

Cross Somme, Take Bapaume, Germans Claim

SEE THIS GAME

Hockey fans who attend Monday night's contest in the Arena between the winners of the Seattle and Vancouver amateur leagues will not only see some fast skating, but will help swell Our Boys in France Tobacco Fund, as all receipts above expenses are to be turned over to it.

The Seattle Star

NIGHT EDITION

Weather Forecast: Tonight and Tuesday rain; moderate southwesterly winds.

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400,000 HUNS LOST IN DRIVE!

GUNS RED HOT; TROOPS FAGGED

BY WILLIAM PHILIP SIMMS

United Press Correspondent

WITH THE BRITISH ARMIES IN THE FIELD, March 25.—With increasing intensity the fighting thunders on from the Scarpe to the Oise.

Both the British and Teutonic troops are fagged but continue battling.

Captured prisoners declare that the heaviest blows are yet to come.

The Germans, at heavy cost, have progressed across the old battle field of the Somme but the British line everywhere is intact.

Haig's troops have withdrawn in the most perfect order. All night long the fighting has been most severe, especially along the Sapignies-Bapaume road. The Germans, in dense masses, were hurled forward in the moonlight while the British machine guns raked them in an unending rattle.

Still Fight in Air
The situation is obscured with the attacks and counter attacks, surging ceaselessly both under the sun and stars. As is inevitable in the case of such fighting, the attackers have taken guns, prisoners and materials, but I do not believe in alarming numbers.

The airmen continue the fighting in the sky, creating new records. They are withstanding the strain of ceaseless war admirably.

The spirit of the men in all branches is fine as the prospect of yet heavier fighting opens. Meantime, the Germans are up to their old tricks. Germans dressed as British officers or civilians are going thru towns far back of the lines, advising the people to flee, and announcing the Germans are in the next village.

One in the uniform of a military policeman galloped into a

village, waving a revolver and declaring the Huns were on his heels. He was caught and proved to be a German.

Guns Red Hot
Observers close up at the front signaled back to the artillery, and the half-tripped gunners fired until their pieces were almost red hot. The enemy is pressing on almost without artillery support, trusting in their ability to bend the British line by sheer force of numbers. No such targets were ever offered to modern guns.

The fighting on the road north of Bapaume continued to be terrific this morning, and likewise southward, in the region of Ham and Nesle, the enemy is desperately endeavoring to maintain a crossing of the Somme.

Try to Drive Wedge
Apparently the Germans are attempting to drive a wedge into the center of the battle front, where they have created a pointed salient, after massed onslaughts and great losses. The British line is bending, but it has not broken. Hindenburg counted upon breaking the line the first day.

The enemy cavalry is doing its utmost to harass the British withdrawal, but only comparatively small bodies have appeared yet. The struggle widens in the night time and contracts during the day. In moonlight of sufficient brilliance to permit the reading of newspapers,

bombing and war planes swarm overhead, carrying high explosives far behind the battle zone. They broaden the area of death scores of miles, few villages escaping.

Smash Air Records
When the sun rises, the bombers, like prowling night birds, return to their roosts; ground fighting speeds up and scout fleets, succeeding the bombers, fly low over the clashing infantry, harassing enemy columns and observing the artillery. British airmen have smashed records. The 47 German airplanes downed Friday were equaled again Saturday, and probably today. The battling is almost exclusively between the Scarpe and the Oise. While the struggle continues throughout the line, it is hottest on the British right.

Altho making some progress, the Germans have been unable to maintain all their gains.

British Smile at Hun
In the midst of the most stubborn fighting, the British cannot resist smiling at the German wireless claim that a considerable portion of the British army is defeated.

"Extraordinary thing that we did not know it ourselves," exclaimed a British officer.

The wireless said the offensive was a "surprise." Personally, I announced an offensive was imminent in recent dispatches from Zurich, and repeated the announcement upon my return to the British front, giving the exact point of attack.

"YOU WILL WIN"

—Wilson.

WASHINGTON, March 25.—"Americans feel you will win."

This was the message President Wilson sent to Field Marshal Haig today, as the great West front battle swept on in its fury.

The message reflected the confidence of the president in the critical events now transpiring in France.

His cable read: "May I not express to you my warm admiration for the steadfastness and valor with which your troops have withstood the German onset and the perfect confidence all Americans feel that you will win a secure and final victory?"

"WOODROW WILSON."

George's Message to Marshal Haig

LONDON, March 25.—"The empire stands calm and confident in its soldiers," was the message King George wired to Field Marshal Haig today.

"I assure you the fortitude, courage and self-sacrifice of the troops you command, which continue so heroically to resist greatly superior numbers, is realized by me and my people."

"BATTLE'S CLIMAX DUE WITHIN NEXT 24 HOURS"—MASON

BY J. W. T. MASON (Famous War Expert)

Written for the United Press
NEW YORK, March 25.—The next 24 hours will probably mark the climax of Von Hindenburg's unprecedented slaughter of his own troops in an effort to overwhelm the British armies in France. If the British lines hold their own during that period, Von Hindenburg's great battle must begin to go against him.

For the present the Germans have gained two objectives. They have largely improved their own defensive positions regarding their chief lines of communication in western France, and they have undoubtedly disarranged British offensive plans for the coming summer. But, the Germans have not yet regained all the territory they voluntarily abandoned last March, when they retired to the Hindenburg line.

Pay in Blood
The British front is resisting all tendency to give way in disorder. As long as this slow, orderly retirement proceeds the German attacks must tend to reduce Germany's man power without corresponding compensating advantages.

The Germans confess to an improved British defense in their statement of captured prisoners. During the first two days of fighting, Berlin reported 25,000 British had been taken. For the second two days of the combat, only 5,000 additional captives have been announced from the Germans.

This sudden decline in the number of prisoners is very reassuring. Plans Are Failing
The present German objective in the attacks shows evidence of not being fixed at any point. The British retirement has caused Hindenburg apparently to search madly at numerous sectors for any special weakness of the line, with the intention of trying to break thru. Otherwise it is hard to explain satisfactorily the scattering nature of the blows.

After attempting to outflank the British positions at the southern end of the British front and failing, Hindenburg has turned for a new drive nearly 50 miles north, near Arras. A breaking up of the German strength in this manner indicates Von Hindenburg is now acting as an opportunist. The failure of opportunists has been almost invariable in the present war.

Kaiser Calls It German Victory
AMSTERDAM, March 25.—The German emperor, says a Berlin dispatch, has received the following from Emperor William: "I am pleased to be able to tell you that, by the grace of God, the battle of Monchy, Cambrai, St. Quentin and Laferre has been won. The Lord has gloriously aided. May He further help."

TEUTONS PAYING TERRIBLE PRICE

WASHINGTON, March 25.—Field Marshal Haig is holding the great German drive of 97 divisions with only 27 divisions of battling Tommies, it was stated by British military men here today.

Ninety-seven divisions would be approximately 1,500,000 men lined up in the kaiser's army, against the heroic defense of 500,000 determined British.

British officials estimate the German losses at approximately 100,000 men a day in killed, wounded and captured, or a total of about 400,000 up to the beginning of Monday's fighting.

At this rate, they maintain, they are justified in optimism and in the belief that the Germans are defeating themselves by their enormous losses.

According to British strategy, it is believed Haig will not rush up a greater concentration of forces until he is ready to assume the offensive at the break in the German onrush. During a bombardment it is not well to overconcentrate men, it is pointed out.

BERLIN, via London, March 25.—The German war office today announced the capture of Bapaume.

Divisions freshly brought up failed to bring a decision in favor of the enemy, the statement said.

"In the evening they were defeated and streamed westward," it was declared. "Near Bapaume the enemy was again defeated."

"Northeast of Bapaume German troops broke thru and drove the enemy back by way of Ytres and Saily.

"Hot fighting is in progress for the possession of Combles. Nesle was stormed during the evening.

"Strong positions west of the Crozat canal were captured.

"Guiscard and Chauny have been captured," the statement said. "Enemy losses are unusually heavy.

"Forty-five thousand allied prisoners have been taken, together with more than 600 guns and quantities of other war material."

BERLIN, via London, March 25.—Passage of the Somme river was forced below Ham, the Berlin war office announced today. "We mounted the heights west of the Somme," the statement said.

Field Marshal Haig, in his official statement, admitted the Germans crossed the Somme south of Peronne, near Licourt, but declared they were driven back.

It is not plain whether the Berlin war office and Haig refer to the same action.

Kaiser Proclaims a Great Holiday

AMSTERDAM, March 25.—Kaiser Wilhelm and Field Marshal Von Hindenburg visited Peronne Sunday evening, according to Berlin dispatches received here today.

The Kaiser ordered flags hoisted, rockets fired and schools given a holiday thruout Germany, in celebration of Peronne's capture.

The German losses in taking Bapaume were "comparatively heavy," the dispatch said.

LONDON HEARS FIRING

LONDON, March 25.—Extremely heavy firing was heard along the Kentish coast thruout last night. Houses were shaken by the concussions.

More War News On Page Ten

TODAY'S BATTLE ANALYSIS

The gist of Field Marshal Haig's official statement today is that the German drive has been stopped temporarily. The enemy is concentrating his attacks north and south of Bapaume, which evidently is one of the Germans' objectives. Heavy attacks north of this city Sunday evening resulted in the enemy obtaining a small foothold in the new British positions, but British attacks later ejected him.

(The Berlin report of the fall of Bapaume had not been admitted by the British war statement at the time this was written.

South of Peronne, German troops forced a crossing of the Somme near Licourt.

The British drove them back to the east bank. Peronne is 12 miles west of the front, as held previous to the present drive. This probably marks the greatest advance to date in the big offensive.

The participation of French troops in resistance to the drive, officially announced as having begun Sunday, is a natural sequence of the German attempt to drive a wedge between the British and French lines at La Fere.

The French evidently have been compelled to fall back at least four or five miles, to preserve their connection with the British. The Paris communique says the French at this point held the heights on the right bank of the Oise in the face of heavy enemy attacks.

Elsewhere on the French front only artillery and raiding activities were reported.

SHELLS FALLING ON PARIS CAUSE LITTLE DISTURBANCE

PARIS, March 25.—Mysterious German shells resumed falling upon Paris early today.

The people remained in bed and were not disturbed.

The force of the explosion of the shells was not greater than that of many shells dropped on the city in the past from aeroplanes.

The shells which fell in Paris today made a very small hole in the ground. Measurements showed that the holes averaged four feet in diameter and were not more than two feet deep. Bombs from aeroplanes heretofore have been much

more effective. French experts direct attention to the fact that the shells fall at a slackened speed, with practically no noise.

The hours today decided to continue operations regardless of the great offensive and the air attacks on Paris. It was arranged in the event of heavy air attacks to use the house basement.

In the absence of any official report, the Paris Midi says the first shell that fell upon Paris this morning, arrived at 4:25 o'clock. An alarm was given by means of drums and whistles. The shells seemed to arrive faster than heretofore.

Shells ceased falling at 9:30 a. m.

GEN. WOOD AND OTHERS SCOUT IDEA OF GERMAN "MYSTERY GUN"

NEW YORK, March 25.—Major Gen. Wood emphatically declared his belief that no mysterious new German gun is firing on Paris.

"I have read all the reports regarding the attack on Paris," said Gen. Wood, in a statement to the New York Herald, "and I am convinced that no new gun of marvelous range is involved.

"In my opinion, a great aerial attack is taking place, and it seems very possible that radical development of airplane guns by the Germans is involved. I hold this belief despite the assertion that the position of a great new gun has been accurately ascertained. I am sure that within a short time it will be established that an airplane bombardment has resulted in the misleading report."

"It is my belief and that of my associates that the missiles reported falling on Paris are aerial torpedoes—nothing more," said Henry Wood, house, of the board of governors of the Aero Club of America, after reading all the reports in the morning papers.

"It is practicable to build an ordinary maxim silencer that would deaden the report of a gun throwing shells into Paris from the suburbs of the city," Hudson Maxim, famous inventor of explosives, declared today after reading accounts of mysterious shells falling in Paris.

"If the Germans really have built a 70-mile long range gun, it would be so expensive and futile as to indicate their mental deterioration and should be the cause for allied rejoicing."

No Word That U. S. Troops Are in It

BY CARL D. GROUT

WASHINGTON, March 25.—That Germany seeks to injure American morale by her propaganda guns was the inference drawn here today upon arrival of United Press dispatches denying American reverses at Chauny.

Germany's official statement yesterday claimed American forces were beaten back when brought up with the French to stem the boche rush.

The falsity of this statement was regarded as part of the Teutons' plans of undermining the allies by discouragement with false news.

No Word Yet
That American reserves will have a share in the defense now stoutly made by the British is possible. Authorities pointed out, that the American spirit is such that it will not be swayed by false stories of reverses, nor even by actual reverses.

Early today no word had been announced here as to American participation or as to Pershing's thoughts on the developments in the smash against the British lines. Pershing's cables were studied thoroughly yesterday and last night by Gen. March and general staff officers.

Turning Point Is Near, Officers Say

WASHINGTON, March 25.—The turning point of the great west front battle is near, officers here believe.

"The British are holding them now," one of the highest ranking American officers said today, "but further local gains by the Germans may be expected. A comparison of both enemy and British official statements convinces me that the allied cause is not in great danger, and I see no reason for pessimism."