

to be a Blitzbomber, to wipe the invasion beaches of Normandy free of enemy occupation, and so more time was lost in the perfection of a pure fighter plane.

While planning this issue of the *Flyer* I found the intelligence reports describing the combats between our fighter pilots and the German Me-262 that appear on the next pages. To my surprise the combats were not always one sided with the victories going totally to the fastest aircraft. This is not to forget that even with all its mechanical problems the Me-262 was a formidable adversary that took its toll of Allied bombers and fighters. To read more about jet vs piston combats, read the book, 'The Messerschmitt Combat Diary, Me-262' by John Forman and S E Harvey.'

The following narratives of P-51 and P-47 combats with Me-262's have been selected from U.S. 8th Air Force Combat Reports as being of general interest. Some previous encounters were reported in earlier issues.

374th Fighter Squadron

Combat on November 6th, 1944, in the Bassum Area, with 8/10 clouds, a general overcast with tops at 25,000 ft. I was leading Yellow Flight at 20,000 ft 1100 hours, approximately. 5 miles south of Bremen. I spotted 2 Me-262s to the left and slightly above our bombers. They made a pass at our bombers at 7 o'clock, proceeding in a long shallow dive to the right. They rapidly pulled away from us. Group commander called us back into formation.

"I then proceeded back to 10,000 ft. when I spotted 2 more Me-262s. These jets were not attacking our bombers, but proceeded at about 6,000 ft. along the bomber track., four P-51s stayed on their tail. The jets made a long diving turn to the left back into Germany and we were able to gain on them. They were drawing away from us in level flight when they started turning to the left. The P-51 to my left closed in and started firing. The Me-262 immediately reversed direction and pulled over in front of me. I fired one burst at 30 degree deflection and observed no hits, but it was then that he must have thrown on his jet power.

"I was turning inside of him and with my next two bursts I observed strikes along the fuselage and canopy, and the enemy aircraft began smoking. He went into a spiral to the right at approximately 2,000 ft. and ended up going straight down obscured in his own smoke and flames. The tactics used in destroying this Me-262 proved very effective. We bracketed him so that he was apparently unable to return to his base. I claim this Me-262 destroyed."

Observation:

The Me-262 can be out turned at any speed. The P-51 can out climb Me-262 at low altitude. The Me-262 can out dive a P-51. The Me-262 can out climb most any piston powered airplane at high altitude. The Me-262 can fly good formation.

486th Fighter Squadron

Combat in the Enchede-Lignin area on November 1, 1944 8/10 cloud tops at 6000 ft and excellent visibility. I was flying number four position in Red Flight. We first saw this Me-262 at our altitude which was 31,000 ft. He made a pass on the flight in front of us and started a diving turn to the right. At about 12,000 or 13,000 ft. Red flight was closing in on him. I had more speed than my element leader as I was passing him. I called on the R/T (radio transmitter) and told him I was going after the Jerry.

"Just about that time the Me-262 made a turn into me. I turned with him and it put me right on his tail. I was using the K-14 sight and first opened fire at approximately 200 yards, saw hits in the tail section, closed up to about 150 yards and shot out his right jet as he was climbing to leave me behind. After I shot his right jet out the Me-262 went into a flat spin to the right, the pilot bailed out a few seconds later.

While the empty plane was spinning down about 16 plus P-51s and P-47s were taking shots of it. The Me-262 did not catch fire. The pilot bailed out at about 19,000 ft. My flight leader had been able to close within firing range of the enemy aircraft when he made the 180 degree turn. He fired several short bursts and I observed strikes in the tail section. Then the enemy pulled up to a climb, the captain followed him, but I was in a better position to close to a shorter range."

77th Fighter Squadron

Combat on November 1, 1944 over Goor, Holland with conditions of solid overcast at 10,000 ft I was flying Yellow 3 and while we were escorting bombers in the vicinity of Gutersloh, Germany we investigated a contrail above at about 1350 but we never did catch up with it.

At 1414 after we had returned to the bombers an Me-262 bounced Yellow Flight right from above and behind while we were at 31,000 feet. Yellow Flight turned to the left in pursuit as this jet aircraft went down. At 10,000 feet the jet pulled up to the right and toward bombers and as Yellow Flight followed, the jet went to left and down full out toward Zuider Zee right above cloud level at approximately 10,000 feet. P-47's were in pursuit at this time too.

"The Jet started wide turn to right at about 10,000 feet to 14,000 feet and I kept cutting inside. I closed steadily pulling over 70 inches. I opened fire at approximately 300 to 400 yards at 60 degrees deflection pulling on through to zero degrees and 100 yards. I fired several long bursts and observed strikes on left wing and left side of fuselage which started to smoke. The Jet continued on straight course for approximately 30 seconds then pulled up to left in almost a straight climb, and pilot bailed out. My flight leader took pictures of the pilot in his chute.

In my supporting Statement 1 was flying Yellow 2. I saw Yellow 3 make his attack on a Me-262s. He closed in to about 400 yards in a turn and started firing. I observed strikes all over the left wing and fuselage. The Me-262 straightened out for a few seconds, then pulled up into a very sharp climbing turn, and the pilot bailed out. The Me-262 started to spin, and pieces began to break off."

On November 2nd, an escorted bomber formation of the U.S. Eighth Air Force encountered about 19 Me-163s and Me-262s. The Me-163s were observed to have both square and rounded wing