

# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when filled out)

## I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting VC-88 (b) Based on or at USS SAGINAW BAY (c) Report No. 54  
 (d) Take off: Date 3 March 1945 Time (LZT) 1100 K (Zone); Lat. 24-45N Long. 142-00E  
 (e) Mission Direct Support - capture of Iwo Jima (f) Time of Return 1400 K (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)		
<u>TBM-3</u>	<u>VC-88</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2-500# G.P. Mk. 43</u> <u>8-5" H.H. rockets</u>	<u>Mk. 103A1 (inst)</u> <u>Mk 101A2 (n.d.)</u> <u>Mk 146 (n.d.)</u>
<u>TN-2</u>	<u>VC-88</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6-5" H.H. rockets</u>	<u>Mk 146 (n.d.)</u>

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
			<u>NONE</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
			(ZONE)	<u>NONE</u>		
			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Did Any Part of \_\_\_\_\_  
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, Describe Clouds \_\_\_\_\_  
 (YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)  
 Time of Day and Brilliance \_\_\_\_\_  
 (j) of Sun or Moon \_\_\_\_\_ (NIGHT, BRIGHT MOON; DAY, OVERCAST; ETC.) (k) Visibility \_\_\_\_\_ (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	GUNS USED		
			<u>NONE</u>			



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(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

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## XI. ATTACK ON ENEMY SHIPS OR GROUND OBJECTIVES (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

- (a) Target(s) and Location(s) Troop concentration, pillboxes, Iwo Jima (b) Time Over Target(s) 1200-1320 K (Zone)  
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)
- (c) Clouds Over Target Clear (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)
- (d) Visibility of Target Difficult terrain (e) Visibility 20 (MILES)  
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.)
- (f) Bombing Tactics: Type Glide and rocket Bomb Sight Used Mk 8  
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)
- Bombs Dropped per Run 2 Spacing 0 Altitude of Bomb Release 2000  
(NUMBER) (FEET) (FEET)
- (g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed \_\_\_\_\_ Probably Destroyed \_\_\_\_\_ Damaged \_\_\_\_\_

(h) AIMING POINT	(i) DIMENSIONS OR TONNAGE	(j) NO A/C ATTACKING (k) SQUADRON	(l) BOMBS AND AMMUNITION EXPENDED EACH AIMING POINT	(m) NO HITS On Aiming Point	(n) DAMAGE (None, slight, serious, destroyed or sunk)
1 Troop concentrations Two medium buildings		4 TBM: 4 FM-2 VC-88	56-5" H.E. rockets 1410 .50 & 145 .30 cal	All	Bldg. seriously Rest unknown
2 Pillboxes		4 TBM: 4 FM-2 VC-88	8-500# G.P. bombs 2000 rds. .50 cal.	5 Bombs	Several pillboxes destroyed
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					

(o) RESULTS: (For all hits claimed on ship targets and for land targets of special interest, draw diagram, top or side view or both, as appropriate, showing type and location of hits. For all targets give location and effect of hits, and identify by numbers above. Use additional sheets if necessary).

- #1 Troop concentrations were reported in target area 234 F, G, H in northern Iwo Jima. 56 rockets plus strafing were put in this area. One medium building was struck by rockets and emitting dense white smoke; another medium size building was struck by rockets and left smoking. No troops were seen. Front lines reported that correct area well covered by attack.
- #2 A series of square pillboxes were the aiming points in target area in 219 M in northeastern Iwo Jima. These were located on the top of cliffs in the area. At least 5 of the light 500# bombs dropped hit squarely on or among these emplacements. It is believed that several were destroyed, others damaged by these hits and strafing.

(p) Were Photographs Taken? Yes Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached By Staple.

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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

Four TBM-3's of VC-88, piloted by Lt(jg) C. L. HIGGINS and P. C. HERFURTH and Ensigns W. A. STEPHENS and P. YBLAVICH and 4 FM-2's of VC-88 piloted by Lt's(jg) J.H. O'CONNOR, P. A. O'BRIEN, E. A. WHITE and Ensign P.D. TAYLOR conducted two attacks on 3 March 1945 in direct support of the Marines engaged in ground operations.

Their first attack was in northern Iwo Jima target area 234 F,G, H on an area where enemy troop concentrations were reported. A heavy attack in which 56 rockets were put into the area plus strafing resulted in two medium sized buildings left burning and a comment from the front lines that the correct area had been well covered. Each plane made two runs on this attack, from east to west.

The second attack was a combined bombing and strafing strike on target 219 M in northeastern Iwo Jima about 40 minutes after the conclusion of the first attack. Square pillboxes located on the top of 35-50 foot cliffs in this area were sighted and extremely accurate bombing resulted in 5 500# bomb hits, directly on or next to several of them. Each bomber made an individual run from north to south beginning at approximately 4500 feet, in a 30 degree glide, releasing at 2000 feet altitude. Three pilots released their bombs in salvo, one on select. Each of the fighters made two strafing runs, preceding the bombing attack. Light, meagre and accurate anti-aircraft fire in the area did no damage to any of these planes participating.

**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

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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

**The radio receiver of one M-2 was inoperative following catapulting until last strafing run over target when it came on again. The same plane had a great deal of dirt between the layers of the windshield which impaired the vision of the pilot.**

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

**H.D. SCHWAAB, Lt. USNR, AGIO, VC-88**  
SIGNATURE RANK AND DUTY

**R.L. KNOPP, Lt. USNR, Commanding**  
SIGNATURE RANK AND DUTY

**10 March 1945**  
DATE