

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

SECRET

I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting VT-45 (b) Based on or at U.S.S. SAN JACINTO (c) Report No. 22
 (d) Take off: Date 18 March 1945 Time (LZT) 0645 (Zone); Lat. 30°-45' Long. 139°-29'
 (e) Mission Strike Kagoshima A/F, Kyushu, Japan (f) Time of Return 1045 (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)		
TB-3	VT-45	9	0	9	Twelve 200/ G.P.	None - None Tail .025 <i>no Kagoshima Assembly</i>

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
TB-3	VT-45	9	USS SAN JACINTO	VF	VF-6	16	USS FRANKLIN
TB-3	VT-47	9	USS BREMER	TB-3	VT-6	16	USS FRANKLIN
VF	VF-47	2	USS BREMER	VF	VF-6	16	USS FRANKLIN
VF	VF-5	2	USS HANCOCK	VF	VF-6	16	USS HANCOCK

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 _____ (k) Visibility _____
(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		
None						

ENCLOSURE (A)

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

SECRET

REPORT No. **22**

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)
1 381-3	VT-45	Engine failure caused	In engine area somewhere	Plane lost in water
2 Ballo.		by enemy A/A fire	though no exact	landing.
3 66782			determination can be	
4			made as plane was lost.	
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
1	VT-45	Lt. Henderson J. Van Haven #129779 USNR	Plane made water landing	Uninjured - picked up by Destroyer.
2	VT-45	Arthur C. Ryley, AM2a(T) # 203 44 27 USNR	Plane made water landing	Uninjured - picked up by Destroyer.
3	VT-45	John D. Freeman, AM2a # 800 03 02, USN-1	Plane made water landing	Uninjured - picked up by Destroyer.

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	
381-3	165	170	4 Hours	300 Gal.	228 Gal.		225 Bds.			3

IX. ENEMY ANTI-AIRCRAFT ENCOUNTERED (Check one block on each line).

CALIBER	NONE	MEAGER	MODERATE	INTENSE
HEAVY — Time-fused shells, 75mm and over			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
MEDIUM — Impact-fused shells, 20mm-50mm				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LIGHT — Machine gun bullets, 6.5mm-13.2mm			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

X. COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE, OWN AND ENEMY AIRCRAFT (use check list at left).

SPEED, CLIMB,
at various altitudes

- TURNING
- DIVES
- CEILINGS
- RANGE
- PROTECTION
- ARMAMENT

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(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

SECRET

REPORT No. 22

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

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) Japanese A/P Installations (b) Time Over Target(s) 0845 (Zone) 9
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)

(c) Clouds Over Target None
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target Clear (e) Visibility 20 Miles
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBTURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (MILES)

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type 01140 Bomb Sight Used Mark 8
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run 12 Spacing Select Altitude of Bomb Release 5000-7000 Ft.
(NUMBER) (FEET) (FEET)

(g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed None Probably Destroyed None Damaged None

(h) AIMING POINT	(i) DIMENSIONS OR TONNAGE	(j) NO. A/C ATTACKING	(l) BOMBS AND AMMUNITION EXPENDED, EACH AIMING POINT	(m) NO. HITS On Aiming Point	(n) DAMAGE (None, slight, serious, destroyed or sunk)
		(k) SQUADRON			
1 Aircraft Assembly plant west of hangars	500 Ft. by 750 Ft.	6 TT-43	72	55	32,000 square feet of assembly plant at southern end destroyed.
2					
3 Hangar and Service area southeast side of field.	500 Ft. by 800 Ft.	3 TT-43	36	30	serious
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).

1. The bombing attack by six of the planes was concentrated on the southern half of aircraft assembly plant area about 1500 feet west of the airfield. Majority of bombs dropped were seen to hit on saw tooth roofed assembly plant buildings. Fires resulted. Area "A" on attached photograph is the area destroyed. In it the shattered remains of buildings can be seen.

2. Three planes attacked hangars along west side of field and service buildings immediately west of them. One small building which formerly stood at SE corner of largest hangar was destroyed and four medium sized hangars were hit and fires started. This area is marked "B" in the attached photograph.

(p) Were Photographs Taken? Yes Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached By Staple.

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REPORT No. 22

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

Lieutenants Flegari, Osborne, Rieck, Van Hoven and Bertoglio, Lieutenants (J.G.) Dyeart and Mason, and Ensigns Leman and Robertson participated in this strike.

The strike approached the target area at 18,000 feet and recognized Kagoshima Airfield without difficulty. The attack was launched from the northeast and push over was at 15,000 feet. Glide angles of 30° to 45° were obtained and bombs were released at altitudes ranging from 5,000 to 7,000 feet. Runs were made from northeast to southwest and the twelve 100/ G.P. bombs in each plane were dropped select. Six pilots chose the aircraft assembly plant 1,500 feet west of the airfield as the target and dropped in rapid succession upon the southern half of it. The attached photograph, which was taken by a VF-45 photo plane immediately after the VF-45 planes attacked, shows that an area of about 32,000 square feet in the southern portion of the plant has been completely destroyed. A few bomb hits can be discerned in the adjoining portions of this plant.

The other three planes chose the hangar area and dropped their bombs select on it. Their runs were directly across four medium hangars at the south end of main paved runway. The attached photograph shows that all of these have been hit by bombs and shows that one is substantially destroyed. A small workshop adjacent to the hangars was exploded by a bomb hit and several other small service buildings were hit.

As the planes began their runs they were met by heavy A/A fire which came principally from the area north of the field. This was quite accurate and followed them down. As they approached their release points these planes ran into a considerable amount of automatic A/A fire which appeared to come from various positions all around the field. None of the 8 planes which returned to base was hit, but the ninth plane, piloted by Lieutenant A. J. Van Hoven, was apparently hit in the engine by automatic A/A fire. Lieutenant Van Hoven went down lower than most of the other planes in his glide and dropped his bombs on the aircraft assembly plant at 5,000 feet. As he levelled out in his pull out at about 4,500 feet with automatic A/A tracers going by the plane in great numbers, his engine momentarily cut out and then ran unevenly. He headed directly for the west coast of Kyushu as he knew rescue facilities existed off shore and he requested the flight leader to assign him fighter escort. When he reached that area he decided to push on further as his engine was still running. He was joined shortly thereafter by two VF-45 fighters assigned to escort him by the flight leader. He flew down the west coast of Kyushu and, after passing the southern tip of Kyushu, he turned east and headed for the position of the nearest destroyer picket. The oil pressure was slowly but steadily dropping during this period and the engine was running very irregularly. In order to check his navigation he called the destroyer picket and asked for a vector. It was given and he found it checked exactly with his navigation. As he came within sight of the destroyer picket his engine cut out several times and it finally froze at 2,000 feet altitude when

XII. TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA (CONT'D)
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he had almost reached the picket. He proceeded to make a very successful water landing without power about 1,000 yards ahead of the destroyer picket. The crew followed the proficuously rehearsed ditching procedure. Lieutenant Van Hoven climbed out of his cockpit onto the starboard wing and his gunner climbed out the escape hatch in the turret onto the port wing. The gunner pushed the life raft through its receptacle while Lieutenant Van Hoven pulled it out from his side. While this was being done the radioman came up through the turret escape hatch and climbed over the cockpit to the starboard wing. As soon as the raft was out of its container the gunner also climbed over to the starboard wing. All three men got in the raft and pushed off. Within five minutes the destroyer picket came alongside the raft and took all three aboard. The plane floated for four minutes, an unusually long time for a TBM.

The large scale photograph of Kagoshima Field and installations (JicPca Neg. 50301-14) taken by the Twentieth Bomber Command and distributed by CincPac-CincPca was of great value in briefing on this target. It is an exceptionally clear and detailed photograph and its large scale and 4/4 annotations make it worth a hundred maps. Such a photograph is extremely helpful also during the interrogation of pilots as it enables them to reconstruct their runs and pick out the particular areas or installations dropped on without the uncertainty which is otherwise apt to exist. It is recommended that such photographs always be supplied in this large scale when possible.

PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS

Twenty-eight (28) bundles of propaganda leaflet Serial No. 2016 were dropped over and in the vicinity of the city of Kagoshima, Kyushu on this flight. Each bundle contained 750 sheets and, therefore, a total of 21,000 sheets were dropped.

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XIII. MATERIAL DATA. (Comment freely on performance or suitability, following check list at left.
Use additional sheets if necessary).

The life raft in Lieutenant Van Haven's plane inflated quickly and had sufficient buoyancy to support all three men. No other emergency equipment was used.

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

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Malcolm I. NEDDIE, Lieut., USNR

J. G. FERRARI, Lieut., USNR

22 March 1945

SIGNATURE

A.C.I. Officer

RANK AND DUTY

SIGNATURE

Commanding Officer

RANK AND DUTY

DATE

