-seven 500# demolition bombs were dropped on positions at Biak and at the secondary target on the New Guinea coast. (9)

(1) FFC # 135-F, 308 Bomb Sq.

(2) FFC # 136-F, 308 Bomb Sq.

(3) FFC # 136-F, 308 Bomb Sq.

(4) FFC # 138-A, 308 Bomb Sq.

(5) FFC # 140-C, 308 Bomb Sq.

(6) FFC # 142-D, 308 Bomb Sq.

(7) FFC # 143-F, 308 Bomb Sq.

(8) FFC # 145-C, 308 Bomb Sq.

(9) FFC # 148-E, -1, -2, 310 Bomb Sq.

Combat Operations, May, cont'd.

Two missions, totaling ten sorties, were flown on 28 May. On the first of these two missions, no ammunition was expended, as the ground station asked for reconnaissance only. On the second, twenty 500# bombs were dropped at Sarmi Peninsula, with damage unassessed. (1)

Three missions, totalling fifteen sorties, were flown on 29 May. All were engaged in giving ground support to ground troops on Biak Island, and all were reported as exceptionally effective. During one mission the Squadron leader was called on to spot artillery fire, which he did, using air support photographs he had with him. (2)

Both missions on 30 May were turned back by weather. The second mission requested a target from the groundstation at Wakde, but he had none, and all planes returned to base. (3)

On 31 May eleven planes took off for a raid on Mansiki Drome, with a barge sweep included in the plans. All planes reached the target and dropped ten 100# bombs on the drome and a hundred of them on the barges which were found. (See plate) One large fire was started, three direct hits were scored on barges, and others were seriously damaged. (4)

After a quiet month of 'cocoanut busting' missions, the Mansiki raid was considered a good omen of things to come. For so quiet, so boring even, had 'cocoanut missions' become, that formation flying and formation take-offs were used to vary the monotony. On the Nadzab strip wide enough for only one plane at a time, nine planes took-off in thirty-seven seconds.

(1) FFC / 149-G, -J, 310 Bomb Sq.

(2) FFC / 150-A, -B, 310 Bomb Sq.

(3) FFC # 151-B, -C, 310 Bomb Sq.

(4) FFC / 152-F, 310 Bomb Sq.



C-47 landing at Hollandia



Ransiki

CHRONOLOGICAL NARRATIVE

ADMINISTRATIVE

CHRONOLOGICAL NARRATIVE
ADMINISTRATION
MAY 1944

The 89th Bombardment Squadron (L), was stationed at APO 713 Unit 1 at the first of the month. The Squadron left by boat from Lae New Guinea, for APO 565 on the 8th of May, the Squadron arrived at APO 565 on the 13th of May.

On the 2nd of this month Pvt George J. Clark was assigned to the Medical Section of the Squadron. Staff Sergeants, Costello, Goldstein, Heskew and Reilly, gunners, were transferred to the 91st Photo Recon Wing. T/Sgt Bruestle on DS to APO 922 to attend the Wright Overall School. Furloughs were granted to S/Sgt Cleveland, Sgt Dodson and Sgt Sadler. (1) (2)

Pvt McIlvoy was assigned and transferred to the Squadron from Hq 3rd Bomb Gp, on the 3rd of May.

On the 4th of May 1st Lt. Burke and 1st Lt. Loftus, pilots, were granted leaves for 7 days to Sydney. 2nd Lt. Reading and S/Sgt Cock crashed landed, 15 miles North of Annanberg, New Guinea.

Cpl Cunningham, gunner, on the 5th was granted a furlough to Sydney for 7 days. 2nd Lt. Field on DS to APO 927. 1st Lt. Maddux on DS to APO 923. M/Sgt Mc Connell, T/Sgt Garrett, Sgt Williams, F.W. on DS to APO 713 Unit 2.

On the 7th of May S/Sgt Clements, S/Sgt Johnson, G.E. went to Sydney Australia for 7 days. Sgt Larson, Cpl Boedecker, Cpl Aurdal, Sgt Roszak, Cpl Teats, Pfc Chamberland and Cpl Salmi on DS to X.

On the 9th of May 1st Sgt Hanberry, M/Sgt Cole, T/Sgt Gonska, T/Sgt Crist, T/Sgt LeBlanc, T/Sgt Poppe, S/Sgt Gideon, Sgt Cook, Sgt Giglio, Sgt Reilly, Sgt Reynolds and Cpl Luce were transferred to Rotation Detachment Port Replacement Depot, APO 928, for return to the U.S. Squadron departed this station to Lae. (3)

S/Sgt Cline, S/Sgt Geigus and S/Sgt Matton were granted furloughs to Sydney on the 10th of May.

Capt. Martin, 1st Lt Gormely and 1st Lt Monroe granted 7 day leaves to Sydney Australia on the 11th of May. Appointed 1st Lt's, 2nd Lt. Field and 2nd Lt. Fones. (4)

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- (1) S.O. 119 par, 10 Hq. V. Bomb Comd.
 - (2) S.O. 120 par, 14 Hq. Adv Ech, Fifth Air Force.
 - (3) S.C. 128 par, 1 Hq. V. Bomb Comd.
 - (4) S.C. 131 par, 18 Hq. Fifth Air Force. APO 925

1st Lt. Forman left the 3rd Field Hospital APO 713 Unit 1, on the 18 of May and departed for Sydney Australia on SK leave for 15 days.

On the 21st of May, the Squadron Commander, Capt. Dow, was appointed Major. (1)

Pfc Worshill on 22nd of May was transferred to Officers Candidate School APO 923. (2)

On the 23rd of May while 2nd Lt. Fowler was on DS he was appointed 1st Lt. (3)

Pfc Troupis on the 26th of May went to V Bomber Command on DS.

On the 27th of May after being in the jungle for nearly a month 2nd Lt. Reading and S/Sgt Cock returned to the Squadron from Annenberg New Guinea and were sent to Gosap Hospital, New Guinea.

30th of May the following named men were assigned to the Squadron, T/Sgt Pack, Pvt Wilson, Pvt Cooper and Pvt Marchant. (4)

The personnel strength during the month of May:

Officers.

	<u>Flying</u>	<u>Ground</u>
(a) At beginning of period	29	14
(b) Net increase during period		
(c) Net decrease during period		1
(d) At end of period	29	13

Enlisted Men.

(a) At beginning of period	38	231
(b) Net increase during period		
(c) Net decrease during period		12
(d) At end of period	38	219

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- (1) S.O. 129 Hq, Fifth Air Force, APO 925.
 - (2) S.O. 136 Fifth Air Force.
 - (3) S.O. 132 par, 2 Hq, USAFFE.
 - (4) S.O. 113 par, 12 Hq, 91st Repl Battalion.

SECTION II

LOCAL INTEREST

LOCAL INTEREST

On 6 May, Lieutenant Julius J. Dinger, the Squadron Ordnance Officer, came to Hollandia on the advance echelon. While he awaited the arrival of the ground echelon, he joined with infantry parties patrolling the vicinity of Hollandia. One day, when he was out by himself south of Lake Sentani, he bagged himself a Jap--the first to be shot by a ground officer of the Squadron. The corpse revealed that the dead soldier had been a big man, apparently wealthy but ill-fed. He carried no identification, but the flag he carried showed that he had fought in Korea and in many other theatres.

The ground echelon sailed on LST # 168 on 8 May. The voyage to Hollandia was uneventful and pleasant. The food was good, and on 12 May, when the LST shoved her nose up on Pie Beach, it was only because of curiosity that the men were glad to get ashore. Four days inactivity was more than made up that night, however, as enemy planes dropped bombs which kept the Squadron quite awake. The following days saw the Squadron move to a pleasant, well-drained camp site northeast of Hollandia drome, and work was started on a permanent camp. Without planes to maintain, there was little to be done after the camp was set up, and the area where Japs were known to be was cautiously explored by both officers and men. Many souvenirs and many tall tales resulted from these expeditions.

Meanwhile, at Madzab, the Squadron had a problem. The problem was the rescue of Lieutenant Thomas J. Reading and Staff Sergeant Burke L. Cock, whose A-20 had been forced down in a swamp 15 miles northwest of Annenberg. Both men had been sighted at a deserted native village near the plane, and supplies were dropped to them. However, it took 23 days to effect the rescue. For tools and instructions had to be dropped, I-30s had to be borrowed for dropping belly tanks and strafing in order to burn off the chosen cub-strip site, and the ground levelled. Natives were used when available, but absenteeism took its toll here as in the States. It was on May 3 that the crew had landed, and it was not until 20 May that the cub could land. Even then, it nosed up and broke its propeller. A new prop was dropped from a rescue plane, but this too was broken when the cub attempted to take-off. A prop was again dropped, and on 26 May the pilot of the cub, Staff Sergeant William Adair, took-off with Sergeant Cock and flew him to Fata, from where he was ferried to the hospital at Gusap. The same day the cub pilot returned and evacuated Lt. Reading, who was flown to the hospital at Gusap. Both of the survivors of the crash were in the hospital until 1 June, when they returned to their unit at Hollandia. Much credit for their rescue goes to Captain Vernon L. Head, Army Air Corps, and to Captain Keith E. Nettlet, A.I.F., for their successful planning of the rescue, and to Sergeant Adair for his skillful flying in completing the mission for which he volunteered.

**AWARDS AND
DECORATIONS**

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

During the Month of May the 89th Bombardment Squadron (L) learned that it was included in the Presidential citation of 6 May, 1943, for its part in the Papuan Campaign. This citation brought with it for each member of the organization the right to wear on the right breast the gilt-framed blue ribbon awarded for efficient service during combat. (1)

The first individual awards of the month were made on 5 May, when the Purple Heart was awarded to Staff Sergeant Adolphus T. Clements and Corporal Mack Cunningham, for wounds received when Major Dow's plane crash-landed after the Boram raid on 11 April. On the same date Technical Sergeant John Klatte was awarded the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for 100 combat hours. (2)(3)

Captain James L. Polse was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross on 8 May, for bringing home his plane after most of the controls had been shot away by the intense ack-ack fire received over Boram Drome on 11 March. (4)

Lieutenant John Soloc was awarded the Silver Star on 13 May, for making his attack on a Jap convoy after one engine had been shot out during his approach. (5)

On 17 May Major Robert M. Dow, Jr., Captain Polse, Captain Walter L. Heyer, and Lieutenant Albert G. Burke, Jr., all were awarded Air Medals for 100 hours of combat flying. (6) (7)

The following day Lieutenant Wix Rutland received the Air Medal for 100 hours of Combat flying. (8)

Lieutenant George L. Akers received his Air Medal for 100 combat hours flying on 22 May. (9)

Major Dow received the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Distinguished Flying Cross on 27 May. The Cluster was awarded to Major Dow for his leadership during the raid on 14 February on Dagua. (10)

On 29 May Lieutenant Rade Vukelic received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions during the Boram raid of 12 March. On this occasion Lt. Vukelic's windshield was smashed by a 20 mm. shell, after which he went in and dropped his bombs directly on the ack-ack position. (11)

Lieutenant Soloc was awarded the Air Medal for 100 combat hours on 30 May. (12)

(1) Sec IV, AD GC 21.
(2) GC 19, Hq 5 AF.
(3) GC 275, Hq 5 AF.
(4) GC 283, Hq 5 AF.
(5) GC 296, Hq 5 AF.
(6) GC 310, Hq 5 AF.

(7) GC 311, Hq 5 AF.
(8) GC 315, Hq 5 AF.
(9) GC 325, Hq 5 AF.
(10) GC 335, Hq 5 AF.
(11) GC 337, Hq 5 AF.
(12) GC 340, Hq 5 AF.

SECTION III

APPENDIX

89TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
3RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)
A. P. O. # 565

16 August, 1944.

SUBJECT: Operations Report.

TO : Historical Officer, 89th Bombardment Squadron (L).

1. The following information is hereby submitted for the Squadron History for the month of May, 1944:

a. Strength, airplanes.

- (1) At beginning of period: 14 - A-20-G's.
- (2) Net increase during period: None.
- (3) No. lost through combat: None.
- (4) No. lost on ground through enemy action: None.
- (5) No. lost through transfer: 2 - A-20-G's.
- (6) At end of period: 14.

b. The Squadron flew 172 combat sorties during the month of May, 1944.

c. The Squadron flew 711:15 combat hours during the month of May, 1944.

For the Squadron Commander:

Mason A. Copeland

MASON A. COPELAND,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Adjutant.