

# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filed out)

## I. GENERAL

Strike 2F

(a) Unit Reporting VF-9 (b) Based on or at USS LEXINGTON (CV-16) (c) Report No. 4-45  
 (d) Take off: Date 16 Feb. 1945 Time (LZT) 1400 K. (Zone); Lat. 34°-31'N. Long. 141°-55'E.  
 Escort of VB & VT on bombing of  
 (e) Mission Makajima Aircraft factory at Ota, Japan. (f) Time of Return 1010 K. (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)		
<u>F6F-5</u>	<u>VF-9</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>9 planes with four 5" HVAR Rockets</u>	<u>Mk. 149 Inst. nose fuze</u>

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
<u>SB2C</u>	<u>VB-9</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>USS LEXINGTON</u>	<u>F6F-5</u>	<u>VF-45</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>USS SAN JACINTO</u>
<u>TM-3</u>	<u>VT-9</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>USS LEXINGTON</u>	<u>TM-3</u>	<u>VT-45</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>USS SAN JACINTO</u>
<u>TM-1C</u>	<u>VT-9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>USS LEXINGTON</u>				

## 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
<u>Frank Zeke</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>K. 1545 (ZONE)</u>	<u>10 mi. E. of Ota to seacoast</u>	<u>Regular Armament</u>	<u>Dark brown, mottled green &amp; brown. Both with nest balls.</u>
<u>Oscar Tojo</u>			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) Interception  
 Did Any Part of \_\_\_\_\_  
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? No If so, Describe Clouds \_\_\_\_\_  
 (YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)  
 Time of Day and Brilliance Day  
 (j) of Sun or Moon \_\_\_\_\_ (k) Visibility Unlimited  
 (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:			GUNS USED	(c) WHERE HIT, ANGLE	(d) DAMAGE CLAIMED
	TYPE A/C	SQUADRON	PILOT OR GUNNER			
<u>Zeke</u>	<u>F6F-5</u>	<u>VF-9</u>	<u>Lt. DeCew</u>	<u>6 50 cal.</u>	<u>Engine-tank area</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>
<u>Frank Zeke</u>	"	"	<u>Lt. DeCew</u>	"	<u>Fuselage &amp; wings</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
<u>Oscar Zeke</u>	"	"	<u>Lt(jg) Baden</u>	"	<u>Fuselage &amp; wings</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
<u>Zeke</u>	"	"	<u>Lt(jg) Snowden</u>	"	<u>Gas tanks &amp; engine</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>
<u>Zeke</u>	"	"	<u>Lt(jg) Lawrence</u>	"	<u>Fuselage</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
<u>Zeke</u>	"	"	<u>Ens. Honegger</u>	"	<u>Engine &amp; fuselage</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>







# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filed out)  
**CONFIDENTIAL**

(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

REPORT No. 4-45

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

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) Sta aircraft factory 50 miles N.W. of Tokyo. (b) Time Over Target(s) 1600 Z. (Zone)  
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)

(c) Clouds Over Target 1/10 coverage high cirrus at 15,000'.  
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

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

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

Bombs Dropped per Run --- Spacing --- Altitude of Bomb Release ---  
(NUMBER) (FEET) (FEET)

(g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed --- Probably Destroyed --- Damaged ---

(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 Center factory area	2000' x 2000'	6 VF-9	24 x 5" HVAR Rockets	24	Serious (VB & VI bombed)
2					
3					
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).

Rockets were all placed on target but target was being bombed by VF & VI this squadron was escorting so that it was impossible to observe damage by rockets separate from damage caused by bombing.

(p) Were Photographs Taken? No Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached By Staple.



# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when filled out)

REPORT No. 4-45

**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
- Defensive 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

16 VF-9 planes took off at 1400 to provide low cover for 13 SB2C's of VB-9 and 15 TBM's of VT-9 and 9 TBM's of VI-45 to bomb the Nakajima aircraft engine plant at Ota 50 miles NW of Tokyo, Japan. The flight proceeded at low altitude under a ceiling of from 800 to 1500' to a point 40 miles N of Inube Saki. The formation then turned west and climbed to 13000 feet the ceiling having lifted. As the formation approached the target 10-15 enemy planes were seen in the distance but they did not attack. Went into target from west side as escort and 6 of the 9 planes armed with 4 rockets each fired their rockets in a dive of 40° to 50° all hitting the target. All of the bombs dropped by both the VB and VI were seen to hit the engine plant area. The formation recovered and rendezvoused to the east. A/A of barrage type of moderate intensity was encountered at the target. At rendezvous point there were at least 25 enemy fighters which attacked and trailed the group as it retired. These planes attacked only planes that were lagging behind, making individual runs from astern and refused to attack as long as our planes weaved and stayed close together. The enemy VF continued these attacks for a distance of 50 miles until the formation was within 10 miles of the seacoast. Further A/A was encountered along the retirement route N & W of Lake Kasumigaura.

The defensive weaving by our VF was extremely effective but if the enemy VF had pressed their attacks by sections or divisions, using good tactics, it would have been necessary to have a division of VF for each division of VB or VI for adequate protection. During the flight three enemy VF were destroyed and three damaged by VF-9 planes.

An account of the individual actions in which enemy planes were destroyed or damaged is attached.

*No engines at Ota.*



ACTIONS IN WHICH ENEMY PLANES WERE DESTROYED OR DAMAGED.

Lieut. DeCew destroyed a Zeke which came in from way out on the side of the formation during retirement. The Zeke at about 3000' got up to the port bow and feinted several times. Finally DeCew with Baden on his wing, went after him when he came in closer and got a tail shot on the Zeke hitting engine and tank area. Plane went into a glide, smoking and crashed into the ground. Shortly after this DeCew damaged a Frank which came in from astern toward a lagging TBM. The Frank pulled up into a loop DeCew getting a head on shot and then DeCew turned and got two no deflection shots seeing hits in fuselage and wings.

Lt(jg) Baden damaged a Zeke which made a run on the after section of the division, Baden countering the run getting a full to 30° or less deflection shot, getting hits at short range into the Zeke's fuselage and wings.

Lt(jg) Snowden destroyed an Oscar which was making a run on the VT group as VT's were retiring toward rendezvous point. Snowden fired a long four second burst at full deflection which started the Oscar smoking and burning. He gave the Oscar another short burst, the Oscar exploded in both wing roots, crashed into the ground and exploded.

Lt(jg) Lawrence damaged a Zeke which attempted to make a run on a TBM. Lawrence cut him off, shot at him and hit the Zeke in the fuselage.

Ens. Honegger, flying wing on Lawrence, destroyed a Zeke when he got a full to 3/4 deflection shot on Zeke making a run on one of the TBM's. The port wheel of the Zeke dropped down and later fell off. Honegger continued to fire until engine of Zeke started to smoke and Zeke was last seen in a split "S" smoking badly.



# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filled out)

REPORT No. 4-45

**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 material satisfactory.**

STRIP 27

\* **Lieut. Kitchen**  
**Ensign Hamilton, H.**  
**Lt(jg) Finlaysen**  
**Ensign Brewer**

**Lieut. Franger**  
**Lt(jg) Smeehuyson**  
**Lieut. Phillips**  
**Lt(jg) Prior**

**Lieut. DeCew**  
**Lt(jg) Baden**  
**Lt(jg) Snowden**  
**Ensign Larson**

**Lieut. Bekard**  
**Ensign Kaelin**  
**Lt(jg) Lawrence**  
**Ensign Honegger**

\* **Flight leader.**

REPORT PREPARED BY:

**R.C. MURPHY, Lieut., USNR**

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

APPROVED BY:

**J.S. KITCHEN, Lieut., USNR**

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

**21 Feb. 1945**

DATE