

VMF-13

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Report #89

HC(14)

VMF-13

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Report #89

IC(16)

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

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55918

I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting VFP-113 (b) Based on or at Charlie Airstrip, Ie Shima (c) Report No. 89
 (d) Take off: Date 22 June, 1945 Time (LZT) 0846 (I) (Zone); Lat. 26° 43' N Long. 127° 47' E
 (e) Mission Carrier CAP, Amami O Shima, Amami Gunto. (f) Time of Return 1400 (I) (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>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>None</u> | <u>None</u> |
| <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>None</u> | <u>None</u> |

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

| TYPE | SQUADRON | NUMBER | BASE | TYPE | SQUADRON | NUMBER | BASE |
|----------------|----------------|--------|----------------|------|----------|--------|------|
| <u>Unknown</u> | <u>Unknown</u> | | <u>Unknown</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 |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| <u>Zeke</u> | <u>36</u> | <u>36</u> | <u>1015 (I) (VE)</u> | <u>SE of Amami O Shima</u> | <u>4 x 13.2mm 2 x 20mm</u> | <u>Silver Colored w/ Heat Balls</u> |
| <u>Frank</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>1015 (II) (VE)</u> | <u>SE of Amami O Shima</u> | <u>2 x 13.2mm 2 x 20mm</u> | <u>Silver Colored w/ Heat Balls.</u> |
| <u>George</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>1015 (I) (VE)</u> | <u>SE of Amami O Shima</u> | <u>2 x 13.2mm 4 x 20mm</u> | <u>Silver Colored w/ Heat Balls.</u> |

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) Fighter Sweep
 Did Any Part of
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? Yes If so, Describe Clouds 10/10 Cumulus - 2000 Feet
(YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)
 Time of Day and Brilliance 1015 (I) - Bright
 (j) of Sun or Moon 1015 (I) - Bright (k) Visibility Unlimited
(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 | GUNS USED | | |
| <u>Zeke</u> | <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>2nd Lt. H.B. ALLCROFT</u> | <u>6 x .50"</u> | <u>6 o'clock level wings</u> | <u>Destroyed</u> |
| <u>Zeke</u> | <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>2nd Lt. H.B. ALLCROFT</u> | <u>6 x .50"</u> | <u>6 o'clock level wings</u> | <u>Destroyed</u> |
| <u>Zeke</u> | <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>2nd Lt. H.B. ALLCROFT</u> | <u>6 x .50"</u> | <u>6 o'clock level wings</u> | <u>Probable</u> |
| <u>Zeke</u> | <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>1st Lt. J.D. JOHNSON</u> | <u>6 x .50"</u> | <u>12 o'clock level # & #</u> | <u>Destroyed</u> |
| <u>Zeke</u> | <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>1st Lt. J.D. JOHNSON</u> | <u>6 x .50"</u> | <u>9 - 6 o'clock level high wings & fuselage</u> | <u>Probable</u> |
| <u>Zeke</u> | <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>2nd Lt. F.B. SMITH</u> | <u>6 x .50"</u> | <u>Unknown</u> | <u>Destroyed</u> |
| <u>George</u> | <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>2nd Lt. C.H. JONES</u> | <u>6 x .50"</u> | <u>5 o'clock level # & #</u> | <u>Destroyed</u> |
| <u>Frank</u> | <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>2nd Lt. A.C. PHARR</u> | <u>6 x .50"</u> | <u>6 o'clock high # & #</u> | <u>Destroyed</u> |
| <u>Zeke</u> | <u>F4U-1D</u> | <u>VFP-113</u> | <u>1st Lt. Russell MUNCH</u> | <u>6 x .50"</u> | <u>12 o'clock level engine</u> | <u>Probable</u> |

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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

(22 June, 1945) Twenty (20) planes of this squadron took off from Charlie Airstrip at 0845 Item to form a barrier CAP in the vicinity of Asani O Shima. The area assigned the patrol was rectangle bounded on the north and south by the 28° 20' N and 28° 40' N lines of latitude and extending from 130° 00' E to 130° 40' E longitude. A similar section west of this area was assigned to twenty (20) planes of another squadron.

Two (2) of the planes of one division were forced to turn back due to engine trouble. The remaining eighteen (18) planes proceeded to the patrol area. Two divisions and the section remaining of the broken division (ten planes) took up stations at 15,000 feet while the remaining two sections (eight planes) went on station at 6000 feet.

1st Lt. James D. JOHNSON was leading one of the high-cover divisions. They were roughly between northern Asani O Shima and Kikai Shima at 15,000 feet when 2nd Lt. Alton G. FRAZER, leading the second section, tallied a four (4) plane division, sections abreast, at about 17,000 feet and several miles away. Identification was uncertain due to the distance, and in view of the formation and silver color of the planes, the pilots thought them probably P47's, but turned in to investigate. As the distance shortened it became apparent that the planes were Japanese.

These planes traveling at high speed, passed directly over the patrol planes and dropped their belly tanks, which fell through the patrol formation, narrowly missing some of the planes. Lt. JOHNSON was swinging his division around in a climbing turn to give chase when they saw two (2) large groups of the enemy, each containing at least five (5) four-plane divisions, diving down from a 5000 foot altitude advantage. One group was coming down from twelve o'clock and the other from six o'clock. Unseen until this point, these planes had evidently lain in wait, sending the first division down as a decoy.

The 113 division pulled up to meet the nearest group head-on. The first planes encountered were a division of Zekes. Lt. JOHNSON fired a burst from head-on at one of these. He saw pieces fly off this plane from the engine and wings. The other three (3) planes of his division were unable to bring their guns to bear, but Lt. FRAZER saw the plane hit by Lt. JOHNSON explode. Still in division formation, they met the second Jap division of four (4) planes. 1st Lt. Russell HUNCHAR flying in No. 2 position got in a long burst at a Zeke coming in from the left. He saw his fire register in the port side of the plane forward of the cockpit. A large puff of smoke broke out from the engine. This was seen by both Lieutenants HUNCHAR and FRAZER. Another Zeke was coming in from the right, so HUNCHAR swung right to meet it and fired a short burst. While firing at this plane he was jumped from behind and his plane hit in the elevators and right wing. His plane fell off in a split-second and went down several thousand feet before he was able to regain control. Unable to attain altitude he was forced to return to base, landing at 1112 Item.

From this point on, sheer weight of numbers, the necessity of meeting runs as they came, and the loss of Lt. HUNCHAR's plane, broke the divisions formation and either order or continuity of description of the action became impossible. Lt. JOHNSON saw a Zeke on Lt. FRAZER's tail. He swung around, dropped his flaps and took a full deflection shot. The Zeke pulled off FRAZER and up, executed a split-second and went into a dive with JOHNSON following. He got in a short burst before the Jap went into a small cloud, followed him through and got on again.

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Only one of his guns was firing, but he changed another gun and got two working before the Zeke could make heavy cloud cover, into which he disappeared, smoking badly. JOHNSON pulled back out of the cloud and saw an F4U (later identified as Lt. ALLGROFF) riding down on the tail of a Zeke with all guns firing. The Zeke was smoking badly. JOHNSON'S attention was distracted from this fight when he was jumped by three (3) more Zekes. He swung into meet them and they pulled away just as three (3) more attacked from astern, hitting his plane in the elevators, fuselage, propellor and left wing. The plane rolled over left in a shallow wing over. JOHNSON popped his flaps and the attack-plane overran. Trying the controls he found that he had no elevator controls or trim tabs. He called the other planes (answered by ALLGROFF) and told them he was damaged and would have to try and return to base. Here he was again jumped by three (3) Zekes which followed him as he rolled left into a small cloud and through into heavy cloud cover where he lost them. He landed with a badly shot up plane at 1138 Itca.

Lt. FRASER had evaded the first two attacks, in which he saw Lt. JOHNSON explode one (1) Zeke and Lt. HUNCHAK smoke one (1). He also saw HUNCHAK'S plane fall off on being hit. After seeing HUNCHAK go down he started to join up on Lt. ALLGROFF, at which time he saw two (2) Zekes attacking ALLGROFF from astern. The planes overran and joined up right in front of ALLGROFF'S guns. The plane on the left was promptly creened by a short burst, exploding with a terrific flash of flame, and ALLGROFF kicked his plane around and opened on the other. FRASER saw large pieces flying from all parts of the plane. He reported that he noticed no explosion, but that the plane seemed rather to go to pieces. Another plane, a FRANK, came in at 11 o'clock, high, and ALLGROFF swung to meet him, firing a short burst, and turning to trail in, with FRASER following. FRASER kicked over in a half roll, stalled to bring his nose around and fired a long overhead burst with full deflection (116 miles). He saw a large chunk, which appeared to be about two feet square, fly off the right wing root. He recovered in front and left of the Frank and pulled up in a tight right chandelle, in an attempt to join up with ALLGROFF. While on his back, the Jap planes passed under him smoking in a 45 degree dive. The Frank continued down in this dive and splashed. (This kill was confirmed by Lt. HOLLINGSWORTH. His division was at 5000 feet and made a run on the Frank, but it went in before they could close to range). FRASER joined on ALLGROFF just as another Zeke made a head on attack. As the Jap passed ALLGROFF made a flipper turn and got on his tail, firing. (This was the plane which Lt. JOHNSON reported under attack by an F4U). FRASER was following ALLGROFF around when he was hit by a Zeke which he had not observed. Four twenty mm projectiles exploded in his left wing, blowing off the flaps. Others hit his left wheel, shooting out the brake line and the tire and jammed the aileron tabs. FRASER rolled over and dived into the clouds. The Jap followed and got another hit in the left wing, after they were in the clouds. FRASER continued his dive, jinking, and got away, making a successful emergency landing at 1223 Itca.

Lt. ALLGROFF, as previously mentioned was last seen riding down on the tail of a smoking Zeke with all guns firing. A short time after this, members of the low level patrol heard him call over the radio, "Come on up here, I have got a Tojo and two (2) Zekes cornered!" No further transmissions were heard. Lt. ALLGROFF did not return to base.

Lt. HOLLINGSWORTH'S division was flying about 40 miles east of Anami O Shima at 18,000 feet when Lt. C. R. JONES tallyhoed a plane in the distance going north at about 13,000 feet. The division started over to investigate and the plane, evidently seeing them, turned west. It was identified as Japanese and all planes started in pursuit.

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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

One (1) of our planes was forced to return to home base due to engine trouble. It was found that the droppable fuel tank seal was broken, allowing air to be sucked into the fuel lines. This plane was escorted back to the base by one of our planes.

One (1) of our planes while in action had five guns jam. He managed to recharge one. Gun ports were later hit by 20mm fire, making it impossible to determine the cause of the jam.

On one (1) plane the remote reading compass was spinning at all power settings, after 20mm fire hit in the port elevator.

All other material and equipment operated in a satisfactory manner.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

W.H. Jordan
SIGNATURE **W.H. JORDAN**

Capt. ASIO
RANK AND DUTY

APPROVED BY

Hendley Williams
SIGNATURE **HENDLEY WILLIAMS**

Major. US
RANK AND DUTY

22 June, 1945
DATE

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Lt. JONES, in the lead, was indicating 260 knots and closing very slowly, when the bogey, by that time only one half mile away and very slightly below, started to turn toward the 113 formation. JONES started a flat side run, firing a very short burst (50 rounds) at 40° and 400 foot distance (used 80 mil lead). He saw a flash inboard on the right wing. JONES continued his run by trailing in and firing a burst from directly astern and only 100 feet behind. The Jap plane, identified as a George, exploded. Lt. JONES flew through the explosion, sustaining a buckled wing and numerous small holes in the wings and fuselage. The Japanese pilot jumped, or was blown, clear of the plane, but was seen to fall out of his parachute at 9,000 feet.

The division had joined up at about eight thousand feet when the Frank shot down by Lt. FRANKER was seen diving toward the water. A run was made and Lt. HOLLINGSWORTH had closed to firing range when the Frank struck the water. It exploded and sank immediately.

Lt. W.C. GREEN and Lt. V.B. SMITH, the remaining section of the broken division, were patrolling at 15,000 feet. They were above the clouds and did not know their exact position. Land was sighted through a hole in the clouds and Lt. SMITH told GREEN he would drop through to see what it was and then verify their position. After SMITH had gone down, GREEN heard the big fight going on over his radio. He called SMITH and told him to come back. SMITH told him he was on his way and requested him to drop down and meet him half way. GREEN dropped down to clear area at about 8,000 feet between two cloud layers and continued to call, asking for SMITH's position. He continued to get the same answer of "I am coming up". Then he heard SMITH call that he had run into a very large Jap formation and that four of them were on his tail. This conversation was also heard by Lt. J.E. WELLMAN who reported hearing SMITH say, quote "For God's sake, help us. There are a million of them. There or four (4) on my tail" unquote. Then approximately ten to twenty seconds later quote "Splash one and I am shot all to hell and heading back for base" unquote. Entry 15-2 came in and said quote "I will confirm the splash and try to keep you in sight" unquote. The next transmission heard from SMITH was approximately three to five minutes later. He said quote "This is Smitty - oil pressure zero - temperature - - -. Going to - - -" unquote. Part of the last was unintelligible. He was heard to say something about his course and that he was attempting something, also not understandable. Lt. SMITH did not return to base.

Lt. GREEN finally joined up with Major HANCO's division and returned to base with them.

No other planes made enemy contact.

The enemy planes and pilots engaged were by no means of the type usually encountered. Their planes were good and the pilots skilled and aggressive. A very good formation was flown and maintained. Deception was used by sending in one division as a decoy. The planes waiting above were grouped in four (4) plane divisions, sections roughly abreast, and divisions stacked. They attacked by divisions in the following manner: The whole division executed a chandelle to the left, thus starting a diving approach on opposite course with altitude advantage. The division then split into two sections, one going to each side of the target planes and executed high side runs simultaneously, completing the run by tailing in and joining.

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The following VME-113 pilots participated on this mission:

Maj. C.H. HARLO - Division leader
2nd Lt. P.J. MILLER - Wingman
2nd Lt. "JACK" WELLMAN - Section leader
2nd Lt. J.V. SMITH - Wingman

1st Lt. E.F. HOLLINGSWORTH - Division leader
2nd Lt. A.J. BRIGHT - Wingman
2nd Lt. C.H. JONES - Section leader
2nd Lt. F.S. VAUGHN - Wingman

2nd Lt. F.E. SMITH - Section leader
1st Lt. W.C. GREY - Wingman

1st Lt. J.D. JOHNSON - Division leader
2nd Lt. R.D. ALEGROFF - Wingman
2nd Lt. A.C. FRAZER - Section leader
1st Lt. Russell HUNCRAB - Wingman

Capt. Robert BAILEY, Jr. - Division leader
2nd Lt. J.L. SCOTT - Wingman
2nd Lt. R.J. HUNRO - Section leader
1st Lt. Kirkland FLYNN - Wingman

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