OPNAV-16-V-#S37
Form ACA-1
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AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

I. GENERAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(a) Unit Reporting VC-91 (b) Based on or at USS SAVO ISLAND (CVE78) (c) Report No. 38

(d) Take off: Date 23 April 1945 Time (LZT) 0545/0930-I (Zone); Lat. 25° 15' N. Long. 126° 02' E.

(e) Mission Direct Support work and Air Coordinator over Okinawa (f) Time of Return 1030/1345-I (Zone)

II. OWN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALLY COVERED BY THIS REPORT.

TYPE (a)	SQUADRON (b)	NUMBER: TAKING OFF (c)	NUMBER: ENGAGING ENEMY A/C (d)	NUMBER: ATTACKING TARGET (e)	BOMBS AND TORPEDOES CARRIED (PER PLANE) (f)	FUZE, SETTING (g)
TBM-3	VC-91	2	0	2	8 - 5" H.E. Rockets) 10 - 100# G.P. Bombs)	Nose Inst. - Tail No Del.
PM-2	VC-91	5	0	5	None.	
TBM-3	VC-91	2	0	2	4 - 300# G.P. Bombs	Nose Inst., Tail .01.

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
PM-2	?	5	USS SHAMROCK (CVE84)	[illegible]			
PM-3	?	5	USS SHAMROCK (CVE84)	PM-2	?	8	?
TBM-3	VC-79	6	USS BARBER BAY (CVE87)				

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
None			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) _____

(i) Did Any Part of Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? _____ (YES OR NO) If so, Describe Clouds _____ (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(j) Time of Day and Brilliance 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: TYPE A/C	SQUADRON	PILOT OR GUNNER	GUNS USED	(c) WHERE HIT, ANGLE	(d) DAMAGE CLAIMED
None						

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

(a) TYPE OWN A/C	(b) SQUADRON	(c) CAUSE: TYPE ENEMY A/C, TYPE GUN, OR OPERATIONAL CAUSE	(d) WHERE HIT, ANGLE (List armor, self-sealing tanks, equipment hit)	(e) EXTENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE, (Give Bureau serial number of planes destroyed)
1 None				
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) NO.	(b) SQUADRON	(c) NAME, RANK OR RATING	(d) CAUSE	(e) CONDITION OR STATUS
None				

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

(a) TYPE A/C	(b) MILES OUT	(c) MILES RETURN	(d) AV. HOURS IN AIR	(e) AV. FUEL LOADED	(f) AV. FUEL CONSUMED	(g) TOTAL AMMUNITION EXPENDED				(h) NO. OF PLANES RETURNING
						.30	.50	20MM	MM	
[illegible]-3	60	65	4.25	330	255	---	---			4
[illegible]-3	60	55	4.25	233	180		3620			5

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

CALIBER	NONE	MEAGER	MODERATE	INTENSE
HEAVY — Time-fused shells, 75mm and over	X			
MEDIUM — Impact-fused shells, 20mm-50mm	X			
LIGHT — Machine gun bullets, 6.5mm-13.2mm				X

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

SPEED, CLIMB, at various altitudes
TURNS
DIVES
CEILINGS
RANGE
PROTECTION
ARMAMENT

None.

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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) Enemy Troop Buildings & Installation (FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK) (b) Time Over Target(s) 615/1000-I (Zone)
Southwestern Okinawa Shima

(c) Clouds Over Target [redacted] Strato-Cumulus - 2500 - 7/10 (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target Hazy (CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (e) Visibility 7 (MILES)

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type Glide (LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) Bomb Sight Used _____ (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run Varying (NUMBER) Spacing Manual (FEET) Altitude of Bomb Release 2000 (FEET)

(g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed 0 Probably Destroyed 0 Damaged 0

(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 Enemy Installations T.A. 7674 "P"	100 yds. by 50 yds.	4 / VE-91	4 - 500# Bombs 8 - 100# Bombs	6	Serious
2 Large Bldg. probably Prison. T.A. 7570 "P"	---	4 / VE-91	16 - Rockets 11 - 100# Bombs 4 - 500# Bombs	26	Serious
3 Town of Gushikawa T.A. 7777	---	5 / VE-91	3620 - Rds. .50 cal.	Numerous	Serious
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).

The designated area was thoroughly saturated by six hits, two 500# and four 100# bombs. Six separate and distinct fires were started, one of which gave forth a considerable amount of white smoke which rose several [redacted] hundred feet. Whatever troops or installations were underneath the foliage which covered the area were seriously damaged.

The second target was a long, two-story, "V" shaped building in Naha city. It was thought to have been used formerly as a prison. Many hits were scored directly on the building and in the grounds immediately around the building, and was seriously damaged although it did not catch fire and no explosions other than the bombs and rockets were noted.

The strafing by the F4F's, which preceded the bombing by the TBM's from other carriers, succeeded in setting on fire five of the houses in the town. The fires were still burning when the pilots left.

(p) Were Photographs Taken? No Photographs of Damage, WhenTaken, 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

Two direct support groups and one Air Coordinator were launched, one at 0945 and the other group at 0930 with the Air Coordinator.

The first group joined up with five FM's from U.S.S. SHAMROCK BAY (CVE64), and were assigned as a target enemy installations in the northwest district in a little town in the designated area. Enemy troops and gun positions were supposed to be in the assigned area. The target area was covered over with thick foliage, however, and nothing could be seen beneath it. Two runs from northeast to southwest were made by the TBM's, who were preceded by the SHAMROCK BAY FM's. Each run was started at 5500 feet, with an angle of dive at 40°, and all bombs were released from 2500 to 2000 feet. The designated area was thoroughly saturated by hits from 100# and 500# bombs, and several fires were started. One appeared to be a small ammunition dump although no violent explosions were noted.

The pilots reported that the area had been completely gone over, and Commander Air Support Control Units sent them to Naha City with instructions to bomb and destroy a large building at a designated point. They located a building which is believed to have been used as a prison formerly. It probably housed troops and stores at this time.

Four runs were made on the building, and the TBM's dropped all of their remaining bombs and fired all of their rockets against it. A large part of the building was wrecked and demolished, by direct hits. It was impossible to determine whether the balance of the building was on fire or not because of the large amount of smoke, dust and haze created by the explosion of the bombs dropped. It is believed, however, that most of the building and that whatever installations it contained were substantially destroyed.

Lt.(jg) Gaither with his group of FM's were joined up with eight FM's and eleven TBM's from other carriers, and were directed by CASCU to knock out enemy troops and installations in the small town of Gusukuma. The town was barely a hundred yards south of our front line troops so the target had to be marked with accuracy.

Lt.(jg) Gaither coordinated the runs of all the planes, and made a reconnaissance run to start with. After definitely locating the positions of our troops with reference to the town to be knocked out, he led the first run on the town. It was made from north to south, with the FM's from VC-91 leading the other planes.

Thereafter, Lt.(jg) Gaither stayed low and directed several additional runs by the balance of the planes on the town. The FM's set several houses on fire, and the TBM's finished up the job by practically destroying the entire town.

The ground coordinator gave Lt.(jg) Gaither and the group a "Well Done", and said that our troops could proceed with their forward advance immediately.

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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

On his reconnaissance run, Lt.(jg) Gaither encountered light but intense anti-aircraft fire. It was inaccurate and he received no hits. The fire ceased after the first strafing and bombing run.

The first group consisted of the following TBM pilots:

Lt. R. F. Richards, Flight Leader
Lt.(jg) J. W. Burch
Ens. H. E. Vieau
Ens. K. W. Neubauer

The second group included the following TM pilots:

Lt.(jg) R. L. Gaither, Air Coordinator
Lt.(jg) R. V. Redelson, Flight Leader
Ens. J. W. Hoffman
Ens. E. F. Nixon
Ens. F. W. Smith

- -

None.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

R. E. SPENCER, LT., A.C.I OFFICER
SIGNATURE — RANK AND DUTY

A. W. PARKER, LT., A.C.I. OFFICER

APPROVED BY:

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SIGNATURE — RANK AND DUTY

23 April 45
DATE

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