



# Lancer News



6 8 T H L I G H T N I N G L A N C E R S

## NORMANDY SUMMER

By Maj "68Cactus"  
Bomber Flight CO

I got my first real airplane (A20-G), received it from maintenance, flew it til my fingers bled, was the summer of '44! What a great time to be in England and a part of the Allied force! As expected of England's weather, it is foul! Rumor has it that the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force has huge plans for everyone in the next three weeks. The 68<sup>th</sup> Intelligence officer has informed BG 68Falcon that air bombardment plans are calling for the shifting of Allied strategic bombing efforts from targets in Germany to the French rail system, airfields, and then to the Atlantic Wall defenses. The Chief Meteorologist has predicted a slight improvement for our launch early in the morning. The A20-G was the primary aircraft assigned for this mission with a P-51D Photo Recon aircraft. The 68th departed from Airfield 9 with BG 68Falcon, Lt Col 68Boxcar, Majors 68Cactus, 68Birt, 68Bolow, 68Donkey, 68Slick, 68JR, Capt 68Hobo, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt's 68RacrX, 68Horses, and Sgt Maj 68Hall. Due to leave of absences of the 68<sup>th</sup>, fellow pilots joined the squadron for the attack; Iijac, Cody, & Asbatt. Major 68Donkey drew the short straw and was assigned the photo recon mission.

It was announced that we were to launch South East and fly the route to the target Nap of the Earth (NOE), which meant flying approximately 25ft above the English Channel. It wasn't too bad, only 80 miles over swells 15 - 20ft! The 68<sup>th</sup> were joined in flight by Qbert and his bomber squadron flying Mossies. The flight took a direct heading to the IP at 11.8.9 then a Southwesterly heading to the target airfield

(codename A38). After going "feet dry" and in sight of our intended target we 'popped' to our assigned 5K altitude for the bomb run. Qbert (who was late for the mission brief) called out with some concern and questioned if our assigned target was indeed A38. BG 68Falcon confirmed that the 68<sup>th</sup>'s target is A38, realizing his error Qbert and the other Mossies headed for their target 20 miles away. During the deliberation of assignments, urgent calls over the radio were heard "190's"!! The high fighter cover did a good job defending the bomber formations but there were 190's low over the target.

The German Air Force was a little too late to prevent the attack force from its assigned duty. Although hampered by the Germans, the 68th's A20-G's dealt a death blow to A38 and LEVELED IT! Major 68Cactus dropped long on a hangar and an Fw-190 managed to shoot out his top turret and blew off his right wing flaps. Before the Fw-190 was able to finish Maj 68Cactus off, the Fw-190 was driven off by a friendly fighter. Maj 68Cactus dropped to the deck with WEP on, trying to blend in with the terrain and get as fast and far away from the havoc and destruction the 68<sup>th</sup> left behind.

Sgt Maj 68Hall made an extraordinary attack run; on his initial pass he rolled his A20 over and took aim at a field target, dropped four of his eight 500lb bombs. Maintaining his 'E', he performed a loop to sight the hangar directly below and on the down side of his loop he released his remaining four bombs, destroying the hangar. It was an impressive display of great flying skills.

BG 68Falcon informed 68Donkey that the bombing run was complete and to begin his photo recon run of the

base to document the A-20s complete destruction of the target for HHQ. Maj 68Donkey obtained hits in his fuel tank, ran out of fuel and was unable to complete his mission.

As Maj 68Cactus leveled out at tree top level he witnessed Capt 68Hobo in his chute who managed to bail out of his damaged A20. Not one to leave a wingman behind, Maj 68Cactus immediately tuned to the emergency radio channel and called out Capt 68Hobo's position so that he could be rescued. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt 68RacerX was attempting to egress the target area when a high Fw-190 rolled in on him ending his swift departure. The remaining Fw-190's were wanting revenge so they followed the few A-20s that were heading away from A38. Friendly fighters showed up to attempt to change the minds of the pilots flying the Fw-190s. An Fw-190 took out 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt 68Horses who was behind Maj 68Cactus as they passed over the beach and went "feet wet". Majors 68Cactus and 68Slick formed up and landed at a friendly airfield. Orders from HHQ suggested that the 68<sup>th</sup> attack A41 after re-arming but BG 68Falcon over rode that command stating the 68<sup>th</sup> had taken enough losses for the day and needed time to recuperate.

This story was about FSO flown on 16 Dec 2011. Here are the breakdown of kills:

68RacrX- 1 Kill

# FLASHBACK

## HMS ILLUSTRIOUS BOMBED BY THE LUFTWAFFE

Unknown Reporter  
January 10, 1941

The Luftwaffe announced their arrival in the Mediterranean with a vengeance. The new aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious*, whose planes had so successfully attacked the Italian fleet at Taranto, was the subject of a sustained attack by Ju 87 dive-bombers as it escorted a convoy to Malta.

The main forces of the Mediterranean Fleet, consisting of H.M. Ships *Warspite* and *Valiant* with H.M.S. *Illustrious* and 7 destroyers, were operating in support in the Eastern Basin and covering the passage from Alexandria to Malta of a convoy which was escorted by H.M. Ships *Perth*, *Orion*, *York* and *Ajax*. On the 10th January the Fleet was attacked several times by various types of aircraft.

The first attack was by torpedo bombers on the Battle Fleet, in which torpedoes missed after avoiding action had been taken. The second, which occurred at about 1235, was carried out by 25 or more Ju 87 and 88 dive-bombers which attacked with great determination and skill, thus confirming the arrival in the Mediterranean of units of the German Air Force.

In this attack H.M.S. *Illustrious* was severely damaged as a result of 6-direct bomb hits and several near misses, which caused fires and disabled her steering gear. Her casualties were 83 killed, 60 seriously and 40 slightly wounded, including several officers. H.M.S. *Warspite* also sustained slight damage from a near miss. During this attack one *Fulmar* and one *Swordfish* were shot down, their crews being saved, and two enemy aircraft were shot down by gunfire.

At 1330 an unsuccessful attack was made on *Illustrious* by high level bombers and between 1600 and 1700 a second dive-bombing attack by about 30 aircraft was made on her and the Battle Fleet in which another hit was believed to have been made on *Illustrious*, and H.M.S. *Valiant* had one killed and 3 wounded from near misses.

During this attack *Fulmars* from *Illustrious*, which had refuelled at Malta, shot down 6 or 7 Ju 87 or 88's and damaged several others. Heavy bombs of about 1,000 lb. were used in all these attacks. *Illustrious*, covered by the Battle Fleet, arrived at Malta at about 2100 after a final, but unsuccessful, attack had been made on her by torpedo bombers outside the entrance to Grand Harbour. Eleven of her *Swordfish* and 5 *Fulmars* were destroyed by fire.

Air Mechanic Rayburn was on board HMS *Illustrious* and somehow lived to tell his story:

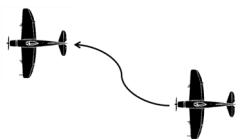
My action station as with all maintenance crews, was in the hanger with the aircraft, which by the way were all heavily armed, and loaded with torpedoes ready for an attack on the Italian Fleet.

*Illustrious* was armed with 16 4.5 dual purpose guns, and 8 6 barrelled 2lb quick firing AA weapons. The ship kept jumping and shaking. Several large bombs hit the shop aft, and the after hanger was on fire. The noise was indescribable. In my baptism of fire, all that sticks in my mind are impressions. I was standing more or less in the centre of the hanger. A chap came down from the flight deck; his rubber suit was full of holes with blood leaking from all of them. I helped carry him down to the casualty station in the washroom flats.

The surgeons were busy. Blood washed from side to side with the sway of the ship. I returned to my action station in the hangar. The ship continued to rock and sway.

I looked up with fear and apprehension. Then there was an almighty flash as a 1,000 lb bomb pierced the 4 inch armoured deck and exploded. I was only aware of a great wind, and bits of aircraft, debris, all blowing out to the forward lift shaft of 300 tons, which was also blown out. There were dead and wounded all around. My overalls were blown off and I had small wounds to the back of my head and shoulder. I was probably 10-15 feet away from the bomb when it exploded. Luck I survived? I prefer the thought of someone looking out for me. The hanger by then was burning all over. The ships commander came and said, 'come on lads close the armoured doors.' The overhead sprays then flooded the hanger.

The ship started to sink by the stern, and everyone had to blow up lifebelts. Then came a spot of humour in all that chaos. Poor old Corporal Gater came through a side door white as a sheet saying 'I wish I hadn't bloody joined.' The battering carried on for six to seven hours. There were many wounded piled up. The aft surgeons station had been destroyed, and the forward station was unable to cope quickly with so many casualties. Captain Boyd finally steered with the engines into Malta. The ship was quiet at last.



# TACTICS TALK



By Lt Col "68Mason"  
Operations Officer

## Introduction Why practice formation flying?

This the most neglected area of training. Everyone wants to begin pulling lots of G and learning 'the real maneuvers'. Formation flying is the basis for everything that follows. Here is a quick explanation of why formation flying is so important.

Aerial combat is about predicting the future of the bandit and maneuvering in reference to that prediction. In order to kill a bandit one must first get in close trail formation on that bandit. If you cannot quickly join in formation on a friend who wants you to join then how can you reasonably expect to form on a bandit that really doesn't want you there. On defense, you want to prevent the bandit from joining on you. A deep instinctive knowledge of how to fly in formation will help you prevent the bandit from joining also.

From the standpoint of wingman tactics, proper formation technique gains additional importance. Every wingman tactic and maneuver starts from a proper formation. Usually combat spread or echelon. Without this proper starting point these maneuvers are less effective. In some cases they become useless or counterproductive. The knowledge a good element leader has regarding solving his wingman's join problem for him aids greatly during the drag and bag. If you know how to best help your wingman join into formation with you, you automatically know how best to drag a bandit for him also.

Formation join technique teaches all of the geometry and prediction skills needed to succeed in air combat without the distraction of bullets flying. You can judge the skill level of your wingman by the level of skill he demonstrates joining formation, maintaining formation and helping you rejoin him. If he is tail end charlie and gets whipped off the formation after two turns he is going to have trouble maintaining SA in the fight and will not be reliable for defensive lookout. If he can do barrel roll joins from 90 degrees

off, you have a skilled wingman with good SA and a good understanding of the geometry of the fight.

It is that simple. Formation Flying and Formation Joins are the fundamentals of EVERYTHING that follows. Aerial combat is, quite simply, applying the primary maneuvers in an effort to join in formation or deny the formation join.

## Tactical Formations

Tactical formations are employed in order to bring multiple aircraft to bear upon the enemy together. Formations are the basis of all wingman and larger engagement tactics. The easiest and most effective formation to employ in the virtual aerial combat arena is the echelon and finger four formations. This is due to the lack of peripheral vision in the online simulation environment. Line abreast formations are historically more effective but more difficult to employ in the virtual world. As a result the echelon formations shown will be the primary formation for most online flying. Combat spread or line abreast formations may be used when entering a known hostile zone or upon contact with the enemy.

## Formation Organization and Common Types

Military units are organized using specific terminology. The precise terminology will depend on the country and branch of service.

For example in the United States Air Force the basic unit is one aircraft (and pilot)  
2 or more aircraft will be grouped into an Element under an Element Leader  
2 or more elements comprise a Flight under a Flight Leader  
2 or more flights comprise a Squadron under a Squadron Commander  
2 or more squadrons comprise a Group under a Group Commander

# AIRCRAFT STUDY OF THE WEEK

## FW 190A-5

### Engine Power

While not quite up to the standards of most MA aircraft, the 190A5 is still very respectable in terms of engine performance. At sea-level the cruise speed is 326mph and WEP can push that up to 339mph, neither of which are stellar numbers. A slight increase in altitude pays some dividends though, at only 6K you have a 355mph cruise with 374mph top speed, both quite respectable. Top speed is at only 21K and only 400mph. Climb rates are quite impressive, 4,000ft/min from low level up to about 5K, slowly decreasing above that but never falling below 3,000ft/min until 18K. Acceleration is good, in the top 1/3 of aircraft at both low and high levels and even then only a second or two off some of the top performers. The 190A5 is fairly well suited to building energy quickly. Fuel duration is a little low, only 26 minutes with full internal fuel, though there is an option for a drop tank that adds another 14 minutes at full throttle for a total of 40minutes. I generally recommend a drop tank if possible even if you decide to take less internal fuel. WEP time is also excellent, which is very important, at over 9 minutes of constant use possible. This tends to allow you to abuse your WEP a bit but still have it when you need it.

### Maneuverability

Maneuverability on the 190A5 is good. It is not a great low speed turner but in every other facet it feels quite light and nimble. It weighs around 8,600 pounds so it's on the side of being a lightweight, though the wingspan is only 34 1/2 ft. This gives it a pretty high wing-loading, meaning that the wings are working a little harder for lift in the turns than some other aircraft. At mid to high speeds the 190 is an excellent turner though, keeping up to almost anything, though as speeds deteriorate it becomes more sluggish. The 190A5 is the best turner of all the 190's at mid-low speeds and can surprise enemies who think you are less manoeuvrable plane in the same fashion as in what happens in the 109 series of aircraft. The 190 has outstanding roll rate and the A5 is no different. High roll rate manoeuvres, like scissors, tend to be very popular and effective. The roll rate also allows for very fast repositioning of the nose for firing opportunities or in the vertical. I think a lot of people don't realize how much of an asset a great roll rate can be both offensively and defensively. One key to manoeuvrability is to stay as light as possible though. In the A5 this is not quite as important as in other 190 models, but it is good practice. One option is, don't take the extra cannons if you know you're a good shot. Load up a drop tank and take somewhat less than full fuel (75% or less if transit not long). You may also consider burning the fuel tanks in an order other than the default, as emptying the AFT tank before the forward seems to better position the center of gravity during manoeuvres. Be careful of the 190's snap-stall too, it can snap-roll on you if you push it to far, although recovery is typically very easy and immediate as soon as you release pressure on the controls. Flap speeds are 180, 160, and 140 IAS, with the last notch of flap being a whole half of the flaps' range.

### Fighting in the Fw 190A-5

The A5 has lost a lot of popularity in the arena because of a couple of additions to the plane set that made it less successful. Speeds in general increased as did planes who could display good roll and acceleration, traits that the 190 used to have mostly to its own. The Fw190D9 was also introduced, giving a late war model that could better compete with the increasing speed and firepower of most of the later warplanes. Still, the Fw190A5 provides a nice plane with good performance against an average opponent and people forget how good it can be when used properly. The A5 is best used in the BnZ'r role which suits almost to perfection. It accelerates well, can claw back energy and altitude quickly, and has a quick roll response to position the nose for firing. The twin cannons are sufficient for knocking down planes in a single pass and allow longer firing times because of the increase in ammunition over most cannon armed planes. Slashing attacks are also fine, although you need to be a little more careful since your top speed is not as high as some of your competition. Most people are used to seeing the 190D9 and not the A5, which usually helps your cause since they both have the same icon in the game. If they feel you are a D9 they are likely to not consider running away as their first manoeuvre and might try and out-turn you. This can be a big mistake that you can exploit since at slow speeds the A5 turns much better than the D9 and that can come as a big asset. Try and use your roll as much as possible though and think about manoeuvres that maximise roll rate use since that is typically your largest advantage. Dive in, line up with roll, snap-shot, and then climb back up on the other side. The 190A5 can strike so quickly in this type of attack that it is difficult to defend against.

\*\*Thanks to Soda's Aircraft Evaluations