

VMB-423

158  
⑨

Report # 215

HC (9)

6



# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filled out)

## I. GENERAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(a) Unit Reporting VMB-423 (b) Based on or at Green Island (c) Report No. 215  
 (d) Take off: Date 23 February 1945 Time (LZT) 0830-0833 (Zone); Lat. 04°32' Long 154°14'  
Medium altitude daylight raid on  
 (e) Mission target #3A Rabaul, New Britain. (f) Time of Return 1025-1035 (Zone)

## II. OWN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALLY COVERED BY THIS REPORT.

| TYPE<br>(a)   | SQUADRON<br>(b) | NUMBER               |                              |                            | BOMBS AND TORPEDOES<br>CARRIED (PER PLANE)<br>(f) | FUZE, SETTING<br>(g) |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------|
|               |                 | TAKING<br>OFF<br>(c) | ENGAGING<br>ENEMY A/C<br>(d) | ATTACKING<br>TARGET<br>(e) |   |                      |
| <b>PBJ-1J</b> | <b>VMB423</b>   | <b>5</b>             | <b>None</b>                  | <b>4</b>                   | <b>4 X 1000 # SAP</b>                             | <b>AN-M-103</b>      |
| <b>PBJ-1D</b> | <b>VMB423</b>   | <b>1</b>             | <b>None</b>                  | <b>1</b>                   | <b>4 X 1000 # SAP</b>                             | <b>AN-M-103</b>      |
| <b>PBJ-1J</b> | <b>VMB423</b>   | <b>1</b>             | <b>None</b>                  | <b>1</b>                   | <b>2 X 1000 # GP</b>                              | <b>AN-M-103</b>      |

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

| TYPE         | SQUADRON      | NUMBER   | BASE                | TYPE | SQUADRON | NUMBER | BASE |
|--------------|---------------|----------|---------------------|------|----------|--------|------|
| <b>PV-1</b>  | <b>NZ-2</b>   | <b>8</b> | <b>Green Island</b> |      |          |        |      |
| <b>PBY5A</b> | <b>VPB-44</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>Green Island</b> |      |          |        |      |
| <b>F4U</b>   | <b>NZ-15</b>  | <b>2</b> | <b>Green Island</b> |      |          |        |      |

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

| (a)<br>TYPE | (b)<br>NO<br>OBSERVED | (c)<br>NO<br>ENGAGING<br>OWN A/C | (d)<br>TIME<br>ENCOUNTERED | (e)<br>LOCATION OF<br>ENCOUNTER | (f)<br>BOMBS, TORPEDOES CARRIED,<br>GUNS OBSERVED | (g)<br>CAMOUFLAGE AND<br>MARKING |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>None</b> |                       |                                  | (ZONE)                     |                                 |   |                                  |
|             |                       |                                  | (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 \_\_\_\_\_ (k) Visibility \_\_\_\_\_  
(NIGHT, BRIGHT MOON, DAY, OVERCAST, ETC.) (MILES)

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

| (a)<br>TYPE<br>ENEMY A/C | (b) DESTROYED OR DAMAGED BY: |          |                 | GUNS USED | (c)<br>WHERE HIT, ANGLE | (d)<br>DAMAGE<br>CLAIMED |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
|                          | TYPE A/C                     | SQUADRON | PILOT OR GUNNER |           |                         |                          |
| <b>None</b>              |                              |          |                 |           |                         |                          |
|                          |                              |          |                 |           |                         |                          |
|                          |                              |          |                 |           |                         |                          |
|                          |                              |          |                 |           |                         |                          |
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REPORT No. **215**

## VI. LOSS OR DAMAGE, COMBAT OR OPERATIONAL, OF OWN AIRCRAFT (of those listed in II only).

| (a)<br>TYPE OWN A/C | (b)<br>SQUADRON | (c)<br>CAUSE: TYPE ENEMY A/C,<br>TYPE GUN, OR OPERATIONAL CAUSE | (d)<br>WHERE HIT, ANGLE (List armor,<br>self-sealing tanks, equipment hit) | (e)<br>EXTENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE,<br>(Give Bureau serial number of planes destroyed) |
|---------------------|-----------------|---|--|---|
| 1                   | <b>None</b>     |   |  |   |
| 2                   |                 |   |  |   |
| 3                   |                 |   |  |   |
| 4                   |                 |   |  |   |
| 5                   |                 |   |  |   |
| 6                   |                 |   |  |   |
| 7                   |                 |   |  |   |
| 8                   |                 |   |  |   |
| 9                   |                 |   |  |   |
| 10                  |                 |   |  |   |
| 11                  |                 |   |  |   |
| 12                  |                 |   |  |   |
| 13                  |                 |   |  |   |
| 14                  |                 |   |  |   |

## VII. PERSONNEL CASUALTIES (in aircraft listed in II only; identify with planes listed in VI by Nos. at left).

| (a)<br>NO.  | (b)<br>SQUADRON | (c)<br>NAME, RANK OR RATING | (d)<br>CAUSE | (e)<br>CONDITION OR STATUS |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| <b>None</b> |                 |                             |              |                            |
|             |                 |                             |              |                            |
|             |                 |                             |              |                            |
|             |                 |                             |              |                            |
|             |                 |                             |              |                            |
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|             |                 |                             |              |                            |

## VIII. RANGE, FUEL, AND AMMUNITION DATA FOR PLANES RETURNING

| (a)<br>TYPE<br>A/C | (b)<br>MILES<br>OUT | (c)<br>MILES<br>RETURN | (d)<br>AV. HOURS<br>IN AIR | (e)<br>AV. FUEL<br>LOADED | (f)<br>AV. FUEL<br>CONSUMED | (g) TOTAL AMMUNITION EXPENDED |             |             |             | (h)<br>NO. OF PLANES<br>RETURNING |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
|                    |                     |                        |                            |                           |                             | .30                           | .50         | 20MM        | MM          |                                   |
| <b>PBJ-1J</b>      | <b>175</b>          | <b>148</b>             | <b>1hr55'</b>              | <b>1016</b>               | <b>419</b>                  | <b>None</b>                   | <b>None</b> | <b>None</b> | <b>None</b> | <b>5</b>                          |
| <b>PBJ-1D</b>      | <b>175</b>          | <b>148</b>             | <b>1hr55'</b>              | <b>1016</b>               | <b>419</b>                  | <b>None</b>                   | <b>None</b> | <b>None</b> | <b>None</b> | <b>1</b>                          |
| <b>PBJ-1J</b>      | <b>43</b>           | <b>43</b>              | <b>29 min</b>              | <b>1016</b>               | <b>112</b>                  | <b>None</b>                   | <b>None</b> | <b>None</b> | <b>None</b> | <b>1</b>                          |

## IX. ENEMY ANTI-AIRCRAFT ENCOUNTERED (Check one block on each line).

| CALIBER                                   | NONE      | MEAGER | MODERATE | INTENSE |
|---|-----------|--------|----------|---------|
| HEAVY — Time-fused shells, 75mm and over  | <b>XX</b> |        |          |         |
| MEDIUM — Impact-fused shells, 20mm-50mm   | <b>XX</b> |        |          |         |
| LIGHT — Machine gun bullets, 6.5mm-13.2mm | <b>XX</b> |        |          |         |

## X. COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE, OWN AND ENEMY AIRCRAFT (use check list at left).

- SPEED, CLIMB,  
at various altitudes

TURNS

DIVES

CEILINGS

RANGE

PROTECTION

ARMAMENT

**No enemy aircraft encountered.**



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REPORT No. 215

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

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) Target #3A Rabaul, New Britain Time Over Target(s) 093440936 (Zone)  
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)

(c) Clouds Over Target .2 build-ups 2000 to 4000  
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target Clear (e) Visibility 20 miles  
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (MILES)

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type Level Bomb Sight Used Mark 15  
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run 2 & 4 Spacing 170 feet Altitude of Bomb Release 10000 & 10500  
(NUMBER) (FEET) (FEET)

(g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed None Probably Destroyed None Damaged None

| (h) AIMING POINT | (i) DIMENSIONS OR TONNAGE      | (j) NO. A/C ATTACKING<br>(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                | <u>Target #3A Rabaul, N.B.</u> | <u>5</u><br><u>VMB-423</u>            | <u>20 X 1000 # SAP</u>                              | <u>See (e)</u>               |  |
| 2                | <u>Target #3A Rabaul, N.B.</u> | <u>1</u><br><u>VMB-423</u>            | <u>2 X 1000 # GP</u>                                | <u>See (e)</u>               |  |
| 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.)

**All bombs hit the target with unobserved results.**

(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

**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

| CALL    | PILOT       | T/O GREEN | T/O/T | P/C GREEN |
|---------|-------------|-----------|-------|-----------|
| 301B21  | LENKE       | 0830      | 0934  | 1025      |
| 302B21  | MARTIN      | 0830      | 0934  | 1025      |
| 303B21  | CANNON      | 0831      | 0934  | 1026      |
| 304B21  | WILHITE     | 0831      | ---   | 0900      |
| 305B21  | FRIEDMAN    | 0832      | 0934  | 1027      |
| 306B21  | TAYLOR      | 0832      | 0934  | 1027      |
| *307B21 | DUTTENHOFER | 0833      | 0936  | 1035      |

\* Captain DUTTENHOFER flew as leader of the New Zealand Ventura squadron.

Captain LENKE led seven PBJs and eight PVs of NZ-2 from Green Island in a medium altitude daylight raid on target #3A Rabaul, New Britain. Captain DUTTENHOFER flew as leader of the New Zealand Squadron so that he could do the sighting for the PVs which do not carry a bombsight.

The formation was composed of six PBJs in two, three plane sections as the first squadron and one PBJ and eight PVs in three, three plane sections as the second squadron. The flight was airborne by 0830 and after join-up proceeded to Cape Sena on the east coast of New Ireland. Captain WILHITE was forced to return early due to an oil leak, pancaking at 0900.

From Cape Sena the formation turned to a course of 263° magnetic passing north of the Duke of York Islands and turning south on a course of 173° magnetic to pass over Watom Island. At Liguon Bay a turn was made to 083° magnetic for the bomb run.

The PBJs bombed from 10,500 feet at 155 knots indicated on a course of 083° magnetic as bombs were released at 0934. The PVs at the same speed and heading dropped their bombs at 0936.

After bombs were released the formation broke to the left and returned to base without incident all being safely on deck by 1035.

No anti-aircraft fire was encountered.

The pattern of the bombs with relation to the target are shown in the attached photographs, all bombs hit the target.

(All times in this narrative are local).

ACIO COMMENT

While over Rabaul on this strike two crews heard



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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

**what they thought was Japs talking on 4475. This is the  
second time this circumstance had been noticed.**

REPORT PREPARED BY:

**WARD D. MARTIN**  
Capt., USMCR  
Intelligence Officer

APPROVED BY:

**ARTHUR C. LOWELL**  
Major, USMC  
Acting

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

DATE





VMB-423-105( 2-2) 2-23-45 - 10500 - 20 - F. H. H. 3A