

U. S. S. PHILADELPHIA (CL41) Thursday

Date Sept. 16, 1943.

20 to 24:

As before. 2000 Position: Lat: 40°-30'-00" N, Long: 14°-50'-00" E. 2102 Commenced firing 5"/25 battery to starboard on coordinates 837-198, for SFCP #1. 2105 "RED" alert; sounded General Quarters. 2109 Fighters picked up one hostile plane 10 miles to the east of Salerno. 2115 Set modified condition "ABLE" for ventilation. 2125 "YELLOW" alert; set "BAKER" plus. 2126 Changed speed to 3.5 knots. 2128 Ceased firing on targets at coordinates 837-198 having expended 180 rounds 5"/25. 2130 Secured from General Quarters; set condition III on all stations except gunnery stations. 2135 Stopped engines; "RED" alert, set condition "ABLE". 2145 Set modified condition "ABLE". 2153 "YELLOW" alert; Secured from General Quarters; set condition II on all Gunnery stations, and condition III on all other stations. 2200 Changed speed to 5 knots. 2220 Observed flare bearing 200°(T). 2222 Radar plot reported unidentified planes 272°(T), 2 miles. 2223 "RED" alert; sounded General Quarters, commenced evasive maneuvers at 15 and 20 knots. 2225 Control requested permission to open up on planes coming in from starboard within 6,000 yards range. Permission granted. A.A. battery commenced firing at enemy planes. Flares observed from beam to beam, bomb bursts observed, one on port beam, one on starboard beam, and one 500 yards aft in wake of ship. 2226 Changed speed to 15 knots, 20° right rudder. 2227 20° left rudder. Planes reported closing in from the north. 2228 Very large bomb dropped in water to starboard, bearing 080°(R), distance 1,500 yards. Coming right to 140°(T). 2229 Ahead 20 knots. Flares dropped bearing 190°(R) and 210°(R). Hostile planes reported by Radar plot 246°(T), 6 miles, closing. 2230 Opened fire on planes coming in. 20° right rudder. 2233 20° left rudder. Ceased firing. Flares dropped to port bearing 295°(R). 2234 Radar plot picked up plane bearing 237°(T), 0.5 miles. Two more flares off starboard quarter. 2235 Radar plot reported planes 337°(T), 8 miles. 2236 When ship's head was 340°(T), 25° left rudder, Radar plot reported planes bearing 317°(T), 3.5 miles, 5 flares dropped bearing 350°(R). 2237 Radar plot reported planes closing fast from 350°(T), 5 miles. 2238 Fighters reported 12 hostile planes entering area below Salerno. 2240 Opened up with all A.A. batteries to starboard. Fired constantly and barrage put up was of such intensity that planes did not come in too close and were forced to turn away. Fired for 35 seconds. 2241 25° right rudder. Very large group reported by fighters to be coming in. Opened fire to port. 2242 Bomb dropped 70 yards off port quarter, another landed 500 yards in wake of ship. 2243 U.S.S. ANCON reported "RED" alert. Captain told Control to use MK 32 fuzes to seaward. 2244 Radar plot reported planes going to the south at 190°(T), 5 miles. 2245 Opened up to port, then to starboard. Ceased firing. Saw plane burning off port quarter. Another seen to be burning but only the first one was seen to crash into the sea. 2246 Radar plot reported planes 270°(T), 25 miles. 2247 Radar plot reported planes 270°(T), 5.5 miles. Opened fire on planes coming in. Fired for 25 seconds. 25° left rudder. 2248 Radar plot reported planes closing from 160°(T), 3 to 4 miles. Also reported another large group closing from 304°(T), 8 miles. After this the attacking planes went out to about 5 to 8 miles and at 2252 things seemed to have quieted down considerably. 2255 SC Radar went out of commission and was again placed in commission at 2305. 2300 Changed speed to 5 knots. 2305 Steadied on course 340°(T), secured from condition "ABLE" set "BAKER" plus. 2309 Very heavy A.A. fire from the southern transport area in the vicinity of AGROPOLI. 2315 Secured from General Quarters; set condition II on all Gunnery stations, condition III Surface on all stations. Changed course to 100°(T). 2345 Changed course to 335°(T). 2355 Changed speed to 3.5 knots. The heavy and consistent barrages put up by this ship which was firing alone and off to one side kept all attacking planes high and prevented them from closing in for accurate bombing. At time of these attacks, this vessel was in between the northern and southern limits of the Avalanche area. A heavy mist or fog commenced to roll in at about 2100. However, the fog did not obscure the beach or decrease ceiling visibility which was unlimited during the entire attack. The moon was full, first phase.

NOTE: The following ammunition was received aboard this date: 390 H.C. projectiles 6"/47 received from LCM 718. 393 rounds 6" Service powder and 768 H.C. projectiles from U.S.S. ANCON via LCT 33. Note: The following ammunition was expended this date: 106 rds. 6" H.C.; 86 rds. 5"/25; 667 rds. 40MM; 1494 rds. 20MM.

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