

VMF 121

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Report # 59

IIC(19)

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AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

6122
611926
Commander in Chief
Pacific Fleet

I. GENERAL CONFIDENTIAL

(a) Unit Reporting **VMP-121** (b) Based on or at **Peleliu** (c) Report No. **59**
 (d) Take off: Date **31 March 1945.** Time (LZT) **0900 (K)** (Zone); Lat. **7°-59'N** Long. **134°-14'E**
 (e) Mission **Barge Sweep--Babelthuap** (f) Time of Return **1000 (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)		
FG-1A	VMP-121	4 FG-1A	- - - -	4 FG-1A	1 x 100 lb. G.P.	Instantaneous nose & non-delay tail.

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
None							

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) _____

(i) Did Any Part of Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? _____ If so, Describe Clouds _____
(YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(j) Time of Day and Brilliance 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:			GUNS USED	(c) WHERE HIT, ANGLE	(d) DAMAGE CLAIMED
	TYPE A/C	SQUADRON	PILOT OR GUNNER			
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 (Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) **TX(691-923) - Babelthup.** (b) Time Over Target(s) **0930 (K)** (Zone)

(c) Clouds Over Target **.6 cover, 2500 feet base, 5000 ft. top.**
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)
(BASE IN FEET. TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

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

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type **Glide.** Bomb Sight Used **Mark 8**
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run **4** Spacing _____ Altitude of Bomb Release **1200**
(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 TX(690-908)	12' x 10'	3 FG-1A VMP-121	2 x 100 lb. G.P.	0	Unobserved.
2 TX(691-923)	12' x 9'	1 FG-1A VMP-121	1 x 100 lb. G.P.	0	Unobserved.
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? **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

NARRATIVE:

First Lieutenant Paul Jackson KELLER, leader of a division participated in a fighter sweep over Babelthuap, had initiated a bombing run on some small bridges along a much-used supply route near the East coast of the island when his plane was hit by light anti-aircraft fire. He heard the projectiles hammering into the bottom of the fuselage while in a 45° glide at approximately 1200 feet and before his bomb had been released. Releasing his bomb, he pulled the plane up into a gentle climb and headed out to sea. The three (3) remaining members of the division meanwhile, had dropped their 100 lb. G.P. bombs on bridges a few thousand feet to the South and had also turned out over the water. They joined Lt. Keller and saw that his plane was on fire, burning on the under side of the fuselage in front of the cockpit.

Lt. Keller noticed smoke in the cockpit and was told by a member of his division that his plane was on fire. He immediately made preparations for ditching, loosening his parachute, tightening his safety straps, and heading Southeast to a suitable ditching spot outside of the reef.

A member of the division began to climb with his emergency IFF on, while the other two (2) kept visual contact with the plane going down.

Before hitting the water Lt. Keller jettisoned the hood. With the engine still running, the plane was landed into the wind and waves at a near-stalling speed. The landing was smooth and mild, with the plane nosing down into the second wave. Lt. Keller unbuckled his safety straps and got out without difficulty, dragging his parachute, survival pack, and life raft after him. He inflated his life jacket, shoved himself away from the plane, inflated his life raft, and climbed aboard. The recommended procedure for ditching was followed throughout, and no difficulty was experienced.

The standby rescue craft, PGM 29, commanded by Lt. Rumbough, was at the scene within fifteen (15) minutes, effecting the rescue at TX(790-880) by 0940 (K Zone).

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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

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

**1st Lt., USMC
Intelligence O.**

**Major, USMC
Commanding**

31Mar45.

SIGNATURE **EDWARD P. WOOD**

RANK AND DUTY

SIGNATURE

W. J. MEYER

RANK AND DUTY

DATE

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