

# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED  
**CONFIDENTIAL**

## I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting VC-85 (b) Based on or at USS LUNGA POINT (CVE-94) (c) Report No. VC-85 - 133  
 (d) Take off: Date 6 April 1945 Time (LZT) 1330 (I) (Zone); Lat. 25° 30' N Long. 127° 47' E  
 (e) Mission Combat Air Patrol over Kerama Retto (f) Time of Return 1745 (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>FM-2</b>	<b>VC-85</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>1600 x .50 cal</b>	

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE

## 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>VAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1700 (I)</b> (ZONE)	<b>10 miles N.W. of Kerama Retto</b>	<b>None Observed</b>	<b>OLIVE DRAB PAINT RED INSIGNIA</b>
<b>OSCAR</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1715 (I)</b> (ZONE)	<b>"</b>	<b>None Observed</b>	<b>Not Known</b>
			(ZONE)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) To attack U.S. ships in Kerama Retto  
 Did Any Part of  
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? Yes If so, Describe Clouds 2500 Stratus 10/10  
(YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)  
 Time of Day and Brilliance  
 (j) of Sun or Moon Day - Overcast (k) Visibility 10  
(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>VAL</b>	<b>FM-2</b>	<b>VC-85</b>	<b>Lt. Robt. F. Pettitt, USNR</b>	<b>4 wing</b>	<b>Engine, Wing, Fuselage</b>	<b>Destroyed</b>
			<b>Lt. (jg) Geo. B. Pleat, USNR</b>	<b>"</b>		
<b>VAL</b>	<b>FM-2</b>	<b>VC-85</b>	<b>Ens. Albert R. Swanson, USNR</b>	<b>"</b>	<b>Engine, Fuselage, Tail</b>	<b>Destroyed</b>
			<b>Lt. Robt. F. Pettitt, USNR</b>	<b>"</b>		
			<b>Lt. (jg) Geo. B. Pleat, USNR</b>	<b>"</b>		
			<b>Ens. Dayo D. Prindle, USNR</b>	<b>"</b>		
<b>OSCAR</b>	<b>FM-2</b>	<b>VC-85</b>	<b>Ens. Albert R. Swanson, USNR</b>	<b>"</b>	<b>Fuselage, Tail, Engine</b>	<b>Probably Destroyed</b>



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Classification  
filled out)

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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  
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

Four FM-2s led by Lieutenant Robert F. PETTITT, USNR, took off from parent ship to provide Combat Air Patrol over assigned sector at Okinawa Shima. Upon arriving on station, the division was ordered to patrol over the Kerama Retto, 15 miles west of southern Okinawa. Bogies were reported in the area and the division was ordered to point Queen, 5 miles north of Tokashiki Jima, then to 5 miles south of Point Baker on Tonaki Shima. Here the division was vectored to intercept bogies reported approaching Kerama Retto from the north. The flight leader tally-hoed two Vals at 3 o'clock, 500 feet above at 2500 feet heading east 90° to our planes' heading. Lieutenant Pettitt and flight turned toward the Vals on a heading of 270°T. Vals were then at 12 o'clock and slightly above. Upon sighting the FM-2s, the Vals split, one turning right, the other left. Lieutenant Pettitt and Lieutenant (junior grade) George B. Pleat, USNR, went after the Val which had turned left; Ensigns Albert R. Swanson, USNR and Dayo D. Prindle, USNR, went after the second Val.

Lieutenant Pettitt and Lieutenant (junior grade) Pleat opened fire on their Val at full deflection and continued turning and firing until no deflection obtained. Both pilots were firing, both hit the mark, and the Val flamed at 2000 feet, diving. He did not appear to have lost control. Both pilots followed on his tail, shooting until he splashed.  
**CREDIT: 1/2 to Lieutenant Pettitt - 1/2 to Lieutenant (jg) Pleat.**

Meanwhile, Ensigns Swanson and Prindle were closing with the second Val. Both pilots had passed above the Jap as he turned sharply toward them, but both had turned and were closing from behind. Ensign Prindle had been sucked well to the rear and wide, and Ensign Swanson was close to the Val when he opened fire. Ensign Prindle, also closing, opened fire. Ensign Swanson's tracers hit the Val and he burst into flames at 1200 feet, still diving. The Val slowed up and Ensign Swanson overshot and pulled to the right. At that point, Lieutenant Pettitt and Lieutenant (jg) Pleat, having recovered from their attack on the first Val, swooped in on the second Val and fired. Shortly thereafter the Val crashed in the water.

**CREDIT: 1/4 to Ensign Swanson - 1/4 to Lieutenant Pettitt  
1/4 to Lieutenant (jg) Pleat - 1/4 to Ensign Prindle.**

Following this attack, at 1700 (I), the division was vectored to intercept a bogey which proved to be a TBM. Just before this friendly plane was tally-hoed, Ensign Swanson looked straight up and saw an Oscar at the base of the clouds at 2500 feet. Our planes were at 1500 feet. The Oscar was on a course of 90° to our planes' heading. Ensign Swanson pulled up sharply and opened fire at 500 feet range. Tracers were seen to hit the engine, fuselage and tail. The port elevator was blown off the Oscar just as he entered a cloud and disappeared. He was sighted momentarily a few seconds later by Lieutenant (jg) Pleat. Although this plane was not seen to crash, it is believed by all pilots who witnessed the action that the pilot could not retain sufficient control to return to base.

**CREDIT: Ensign Swanson - One OSCAR probably destroyed.**

Following this action all planes returned safely to base.  
**SCORE: TWO VALS DESTROYED - ONE OSCAR PROBABLY DESTROYED.**

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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

**No material failures were reported.**

**FORWARDED: G. A. T. WASHBURN,  
Captain, U. S. Navy,  
Commanding Officer,  
U.S.S. LUNGA POINT (CVE-94).**

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

**W. H. KEARNS, Lieut., USNR, ACIO**

**FRED C. HERRIMAN, Lt.Cdr., USN, C.O.**

**6 April 1945**

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

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DATE