

HEADQUARTERS
601ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
APO #464 U. S. ARMY

3 December 1943

SUBJECT: Report of Operations for Period 1 November 1943 to 30 November 1943.

TO : Commanding General, 3rd Infantry Division, APO #3, U. S. Army.

a. The 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion was attached to the 3rd Infantry Division during this period.

November 1st, Reconnaissance Company reached H-067892 on POZA road. Company "B" in support of 7th Infantry, Company "C" guarding Road Blocks west of M. S. ANGELO. November 2nd, Reconnaissance Company reconnoitered for route north to PRESENZANO H-065074, "B" Company in support of 15th Infantry. November 3rd, Battalion moved to PRESENZANO to protect right flank of Division. November 4th, Reconnaissance elements spotted enemy infantry at H-002072 while reconnoitering for possible tank route, and wounded 3 German soldiers. Mud immobilized one platoon of "A" Company's tanks at H-016072. November 5th, "B" Company reported new by-pass for tanks at H-019073. November 6th, "A" and "B" Companies supported Infantry by direct fire on M. LUNGO and M. ROTONDO. November 7th, "A" and "C" Companies moved forward to new positions in support of Infantry. November 8th, "A" and "C" Companies fired 400 rounds direct fire on M. LUNGO and M. ROTONDO. "A" Company shot down one FW 190 Northwest of MIGNANO. November 9th, "A" and "C" Companies supported Infantry advance. November 10th, "A" and "C" Companies moved North of MIGNANO to support Infantry. 2nd Platoon "C" Company fired 344 rounds in 25 minutes on M. LUNGO to support Infantry advance. November 12th, 2 guns of "C" Company attempted unsuccessfully to interdict road running through S. PIETRO INFINE by direct fire from forward position. November 13th, reconnoitered pass East of M. ROTONDO for possible tank route. November 15th, one platoon of "A" Company covered approach from NW between M. LUNGO and M. DIPENSA. November 16th - 18th, Battalion relieved by 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion and moved to rest area vicinity of VISCIANO. November 25th, platoon of "A" Company returned to Battalion after extricating itself from mud West of MIGNANO. Battalion now re-organizing under new T/O and conducting training in compliance with 3rd Infantry Division directives.

b. In the MIGNANO sector, the enemy has been able to make use of excellent OP's to shell our positions. Enemy artillery fire, although intense at times, was not effective when used on M-10 positions except from the morale standpoint. In approaching the PREZENZANO sector the enemy continued to employ mines to good effect. One M-10 hit a mine on November 1st, but the damage was quickly repaired. Mortar and Nebelwerfer fire increased noticeably during the relatively static period.

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c. Since the Battalion received more counter-battery fire during this period than at any other time during the Italian Campaign, observations have been studied and much serious thought given by all ranks to the proper employment of M-10's in this country. It is felt that Commanders of units to which TDs are attached should give the Platoon, Company, or Battalion Commander concerned more latitude in selecting routes and positions and in determining methods of fire. The M-10 destroyer is a relatively new weapon and many Commanders are unfamiliar with its capabilities and limitations. The officers and men of this Battalion have had considerable experience with the weapon during the Italian Campaign and are anxious to utilize this knowledge that they have learned the "hard way". The general practice to date has been for other Commanders not only to tell TDs what to fire on, but how and from where to fire. For example, in the MIGNANO sector, a TD Platoon was given the mission of interdicting a road by direct fire and was ordered by the commander concerned to a position on the forward slope of a hill 3,000 yards from the target. The platoon could not see the target from this position and, if it had been able to employ indirect fire, it would have been observed readily and subjected to intense mortar and artillery fire. Had the Platoon or Company Commander simply been given his mission, he would have elected, in this case, to employ indirect fire from a defiladed position 7000 yards from the target and, in all probability, would have successfully interdicted the road.

d. The battalion is conducting a training schedule and reorganising under the new T/O 18-25 and appropriate T/E's. Recreation trips to NAPLES are being made available to all personnel.

Status of Personnel and Material: Excellent.
 Battalion under new T/O organization lost: 2 officers, 193 M,
 and 53 vehicles of all types.

Walter E. Tardy
 WALTER E. TARDY,
 Major, F.A.,
 Commanding.

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