

Contemporary Accounts

11 August 1940 - 11.55 -12.15 hrs - Combat D - over the Thames Estuary

17 SQUADRON INTELLIGENCE REPORT

At 11.50 hours on 11.8.40 'A' Flight of 17 Squadron took off from forward base to patrol a southbound convoy which was about 10 miles off Orfordness. On arrival over the convoy at approximately 11.55 hours, F/Lt Harper the leader of Red Section sighted about twenty enemy aircraft (Me110 'Jaguar' and Me109) dive bombing the north bound convoy, and Red 1 immediately led the flight to the scene of activity. Yellow Section breaking away to chase six Me110 Jaguars which were returning eastwards. Red Section attacked as Me109s were completing their bombing and gave chase to one of them. Red 1 and Red 3 (P/O L W Stevens) overhauled the enemy aircraft and Red 1 got in two bursts of approximately two seconds each, the second of which appeared to be effective, but enemy aircraft disappeared into a small patch of cloud and though Red 1 searched the vicinity, was not seen to emerge again. It is thought that the enemy aircraft is probably a casualty...

...When Yellow Section broke away from Red Section, Yellow 1 (P/O K Manger, DFC) was seen by Yellow 2 and 3 to chase one of the six Me110 Jaguars, but he disappeared into cloud, and has not been seen again. Yellow 2 (P/O Pittman) delivered a stern quarter attack on another Me110 Jaguar which had broken away from the formation towards him. Sgt Griffiths (Yellow 3) followed with a head-on attack, and black smoke was seen to pour from the starboard engine. Yellow 2 again attacked with a stern quarter, and Yellow 3 followed with a quarter attack. A white smoke trail appeared from the port engine and the e/a dived towards the sea in a turn. As it turned, Yellow 2 got in a full deflection shot, and e/a ran through his fire. E/A was seen out of control at 150 feet when attack was broken off and when Red 3 levelled out, it had disappeared. Yellow 3 of 85 Squadron reports having seen an e/a crash into the sea after being attacked by two Hurricanes at approximately the same time and position, and one confirmed enemy casualty is claimed by Yellow 2 and 3. There was not return enemy fire, and neither Hurricane was damaged.

11 AUGUST (EAST)

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COMBAT REPORT:

P/O L W Stevens – Red 3, A Flt, 17 Squadron

At approximately 11.55 I was No. 3 in Red Section when the section sighted e/a attacking convoy. I followed Red 1 when he attacked an Me109 but did not see it crash. I then broke away to attack an Me Jaguar, which had turned toward me. I gave it a 5 second burst in a head-on-attack closing in to about 50 yards. Two other Hurricanes were also attacking it. I then made a quarter attack on the same a/c and saw thick white fumes pouring from the port engine. The e/a then lost height to about 10 feet and I then delivered a beam attack. As I broke away I saw a large splash and when I had turned to look the e/a had disappeared. In my opinion it must have gone into the sea, as otherwise it must have been visible. I also gave a short burst at a Do215 (?) without obvious effect. During this combat I saw two Hurricanes attacking another Me Jaguar out of which thick black smoke was pouring. They were about 1,500 feet, above me at about 2,500 feet.

Below: Pilot Officer Leonard Stevens (right) with LAC Jacquest and LAC McEvoy the groundcrew who looked after N2359 YB-J. Stevens regularly flew this Hurricane during July and August 1940 but during this combat he was flying P3892.

