OPNAV-16-V-#S37
Form ACA-1

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

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I. GENERAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(a) Unit Reporting VC-91 (b) Based on or at USS SAND ISLAND (CVE78) (c) Report No. 32

(d) Take off: Date 20 April 1945 Time (LZT) 0500/0745-(Zone); Lat. 25° 18' N. Long. 128° 02' E.

(e) Mission X Target Combat Air Patrol & Air Observer over Okinawa Shima (f) Time of Return 0945/1145-(Zone)

II. OWN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALLY COVERED BY THIS REPORT.

TYPE (a)	SQUADRON (b)	NUMBER: TAKING OFF (c)	NUMBER: ENGAGING ENEMY A/C (d)	NUMBER: ATTACKING TARGET (e)	BOMBS AND TORPEDOES CARRIED (PER PLANE) (f)	FUZE, SETTING (g)
TBM-2	VC-91	6	0	6	None	
TBM-3	VC-91	1	0	1	None	

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
TBM-2	VC-93	4	USS PATROL BAY (CVE80)				

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) _____

(i) Did Any Part of Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? _____ (YES OR NO) If so, Describe Clouds _____ (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(j) Time of Day and Brilliance of Sun or Moon _____ (NIGHT, BRIGHT MOON; DAY, OVERCAST; ETC.) (k) Visibility _____ (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: TYPE A/C	SQUADRON	PILOT OR GUNNER	GUNS USED	(c) WHERE HIT, ANGLE	(d) DAMAGE CLAIMED
None						

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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 None				
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
None				

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	
[illegible]-2	60	50	4.75	233	185		8400			8
[illegible]-3	70	65	4	330	210	400	880			1

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, 6.9mm-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

None.

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(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) Kuma Shima and Okinawa Shima (FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK) (b) Time Over Target(s) 0830/0815-I (Zone)

(c) Clouds Over Target Stratus - 1100 - 3/10 (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target Smoke Haze (CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (e) Visibility 10 (MILES)

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type None (LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) Bomb Sight Used _____ (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run _____ (NUMBER) Spacing _____ (FEET) Altitude of Bomb Release _____ (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)
1 Warehouse, Toishima Town	----	8 / VC-91	1200 - Rds. .50 cal.	Numerous	Prob. Destroyed
2 Factory, T.A. 8666 "Q" & "V"	----	8 / VC-91	1500 - Rds. .50 cal.	Numerous	Destroyed
3 Large Bldg., T.A. 8186 "B"	----	8 / VC-91	1000 - Rds. .50 cal.	Numerous	Prob. Destroyed
4 Zanta Town	----	8 / VC-91	4700 - Rds. .50 cal.	Numerous	Serious
5 Motor Torpedo Boat T.A. 7370 "T"	61' Long	1 / VC-91	400 - Rds. .30 cal. / 380 - Rds. .50 cal.	Numerous	Sunk
6 Truck, T.A. 7669 "U"	Medium Size	1 / VC-91	100 - Rds. .50 cal.	Numerous	Serious
7 Truck, T.A. 7572 "T"	Medium Size	1 / VC-91	200 - Rds. 50 cal.	Numerous	Serious
8 Truck T.A. 7471	Medium Size	1 / VC-91	200 - Rds. .50 cal.	Numerous	Serious

(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: A warehouse was strafed by incendiary bullets, caught on fire and was burning when the pilots retired.

Target #2: The mill which was strafed was completely ablaze and was razed prior to the departure of the pilots.

Target #3: A large building was set on fire and considerable smoke was noticed by the pilots coming from the building.

Target #4: Zanta Town is a small village, and contains many small houses, the majority of which were strafed and a number of fires were started which were burning when the pilots left.

Target #5: At the end of numerous strafing runs, the motor torpedo boat was well down in the water and appeared to be resting on the shallow bottom.

Each of the trucks in targets #5, #6 & #7 were thoroughly strafed and rendered inoperational. They must have been degassed because no explosions were noted, and they did not catch fire.

(p) Were Photographs Taken? Yes 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

At 0500-I a Target Combat Air Patrol of eight F4U's was launched, and they joined up with four fighters from U.S.S. PERRY BAY (CVEGO) and proceeded to their designated patrol areas.

At 0745-I, Lt.(jg) A. L. Smith, flying an Army Air Observer, took off in a TBM.

Upon completion of the Combat Air Patrol's flying over Yonachi Shima and Kerama Retto, the F4U's were given permission by Commander Air Support, Control Units to strafe targets of opportunity on Kume Shima. They were directed to look for a round, concrete tank in target area 7689. This was found and one strafing run was made on it, but no apparent damage was inflicted.

The patrol then split in two groups and Lt. Ryan's division went to the western side of the island, while Lt. Blanchard's division covered the eastern side of the island. No enemy activity was noticed, and no enemy gun emplacements or military installations could be found. Accordingly, the pilots directed their fire toward the most likely looking buildings that they could find.

Several runs were made on a large warehouse in Toishima Town creating a fire which probably destroyed the building. Likewise, several runs were made on a mill near ~~XXXXXXX~~ Toishima which was completely destroyed by fires started by ~~XX~~ the incendiary bullets.

On the other side of the island, runs were made on a large building on O Shima Town, and it was set afire. Numerous runs were then made on Kanta Village, and when the pilots left, practically the entire village was blazing.

There were no clouds to bother the visibility of the target, but the atmosphere was somewhat hazy. The strafing was average from an altitude of 2500 feet down to 500 feet with a shallow angle of dive not exceeding 20°. All of the runs were made from east to west.

Lt.(jg) A. L. Smith after having flown the Army Air Observer on his designated patrol over Okinawa Shima, was directed by CASCU to find and strafe some boats in Naha Ko. On arrival over the target, a motor torpedo boat was located close to shore and several strafing runs were made on it. The tail gunner as well as the pilot scored a considerable number of hits on the boat. After several runs they noticed that the boat, which had not caught fire or exploded, had sunk and was apparently resting on a shallow bottom.

No other operational boats could be found close by so the pilot proceeded east over an inlet and located a truck on a road running along the inlet. He made two strafing runs on the truck registering many hits on each run. Two other trucks were located by the pilot in the areas designated on the preceding page, and were repeatedly hit in several strafing runs on them.

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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 of the trucks were rendered inoperational, but they must have been degassed because none of them either burned or exploded. There was considerable smoke haze over Okinawa so the pilot flew low most of the time, and started his strafing runs at 2000 feet. He strafed down to treetop levels.

No enemy planes were seen on either of the strikes and no anti-aircraft fire was encountered over any of the targets.

The first strike was composed of the following fighter pilots:

Lt. F. M. Blanchard, Flight Leader
Lt.(jg) J. N. Wilson
Lt.(jg) H. L. Ofer
Lt.(jg) H. Sunshine

Lt. W. E. Ryan, Flight Leader
Lt.(jg) J. C. Habberstt
Lt.(jg) C. A. Custer
Ens. J. M. Metzger

Lt.(jg) A. L. Smith flew the Army Air Observer and made the second strike.

- -

None.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

E. H. SPENCER, LT. A.C.I. OFFICER
SIGNATURE RANK AND DUTY

A. W. PARKER, LT., A.C.I. OFFICER

APPROVED BY:

F. M. BLANCHARD, LT., C.O.
SIGNATURE RANK AND DUTY

20 April 45
DATE

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