

HEADQUARTERS
U. S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(Pacific)
C/O POSTMASTER SAN FRANCISCO



INTERROGATION NO 386

PLACE: Meiji Bldg
DATE: 20 Nov 45

Division of Origin: Military Analysis

Subject: Combat techniques of the JAAF

Person interrogated and background:

TOKO, Guy, Superior Private - a pilot with the 7th Flying Regiment (Hikosentai) from March 1945 until the end of the war. Prior to that time, he served as a civilian test pilot. He has flown both army and navy types. Although only 21 years old, he states he has more than 5000 flying hours.

Interrogator: Major John J. Driscoll

Interpreter: Mr. Yano, Hero

Allied Officers Present: Capt John C. West

SUMMARY:

TOKO was a very cooperative individual who seemingly was an exceptionally good pilot. He was able to give an excellent comparison of the relative effectiveness of American army and navy planes as compared to Japanese types. He considers the American P-51 the best fighter that the Allies had, but thinks that the Japanese KI 61 was equally as good and better in some respects. He gave an account of various tactics used by Japanese pilots in their encounters with American planes.

TOKO also gave an amazing account of how a group of suicide planes took off from Itemi airfield, near Osaka, on 17 Aug 45 in search of Allied naval forces known to be operating in that area. He stated that the planes were unable to find the task force and that reason alone prevented an attack, despite the fact that surrender negotiations had been virtually completed two days before.

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Q. How old are you?

A. 21 years (by American standards).

Q. How long were you in the Japanese Army?

A. I was called up in March 1945 and was demobilized after the surrender.

Q. What did you do in the Army?

A. I was at first sent to a communications school in Saiku village, in Miye Ken. Then in March they sent out a call for all men who could fly. I had considerable flying experience as a civilian. Therefore I was sent down to Kyushu as a pilot.

Q. What about your civilian flying experience.

A. I started flying at an early age. I first soloed when I was 15 years old. Shortly thereafter I was employed by the Central Air Testing Dept (Chuo Koku Kenkyu) near Yokohama as a test pilot. I flew all sorts of planes, mostly navy fighters.

Q. How long did you work for this organization?

A. Until I was called in the army in March 1945.

Q. How much flying time do you have to your credit?

A. I know that I have more than 5,000 hours, although I've lost the exact count.

Q. How much of this was during your civilian life?

A. Between three and four thousand.

Q. That sounds like a lot of flying time. Are you sure that all this time was as a pilot and not as a passenger?

A. Yes, you see I flew continuously, at every opportunity, for over six years. Flying meant more to me than anything else. I neglected my education to the extent of running away from school to fly.

Q. Just how much education do you have?

A. I am a high school graduate and attended Hosei University here in Tokyo for over a year, leaving only when I was called in the army.

Q. Then you went to school while you were employed by the Central Research Department?

A. Yes.

Q. How much of your army flying time was actual combat?

A. Between 500 and 600 hours.

Q. What training did you receive in army tactics, etc?

A. Practically none. When I was sent to Kyushu, my squadron leader wanted to test my flying ability, so he took me up and told me to follow the squadron. I evidently did all right for then he told me to follow him while he went through a few maneuvers. I managed to follow him all right, so then he told me to lead him and he would follow me. I did an outside loop and when the squadron leader tried to follow me, he went into a dive and just managed to pull out and avoid crashing. After that they evidently decided I didn't need any training.

Q. What kind of a plane were you flying?

A. A type 3 fighter, the KI 61.

Q. Did you fly any other types while in the army?

A. No.

Q. What kind of planes did you fly as a test pilot?

A. Mostly navy fighters, but I can't remember all the types.

Q. Here is a list of most of the navy fighters. Will you select those which you recall flying? We would also like to know exactly what you think of each of the planes that you definitely remember flying.

A. I remember the "Jack" quite well. Its degree of maneuverability was not good. However when this plane was turned into mass production, its overall efficiency declined even more, as compared to the original models. I think the "George" is the best navy plane I piloted. The Irving II had a limited view and for that reason was hard to fly.

Q. We would like to know, during your 500 hours of operational flying, how many Allied aircraft you actually engaged, what your successes were, and what your personal evaluation was of each type.

Type a/c	#encounters	Claims		Remarks
		Des/	Dem	
P-38	12	2	12	This was second best a/c I encountered. It was slower than the P-51 and was easier to hit because of its design.
P-51	15	None		This was the best Allied aircraft I even encountered. It had great speed and maneuverability. It was the only one I feared and the only one I found difficult to shake off my tail.
F6F	20	0	3	This was not at all terrifying due to its relative slowness.
F4U	10	1	7	This was even slower than the F6F and the most inferior in performance of all the Allied aircraft I encountered.
B-24	6	None		Due to their formation fire-power. I was a little reluctant to press home attacks on these bombers. I feared their guns more than the B-29's.
B-29	30	1	3	Because they were usually not in a close formation, and often flew in an isolated position, they offered little defensive firepower.

Q. What method of attack did you use against the B-29's?

A. I found the least defense put up when I came in low in a tail attack. This was the most successful method of attack.

Q. Did you ever try a nose attack?

A. Yes, but I suffered a few hits and decided it was safer to use the low tail attack in the future.

Q. Did you ever carry bombs?

A. No.

Q. With what armament was your ship equipped?

A. Two 20mm guns in the nose.

Q. This is relatively light armament. Were there no other guns on the a/c?

A. No.

Q. According to our information, the KI 61 has 2 12.7 mm guns in the nose and one 12.7 or 20mm gun in each wing.

A. The other aircraft in my organization had lighter guns in the nose. Mine was a special aircraft, a new experimental type and to the best of my knowledge the only one with two 20mm cannon in the nose.

Q. Did this special armament installation effect the performance of the aircraft?

A. Yes, my ship had greater maneuverability.

Q. How was your ammunition linked? Did you use tracer, HE, AP or I?

A. I had one tracer to eight armor piercing rounds.

Q. Did you not use incendiary or HE?

A. No, I do not believe so.

Q. Was this linkage standard throughout your organization?

A. Yes.

Q. Why did you use tracer ammunition?

A. For aiming purposes.

Q. How were you instructed to aim with tracer?

A. I received no instruction in gunnery at all.

Q. What did you consider the maximum effective range of your guns?

A. I opened fire against bombers at about 150 meters; and against fighters at about 100 meters.

Q. At what range did you break away from a bomber attack?

A. Usually at 75 meters, but on a few occasions I went as close as 30 meters.

Q. When tracers were fired at you, did they deter your attack?

A. They only disturbed me slightly, and I did not fear them.

Q. When an American fighter got on your tail, what was your most successful basic maneuver?

A. An outside loop was very effective, and often enabled me to get on the tail of the attacker. Only on one occasion was this unsuccessful. This was when a P-51 was chasing me and I was unable to shake him off. I tried all normal tactics, but he still kept on my tail. Finally I headed for the ground but he followed me right down to 30 meters. As a last resort I flew between two trees under the interlocking branches. The P-51 did not follow me through.

Q. Do you consider the P-51 a better aircraft than the KI 61?

A. No. The KI 61 had a better all-around performance.

Q. What were the performance characteristics of the KI 61?

A. Maximum speed was 670 to 680 kilometers per hour. The cruising speed 600 to 620 KPH. They told us the maximum altitude was 12,000 meters, but I doubt if it could exceed 11,000.

Q. How long would it take you to reach 6,000 meters?

A. About 4 minutes.

Q. How high could you get in six minutes?

A. About 8,000 meters.

Q. Why do you rate the P-51 inferior?

A. My a/c was superior in speed as well as having greater maneuverability.

Q. Was your unit at Miyazaki all the time?

A. No, about 20 days before the end of the war, when Miyazaki had been reduced to a shambles, we were evacuated by rail to Itami, near Osaka.

Q. Did any planes from your unit ever go on suicide missions?

A. No not until the war was over.

Q. What do you mean by that?

A. Well, two days after the surrender, on 17 Aug 45 to be exact, we received orders from Hq 6th Air Army (Kokugun) to attack an Allied flotilla which was operating off the coast of the Osaka area. Some planes from our squadron took off, loaded with bombs. We were told this was to be the final glorious attack for the honor of the Empire.

Q. Why didn't you take off?

A. I was in my plane, warming up the motor, when the first plane came back with the information that the flotilla had steamed away and could not be located now.

Q. You mean you were actually set to take off when the order came to stop?

A. Yes. My plane was loaded with bombs, even in the cockpit. There was barely room for me.

Q. How did you feel about being designated as a suicide pilot?

A. It is unmanly of me to say so, but truthfully I was saddened to tears at receiving the death sentence.

Q. Did the other pilots feel as you did?

A. One more in my squadron did. He and I were the only ones who had university education. The ones who had been trained in military schools (Shonen Hei Gekko) and the ones who had little education seemed to be quite happy at the honor.

Q. Did you protest or do anything to show that you didn't like the assignment?

A. There wasn't much I could do. However, I was planning perhaps to make a landing on the ocean rather than crash my plane into a ship.

Q. Did you know of any others who did this?

A. I had heard rumors that some did.

Q. Are you sure that all this occurred after the surrender?

A. Yes, it was two days after the armistice.

Q. How were personnel selected for suicide missions?

A. They were always designated.

Q. Were there ever any volunteers?

A. I never knew any.