

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. 113
 (d) Take off: Date 7 April 1945 Time (LZT) 0830(I) (Zone); Lat. 25-35N Long. 128-30E
 (e) Mission Photographic mission and Fighter escort - Okinawa (f) Time of Return 1100(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>FM-3</u>	<u>VC-88</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>-----</u>	<u>-----</u>
<u>FM-2</u>	<u>VC-88</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>-----</u>	<u>-----</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
<u>VAL</u>		<u>2</u>	<u>0925 (Z)</u>	<u>26-33N 127-52E</u>	<u>one plane had 250 kg bomb, ext; no rear gunner</u>	<u>All were brown with green mottled</u>
<u>Val</u>	<u>1</u>		<u>0922 (Z)</u>	<u>26-33N 127-52E</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>streaks; usual red roundels on wings.</u>

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) Bombing (1 plane) and suicide (all three)
 Did Any Part of _____
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? No 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 Dull day (k) Visibility 10'
(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>VAL</u>	<u>FM-2</u>	<u>VC-88</u>	<u>Lt(jg) D.L.SIMS, USNR</u>	<u>4-50 cal</u>	<u>Engine & cockpit, 3 to 4 o'clock, level</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>
<u>VAL</u>	<u>FM-2</u>	<u>VC-88</u>	<u>Lt(jg) D.L.SIMS, USNR</u>	<u>4-50 cal</u>	<u>Fuselage, engine star- board wing, 6 o'clock above</u>	<u>Destroyed</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

On 7 April 1945 Ensign G. B. HANOVER, a TBM pilot, was assigned a photographic mission over Okinawa. Lt(jg) D. L. SIMS, flying an FM-2, was assigned to him as fighter escort. While they were carrying out the mission, the enemy made a heavy air raid on the ships in the target area, and these two pilots found themselves in the midst of a bombing and suicide attack. Before it was over Hanover had had a dogfight with a Val, possibly damaging it, and Sims had destroyed two Vals, both in the process of attacking U.S. Ships just north of the Isthmus of Okinawa. The encounter took place at Lat. 26-33N. 127-52E, at 0925(I).

Sims had gone several thousand below Hanover to investigate an unidentified plane which had proved to be a TBM, and was climbing back when he first saw an enemy plane, believed to be a Val, dive into a formation of minesweepers. The plane did not hit, however; the pilot missing by his own lack of skill since there was no AA fire. Almost immediately Sims saw a second plane, another Val, start to dive from a northwesterly direction at about 5000 feet, at about a 45° angle, just under the overcast, heading straight for the ships. Sims headed up toward him, and when at maximum range opened fire, getting in his bursts about 45 degrees from head on. As Val continued down, closing the distance between them, Sims continued to fire, falling off his starboard wing as Val passed. The enemy plane was being hit by Sim's fire, tracers indicating that fire was going into engine and cockpit from about 3 to 4 o'clock, level. At 2000 feet, Val went out of control, rolled on its back and dove into the water. A large splash and explosion resulted. The plane landed about 100 yards from the closest ship. There had been no ship AA fire. Once the Val went by him, as he hung in the air, Sims didn't get in another shot. He doesn't believe there was any rear gunner in the plane, nor did he see a bomb.

Hanover, meanwhile spotted a third Val at 10 o'clock down 2 miles. At that time Hanover was at 4000 to 5000 feet on course of 270°, Val at about 3000 on course of 120°. Hanover headed toward Val which also turned toward him. Almost head on the planes approached each other. Hanover opened fire at 1000 ft. but had no gun sight mounted and could not aim accurately. His fire was falling below the Val, and he didn't have time to correct before planes passed, Hanover pulling to port, and about 20-30 feet below Val which broke to starboard. The planes scissored. Val pulled up and did wing over; the turret gunner, W.D. STEVENS, AQMSc, was able to get in about 50 rounds as TBM was still turning. Val headed back toward them. The turret fire was hitting aft of second cockpit, 9 o'clock below. No smoke seen but Hanover and Stephens believe hits were made. Val dropped a 250 kg bomb before heading back toward the TBM. There was no gunner in the plane, the rear canopy enclosure being closed. Hanover had no opportunity to fire again.

As the Val descended Sims continued the attack. After shooting down his first Val had started to climb. He heard Hanover on the air say something about a Val. Then he saw it about 2000 feet above at 11 o'clock in a shallow ten degree glide. Sims pulled up to meet him and easily got on tail. He was about to pour fire into Val from 4000 ft. altitude to 800 ft. The starboard wing began to flame first, then in bad shape, Val began to dive away to starboard, in flames, exploding, and crashed into the sea. Sims had broken off to the left and saw Val crash a thousand yards from the nearest ship. J. A. FUCHS, ARMSc, in Hanover's plane, watched Sims follow the Val, flame and splash it.

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XII. TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA.

The TBM occupants also saw Sims fire on the first Val he destroyed although they didn't see the first plane hit the water they saw the spot not far from the minesweepers where it hit.

While there was no return fire from the second Val, there was a profusion of intense heavy accurate and intense medium accurate AA fire from U.S. ships, including two BBs, 3 cruisers and numerous destroyers, during the entire fight, beginning when Hanover was fighting and continuing after Sims had splashed the second Val.

The entire situation was somewhat confusing and definitely dangerous. Sims and Hanover, unable to rendezvous, headed ~~their~~ towards their carrier.

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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

No comment.

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

REPORT PREPARED BY:

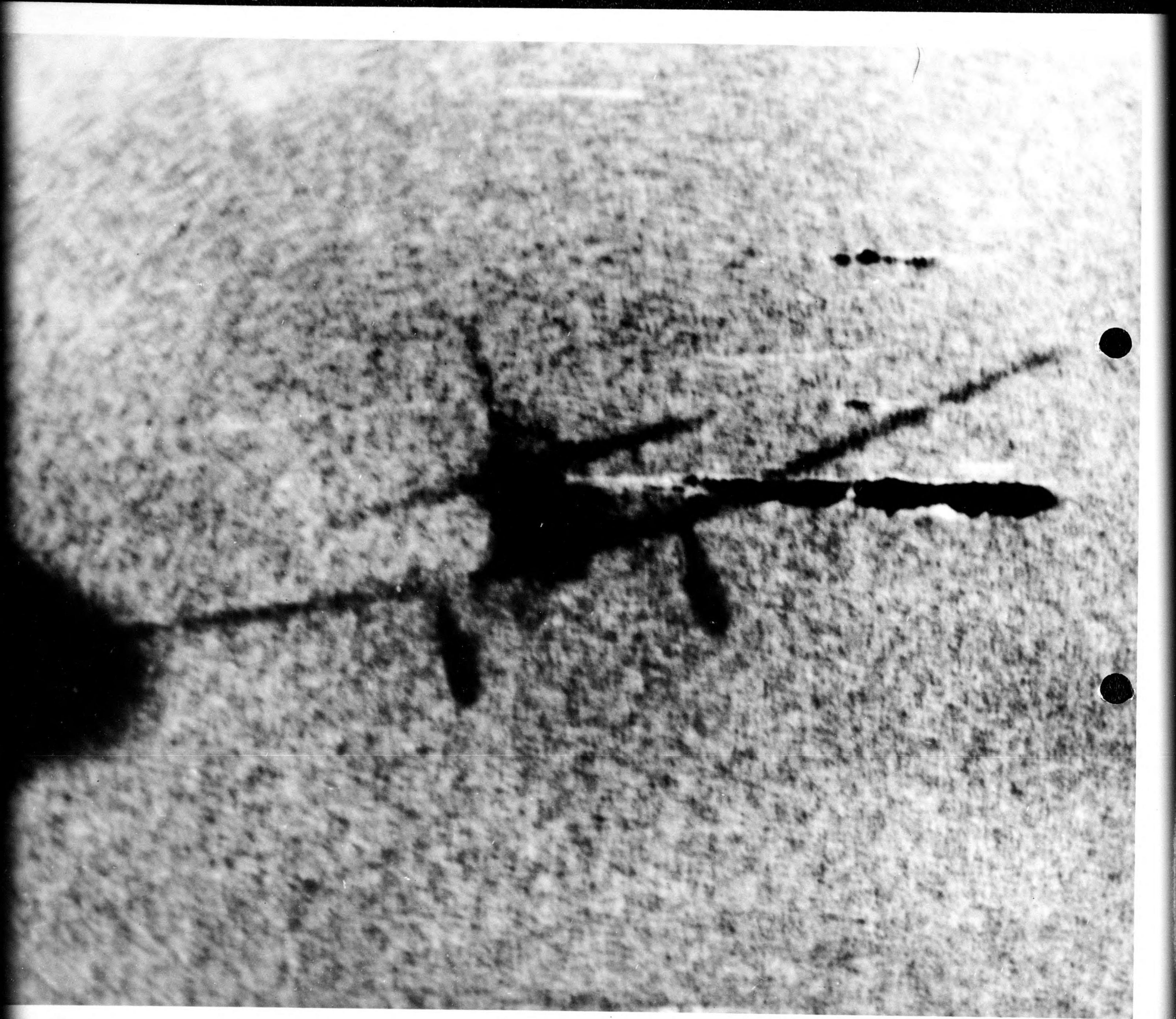
APPROVED BY:

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E. D. SCHNAAB, Lt. USNR, ACIO
SIGNATURE RANK AND DUTY

E. L. KEMPF, Lt. USNR, Commanding
SIGNATURE RANK AND DUTY

28 April 1945
DATE



OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH
NOT TO BE USED FOR PUBLICATION
BY ORDER OF
THE CHIEF OF THE BUREAU
OF AERONAUTICS

NO. QVE 82
428 DATE 3-26-45
UNIT VC-88

MADE FOR ACT ACA-1 #113
SUBJECT VAL DESTROYED BY
LT (JG) D. W. Sims USNR ON
7 APRIL 1945