

# VET

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as once in two months. A file was kept on each enemy port covered. The file contained information about the port and its uses. Each file held as many pictures of the port as we could get so pilots could get as much information as possible about the port before they flew there on a mission.

The camera used produced what intelligence reports referred to as "excellent straight laydown mosaics." Pilots flying over a port would return saying that the port they saw looked exactly as it was represented in photos.

Among the challenges Nielsen and the other pilots dealt with was the "notoriously bad" English weather. Because the enemy had control of the continent, the U.S. had no ground stations there for weather observation. Weather forecasters provided detailed information, but some missions were unsuccessful and operations were hampered due to unexpected weather such as heavy cloud cover. Heavy air traffic was a further concern. Nielsen recalls numerous experiences in dodging enemy bombers.

"We didn't have weapons on our planes and the enemy knew that," he said. "With all the other things we were watching for when we flew, we were always on the lookout for enemy aircraft. Because we weren't carrying bombs, our planes were lighter and could fly faster than enemy bombers. If we did get in a close encounter, we could usually speed up or quickly fly at a higher altitude to avoid them."

Crews waiting for the photographer's return unloaded the plane's cameras and rushed them to the laboratory. Depending on the plane's location on the airfield, it took between three and six minutes from the time propellers stopped turning until the film was in the laboratory. The name and number of the plane along with the type of mission flown was noted on the film's container. Between two and five rolls of film were obtained from every aircraft that flew a mission. If the film was completely used, it would be 150 feet long, and it took about 13 minutes to develop the film. As soon as it was dried, the Intelligence Department was notified and came to inspect the images.

On a normal operation day, the laboratory turned out 15,000 9x9 prints. One of the steps taken to improve photo quality was regrounding the glass filters used on the K-18 cameras. All the photos were taken from well above 27,000 feet and there was only one time when failure of camera equipment resulted in no photos obtained during a mission.

"All the intelligence photos were either of ports, airbases or marshaling yards," Nielsen said. "Intelligence personnel were trying to determine whether certain ships they were interested in were in the port. They were also looking for any important change in the shipping activity in the harbor."

In airbase photos, intelligence officers documented the number and location of aircraft, noting the types of planes on occasion. The concentration of boxcars was the information the photographs provided in regard to marshaling yards.

The German raider ship Togo was one of the ships intelligence officers tracked through the photographs obtained by pilots like Nielsen. During the seven months that the ship's activities were photographed, she was spotted apparently heading for the Atlantic to raid merchant shipping. A few days later, she was found in harbor of Boulogne and was eventually attacked in Dunkirk, where it was believed she sustained at least some damage. After the attack, Togo returned to Germany where she was camouflaged while apparent repairs and/or conversion was made.

"Our average mission was two-and-a-quarter to two-and-a-half hours," Nielsen said. "The temperatures were usually 30 to 35 degrees. We didn't have any special gear to wear. The five of us who flew the special missions were brought home after we finished those missions. We never knew for sure, but it was rumored that we were the only ones who knew where the coming invasion would take place and they didn't want us to fall into enemy hands."

Nielsen has a variety of publications that document his squadron's activities and details about their missions. He and his fellow pilots took part in "War Room" lectures on their return to the United States. He returned home before Christmas in 1944 and made plans with his fiancée, Anita O'Reilly, to marry on Jan. 11, 1945.

"During my combat days, I had made up my mind that, if I survived, I was going to go back home and live a peaceful life," Nielsen said. "I met with a lot of stars during my military service. I enjoyed that. I don't consider what I did to necessarily be heroic. All of us were doing a service for our country at the time."

# CLASH

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the state of South Dakota — especially when you consider how many people in the area have ties to both schools.

"It has been very interesting in our household this week," stated Connie Frohreich of Yankton. "I actually had a special T-shirt made — half is a UNL T-shirt the other half is an SDSU T-shirt. Of course, there has been a rivalry between the two schools within the family. The whole family trying to decide what should we wear to the game."

Frohreich's daughter Shelby attends SDSU and her son Luke goes to UNL.

"We are generally Huskers fans to begin with," she said. "My son and daughter have been going back and forth between each other. My daughter said she is going to wear a Huskers T-shirt but her SDSU gloves."

The dilemma of what to wear to the game has been

repeated across Yankton this week.

"Our entire family is going to meet down there," said Yankton High School principal Wayne Kindle. "We have two kids that have graduated from UNL and my daughter-in-law is an SDSU graduate."

She also had a half-and-half T-shirt made, Kindle said, as did Lisa Scheve of the Yankton Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

"I will wear my half-and-half shirt for tailgating, but when I go into the stadium, I will have to change and put on my Husker gear," said Scheve, a Nebraska native. "Obviously ... my first love is always going to be the Huskers, but since I moved to South Dakota, it was fun to have additional teams to root for like the Coyotes and the Jackrabbits. Through getting to know several friends here, I became a Jackrabbit fan and they let me into their club. So, I enjoy being a part of it and rooting for them."

Most Husker fans in Yankton have said that while they will be wearing their red, they will still be cheering for the blue

and yellow.

"It truly is going to be a monumental event for our university," Everson said. "I don't have any preconceived notions that we are going to win. But, look how much excitement we have generated within the state lines of South Dakota for a game that could be quite lopsided. If you are one of the alumni or a player, imagine being in that stadium (tonight) when that hype that is there for every one of the Huskers' home games takes over the stadium. I know that the hair on the back of my neck will stand up. It will be a thrill."

At a typical Husker home game, it's hard to spot the fans from the visiting teams. But with an estimated 5,000 tickets sold to Jackrabbit fans, you will be able to see, and hear, the Jackrabbit faithful.

"I would say that there will be a good representation, probably a larger representation

than were at Minnesota or Iowa, just because of the sheer number of people in the area who follow both the Huskers and the Jacks," said Marc Mooney of Yankton, who sits on the alumni foundation at SDSU. "I hope we go down and just play good football and are respectable at the end of the day. The experience of a football game at the Division I level, it is an entirely different experience than Coughlin-Alumni (Stadium in Brookings) is. It is just a great opportunity to be a part of it."

"I guess one thing I have always said is everyone in this area needs to experience at least one Husker game," Frohreich said. "It is so unbelievable how much spirit that the Husker fans have. I just think everyone should experience that. Whether you are a small school fan like SDSU, I just think it will be a very good experience for everyone there including the football players."

Scheve agreed. "There is a sea of red and a lot of people there. So it can be a little intimidating at first. The *Omaha World Herald* had interviewed some people from South Dakota earlier this week, and they said, 'You know this is kind of like going to a bowl game for us.' I would definitely attest to that. Some of those bowl games you are hoping for the win, but others it is just an opportunity to go and have a good time."

Everson said that he believes tonight's game has the potential to be something that the SDSU players and fans will treasure.

"I can't imagine what the players are going to feel like when they roll in to that crowd of 75,000 plus fans," he said. "Even though there will be a lot of blue and yellow, it will still be a sea of red. I think it will be an event of their lifetime that they will never forget."

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