

U. S. S. PHILADELPHIA (CL41) Thursday

Date Sept. 9, 1943.

8 to 12:  
(Cont'd).
  
 R.L. CATON  
 Lieut., U.S.N.R.


12 to 16:

As before. Position: Lat: 40°-23'-00" N, Long: 14°-46'-00" E. Steaming as before on various courses at various speeds in Fire Support area inside mine field off Salerno, ITALY. 1205 Commenced firing with main battery at coordinates 890-005. 1217 Ceased firing. 1240 Observed shell bursts on water bearing 165°(T), 5 miles, and several other shell bursts on landingbeaches. 1242 Plane reported that batteries firing at AMs and SCs are at coordinates 885-075. 1245 Commenced firing main battery at coordinates 885-075. 1258 Ceased firing. 1305 Commenced firing at target 893-988. 1306 Changed course to 020°(T). 1319 Ceased firing. 1338 Recovered two planes, SAVANNAH planes taking over spotting and observation duties. 1424 Launched plane 8-CS-4, pilot Lieut.(jg) Lawry, passenger Schaffer ARM2c, as relief for the two SAVANNAH planes. 1555 Commenced firing main battery at a group of tanks reported to be at coordinates 810-088. Plane No. 5 spotting.

  
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16 to 20:


As before. 1610 Target consisted of approximately 20 tanks. Plane requested rapid continuous fire for one minute. 1620 Ceased firing main battery at the tanks. 1640 Resumed firing at tanks, at coordinates 830-105. 1645 Checked fire, changed course to 130°(T). 1650 Four more tanks coming down the road to join the original group. 1652 SAVANNAH pilot identified tanks as enemy at new coordinates 790-110. 1655 The spotting plane pilot reported that there are 35 vehicles behind the tanks and they are sending troops into the woods. There is no Shore Fire Control Party in the vicinity. 1658 Changed course to 155°(T). 1659 Commenced firing main battery on target 790-110. 1706 Explosion observed in water near H.M.S. ABERCROMBIE, who reported striking a mine. 1708 Checked fire; unidentified troops reported moving into target area. 1716 Changed course to 020°(T). 1725 Resumed fire on advice from spotting planes that troops in target area made no identification signal and vehicles had no friendly markings. 1731 Rapid continuous fire for one minute. 1734 Ceased firing main battery, ordered spotting plane to return to the ship. 1733 Sighted ME-110s, ahead 10 knots saw Spitfires dogfighting with ME-110s. Ahead 20 knots; set condition "ABLE". 1735 Enemy planes overhead; commenced evasive maneuvers, opened fire on hostile aircraft with 40MM. 1737 Friendly fighters sighted overhead; changed speed to 3½ knots, changed course to 155°(T). 1745 Recovered plane 8-CS-3. 1755 Secured from material condition "ABLE" set "BAKER" plus. 1813 Changed course to 335°(T). 1823 Catapulted plane 8-CS-4, pilot Lieut.(jg) Fierstein, passenger Ryan ARM3c. 1835 Changed course to 105°(T). 1853 Commenced firing at tanks on coordinates 794-104. 1858 Rapid fire for one minute. Plane then reported that the target is still intact. 1904 Opened fire with main battery, rapid fire for one minute. 1907 Plane reported that the target had been hit and he could see no reason for continuing firing. Ceased firing. 1914 Changed course to 335°(T). 1923 Recovered plane 8-CS-4. 1950 Changed course to 155°(T).

  
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20 to 24:

As before. Patrolling off Salerno, ITALY. Position: Lat: 40°-26'-00" N, Long: 14°-51'-00" E. 2005 Secured from General Quarters; set condition II Pert Watch. 2020 "RED" alert - two large groups of enemy planes approaching from the North and East. Set condition "ABLE". 2044 "RED" alert now "YELLOW"; modified condition "ABLE" for ventilation. 2045 Changed course to 155°(T), speed 3½ knots. 2055 Set condition "BAKER" plus. Went into regular condition II, pert watch. 2130 Hostile aircraft approaching, set condition "ABLE". 2132 Saw what appeared to be a small vessel burning in the southeastern part of the transport area.

 Approved:   
 PAUL HENDREN  
 Captain, U.S. Navy,  
 Commanding.

 Examined:   
 C.G. GESEN,  
 Comdr., DEV-G, U.S.N.R.  
 Navigator.

U. S. N., Navigator.