

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

52850

I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting VF-45 (b) Based on or at U.S.S. SAN JACINTO (c) Report No. 86
 (d) Take off: Date 6 April 1945 Time (LZT) 1257 (I) (Zone); Lat. 26° 45' N Long. 129° 30' E
 (e) Mission Emergency Day Combat Air Patrol (f) Time of Return 1405 (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>P-51</u>	<u>VF-45</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>None</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>Tojo</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1336 (I)</u> (ZONE)	<u>Vicinity of</u> <u>Task Group</u>	<u>None observed</u>	<u>Big red nose balls</u> <u>near top of each</u> <u>wing. Plane was</u> <u>colored dull Army</u> <u>green</u>
			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) Unknown
 Did Any Part of
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? No If so, Describe Clouds _____ (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)
 Time of Day and Brilliance
 (j) of Sun or Moon Day (NIGHT, BRIGHT MOON; DAY, OVERCAST; ETC.) (k) Visibility 8 (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			
<u>Tojo</u>	<u>P-51</u>	<u>VF-45</u>	<u>It. H. Kitchelbin</u>	<u>6 x .50 cal</u>	<u>After part of fuselage</u> <u>from astern. Cockpit,</u> <u>from port quarter,</u> <u>slightly above.</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>

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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				
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

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		
F4U-7	2	2	3.1	400	270	App. 600 rds.				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
- TURNS
- DIVES
- CEILINGS
- RANGE
- PROTECTION
- ARMAMENT

The F4U-7 closed very quickly to within firing range of the Tojo. In closing the gap between the F4U and the Tojo, it was necessary for the former to climb. That the F4U speedily got within range without employing full military power can only be explained by the apparent ignorance of the Jap pilot of the approach of the F4U.

The Tojo did not burn. The pilot was believed killed by a quartering burst.

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~~SECRET~~

(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) X (FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK) (b) Time Over Target(s) X (Zone)
- (c) Clouds Over Target X (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)
- (d) Visibility of Target 1 (CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (e) Visibility X (MILES)
- (f) Bombing Tactics: Type X (LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) Bomb Sight Used X (TYPE)
- Bombs Dropped per Run X (NUMBER) Spacing X (FEET) Altitude of Bomb Release X (FEET)
- (g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed X Probably Destroyed X Damaged X

(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					
2					
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).

(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
- Offensive Tactics, Enemy
- Defensive Tactics, Own
- Defensive Tactics, 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

At 1255 (I) 6 April 1945, the last four available Wildcats on the USS SAN JACINTO were scrambled for Emergency CAP over Task Group 58.1. Our Naval Forces in the vicinity of Okinawa J were under heavy air attack, and Task Force FIFTY-EIGHT, lying to the eastward, was likewise being hit by the enemy. The atmosphere was tense and the situation grim.

The four plane division, led by Lt. H. Knickelbine, following the emergency scramble procedure in effect, took a heading of 270° and was told to climb to 10,000 feet. When the planes had climbed to 4000 feet they were in the middle of thick cloud cover, so the Fighter Director instructed Knickelbine to lead the division back to the base of the cloud layer. The planes popped out of the clouds about ten miles distant from the Task Group. They were soon given a vector of 070°, which eventually resulted in an interception of friendly aircraft. The four fighters were then approximately 40 miles east of base, and they started their return trip at 2000 feet altitude. Knickelbine glanced up shortly after they had commenced their return trip and saw a single bogey 10 o'clock, up a proximately 500 feet, distance about a mile, and on an opening course to the south. Knickelbine tally-lead the bogey, made a port turn and quickly closed, employing 2000 RPM, 15 inches of manifold pressure and indicating 210 knots. The bogey was now identified as a Tojo. The Jap pilot obviously did not see the crushing destruction, for he flew straight and level, at cruising speed. This assurance was cured by Knickelbine's first burst of fifty calibre fire from extreme range, in a no deflection shot astern. The Tojo emitted a puff of white as he as a few of the bullets went home, and the Jap flipped his port wing and started a gliding turn to port, exposing the engine and cockpit to Knickelbine. That latter now gave the Jap a short burst from about 700 feet hitting the cockpit. The Tojo, light smoking, and with all its wing guns firing, pitched over into the sea from a proximately 1000 feet. The pilot was apparently killed.

The four plane division then joined up, and orbited without further excitement north of Base until they sneaked at 1405 (I).

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XIII. MATERIAL DATA. (Comment freely on performance or suitability, following check list at left.
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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

All material and equipment functions satisfactorily.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

S. N. WEAVER, Jr., Lt. Jc., USNR
SIGNATURE CI Officer RANK AND DUTY

L. E. F. HUBER, Lt., USNR
SIGNATURE Commanding Officer RANK AND DUTY

4-24-45
DATE