

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

CONFIDENTIAL

I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting VC-91 (b) Based on or at USS MAKIN ISLAND (CVE93) (c) Report No. VC-91 #66
 (A)0600/(B)0730
 (d) Take off: Date 17 May 1945 Time (LZT) (C)1130-I (Zone); Lat. 25° 13' N. Long. 128° 01' E.
 (A)0930/(B)1110
 (e) Mission Ground Support, Okinawa. (f) Time of Return (C)1530-I (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)		
(A)TBM-3	VC-91	4 5 (1 Coord)	0	4	2 x 500# SAP AN-M-58A1 8 x 5" HE AR Mk1/Mk7.	8-15" tail AN-M-116 .02" base Mk 157.
(B)TBM-3	VC-91	4	0	4	2 x 500# GP AN-M64 8 x 5" HE ARs. (As above)	Inst nose AN-M-103A1 & .025 tail AN-M-101A2.
(C)TBM-3	VC-91	1	0	1	10 x 100# GP AN-M30 6 x 5" HE ARs. (As above)	Inst nose AN-M-103A1 & .025" tail AN-M-100A2.

NOTE: 1 TBM in group (A) carried only 6 ARs.

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
(A)TBM-3	VC-97	4	USS SHIPLEY BAY	(C)TBM-3	VC-9	4	USS NATOMA BAY
"	VC-93	1	USS PETROF BAY	"	VC-97	1	USS SHIPLEY BAY
(B)TBM-3	VC-9	4	USS NATOMA BAY (1 Coord)				

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						

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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) **Possible Radio-Radar Station, Supply Area, Hdqtrs Bldgs, Caves on Okinawa.** Time Over Target(s) **(A)0715/(B)0900**
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK) **(C)1300-I** (Zone)

(c) Clouds Over Target **(A)None/ (B) None/ (C) Cumulus 5000 - 2/10**
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target **Hazy/good/good** (e) Visibility **10**
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (MILES)

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type **Glide** Bomb Sight Used **(A)1000/(B)2000-**
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) Altitude of Bomb Release **2500/(C)2000.**

Bombs Dropped per Run **3&2 (C), 1 (A&B)** Spacing **---** Rockets " " " **2** Slant Range **800 to 1000 Yards.** Angle **(A)30/(B)35-45/(C)40°**

(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) 3 houses (suspected radio-radar station)	12'x12' each.	4 VC-91	8 x 500# SAP/30 5" ARs 530 - Rds .50 cal.	2 SAP 8 ARs	Destroyed
(B) 2 Tanks (7761 E)	Medium	4 VC-91	6 x 5" ARs 450 - Rds. .50 cal.	2 ARs.	1 Serious
(B) Possible Supply area (7660 ABFG)	200x400 yds.	4 VC-91	8 x 500# GP/ 26 ARs. 1515x50 cal/750x30 Cal.	All.	Undetermined
(C) 2 Hdqtrs Bldgs., (7662 RS).	40'x40' Ea. 200x400 yds.	1 VC-91	8 x 100# GP/ 4 ARs.	2 ARs.	1 Serious
(C) Caves, tombs, trenches on hill (7668 FGH)	100x600 yds.	1 VC-91	2 x 100# GP/ 3 ARs.	All	Undetermined
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 small houses (reported by Marine CSA as suspected Jap Radio-Radar Station) were at base of 100-foot escarpment. Two 500# SAP's and eight rockets hit buildings; all others hit close. Buildings demolished and debris set afire. (Four bombs duds.)

Target #2. (By Group B). One tank, type 2594 (possibly already non-operationa; it was in field) was believed seriously damaged by rocket explosion beneath it. Tank rocked up, then settled back. A second "tank", one of several seen several hundred yards distant, disintegrated when hit by one rocket; assessed as a dummy, as were others close to it.

Target #3. (By Group B). This was saturation bombing of area reported as possible containing camouflaged supply facilities. No buildings or specific targets were seen, no fires resulted, and results not determined; however, area well blasted.

Target #4. (By Group C), (led by VC-91 Coordinator) - Two 5" HE rocket hits (fired by Coordinator to spot target and 2 100# explosions within 20 yards blew out sides of both buildings; both later destroyed by Coordinator and group he led. Buildings reported as suspected Jap Headquarters.

Target #5. (By Group C, led by VC-91 Coordinator). Two 100# bombs and three 5" HE rockets used to spot Jap concentration area; all hit in area but none observed squarely on caves, trenches or tombs. Damage either by Coordinator or group could not be determined but area plastered.

(p) Were Photographs Taken? **Yes** Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached By Staple. (Not attached)
NOTE: Photo used to identify tank damaged in target 2 attack; indicated tank possibly non-operational.

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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	
(A) TBM-3	90	65	3.5	301	180		530			54
(B) TBM-3	60	60	4.17	301	230	750	1915			4
(C) TBM-3	60	60	4.0	301	210		450			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, 6.5mm-13.2mm	X			

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

SPEED, CLIMB,
at various altitudes

None.

URNS
DIVES
CEILINGS
RANGE
PROTECTION
ARMAMENT

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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

This report combines two Ground Support Missions and one Air Coordinator flight over Okinawa by VC-91 pilots from the MAKIN ISLAND on 17 May.

The first group (designates as A in other parts of this ACA Report) consisted of four TBM's, including Lt. Richards as Air Coordinator; it took off at 0615 and traveled to an orbit point west of Naha in company with 12 other VT from the Carrier Unit. The operation is described by Lt. Richards:

"Nine VT, including the four from VC-91, four from the SHIPLEY BAY and one from PETROF BAY, all with 500-pound SAP bombs, were assigned a target in TA 7660J, in the southern part of the island. The target was located at the base of a 100-foot escarpment and included three small, camouflaged houses suspected as radar and radio activity. These were hidden in a wooden area and included what appeared to be one tent or house covered with dark green canvas.

"The escarpment ran north to south, and all runs were made parallel to its face. The Coordinator made a preliminary run to spot the area with a bomb, after which the nine VT attacking in a loose column formation, well spread out because of the 8 to 15-second delay tail fuzing on the bombs, made two bombing, four rocket and three strafing runs. There were no clouds, although the target was somewhat obscured by haze and smoke. Both bombing and rocket runs were made at 30 degrees, bombs being dropped singly at 1000 feet and rockets being fired in pairs at about 800 yards slant range.

"Two 500-pound SAP bombs and eight rockets (of those expended by VC-91 pilots) were seen to hit the buildings, demolishing them and setting the debris afire. All our other bombs and rockets landed close, adding to the destruction. The other pilots had similar success. Four of our bombs failed to detonate, probably because of defective fuzes. One pilot, Ensign Peebles, had engine trouble and landed at Yontan field, but had the trouble, sediment in the fuel line, taken care of and returned in time to join in the attack."

The second group (Group B) took off at 0730 and in company with four VT from NATOMA BAY, including an Air Coordinator, was assigned a target in a nearby area, TA 7660BFG. They arrived there at 0900 just as Group A left, and could see the fires started by the first group still burning. The area was described as a possible Jap supply depot, but no buildings or specific targets were observed. The Coordinator directed the group to make a saturation type attack.

Eight 500-pound GP bombs and 26 rockets were expended by VC-91 pilots in the area. No fires resulted, and damage could not be ascertained but the area was thoroughly blasted. Under a cloudless sky, the pilots started their bombing and rocket runs from about 4500 to 5000 feet, at 45 degrees; bombs were released singly at 2000 to 2500 feet, and rockets fired in pairs at 800 to 1000 yards slant range.

Actually preceding this attack, the four VC-91 VT's spotted some tanks in TA 7781 and went down in pairs to attack them. One pilot hit a tank with one rocket and it disintegrated, indicating it was a dummy - - and the pilots before they started down again were told by CSA that eight dummy tanks were in that area. The other two pilots had fired rockets at a single tank some distance away, one rocket exploded directly under it and causing it to rock up and then settle back;

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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. Four 500-pound SAP bombs (AN-M-58A1) failed to detonate. Probable cause: Defective fuze (8-15 second delay tail AN-M-116).

(Continued from Page 4)

a photo taken by that pilot (Lt.(jg) Younglove) on a second pass supported their description of the object as a Jap Type 2594 Medium tank, possibly non-operational.

This third mission was that of Lt.(jg) McNeela as Air Coordinator for four VT from NATOMABAY and one from SHIPLEY BAY. McNeela who carried ten 100-pound GP bombs and six 5" HE rockets, took off at 1130 and led the group in an attack at 1300 against two buildings reported in use as a Jap Headquarters (TA 7662RS) and then against caves and trenches reported as a Jap concentration area (TA 7668FGH). He spotted the first target with two rockets, and then joined the group to fire two more and drop eight bombs. Two of his bombs and two rockets landed within 20 yards of the buildings, blowing out the sides of both; the other planes finished demolishing them. He reported no damage from his two bombs and three rockets used to spot the second target; nor could he report specific damage by the other VT's, but said the area was plastered.

Pilots were:

Group A - Lt. R. F. Richards (Air Coordinator)
Lt.(jg) J. W. Burch
Ens. H. L. Peebles
Ens. K. W. Neubauer

Group B - Lt.(jg) M. D. Howard
Lt.(jg) E. E. Younglove
Ens. W. F. Hancock
Ens. L. L. Lundquist

Group C - Lt.(jg) J. P. McNeela (Air Coordinator)

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

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

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

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

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

17 May 45

DATE