

# STICHTING WINGS TO VICTORY

AIRWAR MUSEUM / AIRMEN MEMORIAL ZEELAND



**Crash No 336**

**Hurricane KZ620**

**07-10-1943**

**Noordzee**



## 07 oktober 1943

Om 07.53 uur stegen acht met SAP60 lbs raketten bewapende Hurricanes van No.137 squadron op om ter hoogte van de Zeeuwse kust een anti-shipping uit te voeren. De toestellen werden geëscorteerd door zeven Typhoon F's van No.198 squadron. Tussen 07.37 en 07.47 uur werden in en om de Oosterschelde diverse aanvallen uitgevoerd op een motorschip en een viskotter (Arm 11).

Beiden werden tot zinken gebracht; vier Nederlandse opvarenden kwamen om het leven. Tijdens de terugvlucht kwam het tot een treffen tussen de Typhoon F's en twee Fw 190's van I./JG 26, die van een zeeverkenning terugkeerden. Sqn.Ldr. Bryan en Flt.Lt. Fittall schoten hierbij de Fw 190A-4 (Wnr. 0617) van eerdergenoemd Jagdgeschwader neer (waarna) het toestel neerstortte in een veld ten zuidwesten van Tielt. Lt Johannes Matthiesen slaagde er nog wel in om zijn machine te verlaten maar had niet meer voldoende hoogte om zijn parachute te kunnen laten ontplooiën zodat hij alsnog om het leven kwam!

Beide Typhoon's vershoten vervolgens hun resterende munitie op Belgische spoorwegdoelen waarna naar Engeland werd terug gekeerd.

### War Diary No. 137 squadron

--/-- Time up/ down 06.50 and 08.30 hours

Eight Hurricanes, Red Section being Flt.Lt. I.J.Davies, Flt.Sgt.J.A.D.Shemeld, Plt.Off. A.G.Brunet and Sgt. J. Ashworth, and Blue Section Plt.Off. J.H.Ashton, Plt.Off. R.A.Johnstone and Flt.Sgt. R.A. Nickless, took off from Manston at 06.50 hours to rendez-vous with Typhoon's of No. 198 squadron and attack any shipping which might be found between Walcheren and Noord-Beveland Islands. The Hurricanes, flying at sealevel, made landfall at the southwest corner of **Schouwen** Island, but the Typhoon's did not arrive as they were chasing three Fw 190's.

As the cloud base was down to 1200 feet, Flt.Lt. I.J.Davies decided to continue.

As the formation was turning to the right at sea level, Flg.Off. B.Soulsby was seen to straighten out and then "mush" into the sea, debris flying up and when Flt.Sgt.

R.A.Nickless flew back over the spot no sign of anything was seen on the water.

Red Section found a motorcoaster of about 500 tons and a large sailing barge, which were attacked with rockets and seen to disintegrate, whilst Blue Section attacked lockgates at **Colijnsplaat**. Owing to adjacent high buildings, difficulty was found in making the attack and all the R.P's were seen to overshoot and explode in the sea.

Intense accurate light Flak was experienced and also some heavy Flak and two aircraft received superficial damage.

### War Diary No. 198 squadron

--/-- A day to be remembered! The squadron destroyed its first German aircraft and, as a chance, we were trying out a combined operation with the Hurricanes of No.137 squadron. Owing to the great difference in speed the Hurricanes went off first and we set off later at --??—with the idea of making rendez-vous off the Dutch Islands. Course was set for **Domburg** but after 16 minutes, when off **Blankenberge** at zero feet, Red 1 sighted three Fw 190's approaching at zero height, 70 degrees astern and at about one mile distance. Realizing that with the present prevalent weather condition – 10/10 cloud at 500 feet – the Hurricanes could depend upon to take good care of

themselves, Red 1 ordered the squadron to close and attack! The Fw 190's seemed to sight our aircraft at the same instant for two turned starboard and made for the coast while the squadron turned to pursue.

The other "Wolf" broke away in the opposite direction and took the opportunity of making an attack on the three rearmost aircraft of our formation who broke away on seeing his tracer. Red 2 zooming into cloud and Blue 2 and Yellow 3 turning sharply into the attack, when Yellow 3 had almost got around to the head-on position, the 190 too, pulled up into cloud and was not seen again.

Meanwhile, Red 1, Blue 1 and Yellow 1 and 2 were streaming across the coast at **Blankenberge** at zero feet in hot pursuit so Yellow 3 joined in the chase.

Blue 2 failed to regain contact so proceeded to carry out an independent "Rhubarb" attacking and seeing many strikes on a loco drawing a mineral train between **Aalter** and **Thielt** before finally recrossing the coast at Furnes and making his own way home.

By the time Red 2 came down out of cloud again no one was in sight so he too returned home. The chase however was still on and continued flat out with all at tree top height to 12 miles southeast of Thielt, where one Fw 190, which had been repeatedly attacked by Sqn.Ldr.Ryan and Flt.Lt. Fittall, dived into a field, crashed and exploded, smattering burning wreckage over a wide area.

Red 1 then collected all available aircraft and flew seawards on a reciprocal Blue 1 and Yellow 3 attacking and stopping a goods train obtaining many strikes on cab and fire box and causing driver to bale out. They recrossed coast at Blankenberge at zero feet (moderate and inaccurate LAA) and set course for base, landing at 08.09 hours.

Yellow 1 however, who was considerably ahead of formation when "kill" was made and who had been hot on the tail of the other Fw 190 from the outset, received permission to continue the chase which he did as far as --??—when his ammo ran out and after which he returned to base refuelling at Friston en route.

Unfortunately, on the same operation, one of 137's pilots crashed into the sea on what was otherwise a very successful attack on shipping off the Dutch Islands.

Subsequently we made an ASR search of the area 5 – 7 miles off **Domburg** as a result of a report by No.137 squadron that they had seen a dinghy, but we met with no success.

Flakkommandeur Vlissingen

**0740 Flakalarm! Fluko Gent meldet mehrere feindliche Ziele, Entfernung 40 km. Es handelt sich um 7-8 Typhoon, die aus Richtung 2 kommend im Tiefflug einen holländischen Lastkahn mit Bomben und Bordwaffen angreifen, sodass das Boot in Brand gerät.**

Zwei der angreifenden Maschinen fliegen sofort in Richtung 3 aus, während die übrigen 5 Maschinen in Richtung 4 abdrehen und erneut aus Richtung 5 einen holländischen Fischkotter mit Bordwaffen angreifen. **Die Maschinen werden von Stand Veere 3,7 cm – 6./810 – mit 23 Schuß, von den 2 cm Waffen der 4./202 mit 75 Schuß und von der 12./AR 19(L) mit 310 Schuß 2 cm unter Feuer genommen**, worauf sie nach Richtung 12 abfliegen. Bei guter Trefferlage kann doch wegen des diesigen Wetters ein weiterer Erfolg nicht beobachtet werden.

0759 Kriegswache Ruhe! Die Ziele sind in Richtung 12 abgeflogen.

Het verloren gaan van een Hurricane boven het Noordzeegebied.

- Hurricane Mk IV (KZ620) van No.137 squadron – om 06.37 uur opgestegen van Manston Kent -keerde niet op haar basis terug. Aangenomen moet worden dat het

hevige afweervuur het toestel zodanig moet hebben getroffen dat het korte tijd later in de Noordzee stortte.

Flg.Off. Bernard Soulsby

mia

Runnymede Memorial Panel 129