

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL
RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

COPY 1

I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting **VT-33** (b) Based on or at **U.S.S. SANGAMON** (c) Report No. **6B**
 (d) Take off: Date **29 March 1945** Time (LZT) **0932(I)** (Zone); Lat. **25°27'N** Long. **127°36'E**
 (e) Mission **Support (Bomb and Rocket Ground Targets pre-landing Day)** (f) Time of Return **1357(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) | | |
| TBM-3E | VT-33 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 10 X 100 G.P. 8 HVAR | Nose AN M 103A1 Inst. Tail AN M 100 A2 .1 sec. Base Mk. 157 .02 sec. |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

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

| TYPE | SQUADRON | NUMBER | BASE | TYPE | SQUADRON | NUMBER | BASE |
|-------------|--------------|----------|----------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| TBM | VC-13 | 4 | U.S.S. ANZIO | TBM | | 8 | Carrier Support Unit |
| FM-2 | VC-84 | 4 | U.S.S. MAKIN ISLAND | | | | 52.1.2 |
| FM-2 | VC-85 | 8 | U.S.S. LUNGA POINT | FM-2 | | 12 | " " |

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 |
|----------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| N-o-n-o | | | (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) **Yontan Airfield, Okinawa** (b) Time Over Target(s) **1100(I)** (Zone)
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)

(c) Clouds Over Target **Base 3000, strato-cumulus, 6/10 cover**
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

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

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type **Glide** Bomb Sight Used **Mk. VIII**
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run **4** Spacing **100** Altitude of Bomb Release **800**
(NUMBER) (FEET) **Rockets S/R 1000 yds.**

(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 Two Story Bldg. | 75 X 100 | 2 VT-33 | 14 HVAR and strafe | 8 | Serious |
| 2 Gun Positions | - - - | 3 VT-33 | 16 X 100 G.P. Unobserved 10 HVAR | 0 | Unobserved |
| 3 Revetments | - - - | 3 VT-33 | 14 X 100 G.P. and strafe | 7 | Unobserved |
| 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).
- This building is located at northern edge of Yontan Airfield, Okinawa, 75 X 100 ft. and is a barracks or administration type of building. At least eight (8) rockets hits by reporting aircraft were observed. Serious damage was done to the building and it was set afire.**
 - Hidden gun positions east of Yontan Airfield, Okinawa. These positions fire only occasionally and not every day, and are very difficult to locate and bomb from the air except when they are firing. No tracers have been observed. In other words, when the gun is not firing it is necessary for the pilot to dive at what he thinks is a gun position. Actual damage was not and could not be observed.**
 - These revetments are situated approximately immediately inland from the sea wall along the western beach of Okinawa near Yontan Airfield. They appear to be protection for troops, such as rifle trenches. Hits threw debris into the air but extent of damage unobserved.**

(p) Were Photographs Taken? **No** 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

Lieut. Comdr. GILKESON, Squadron and Air Group Commander, and two (2) other planes took off as part of twenty-four (24) FM-2 and fifteen (15) TBM support group. CASCU assigned a large building and AA emplacements near Yontan Airfield. Just before going off station, a revetment behind a sea wall was designated. It had been reported that there were some troops there. No troops were seen, but the revetments were located and bombed.

Since no AA was firing, it was particularly difficult to pick out and hit AA positions. One (1) crewman saw some light gun flashes coming from the ruins of what was formerly a building alongside the runway. The number of hits and damage could not be observed. It is believed that several good hits were made on what looked like gun positions.

Around such areas as this (near airfields) on Okinawa, there are many dugouts and mounds which could be gun positions, but when coming down in the dive, pilots are unable to pick the spot containing the gun. Many are empty positions. With an over-cast, such as during this flight, crewmen sometimes pick a target but by the time the climb for altitude has been made (into the over-cast) for the next dive, the point of aim has been lost.

On this flight, Squadron's Commanding Officer completed his fifth mission in this operation as Air Coordinator. It is his recommendation that at least one (1) phase of rocket training for pilots be allocated to firing at quick appearing targets. Because of the low ceiling and indistinct targets, it is often necessary to search for a target from low altitude and to fire at it as soon as it appears, there being no opportunity to get the altitude for the regulation rocket glide angle and slant range. Of necessity this results in "shooting from the hip" method.

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

AN/APS-4 radar gear in the TBM was especially helpful in this flight. It is incumbent upon the Air Coordinator to keep track of thirty-nine (39) planes, select and identify targets for all and to make occasional runs himself. His radioman was able to keep him informed at any time of his position with respect to land reference points and groups of ships near by. Although it was necessary to go on instruments at time while climbing into the low overcast, the Air Coordinator and other TBM-3E pilots were able to keep oriented.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

A.W. SWARNER, Lt. (A) USNR
A.C.I. Officer VT-33

RANK AND DUTY

F.B. GILKESON, Lt. Comdr. USN
Commanding Officer VT-33
Commanding Officer CVG-33

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

29 March 1945

DATE