

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

I. GENERAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(a) Unit Reporting VC-93 (b) Based on or at USS PHETOP BAY, CVE-90 (c) Report No. 37
 (d) Take off: Date 12 April 1945 Time (LZT) 1200-9 (Zone); Lat. 25° 20'N Long 139° 30'E
 (e) Mission Target combat air patrol over Okinawa (f) Time of Return 1840-9 (Zone)

II. OWN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALLY COVERED BY THIS REPORT.

TYPE (a)	SQUADRON (b)	NUMBER			BOMBS AND TORPEDOES CARRIED (PER PLANE) (f)	FUZE, SETTING (g)
		TAKING OFF (c)	ENGAGING ENEMY A/C (d)	ATTACKING TARGET (e)		
FM-2	VC-93	8	8	0	--	--

III. OTHER U. S. OR ALLIED AIRCRAFT EMPLOYED IN THIS OPERATION.

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
<u>Many other Marine and Naval Aircraft over Objective Area</u>							

IV. ENEMY AIRCRAFT OBSERVED OR ENGAGED (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

(a) TYPE	(b) NO. OBSERVED	(c) NO. ENGAGING OWN A/C	(d) TIME ENCOUNTERED	(e) LOCATION OF ENCOUNTER	(f) BOMBS, TORPEDOES CARRIED; GUNS OBSERVED	(g) CAMOUFLAGE AND MARKING
Val	7	7	1330-9 (ZONE)	15 miles north of Okinawa	500 ^{lb} bomb under fuselage	Standard dun color, Red discs
Oscar	1	1	1550-9 (ZONE)	same	not observed	same
Zeke 52	2	2	1410-9	same	not observed	same
Tojo	3	2	1450-9 (ZONE)	same	not observed	same

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) Attack on our shipping near Okinawa
 Did Any Part of
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? no If so, Describe Clouds none
(YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)
 Time of Day and Brilliance
 (j) of Sun or Moon Afternoon (k) Visibility 20
(NIGHT, BRIGHT MOON; DAY, OVERCAST; ETC.) (MILES)

V. ENEMY AIRCRAFT DESTROYED OR DAMAGED IN AIR (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

(a) TYPE ENEMY A/C	(b) DESTROYED OR DAMAGED BY:			(c) WHERE HIT, ANGLE	(d) DAMAGE CLAIMED
	TYPE A/C	SQUADRON	PILOT OR GUNNER		
Val	FM-2	VC-93	Lieut. R. E. Friedrich	4x50caliber	Wingroot, cockpit, 11, level Destroyed
Val	FM-2	VC-93	Lt(jg) R. C. Sullivan	4x50caliber	Engine, 12, level Destroyed
Val	FM-2	VC-93	Ensign R. R. Parsons	4x50caliber	Engine, 9, below Destroyed
Val	FM-2	VC-93	Lt(jg) R. C. Sullivan	4x50caliber	Cockpit, 8, above Destroyed
Val	FM-2	VC-93	Lieut. R. E. Friedrich	4x50caliber	Wingroot, 11, above Destroyed
Val	FM-2	VC-93	Ensign R. R. Parsons	4x50caliber	Engine, 12, level Destroyed
Zeke 52	FM-2	VC-93	Lieut. R. E. Friedrich	4x50caliber	Engine, 12, above Destroyed
Val	FM-2	VC-93	Lt(jg) H. Foster, III	4x50caliber	Wingroots, 12, level Destroyed
Oscar	FM-2	VC-93	Lt(jg) H. Foster, III	4x50caliber	Engine, cockpit, 12, above Destroyed
Zeke 52	FM-2	VC-93	Lt(jg) H. Foster, III	4x50caliber	Engine, wingroots, 11, above Destroyed
Tojo	FM-2	VC-93	Lieut. L. V. Lieb & Lt(jg) R. M. Reid	4x50caliber	Engine, 1, level Destroyed
Tojo	FM-2	VC-93	Ensign F. R. Baumgartner	4x50 cal.	Engine, 9, level Probably Destroyed

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XII. TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA. (Narrative and comment. Describe action fully and comment freely, following applicable items in check list at left. Use additional sheets if necessary.)

ENGAGEMENT WITH ENEMY

OWN AIRCRAFT

Disposition
Altitudes
Speeds
Approach Tactics
Use of Cover, Deception
Angles of Attack and
Their Effectiveness
Distance of Opening Fire
Defense Tactics and
Their Effectiveness

ENEMY AIRCRAFT

Method of Locating, Distance
Disposition
Altitudes
Speeds
Approach Tactics
Use of Cover, Deception
Angles of Attack
Distance of Opening Fire
Defensive Tactics

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Own Weaknesses
Enemy Weaknesses
Offensive Tactics, Own
" " " Enemy
Defensive Tactics, Own
" " " Enemy
Flexible Gunnery, Own
Escort Tactics
Fighter Direction
Use of Radar
Night Fighting
Recognition, Aircraft

ATTACK

OWN TACTICS

Method of Locating Target
Approach to Target
Altitudes, Speeds
Approach
Dive
Pull-Out
Dive Angle
Strafing
Retirement
Defensive Tactics
Use of Jamming

DEFENSE, ENEMY

Evasive Tactics, Ships
Concealment
Searchlights
Night Fighter Tactics
Use of Jamming

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Bombing Tactics
Torpedo Tactics
Effectiveness of
Bombs, Torpedoes
Selection of Targets
Fuzing
Strafing Tactics
Defensive Tactics
Use of Radar
Reconnaissance
Photography
Briefing

OPERATIONAL

Navigation
Homing
Rendezvous
Recognition, Ships
Communications
Flight Operations
Search and Tracking
Base Operations
Maintenance

On target combat air patrol the two divisions of VF were split. One division was directed to orbit about fifteen miles north of Okinawa with a picket DD as Fighter Director. An intense air attack occurred during which this division destroyed, without additional help, ten enemy aircraft. Early in the action the picket DD sustained a near miss from a Jap suicider and thereafter the flight was without surface direction. Lt(jg) Sullivan led this division back and forth on an east to west line, 7 miles north of the picket DDs. The other division, orbiting northwest of Okinawa, destroyed one Tojo and damaged another but lost one plane in mid-air collision and one from an attack by a Tojo. The pilot of the colliding plane is missing. Events of the flight are in chronological order.

The first mentioned division, when at 5000 feet, course 000 degrees, sighted a flight of four Vals. These were in column, 1000 feet apart, level, about two miles. The division turned west and again to north to effect a side run.

Lieut. Friedrich, on a flat side run, fired at 45 degree deflection and rushed into a tail position on the third Val in column. He closed from 800 to 50 feet while firing at the wing roots and cockpit. The only action by the Val was a glide of 15 degrees and speed increase from 170 to 210 knots, in a straight course. The Val did not burn although the many observed hits brought smoke and debris from the plane. At 1000 feet it commenced a tight spin into the water.

Lt(jg) Sullivan had similarly obtained a tail position on the second Val and decreased his distance to 50 feet, as he chased the Val in a 15 degree glide at 210 knots. Four two-second bursts caused fire from the engine and/or wing roots at 1500 feet altitude. As Lt(jg) Sullivan over-ran and pulled off to the right he saw the Val glide into the water. Only evasive action was a "fishtailing" during increase of glide angle and speed.

Leading the second section at 4500 feet, 130 knots, course 045 degrees, level, Ensign Parsons saw the fourth Val in the column at 9 o'clock 2500 yards distant, course 150 degrees, speed 200 knots, level. The Val headed north as he closed the interval. He saw the first burst, at 1200 feet fall short. The Jap made no evasive action until, after two more two-second bursts into his plane, he pulled up to the left. Ensign Parsons, 200 feet behind, pulled up inside and fired the internal service tank. The plane splashed from 1000 feet.

Immediately after watching the second Val in column splash, Lt.(jg) Sullivan saw the first at 3000 yards, course 130 degrees, 1200 feet altitude, ahead of him. He dropped his wing tanks and gave chase, during a slow climb from 600 to 1000 feet, this Jap pilot used all manner of evasive action, including sharp turns, dives, wing overs, etc. The F4U-2 repeatedly closed but bursts could be fired only at difficult angles. Tracers were seen to smoke and slightly flame the left wing root four different times but the fire failed to take hold. Finally the Val made a climbing turn and, at 10 degree deflection, bullets were seen to enter the cockpit. The Val dived to the water but did not explode.

The division rejoined and was at course 000 degrees, 3000 feet, when two planes were observed 12 o'clock, above 1000 feet, course 150 degrees, at 8 miles. Lieut. Friedrich executed a sweeping turn to the right. Recognizing a Val he made a low side run, hitting the engine and wing root with a full deflection burst. The Val turned away, permitting a tail position, and began a 20 degree glide and speed acceleration. Bursts from 600 and 400 feet fired the starboard and port wing roots, and the Val exploded, splashing from 2500 feet.

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ENGAGEMENT WITH ENEMY

OWN AIRCRAFT

Disposition
Altitudes
Speeds
Approach Tactics
Use of Cover, Deception
Angles of Attack and
Their Effectiveness
Distance of Opening Fire
Defensive Tactics and
Their Effectiveness

ENEMY AIRCRAFT

Method of Locating, Distance
Disposition
Altitudes
Speeds
Approach Tactics
Use of Cover, Deception
Angles of Attack
Distance of Opening Fire
Defensive Tactics

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Own Weaknesses
Enemy Weaknesses
Offensive Tactics, Own
" " " Enemy
Defensive Tactics, Own
" " " Enemy
Flexible Gunnery, Own
Escort Tactics
Fighter Direction
Use of Radar
Night Fighting
Recognition, Aircraft

ATTACK

OWN TACTICS

Method of Locating Target
Approach to Target
Altitudes, Speeds
Approach
Dive
Pull-Out
Dive Angle
Strafing
Retirement
Defensive Tactics
Use of Jamming

DEFENSE, ENEMY

Evasive Tactics, Ships
Concealment
Searchlights
Night Fighter Tactics
Use of Jamming

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Bombing Tactics
Torpedo Tactics
Effectiveness of
Bombs, Torpedoes
Selection of Targets
Fuzing
Strafing Tactics
Defensive Tactics
Use of Radar
Reconnaissance
Photography
Briefing

OPERATIONAL

Navigation
Homing
Rendezvous
Recognition, Ships
Communications
Flight Operations
Search and Tracking
Base Operations
Maintenance

Ensign Parsons obtained a tail position on the other plane, an Oscar, which turned east. It was necessary to put the F4U-2 in full military power to close from 1000 feet distance and retain position. The Jap tried all evasive maneuvers. Bursts were fired whenever he was momentarily in the sights. The F4U-2 turned, climbed and dived easily with the Oscar according to Ensign Parsons. Point of aim was the engine on seven bursts, after which the Oscar, on fire inside the fuselage (flames erupting from tail) spun into the water from 2000 feet.

After the division was rejoined at 4000 feet, course 270 degrees, a plane was seen under anti-aircraft fire bearing 10 o'clock, level, course 090 degrees, distant 2500 feet. Lieut. Friedrich, upon identifying a Zeke engaged in a 30 degree dive toward an LSI, made a flat side pass at 3000 feet altitude. From a tail position, following in a now 30 degree glide at 230 knots Lieut. Friedrich saw his burst from 700 feet cause smoke and chips to emerge from the Jap engine. The Zeke then turned from the LSI and as he pulled off at 400 feet Lieut. Friedrich saw it splash 150 feet aft of the ship. Anti-aircraft fire ceased when he attacked the enemy plane.

A few minutes later, at 3000 feet and course 000 degrees, a Val was seen at 9 o'clock, level, 3000 yards distant, course 090 degrees. A flat side run by the division, caused no apparent damage. The last man in the division, Lt.(jg) Foster, in finishing his flat side run made a pass from the rear. The wing roots thereupon flamed and the plane splashed from 3000 feet.

Shortly thereafter, when at 3500 feet and proceeding south east, flying wing on Ensign Parsons, Lt.(jg) Foster (a VF pilot) indoctrinated during previous three months as additional VF pilot) saw an Oscar. It was at 9 o'clock, 2500 feet distant, executing a 35 degree glide onto a DD from 3500 feet. Although an intense anti-aircraft barrage was being directed at the enemy plane, he slid onto the Oscar's tail. Lt.(jg) Foster continued firing from 450 to 100 feet distance at the cockpit and wing roots. Smoke emanated from both points and he pulled out at 1000 feet when the Jap was obviously out of control and would miss the ship. The Oscar, after the last burst, increased its dive angle, went into a shallow turn, and splashed 250 feet off the starboard bow of the DD.

About five minutes later at 4000 feet, course 315 degrees, a Zeke was observed at 4 o'clock, 1000 feet below, course 180 degrees, distant 500 yards, overrun by an F4U. The Zeke, after the unsuccessful pass by the Corsair, went into a gradual turning glide onto a picket DD which began firing anti-aircraft. Lt.(jg) Foster using full military power attained a tail position and fired his first burst at the engine and wing roots, from 500 feet distance, at 3000 feet altitude. While closing at a speed of 330 knots to 150 feet interval, he fired three more bursts. The Zeke commenced to burn from the engine and wing roots and splashed about 400 feet off the port bow of the ship. The anti-aircraft fire was intense about the two planes from 3000 to 1500 feet altitudes and several bursts appear in Lt.(jg) Foster's gun camera film. The enemy aircraft was not apparently hit by this barrage, and in all probability would have made a successful dive.

The other division was orbiting at 16,000 feet when a Tojo was observed under attack by several Corsairs which continually overran as it turned.

Lieut. Lieb made a run from 12 o'clock and saw his tracers go into the engine as he closed distance from 1000 feet to over running the Jap.

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XIII. MATERIAL DATA. (Comment freely on performance or suitability, following check list at left.
Use additional sheets if necessary).

ARMAMENT

Guns, Gunsights
Turrets
Ammunition
Bombs, Torpedoes
Bomb Sights
Bomb Releases

COMMUNICATIONS

Radio, Radar
Homing Devices
Visual Signals
Codes, Ciphers

RECOGNITION

IFF
Signals
Battle Lights
Procedures

PROTECTION

Armor; Points and Angles
of Fire Needing Further
Protection
Leak Proofing

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

Parachutes
Life Belts, Life Rafts
Safety Belts
Emergency Kits
Rations, First Aid

NAVIGATIONAL EQUIPMENT

Compasses
Driftsights
Octants
Automatic Pilots
Charts
Field Lighting

INSTRUMENTS

Flight
Power Plant

OXYGEN SYSTEM

**CAMOUFLAGE AND
DECEPTION DEVICES**

STRUCTURE

Airframe
Control Surfaces
Control System
Dive Flaps
Landing Gear
Heating System
Flight Characteristics
At Various Loadings

POWER PLANT

Engines
Engine Accessories
Propellers
Lubricating System
Starters
Exhaust Dampers

HYDRAULIC SYSTEM

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Auxiliary Plant
Lights

FUEL SYSTEM

FLIGHT CLOTHING

MAINTENANCE

BASE FACILITIES

Plane Servicing Equipment
Personnel Facilities

Lt. (jg) Reid, his wingman, then made a high side run and his bullets were observed entering the cockpit. The Tojo flipped up and over onto its back and fell in a tight spin to splash from 17,000 feet.

As the first section attacked this Tojo, two others were seen by Ensigns Janson and Baumgartner who composed the second section. These also were under unsuccessful attack by Corsairs. Ensign Baumgartner made a flat side run, firing 2 bursts at 50° deflection on a Tojo making a pass at Ensign Janson. Chips and smoke emanated from the engine, as the Tojo lost altitude and left the fracas, chased by a Corsair. Just then Ensign Baumgartner saw Ensign Janson's FM-2 and an F4U make simultaneous runs (from 5 and 4 o'clock respectively) on the other Tojo and collide when it turned from south to east. One wing was broken from each plane. One parachute was seen to open at 4,000 feet. Ensign Baumgartner followed down to 7000 feet when he saw an F4U below him and so remained, circling, at that altitude to relay transmissions if necessary, and generally assist in directing rescue facilities.

Suddenly Ensign Baumgartner's instrument panel and engine were hit by bullets and he saw a Tojo on his tail. He executed a controlled half spin and, as the Tojo turned, a scissors developed. The engine was losing power so Ensign Baumgartner turned directly into the Jap and let go a burst which passed in front of him. The Jap thereupon fled. Ensign Baumgartner lost altitude and intended to ditch near two DDs and an island. When about 1000 feet altitude and 2000 feet from the ships they opened fire at him (air raid conditions were then present and his IFF may have been shot up), damaging wings and fuselage. Unhurt he was nevertheless forced to ditch the plane immediately. After being in the water 90 minutes he was rescued by another DD. While he was on this ship it was twice attacked by suicide dives. He returned to the Squadron several days later, physically unharmed.

The following pilots participated in this flight:

R. E. FRIEDRICH	Lieut.	A1	USNR
R. C. SULLIVAN	Lt. (jg)	A1	USNR
R. E. PARSONS	Ens.	A1	USNR
A. FOSTER, III	Lt. (jg)	A1	USNR
L. V. LIEB	Lieut.	A1	USNR
R. W. REID	Lt. (jg)	A1	USNR
C. J. JANSON	Ens.	A1	USNR
P. B. BAUMGARTNER	Ens.	A1	USNR

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

R. L. WINTER, Lieut. Col., USNR, AGIO

C. P. SMITH, Lt. Comdr. USN, CO, VC-93 4/12/45

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

DATE