

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

I. GENERAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(a) Unit Reporting VC-91 (b) Based on or at USS MAKIN ISLAND (CVE93) (c) Report No. VC-91 #60
 (d) Take off: Date 24 May 1945 Time (LZT) 0600/1130-I (Zone); Lat. 25° 13' N. Long 128° 07'
 (e) Mission Ground Support, & Coordinator, Okinawa. (f) Time of Return 0945/1530+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) | | |
| (A) TBM-3 | VC-91 | 41 | 0 | 4 | 3 x 500# GP AN-M64 8 x 5" HE AR Mk1/Mk7 | Inst nose AN-M-103A1 & .025" tail AN-M-101A2. |
| (A) TBM-3 | VC-91 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 x 5" HE AR Mk1/Mk7 4 x 3.5" FS AR Mk6/Mk7 | .02 base Mk 157. Inst nose Mk 155. |
| (B) TBM-3 | VC-91 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 2 x 500# GP (as above) 8 x 5" HE AR (as above) | Same as above. |

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

| TYPE | SQUADRON | NUMBER | BASE | TYPE | SQUADRON | NUMBER | BASE |
|-----------|----------|--------|-----------------|------|----------|--------|------|
| (A) TBM-3 | VC-93 | 4 | USS PETROF BAY | | | | |
| (A) TBM-3 | VC-99 | 3 | USS HOGGATT BAY | | | | |

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) _____
 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: | | | GUNS USED | (c) WHERE HIT, ANGLE | (d) DAMAGE CLAIMED |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| | TYPE A/C | SQUADRON | PILOT OR GUNNER | | | |
| 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 | | | | |
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| 6 | | | | |
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| 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 | | | | |
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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 | |
| (A) TBM-3 | 70 | 70 | 3.75 | 301 | 210 | | | | | 5 |
| (B) TBM-3 | 60 | 60 | 3.5 | 301 | 210 | | 200 | | | 4 |

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

None.

TURNS
DIVES
CEILINGS
RANGE
PROTECTION
ARMAMENT

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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) **Caves used as Supply Depots and Emplacements on Okinawa.** (b) Time Over Target(s) **0850/1230-I** (Zone)
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE AL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)

(c) Clouds Over Target **(A) fog to 1500', haze to 3500' (B) haze to 2500', Cumulus to 6000'.10/10**
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER).

(d) Visibility of Target **Poor** (e) Visibility **1 1/2**
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (MILES)

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

Bombs Dropped per Run **A3/B1** Spacing **---** Altitude of Bomb Release **2500/1800**
(NUMBER) (FEET) (FEET)

Rockets " " " **8/2** Slant Range **1000 to 700 yds.** Angle **35/30.**
(FEET) (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) |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| A) ¹ Caves (supply depots) on ridge 7457 KLH. | 200x600 yds | 5 VC-91 | 11 x 500# GP 31 x 5" HE ARs. | All | Undetermined |
| B) ² Caves (Troop and gun emplacements), X7668 FGB to 7669 VW. | 50x200 yds. | 4 VC-91 | 8 x 500# GP 32 x 5" HE AR's. 200 x 50 cal. | 4 GP 28 ARs. | Undetermined |
| 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).

Target #1. (By Group A) - About 20 caves had been observed from 5000 feet, but were not visible at lower altitudes because of haze and fog. Area was plastered, but specific damage could not be observed.

Target #2. (By Group B) - Again poor visibility prevented pilots from observing damage, except for one explosion of ~~the~~ what apparently had been an unobserved grass-camouflaged building.

(p) Were Photographs Taken? **No** 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

Caves believed in use by the Japs on Okinawa as emplacements and for storage purposes were bombed and rocketed by two groups of four TBM-3s from VC-91 on 24 May 1945. This report covers both flights.

The first (A) group left the MAKIN ISLAND at 0600, led by Lt. (jg) Smith, with Lt. Richards in a fifth VT loaded only with rockets as Air Coordinator. The four VC-91 planes carried three 500-pounders as well as eight 5" HE rockets. Upon reporting to the Marines' CSA, they were assigned to a target with four VT from PETROF BAY and three from HOGGATT. They waited two hours before getting started on that target assignment, however, first being transferred by the Marine CSA to the Army CSA on the east side of the island, then being transferred back.

The target was a ridge at TA 7457 KLH, near the souther tip of the island, where caves were reported being used for storage of supplies. The weather had a peculiar effect on target visibility - a fog extending up to 1500 feet and a haze from there to 3000 feet making visibility better at 5000 feet than at lower altitudes. From that point about 20 caves were observed, but they could not be seen at lower altitudes. As a result the pilots did not make the normal dummy spotting runs.

Relying on a saturation type attack when the caves faded from sight during their dives, the pilots pushed over at 5000 feet at an angle of 45 degrees and released at about 2500 feet, dropping all three bombs in salvo. This run was followed by one at 35 degrees in which all eight rockets were fired at 1000 yards slant range. The Coordinator, who added his four smoke and four HE rockets to the bombardment, reported all bombs and rockets hit in the specified area. Results could not be determined.

While crossing the island in being shifted from one CSA to another the pilots saw about four rounds of five-inch AA burst some 1000 feet ahead of them, at their altitude, but it was not followed by any closer bursts.

Pilots were: Lt. R. F. Richards (Air Coordinator)
Lt. (jg) A. L. Smith
Lt. (jg) D. G. Kane
Ens. D. F. Griesinger
Ens. K. W. Neubauer

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The second (B) group, led by Lt. (jg) McNeela, consisted of four VT's loaded with eight rockets and two 500-pound GP's; it took off at 1130 and an hour later was on target.

The target was caves on the northeast side of a ridge in TA 7666FGB and 7669VW, just southeast of Naha inner Harbor, which were reported in use as Jap fortified troop and gun emplacements. Again the pilots were handicapped by haze up to 2500 feet, which obscured the targets, with solid clouds from 2500 to 6000 feet.

Because specific targets could not be seen at low altitudes, no dummy runs were made. Instead the pilots went immediately into their usual loose column formation for two bombing and four rocket runs, dropping their bombs singly and firing their rockets in pairs. Four of the eight GP's and 28 of the 32 rockets landed in the area, but results

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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

1. One bomb (group A) failed to release until during return toward base when pilot opened bomb bays to try again, and it dropped out. Cause: probable defective shackle. A pilot in Group B, flying the same plane, had identical difficulty but his bomb fell near the target area.

2. Two rockets failed to fire on one plane. Cause: plugs became unplugged, probably during catapulting.

(Continued from Page 4)

could not be determined -- except for an explosion of what apparently had been an unobserved grass-camouflaged building.

Bombing runs were at 40 degrees, starting at 3000 feet with release at 1800 feet. Rockets were fired at 1000 to 700 yards slant range, at an angle of 30 degrees.

No AA was encountered.

Pilots were:

- Lt. J. M. Fletcher
- Lt.(jg) J. P. McNeela
- Ens. H. E. Vieau
- Ens. S. E. Ulmer

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

E. H. SPENCER, LT., A.C.I. OFFICER

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

F. M. BLANCHARD, LT., C.O.

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

24 May 45

DATE