

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

REPORT No. _____

SECRET

XI. ATTACK ON ENEMY SHIPS OR GROUND OBJECTIVES (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) Ashiya and Gannosh Airfields, Kyushu Time Over Target(s) 1615-1630(17) (Zone)
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)

(c) Clouds Over Target 5000, alto-cumulus, scattered
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

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

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type Dive Bomb Sight Used Mk. VIII, Illuminated
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE) Gunsight

Bombs Dropped per Run 1 Spacing _____ Altitude of Bomb Release 2500
(NUMBER) (FEET) (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
" " , 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

See attached sheets

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TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA

Lt. Comdr. George M. Rousee, Commander of Air Group FORTY NINE, took off at 0455(1) 14 May 1945, with four divisions of Hellcats from the USS SAN JACINTO, to join a like number of F6F's from the USS BELLEAU WOOD in a sweep against ASHIYA and GANNOSU Airfields, Kyushu. The sweep leader and coordinator designated for the attack was the flight leader from the USS BELLEAU WOOD.

The approach to the targets was over water, along the eastern coast of Kyushu, at an altitude of 15,000 feet. A landfall was made between SONE and ISUKI, and a westerly course was held until the sweep group was almost due south of Ashiya. The attack on this airfield was from east to west, the "push-over" point being at about 9000 feet. The attack was extremely well coordinated, the front of the flight being easily contained in a 60° quadrant relative to the target. The pull-out altitude was from 1000 to 2000 feet, and the retirement was to the west over the water. About one-half of the bombs and rockets carried by the fighters were expended in the northeastern corner of the field in the hangar and dispersal areas, where three Zekes were seen parked, and in the southwestern sector where two twin-engined and five single engined planes were seen. The rockets and bombs were seen to hit in the target area, but no fires or damage to the planes or the adjacent buildings were observed. The whole of the building and dispersal area were heavily strafed.

There was a good deal of automatic weapon fire, but it was quite inaccurate. The antiaircraft fire came mainly from the northeastern corner of the field. Some heavy flak was fired from the same area, but it was meagre in amount and inaccurate in deflection.

The runway at Ashiya airfield appeared to be operational, although the field installations had been badly hit some time before this attack. The planes parked in the southwestern quarter of the field were well dispersed, but the three Zekes were all in a tight bunch near the hangars.

The flight rendezvoused over the water to the west of the airfield and climbed to 12,000 feet before proceeding south to attack Gannosu Airfield. The attack on Gannosu field was made from the southeast, and again was well coordinated. The principal attack was made on the hangars and parking area on the eastern half of the target. Several bombs were also dropped in the barracks area near the southwest boundary of the field. About a dozen twin-engined transport aircraft were close parked immediately west of the hangars. None of these planes were seen to burn, although hits were observed on several of them. At least three were probably damaged. One hangar was seen to explode and three others were left burning. As the flight was departing over the water, two Emilys were seen taking off. One was fired upon but no hits could be observed.

At Ashiya airfield there was moderate but inaccurate fire from automatic weapons. Most of the firing was from the hangar area, but there was some firing from guns on the beach to the northwest. A heavy battery fired a few rounds at the planes from the northwestern corner of

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the airfield, but the bursts, while close aboard the F6F's, were wide of their intended target.

Gannosu airfield likewise appeared operational, and while the building area had obviously been struck before, it did not evidence serious damage prior to this sweep.

Retirement was made to the west over the water. Before rendezvousing, a small, single-stack merchantman with engines-aft (Sugar Dog--JST) was strafed and left dead in the water. This ship fired on the strafing planes with medium automatic weapons located fore and aft. The VF from both squadrons proceeded north to a point just south of Ashiya where they turned inland. The fighters from the USS BELLEAU WOOD were taken under attack by numerous heavy antiaircraft guns, and the planes from VF-49 proceeded north around the tip of Kyushu, cutting across the peninsula above Kokura. This route was selected because the same course had been followed on the approach to the target, and no guns had fired at that time. However, there was a great amount of heavy flak from the time the flight came within gun range of the shore and ships' guns at Wakamatsu until they left on the western side of the peninsula below Sone. The antiaircraft fire was continuously pointed and extremely accurate both as to range and deflection. The flight was at about 9000 feet. Planned changes in course and altitude seemed to be effective in throwing the enemy gunners off on their aiming, but the bursts were extremely close during most of the period when the flight was under fire. Lt. Comdr. Rouzee was unable to attempt a radical climb to higher altitude, inasmuch as the planes in the flight were dangerously low on gasoline.

A great concentration of merchant shipping was seen on both sides of the peninsula and to the north in the Shimonoseki straits. All ships within range fired everything they had, which was considerable.

After leaving the vicinity of Sone the course home was entirely over water and was without incident. The flight pancaked at 0835(1).

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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

All equipment functioned satisfactorily.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

SIGNATURE **Lt. (jg) R. A. Smythe, AF1 Officer** RANK AND DUTY

SIGNATURE **Lt. Comdr. G.M. Rousee, Commanding Officer** RANK AND DUTY

17 May 1945

DATE