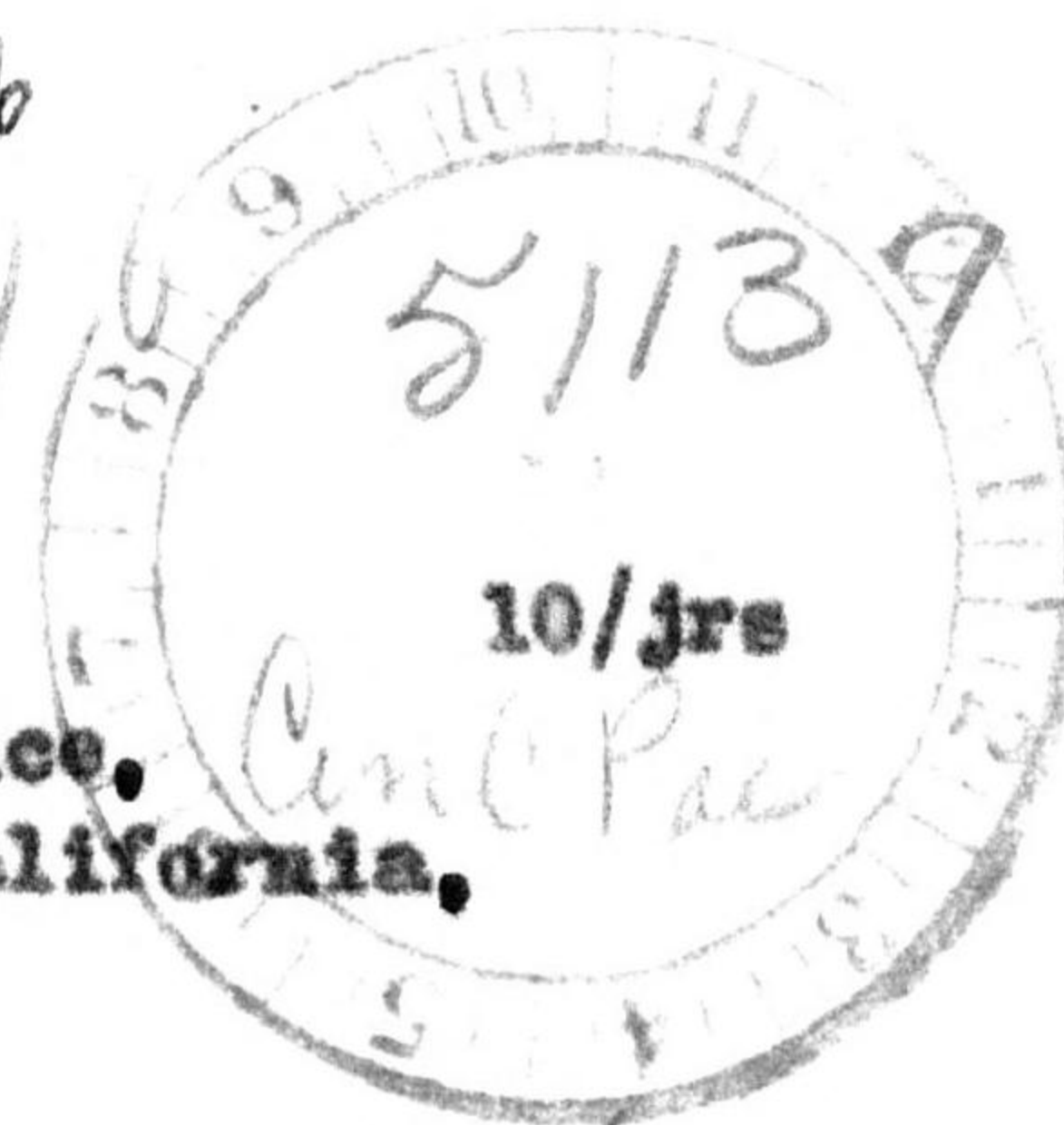


S-E-C-R-E-T

CVL30/A16-3  
Serial: 0018

U.S.S. SAN JACINTO

c/o Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California,  
7 March 1945.



FIRST ENDORSEMENT to:  
C.O. VMF5's Secret Ltr.  
VF-45/A16-3/A9 Serial:(0012) of  
4 March 1945.

**From:** Commanding Officer.  
**To:** Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.  
**Via:** (1) Commander Task Group FIFTY-EIGHT POINT TWO.  
(2) Commander Task Force FIFTY-EIGHT.  
(3) Commander FIFTH Fleet.  
(4) Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.  
**Subject:** Aircraft Action Reports; 19 to 21 February 1945.

1. Forwarded. Commander Scheeter, Commander Air Group 45, states that practice air-ground support missions conducted on OAHU during training were supplied better facilities than were available in the actual air-ground support of the assault and occupation of IWO JIMA.

2. An earnest attempt has been made to obtain a small number of FS-WP rocket bodies. ComServRon TEN's ammunition representative again reports there are none available in this area. This situation should be corrected.

MICHAEL H. KERNODLE.

DISTRIBUTION OF ENCLOSURES:

ComInCh	(1) Advance Copy
CinCPac	(3) Advance Copies
JICPOA	(1) Copy direct
ComAirPac	(1) Copy direct
ComAirPacSubComFwd	(1) Copy direct



UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
AIR FORCE  
FIGHTING SQUADRON FORTY-FIVE  
c/o Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California

In Reply  
Refer To:  
VF-45/A16-3/A9  
Serial: (0012)

4 March, 1945

S-E-C-R-E-T

From: Commanding Officer, Fighting Squadron FORTY FIVE.  
(Commander CVL Air Group FORTY FIVE)

To : Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet.

Via : (1) Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SAN JACINTO.  
(2) Commander Task Group FIFTY-EIGHT POINT TWO.  
(3) Commander Task Force FIFTY-EIGHT.  
(4) Commander FIFTH Fleet.  
(5) Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Aircraft Action Reports; 19 to 21 February, 1945.

Reference: (a) ComInCh Serial 7152 of 29 October, 1943.  
(b) Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 1CL-45 of 1  
January, 1945.

Enclosure: (A) Comments by Commander CVL Air Group FORTY FIVE.  
(B) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 33, dated  
19 February, 1945  
(C) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 34, dated  
19 February, 1945  
(D) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 35, dated  
19 February, 1945.  
(E) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 36, dated  
21 February, 1945.  
(F) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 37, dated  
21 February, 1945.  
(G) VF-45 Aircraft Action Report ACA-1, No. 38, dated  
21 February, 1945.  
(H) Aircraft Action Report VF-45 ACA-1, No. 39, dated  
21 February, 1945.

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosures  
(A) through (H) are forwarded herewith.

G. E. SCHECTER.

DISTRIBUTION OF ENCLOSURES:

ComInCh	(1) Advance Copy
CinCPac	(3) Advance Copies
JICPOA	(1) Copy direct
ComAirPac	(1) Copy direct
ComAirPacSubComFwd	(1) Copy direct
USS SAN JACINTO	(1) Copy

COPY



SUMMARY OF ACTION REPORTS FOR PERIOD 19-21 FEBRUARY, 1945 - INCLUSIVE

1. NUMBER OF SORTIES FLOWN AND TIME:

VF Sorties - 48 (168.8 hours)  
VT Sorties - 15 (63.2 hours)

2. OWN PLANE LOSSES:

VF - One F6F-5  
VT - None

3. OWN PERSONNEL LOSSES:

VF - No losses (One pilot (Ensign M.A. Nowely, USNR) shot, or forced down, over Iwo Jima, picked up by rescue vessel on 21 February, 1945, suffering from a possibly fractured foot. Ensign Nowely has not at this date been delivered back to the fighter squadron).

VT - None

4. DAMAGE TO ENEMY:

Ground targets damaged or destroyed  
by VF:

Artillery, mortar and anti-aircraft positions, some located in caves, were attacked on numerous occasions by VF planes on air-ground support missions. The nature of the missions and targets, and the low visibility, prevented any accurate assessment of results achieved. All ammunition by VF planes was expended on the target areas, and Commander Air Support Control Units commended their performance.

Ground targets damaged or destroyed  
by VT:

Hit's on concealed enemy artillery positions in target area with 100 lb. bombs, 500 lb. bombs and rockets.

5. TACTICS EMPLOYED:

Instruction on air-ground support missions as set forth in the Amphibious Operation Plan were carefully followed and no serious difficulties were encountered in carrying out the assigned missions. Most of the work was area bombing; so the necessity for pinpointing the target did not generally arise.



8-1-42-1-1

6. GENERAL COMMENTS:

On two separate occasions the Air Group Commander acted in the capacity of an assistant Target Coordinator, controlling and directing strikes on call missions on the northern end of Iwo Jima during the early morning operations on D + 2 day. Most of the missions assigned were for area bombing which is comparatively easy to do. However, the last mission required pinpointing some cave targets from which Jap artillery was firing at the stores area on our beach head. An effort was made to specifically designate this target by means of rockets, but lacking the FS or WP loaded heads which are excellent for this purpose and which the Air Group Commander had previously used in practice, he was able to achieve only partial success in clearly marking the target with H.E. rockets, the only type available on CVL's. It is recommended that a small supply of the FS or WP heads be allotted to all carriers for the above purpose.

The air group as a whole benefitted greatly from previous practice air-ground support missions conducted on Oahu during training. In particular the Air Group Commander benefitted from the previous training effort and was only disappointed in that better facilities were available for the practice work than for the actual coordination of the real thing. It should be remarked that communications seemed to be unusually good throughout most all the support missions. Only occasionally 414 SAB-2 frequency became overloaded.

G. R. SCHACTER.

ENCLOSURE (A)



# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when filled out)

## I. GENERAL

**SECRET**

(a) Unit Reporting VF-45 (b) Based on or at USS SAN JACINTO (c) Report No. #33  
 (d) Take off: Date 19 February, 1945 Time (LZT) 0630 (K) (Zone); Lat. 25° 26'N Long. 140° 06'E  
 (e) Mission Target Coordinator #1, Iwo Jima (f) Time of Return 1115 (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-45</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Each plane carried 6 X 5" H.E. rockets apiece</u>	<u>Mark 146 non-delay</u>

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
<u>None</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>None</u>			<u>(ZONE)</u>			
			<u>(ZONE)</u>			
			<u>(ZONE)</u>			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) X  
 Did Any Part of  
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? X If so, Describe Clouds X  
(YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)  
 Time of Day and Brilliance X (k) Visibility X  
(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>None</u>						

Enclosure (B)







# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when filled out)

**SECRET**

(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

VF-45

REPORT No. #33

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

Enemy positions Northern Iwo Jima (Grid squares 217 and 234, Air Support Chart compiled by 64th Engr. Top Bn., USAFC BC, No. 1125) (b) Time Over Target(s) 0845-0855(K) (Zone)

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) Engr. Top Bn., USAFC BC, No. 1125 (FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)

(c) Clouds Over Target 3000 feet, 5/10ths, strato cumulus (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target Hazy from gunfire smoke and dust (CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (e) Visibility 6-10 (MILES)

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

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

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

(h) AIMING POINT	(i) DIMENSIONS OR TONNAGE	(j) NO. A/C ATTACKING	(l) BOMBS AND AMMUNITION EXPENDED, EACH AIMING POINT	(m) NO. HITS On Aiming Point	(n) DAMAGE (None, slight, serious, destroyed or sunk)
		(k) SQUADRON			
1					
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).

(p) Were Photographs Taken? \_\_\_\_\_ Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached By Staple.



# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filled out)

~~SECRET~~

VF-45

REPORT No. 33

**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



Commander Gordon E. Scheeter, Commander Air Group FORTY FIVE, took off at 0630 (K), 19 February, 1945 with his four plane fighter division as escort, from the USS SAN JACINTO to act as Target Coordinator at Iwo Jima for T.G. 58.2 during support missions by the Task Group from 0730 - 1030 (K) "D" Day.

He reported to Commander Air Support Control Units when about 30 miles from the target objective, and was ordered to stay well clear of the objective area until further notice. In approximately 15 minutes CASCU ordered Commander Scheeter to act as 5th Phib Force Air Coordinator for CASCU. In about ten minutes the Air Coordinator, 5th Phib Force came on the air and attempted to make contact with CASCU, as a result of which he later shifted Commander Scheeter back to his original voice call; but since CASCU could not work the Air Coordinator, 5th Phib Force owing to the latter's receiver difficulties, the Air Group Commander had to take over at 0745 (K) as Air Coordinator. At that time CASCU assigned to Commander Scheeter, acting temporarily as Air Coordinator, targets of opportunity for flight led by the USS HANCOCK and CVE Support Aircraft group commanders, the mission to be completed and planes clear of the target area by 0800 (K). Targets of opportunity on either flank of the landing beach were given to the support elements, the right flank (Grid Squares 166/C, D and E) being assigned to the CVE Support Group and Grid Squares 132/C, H, M being delegated to the USS HANCOCK group (Grid Reference: Air Support Chart, Iwo Jima, compiled and reproduced by 64th Engr. Bn., USAFOPBC, No. 1125, Dec. 1944). These targets were hit by the designated VB and VT in glide bombing and by the VF in strafing and rocket attacks.

Shortly afterwards, communications were re-established between CASCU and the Air Coordinator, 5th Phib Force.

At approximately 0840 (K) CASCU ordered Commander Scheeter's four-plane division to expend all rockets and ammunition on targets of opportunity, to be completed in fifteen minutes. The four planes made their first rocket and strafing run from E to W against probable gun positions in Grid Square 217/F, G and H; and, circling to the right on a climbing recovery, made a second rocket and strafing run against buildings in Kita (Grid Square 234/R) from NE to SW. Both runs were initiated from approximately 6500 feet in a 50 degree glide to 1000 feet. All rockets and strafing hits were in the objective area.

The planes went back on station approximately 2500 yards off the landing beach and continued to notice developments. In particular, the Air Group Commander observed that the enemy artillery and mortar fire from the eastern and northern slopes of Mt. Suribachi was much less accurate when these positions were being taken under Naval gunfire.

At approximately 0920 (K) an OS2U was observed to crash at a approximately Grid Square 148/M, about 30-50 yards off shore, and the Air Group Commander gave the prescribed "crash, crash, crash" report over the SAB-2 frequency. A number of LVT's were observed in the immediate vicinity of the crash, but no survivors were seen picked up.

At 1030 (K) the flight left its station, pancaking without further incidents at 1115 (K).



# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
(Reclassify when  
filled out)

VF-45

REPORT No. #33

**SECRET**

**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 equipment functioned satisfactorily**

REPORT PREPARED BY:

**S.W. PLAUCHE, Jr., LT(JG), USNR**  
SIGNATURE ACT OFFICER RANK AND DUTY

APPROVED BY:

**G. E. S&HECTER, COMDR., USN**  
SIGNATURE COMMANDING OFFICER RANK AND DUTY

**2-20-45**

DATE