

# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filled out)

## I. GENERAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(a) Unit Reporting VF-12 (b) Based on or at USS Randolph (CV-15) (c) Report No. VF-12-29  
 (d) Take off: Date 21 April 1945 Time (LZT) 0040 (I) (Zone); Lat. 27-30N Long. 130-00E  
 (e) Mission Night Fighter Interception (f) Time of Return 0320 (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)		
<b>F6F-5N</b>	<b>VF-12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>			

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
<b>None</b>							

## 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
<b>BETT Y</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0103(I)</b> (ZONE)			<b>Could not observe</b>
<b>BETTY</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0140(I)</b> (ZONE)			<b>Silver finish Red meatballs</b>
			(ZONE)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) Attack on Task Force 58  
 Did Any Part of  
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? Yes If so, Describe. Clouds 2500' base; cumulus; 4/10 cover  
(YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET. TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)  
 Time of Day and Brilliance  
 (j) of Sun or Moon Night, hazy, 3/4 moon 1 hr. from setting (k) Visibility 1/2  
(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		
<b>BETTY</b>	<b>F6F-5N</b>	<b>VF-12</b>	<b>En. D. G. HOWARD, USNR</b>	<b>6x.50</b>	<b>Ft. &amp; Stbd. Eng, 6, below</b>	<b>Destroyed</b>
<b>BETTY</b>	<b>F6F-5N</b>	<b>VF-12</b>	<b>" " "</b>	<b>6x.50</b>	<b>Stb. Eng, C'pit, 6, below</b>	<b>" "</b>

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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 <b>None</b>				
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
<b>None</b>				

### 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	
<b>F6F-5N</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>3h.10m.</b>	<b>400 g.</b>	<b>250 g.</b>		<b>1150</b>			<b>1</b>

### 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, 6.5rim-13.2mm	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

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

SPEED, CLIMB,  
at various altitudes

TURNS

DIVES

CEILINGS

RANGE

PROTECTION

ARMAMENT

**First BETTY took no evasive action.**

**Second BETTY was in continuous evasive action. F6F stayed with it through all maneuvers.**

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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.)

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### 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

Ensign D.G. HOWARD performed the creditable task of destroying two BETTY's in one hop within approximately half an hour of each other. The first kill was uneventful - almost routine - with the exception of a transmission made by HOWARD. He was vectored out at 12,000 feet by Ensign F.G. SMITH, the night fighter director, with whom his team had trained since its inception. At two miles he made a good radar contact, lowered to 8000 feet, and came up behind the BETTY, making visual contact at half a mile. Various friendly search planes were known to be in the area and had been alerted to remove when bogeys were picked up in C.I.C. Ensign HOWARD had been assured that the plane before him was enemy, but lest there be some error, he switched to Channel GUARD and made the following transmission: "Twin-engine plane with a night fighter on your tail! If you are friendly flash your signal lights." (It is a matter of some speculation as to whether the skies around OKINAWA and vicinity might not have been filled with the answers to this request.) No response was given, so HOWARD opened fire. His first burst put the port engine out of commission; his second fired the starboard engine. The BETTY began to burn around the wing roots and plunged into the water, leaving behind a burning oil slick.

Upon reporting the splash Ensign HOWARD was immediately vectored out after another bogey, this time under the control of MELROSE. Approaching at 16,000 feet he made radar contact at three quarters of a mile as he drew up behind the enemy from below. Perhaps as a result of the loss of one BETTY, this plane was taking continuous evasive action by changing altitude and turning. At half a mile HOWARD identified it as a second BETTY as he came up within visual range. He let down his wheels and flaps to stay behind, fearing that any change of the throttle would later dis-close him to the enemy when the time came to resume speed. After losing him once, then regaining him, HOWARD opened fire when the BETTY's tail filled his 50 mil sight. Both engines showered sparks on his first burst, and soon put out completely. The plane was still under control, however, for the pilot put it into a long evasive glide. HOWARD could follow him by the burning wing and cabin, however, and poured in a few more bursts to forestall a controlled water-landing. At 6000 feet, just after his last rounds, the BETTY burst into flames, rolled over and crashed with a violent explosion.

Commenting on his activity, Ensign HOWARD indicated that there was really nothing to it. "All you have to do is follow the fighter director and pull the trigger." Simple as that! He did not mention, however, that conditions of visibility were very poor with a heavy haze to 5000 feet, and clouds from 2500 to 4000 feet, both of which his second contact used to advantage.

The Task Group Commander dispatched a few words of congratulations to him upon his accomplishment.

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

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**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

**NO COMMENTS.**

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

*H.W. Hewlett*

SIGNATURE **H.W. HEWLETT, Lt.(jg), USNR, ACIO** RANK AND DUTY

SIGNATURE **F.H. MICHAELIS, Lt.Cdr., USN, CO.** RANK AND DUTY

**1 May 1945**

DATE