

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

CONFIDENTIAL

REPORT No VC-91 #67

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

(A)0730/(B)1540/

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) Artillery & Caves on Okinawa. (b) Time Over Target(s) (C)1710-I (Zone)
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)

(c) Clouds Over Target (A) Stratus 3000' 3/10 (B) None (C) Cumulo-Stratus 4000' - 10/10
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target Good/good/fair (e) Visibility 15/10/12
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (MILES)

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

(A)1500/(B)2000-

Bombs Dropped per Run 1 Spacing -- Altitude of Bomb Release 2500/(C)2500-2000
(NUMBER) (FEET)

Rockets " " " 2/4/4 Slant Range 600-1000/800/1200 yds. Angle 20/30/40.
(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 3 Artillery (105-155MM)(7171 MR)	Circle 50 yds. radius	5 VC-91	12 x 500# GP/32 ARs. 1375 x 50 cal/210x30	4 GP All AR.	Serious
(B) ² Caves (7370 LQRW)	50x200 yds.	5 VC-91	8 x 500# GP/29 ARs. 605 x 50 cal.	6 GP 25 ARs.	10 closed (by all planes)
(B) ³ Gun emplacement in TA 7370 WZ.	25ft Radius	2 VC-91	6 x 5" ARs.	6 ARs	Serious
(C) ⁴ Caves (7770 PQUV)	400x400 yds.	5 VC-91	8 x 500" GP 35 x 5" ARs.	8 GP 24 ARs.	Undetermined
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) - Three 105-155 mm guns were presumably damaged seriously by explosion of four 500 pound GP bombs within 20 yards and 32 rockets within 50 yards, including one direct rocket hit on one gun. However, guns were still standing at completion of attack.

Target #2. (By Group B) - Coordinator counted at least ten caves (reported in use by Jap troops) closed by combined attack of five VC-91 pilots (six 500-pound bombs and 25 rockets in area) and eight VT from USS SUWANNEE (60% or better of 32x500-pound bombs and 64 rockets in area).

Target #3. (By Group B) - Two VT's fired six rockets at gun in emplacement within main #2 target area; all hit emplacement or inside it, but specific damage could not be determined. Gun assessed by pilots as possible dummy.

Target #4. (By Group C) - Results of bombing of caves could not be determined because of smoke, but area well covered.

(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

Three Support Flights over Okinawa by VC-91 pilots on 20 May, each composed of four loaded TBM's and one VT as Air Coorconatir, are covered by this report.

The first (A) group departed from the MAKIN ISLAND at 0600 and reported in to the Marines' CSA west of Naha. The Coordinator, Lt. Richards, was assigned to lead another group; the other four VT's from VC-91 with Lt.(jg) Butler acting as Coordinator were assigned their own target -- three 105-155mm guns in emplacements atop a hill in TA 7171MR, north of Naha Airfield. This group was delayed long enough before being released for its attack that Lt. Richards was able to finish spotting a target for his group and rejoin his own squadron group and fire his rocket into their target.

Lt. Butler led his group in a dummy run over the target area, the pilots getting down to about 500 feet in order to pick out the guns and emplacements. Then they made three bombing, four rocket and three strafing runs, releasing their bombs singly at 1500 feet and firing rockets two per run from 600 to 1000 yards slant range. Because of three-tenths stratus clouds at 3000 feet, they made their glide bombing runs from 4000 feet. Angles of 35 degrees were used in bombing and 20 degrees in rocket runs. Although the guns were still standing at the completion of the attack, they probably were seriously damaged because at least four bombs exploded within 20 yards and all 32 rockets within 50 yards, including one which was seen to hit one gun.

No AA was encountered.

Pilots were: Lt. R. F. Richards (Air Coordinator), Lt.(jg) D. K. Butler (Acting Coordinator), Lt.(jg) A.L. Smi. Lt.(jg) D. G. Kane, Ens. D. F. Griesinger.

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Lt.(jg) McNeela was coordinator for the second (B) group of four VT's from VC-91, which joined over Okinawa with eight VT's from the SUWANNEE in attacking caves reported in use as artillery and troop positions. The specific caves assigned were on the northeast side of a ridge facing Naha inner Harbor, in TA 7370LQRW. The planes left the MAKIN at 1315 but were not assigned to the target until 1540.

The coordinator first made several low flights over the area, getting down to 150 to 300 feet, to locate the caves; then told the SUWANNEE pilots, who were overdue, to drop their loads first. The VC-91 pilots followed suit, dropping their two 500-pound GP's singly and their eight rockets in two runs. At least six of their eight bombs and 25 of their 29 5" HE rockets landed within the target area. The SUWANNEE pilots put a majority of their 32 500-pounders and 64 rockets in the area. Specific credit for damage could not be determined, but a minimum of 10 caves were closed.

There were no clouds and the pilots pushed over between 4000 and 5000 feet into a 45 degree glide on their bombing runs, releasing at 2000 to 2500 feet. They fired rockets at 800 yards at an angle of 30 degrees. The attack was held off for an hour and half while the planes circled until an eight-tenths cloud cover extending from 500 to 2500 feet cleared the area.

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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 500-pound GP bomb failed to detonate; cause undetermined. Aircrewmembers said bomb was properly armed, but shackle did not retain arming wires, so this can not be definitely established; shackle and systems were tested out satisfactorily later. Arming wire believed placed properly in receptacles; absence of arming wires makes it impossible to attribute failure to a defective fuze.

2. One rocket failed to fire; probable cause: Defective motor (Mk7).

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Two VC-91 pilots aimed six rockets at a gun in the general target area, all six rockets hitting inside or into the emplacement. The gun, described by the Coordinator as possibly a dummy, was presumably seriously damaged but remained standing.

Five rounds of 40-mm anti-aircraft fire burst some 100 yards to the left of one pilot, Lt.(jg) Younglove, during a retirement run south of Naha inlet, but caused no damage. The area was avoided on subsequent retirements.

Pilots were: Lt.(jg) J.P. McNeela (Air Coordinator); Lt.(jg) M. D. Howard, Lt.(jg) EE, Younglove, Ens. W. F. Hancock and Ens. L. L. Lundquist.

The third (C) group, led by Lt. Fletcher as Air Coordinator, left the MAKIN ISLAND at 1600 and joined with eight VT from the BLOCK ISLAND for another saturation type attack on a cave area at TA 7770PQUV, West of Naha. The caves were described as believed in use for storage and as forts and were located on the north side of the ridge.

Lt. Fletcher made four dummy runs in an attempt to see the caves which were only vaguely visible under smoke and mist, and then marked the ridge area with smoke rockets from 400 to 500 feet altitude. He then led the planes in two bombing runs, halted the attack to re-mark the target with smoke rockets, then sent the pilots in to unload their rockets.

The VC-91 planes carried two 500-pounders and eight 5" HE rockets, dropping the bombs singly and firing the rockets four per run. Cumulo-Stratus clouds made a solid cloud cover at 4000 feet, so bombing runs were started from that altitude, at 30 to 40 degrees, with release at 1500 to 2000 feet. Rockets were fired at 40 degrees and 1200 yards.

Results of the bombing could not be determined by the Coordinator because of the heavy smoke, but the area was well plastered. Our pilots scored with six of eight bombs and 20 of 35 rockets in the area; BLOCK ISLAND pilots with 60 percent of their loads.

Pilots were: Lt. J. M. Fletcher (Air Coordinator), Lt.(jg) F. K. Harmon, Ens. S. W. Ulmer, Ens. H. E. Vieau and Ens. H. L. Peebles.

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

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RANK AND DUTY

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

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RANK AND DUTY

20 May 45

DATE