

VMF 122

167
20

Report #20

IIc(20)

5

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

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REPORT No 20

VI. LOSS OR DAMAGE, COMBAT OR OPERATIONAL, OF OWN AIRCRAFT (of those listed in II only).

(a) TYPE OWN A/C	(b) SQUADRON	(c) CAUSE: TYPE ENEMY A/C, TYPE GUN, OR OPERATIONAL CAUSE	(d) WHERE HIT, ANGLE (List armor, self-sealing tanks, equipment hit)	(e) EXTENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE (Give Bureau serial number of planes destroyed)
1 F4U-1D	122	ENGINE TROUBLE		COMPLETE LOSS-WATER LAN- ING-BUREAU NO. 57589
2				
3				
4		NOTE: MAJOR PIERCE HEARD SOMETHING SNAP IN THE ENGINE WHEN ABOUT 25 MILES FROM YAP. ENGINE BEGAN TO RUN ROUGH MAKING WATER LANDING MANDATORY.		
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				

VII. PERSONNEL CASUALTIES (in aircraft listed in II only; identify with planes listed in VI by Nos. at left).

(b) SQUADRON	(c) NAME, RANK OR RATING	(d) CAUSE	(e) CONDITION OR STATUS
	NONE		
	NOTE: UNDER VIII (H) BELOW IS LISTED THE FOUR PLANES WHICH RE- TURNED DIRECTLY TO BASE. THE REMAINING THREE PLANES IN MAJOR PIERCE'S DIVISION PROCEEDED ON TO ULITHI WHERE THE RESCUE DESTROYER WAS BASED.		

VIII. RANGE, FUEL, AND AMMUNITION DATA FOR PLANES RETURNING

(a) TYPE A/C	(b) MILES OUT	(c) MILES RETURN	(d) AV. HOURS IN AIR	(e) AV. FUEL LOADED	(f) AV. FUEL CONSUMED	(g) TOTAL AMMUNITION EXPENDED				(h) NO. OF PLANES RETURNING
						30	50	20MM	MM	
F4U-1D	270	270	3.3 HRS.	402	342		1550			4

IX. ENEMY ANTI-AIRCRAFT ENCOUNTERED (Check one block on each line).

CALIBER	NONE	MEAGER	MODERATE	INTENSE
HEAVY — Time-fused shells, 75mm and over	X			
MEDIUM — Impact-fused shells, 20mm-50mm	X			
LIGHT — Machine gun bullets, 6.5mm-13.2mm			X	

X. COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE, OWN AND ENEMY AIRCRAFT (use check list at left).

SPEED, CLIMB,
at various altitudes

TURNS

DIVES

CEILINGS

RANGE

PROTECTION

ARMAMENT

NOTE: THE FIGURES LISTED UNDER VIII ABOVE APPLY ONLY TO THE ONE
DIVISION WHICH RETURNED DIRECTLY TO BASE. THE BELLY TANKS
ALONG WITH WHAT GASOLINE REMAINED IN THEM WERE JETTISONED
AT YAP WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR THE RELATIVELY HIGH FIGURE UN-
DER VIII (F).

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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) INSTALLATIONS PEKEL ISLAND (b) Time Over Target(s) 1100 -10 (Zone)
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)
- (c) Clouds Over Target 3/10 CUMULUS COVER AT 2000'
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)
- (d) Visibility of Target CLEAR (e) Visibility 30 MILES
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (MILES)
- (f) Bombing Tactics: Type 40 DEG. GLIDE Bomb Sight Used NONE
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)
- Bombs Dropped per Run 2 Spacing _____ Altitude of Bomb Release 1500' AV.
(NUMBER) (FEET) (FEET)
- (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 PEKEL ISLAND	400 YDS X 150 YDS	6 VMF 122	12-250 LB. G.P.'S.	5	UNDETERMINED
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? 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
Release
Pull-Out
Dive Angle
Strafing
Retirement
Defensive Tactics

DEFENSE, ENEMY

Evasive Tactics, Ships
Concealment
Anti-aircraft
Searchlights
Night Fighter Tactics

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

PEKEL ISLAND, STRATEGICALLY LOCATED IN TOMIL HARBOR AT YAP, WAS THE TARGET OF THIS EIGHT PLANE BOMBING MISSION. A SMALL ISLAND (400 YDS LONG X 150 YDS WIDE) IT CONTAINS APPROXIMATELY SIX WAREHOUSES AND HAS DOCKING FACILITIES FOR MIDGET SUBMARINES. NO ANTI-AIRCRAFT HAS BEEN REPORTED AS ORIGINATING FROM THIS ISLAND BUT THERE ARE MANY ACTIVE POSITIONS WITHIN RANGE.

OF THE SIX PLANES STRIKING THE TARGET THE TABULATED RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RELEASE PT.</u>	<u>CONTACT PT.</u>
LT. MELIN	1000'	ONE ON NORTHWEST END OF ISLAND; ONE IN WATER
LT. SMITH	1000'	BOTH BOMBS STRUCK ISLAND.
LT. TORBETT	1500'	BOTH BOMBS OVERSHOT IN WATER.
LT. BROADUS	1500'	BOTH SHORT-IN WATER.
LT. MORRISON	2000'	BOTH MISSED TARGET.
LT. ASHE	2000'	BOTH BOMBS IN TARGET AREA.

GLIDE BOMBING TACTICS WERE USED, THE RUNS BEING MADE FROM SOUTHEAST TO NORTHWEST. DUE TO THE MANY KNOWN ANTI-AIRCRAFT POSITIONS IN THE VICINITY IT WAS NOT DEEMED ADVISABLE TO ATTEMPT AN ACCURATE APPRAISAL OF THE DAMAGE.

LTS. SMITH, MORRISON AND BROADUS REPORT STRAFING AND KILLING ONE JAP ON A RAFT AT "YAP SHEET 3 T.A. 191 UNCLE." LT. ASHE STRAFED AND BURNED A BUILDING AT "YAP SHEET 3 T.A. 204 KING"

NEITHER MAJOR PIERCE, THE STRIKE LEADER, NOR HIS WINGMAN RELEASED OVER THE TARGET. DUE TO SERIOUS ENGINE TROUBLE MAJOR PIERCE WAS FORCED TO MAKE A WATER LANDING. HIS COMPLETE STORY FOLLOWS:

"WHEN APPROXIMATELY 35 MILES SOUTH OF YAP I HEARD A LOUD SNAPPING NOISE IN THE ENGINE WHICH WAS FOLLOWED BY EXTREME VIBRATION. THE SETTING WAS 2100 AND 30 INCHES. NOTING THAT EVERYTHING WAS IN ORDER ON THE INSTRUMENT PANEL, I SWITCHED FROM LOW BLOWER TO NEUTRAL BLOWER, INCREASED MY RPM'S TO 2300, AND LOWERED MY MANIFOLD PRESSURE TO 28 INCHES. THE VIBRATION DECREASED AND I THOUGHT I WOULD BE ABLE TO RELEASE OVER THE TARGET AND GET TO ULITHI FOR A CHECK-UP ON THE TROUBLE. CONTINUING ON COURSE I RELEASED MY BELLY TANK AS YAP WAS APPROACHED AND MADE THE NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS PREPARATORY TO GOING INTO THE BOMBING RUN. AT THIS POINT (MY ALTITUDE WAS 7500') THE ENGINE STARTED TO MISS AND THE VIBRATIONS INCREASED. I SWUNG AWAY FROM THE TARGET, JETTISONED MY BOMBS, AND NOTIFIED MY WINGMAN THAT I WAS FORCED TO MAKE A WATER LANDING. THE INSTRUMENT READINGS CONTINUED TO BE NORMAL. I LOWERED MY MANIFOLD PRESSURE TO 22 INCHES BUT FOUND THAT THE ENGINE WOULD COUGH WHEN I TRIED TO RAISE IT AGAIN TO INCREASE ALTITUDE. I DECIDED TO GIRCLE THE ISLAND FIRST, BECAUSE I WANTED TO STAY CLOSE ENOUGH TO USE IT AS A RESCUE BEARING AND SECOND, BECAUSE I WANTED TO STAY WITHIN

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XIII. MATERIAL DATA. (Comment freely on performance or suitability, following check list at left.
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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

RANGE OF THE DUMBO PLANE AND STILL PERMIT THE DUMBO TO REMAIN ON STATION DURING THE ACTUAL BOMBING. I STARTED LOSING ALTITUDE GRADUALLY. AT 4000' I JETTISONED THE HOOD AND TURNED ON MY I.F.F.. THEN WHEN I HAD REACHED THE SOUTHERNMOST TIP OF YAP I HEADED OUT TO SEA, HAVING BAILED OUT ONCE BEFORE (15 JANUARY 1943-GUADALCANAL-PLANE RIDDLED WITH HOLES) I THOUGHT OF JUMPING BUT DECIDED AGAINST IT BECAUSE OF THE RELATIVELY HIGH WIND VELOCITY. I WAS AFRAID THAT I MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO SPILL THE AIR OUT OF THE CHUTE BEFORE IT DRAGGED ME UNDER. WHEN AT 1000' AND FIVE OR SIX MILES FROM YAP I LOWERED MY TAIL HOOK AND HEADED INTO THE WIND FOR A FULL STALL LANDING WITH 50 DEGREE FLAPS. THE ENGINE WAS STILL TURNING OVER WHEN I LANDED BUT I HAD NO POWER. PRIOR TO LANDING I HAD TIGHTENED MY SHOULDER STRAPS AND SAFETY BELT. THE LANDING WAS VERY SMOOTH. I UNFASTENED MY SAFETY BELT, STOOD UP IN THE COCKPIT AND LOWERED MYSELF INTO THE WATER. THERE WAS PLENTY OF TIME-IT WAS AT LEAST 40 SECONDS BEFORE THE PLANE SANK. ONCE IN THE WATER I UNBUCKLED THE CHUTE AND INFLATED MY LIFE JACKET. THE SWELLS WERE HIGH AND I EXPERIENCED SOME DIFFICULTY IN GETTING THE BOAT OUT AS THE PARACHUTE RAPIDLY BECAME WATER LOGGED AND TENDED TO PULL ME UNDER. WHEN I DID GET THE BOAT OUT I FOUND THAT THE CO2 BOTTLE WAS ONLY 1/4 EFFECTIVE. I HAD TO INFLATE IT ORALLY. I CLIMBED ON AFTER I HAD IT HALF INFLATED. EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT ME THAT IT'S MUCH EASIER THIS WAY. IN THE PROCESS OF INFLATING THE RAFT, MY FISHING LINE, MIRROR, AND KNIFE WERE LOST. I RECOMMEND THAT NO LOOSE ARTICLES BE CARRIED IN THE RAFT. THEY SHOULD BE TIED ON. MY WINGMAN WAS CIRCLING OVERHEAD AND THE DUMBO PLANE WAS HEADED MY WAY. I PUT OUT A PACKAGE OF DYE MARKER TO MARK MY POSITION. THE TIME, I NOTED WAS 1120. THE PARACHUTE I TIED TO THE HEAD OF THE RAFT TO KEEP IT HEADED INTO THE WIND. TO AVOID PUNCTURING THE RAFT I TOOK OFF MY SHOES AND TIED THEM ON. IT WAS TOO ROUGH FOR THE DUMBO TO LAND. I SIGNALED THAT I WAS ALL RIGHT AND HAVING IN MIND THE NEW LOCAL AIR-SEA RESCUE PROCEDURE, I MENTALLY CALCULATED THAT A ULITHI BASED DESTROYER WOULD BE ABLE TO REACH ME AT ABOUT 1600. I BUSIED MYSELF WITH KEEPING THE RAFT BAILED OUT. FROM TIME TO TIME I PUT OUT A SMALL AMOUNT OF DYE MARKER TO ENABLE THE DUMBO PILOTS TO KEEP ME IN VIEW. AT LEAST ONE DUMBO PLANE KEPT CIRCLING ME THE ENTIRE TIME. I WAS PICKED UP AT APPROXIMATELY 1600 BY THE D.D. LANSDOWNE AND TAKEN TO ULITHI.

AT THE REQUEST OF THE DUMBO PILOT LTS. MISLEY, MORRISON AND ASHE PROCEEDED ON TO ULITHI TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE RESCUE FACILITIES HAD BEEN PROPERLY ALERTED AND THAT HELP WOULD BE FORTHCOMING.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

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SIGNATURE RANK AND BODY

F. E. PIERCE JR. MAJOR, USMC
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13 FEB 45 COMD'G, VNF 122
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