

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

15588

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when
filled out)

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I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting MAG-22 (b) Based on or at Charlie Strip, Ie Shima, Okinawa (c) Report No. VMF-113 #92
VMF-314 #23
VMF-422 #96

(d) Take off: Date 1 July 1945 Time (LZT) 1515 Item (Zone); Lat. 26° 43' Long. 127° 47'
Nansei Shoto

(e) Mission Strike against Hirara Airfield, Miyako Shima (f) Time of Return 1845 (I) (Zone)

II. OWN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALLY COVERED BY THIS REPORT.

TYPE (a)	SQUADRON (b)	NUMBER			ATTACKING TARGET (e)	BOMBS AND TORPEDOES CARRIED (PER PLANE) (f)	FUZE, SETTING (g)	
		TAKING OFF (c)	ENGAGING ENEMY A/C (d)	(g)			Tail	
F4U-1D	VMF-113	7	0	5	8A/C-2x500 G.P.	Inst.	.025	
FG-1D		5	0	3	7A/C-8AR5" HE Head. 1A/C-4AR5" HE Head. #1 Mot.	Inst.	N.D.	
F4U-1C	VMF-314	8	0	8	2x500 G.P. 8AR 5" HE Head	4-no nose. 6hr. delay Inst. 10	.025	
F4U-1D		7	0	7	2x500 G.P.	Inst.	N.D.	
FG-1D	VMF-422	1	0	1	8AR 5" HE Head	Inst.	N.D.	

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
PBM (Dumbo)	Unknown	1	Kerama Retto				

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) None

Did Any Part of
(i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? No 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 _____ (NIGHT, BRIGHT MOON; DAY, OVERCAST; ETC.)

(k) Visibility _____ (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		
None					

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(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

VMF-113#92

VMF-314#23

REPORT NO. VMF-422#96

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

Hirara

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) A/F, Miyako Shima, Nansei Shoto (b) Time Over Target(s) 1700 (I) (Zone)
(FOR SHIPS INCLUDE ALL IN AREA UNDER ATTACK)

(c) Clouds Over Target None
(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 4-Glide, 20-Dive Bomb Sight Used 16-Mk8 Gunsight
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run 2 Spacing 0 Altitude of Bomb Release 2000 to 3000
Rockets 16-8, 2-7, 2-6, 1-4, 1-2, 2-0 (NUMBER) 0 (FEET) 1500 to 2500 (FEET)

(g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed 2 Probably Destroyed None Damaged None

(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)
AA Positions, S. of SW-NE Strip	Undeter.	4 VMF-422	8-Bombs 24-Rockets.	8 24	Unobserved.
AA Positions, N. of SW-NE Strip.	Undeter.	4 VMF-422	6-Bombs. 29-Rockets.	6 23	Unobserved.
"Sugar Charlie" on W. coast Miyako.	300-400GT	6 VMF-422	3535 rds. 50 Cal.	Numerous	None.
Northeast South-west Runway.	4830'X300'	4 VMF-314	8-Bombs.	8	Hit Runway but results unobserved.
North South Runway	4300'X250'	4 VMF314	8-Bombs.	8	Ditto
Eastern End East West Runway.	3000'X250'	4 VMF-314	32-Rockets.	32	Ditto
Revetments along Runways.	Unknown	4 VMF-314	31-Rockets.	31	All rockets hit in Target Area. Seven direct hits on 1 A/C in revetment. One A/C hit by 2 rockets. (Both destroyed).

Undetermined whether A/C were originally-
Operational.

(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).

8. Small boats S.E. Ikema Jima.	Unknown	4 VMF-314	1500 20mm	Numerous	set afire.
9. Bldgs. NE Miyako Shima.	Unknown	4 VMF-314	2000 20mm	Numerous	set afire.
10. Concentrations of 6 planes on the N. end of NS Runway.	Unknown	8 VMF-113	6-500#GP Bombs.	6	Not observed.
11. Gr. of planes on the So. end of the North South Runway.	Unknown	8 VMF-113	8-500#GP Bombs.	8	Not observed.
12. Concentration of A/C & 3 covered hangs. on the S. perimeter of traffic circle at the So. edge of the A/F.		8 VMF-113	39-AR5" HE Head Inst. - N.D. 2-500#GP Bombs.	39 2	Not observed. Not observed.
13. Ship in Harbor.	Unknown	8 VMF-113	4-AR5" HE Head (5000 rds., 50 Cal. were expended).	4	Not observed.

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(p) Were Photographs Taken? No Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached By Staple.

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XI. ATTACK ON ENEMY SHIPS OR GROUND OBJECTIVES. (Cont).

Results: VMF-422

(1-2) Smoke and dust from our exploding bombs and rockets in the target area obscured observation of actual results although pilots felt confident that many direct hits or near misses had been registered.

(3) No damage was observed despite numerous hits. Several pilots stated that the ship appeared already "beached".

VMF-314

(4,5,6,7) All pilots agree that the Airfield did not look as though it could have been operational. All runways were gutted with holes from previous strikes. One or two A/C may have been operational but it would have been impossible to take them off.

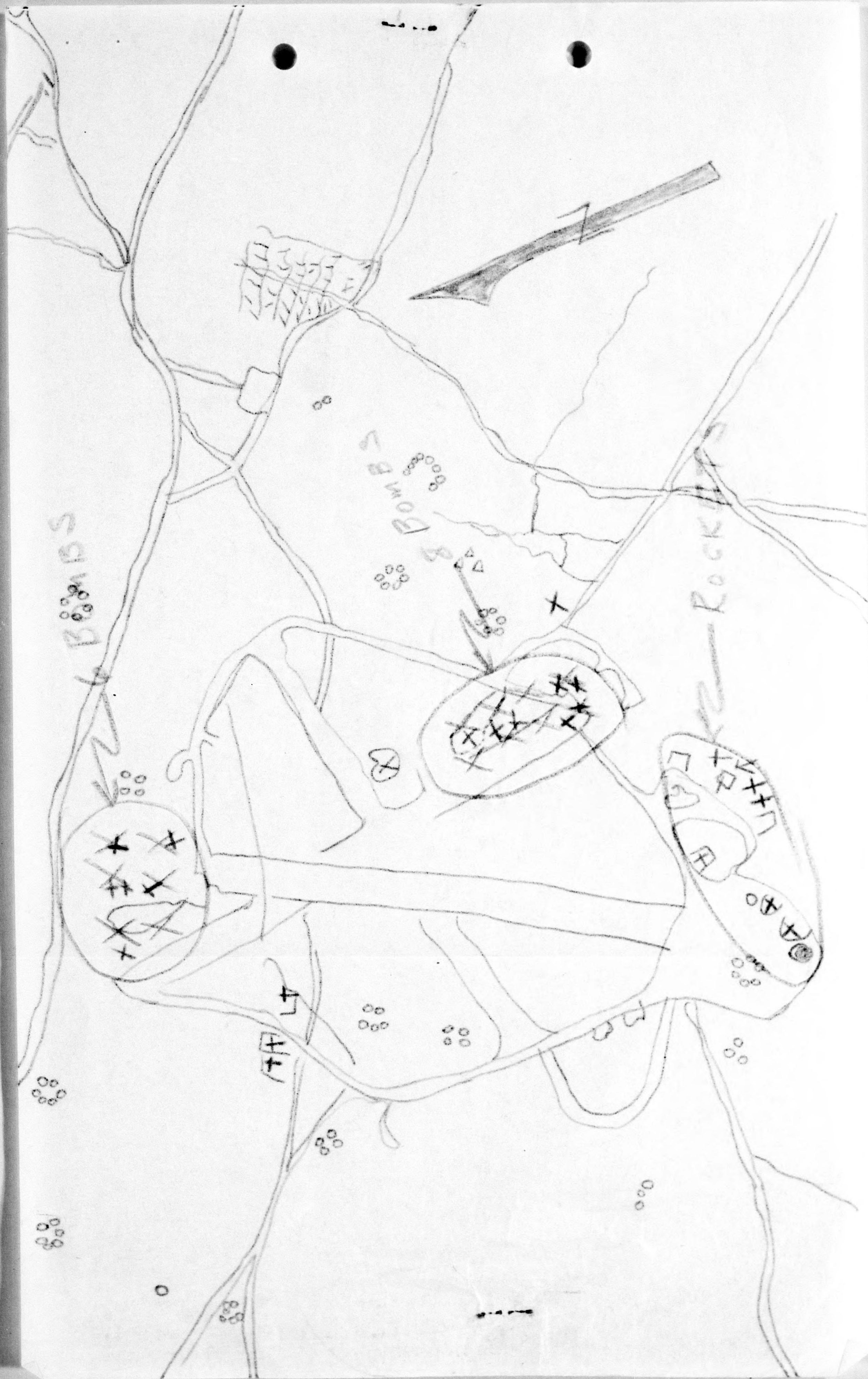
(8-9) After dropping bombs and firing rockets the pilots strafed targets of opportunity throughout the island. A couple of boats in the cove of Ikema Jima were left burning. Several small fires were started in buildings which appeared to be barracks or warehouses along the north-east Coast. All buildings appeared well ventilated from previous strafing attacks.

VMF-113

(10-11-12-13) Rockets and bombs were seen to hit aiming points but extent of damage could not be determined.

Strafing was very effective and targets were damaged.

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Report No. VMF-422 #96

XII. TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA.

VMF-422:

Major C.C. Lee was strike leader of this coordinated bombing, rocket and strafing attack on Hirara Airfield, Miyako Shima. Planes of VMF-113 and VMF-314 also participated. Our eight planes were the first to make runs having as their targets antiaircraft positions at the airfield.

Major Lee's division struck emplacements on the South side and Lt. Kellenberger's division on the North side of the main (SW-NE) strip. Two runs were made, the first bombing and the second rockets, as follows:

	<u>Pushovers</u>	<u>Releases</u>	<u>Angle of dive</u>	<u>IAS</u>	<u>Axis of attack</u>
Bomb	10,000'	2000'-3000'	55 degrees	345	SW to NE
Rocket	8,500'	1500'-2500'	45 degrees	330	SW to NE

Light, meager, inaccurate AA was encountered. After completing these runs, Major Lee led our two divisions in a strafing attack on a tanker (Sugar Charlie) which was observed close in to the West shore of Miyako Shima, North of Hirara Town. Several pilots reported it to be beached. Medium, moderate and accurate AA was encountered from the ship itself. Lt. Ragone's plane received hits on its propeller blades and shrapnel holes in its right wing.

After joining up the flight headed for home.

OBSERVATIONS

The SW-NE strip of Hirara Airfield looked possibly operational. One twin engine and three single engine "silver" planes which appeared operational were observed parked in revetments along the South taxi strip.

The following squadron pilots participated in the strike:

Major C.C. LEE, Strike and Division Leader.
 1stLt. R.A. Cates
 1stLt. B.C. Allison, Section Leader
 2ndLt. R. Ragone
 1stLt. C.F. Kellenberger, Jr., Division Leader.
 2ndLt. J.Z. Sack
 2ndLt. J. Lee, Section Leader.
 1stLt. C.M. Jekot.

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Report No. VMF-314#23

VMF-314:

The planes arrived over target at 1700. The weather was CAVU. The bombing run was made from SW to NE with retirement over the water. Pushover was from 10,000', angle 40 degrees, IAS 340 knots and released at 3000 feet with retirement at about 1500 to 2000 feet. The Rocket run was made in the same direction. Pushover was from 7,000', angle 40 degrees, IAS 320 knots and release at about 1800' with retirement at 1000 feet.

As there was no AA fire observed, the planes strafed targets of opportunity from all angles in section during the third run. Some pilots said they got right on the deck during these runs. From their observations it didn't seem as though there were any targets left that were worth while.

The following squadron pilots participated in the strike:

Major F.G. Steckelberg, Division Leader.
1stLt. W.B. Caldwell
1stLt. G.P. Scott
2ndLt. W.L. Milne
1stLt. B.J. Thomas
1stLt. R.S. Crannell
2ndLt. C.W. Egan
2ndLt. G.W. Gardner

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Report No. VMF-113#92

XII. TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA.

VMF-113:

Twelve planes from this squadron took off from Charlie strip at 1530 I as part of a combined dive-bombing and strafing mission to Hirara Airfield, Miyako Jima, Sakishima Gunto. Four of these planes were assigned as fighter cover for the accompanying Dumbo. The remaining eight were armed with 2x500GP bombs and rockets and had been assigned dispersal areas. Each pilot of this group was furnished with an overlay of the airfield on which the position of the planes on the field were indicated, and definite targets were selected in advance.

The bombing run was from the Southwest, the planes approaching at 12,000 feet, nosing over into a 45 degree angle, releasing at 3000 feet and pulling out 2000 feet to retire to the Northeast.

Major Sim's division had picked a concentration of six planes on the North end of the N-S runway as their target. Six bombs struck among the parked planes. Major Sim's bombs failed to release.

Capt. Baldwin's division chose a group of planes on the southern end of the N.S. Runway. All eight bombs struck among these planes.

The two divisions rendezvoused at 6000' about five miles Northeast of the Island.

The target for the rocket attack was a concentration of planes and three covered hangers on the southern perimeter of the large traffic circle at the southern edge of the airfield. This attack was started at 6000' from the Southwest, at 40 degrees and 260 knots. Thirty-nine rockets were fired. Only eight were observed but these were in the area selected. Nine rockets failed to fire and were brought back to base. Major Sim's dropped his bombs on this run. Their strike was unobserved. Lt. Kellehers rockets fired when he inserted the plug, before he started his run, a stuck spring in the firing button was the evident cause.

AA was medium, meager and inaccurate, continuously pointed.

Four rockets were fired and strafing attacks made on a beached ship on the eastern side of the large cove on the NW side of the Island. Again the rocket firing was accurate with all four rockets hitting the super structure of the ship. 20 degree Glide, 250 knots, 800 yds. AA light, moderate, and inaccurate, continuously pointed from both sides of cove. Positions on western shore fired on retirement.

Five 45' motor launches in the harbor at Ikema Shima (Maezato) were strafed and numerous hits observed. A probable radio station on the northern shore of Ikema Shima consisting of high towers and six 2-story buildings was strafed. Hits were observed.

Scattered small boats beached along the shore between Matsubara and Kawamitsu were strafed. .50 cal. hits caused some to disintegrate. Take Off 1530, Over Target 1710, Pancake 1845.

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XII. TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA.

VMF-113:

The following VMF-113 pilots participated:

DUMBO ESCORT

1stLt. W.F. Bland - Division Leader
2ndLt. H.F. Smith
2ndLt. N.J. Petersen
2ndLt. E.E. Zandt

FIGHTER BOMBER

Major W.J. Sims - Division Leader
2ndLt. H.E. Wendt
2ndLt. R. Hunchar
2ndLt. B.J. Kelleher

Capt. W.A. Baldwin - Division Leader
2ndLt. D.C. Hallquist
2ndLt. B.N. Tuttle
2ndLt. L.E. Nolan, Jr.

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VMF-113#92

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:

VMF-422:

All planes and equipment functioned satisfactorily except for the following:
Five rockets failed to fire due to dislodged pigtails. No mechanical reason could be found for failure of six other rockets to fire. All eleven were brought home.
Two bombs failed to release. One was later jettisoned in the ocean and the other was brought back. No mechanical reason for the failure was found.

VMF-314:

Rockets did not fire because the pigtail became unloosened.
There were three stoppages during the strafing attacks.
a. Left outboard gun failed to eject a cartridge probably due to a weak ejector spring.
b. Two right guns did not function because of a failure to feed properly. The wing had been folded which caused improper feeding.

VMF-113:

Nine rockets failed to release and were returned to base. Examination disclosed faulty bodies.
Eight rockets were released in the sea due to a defective spring in the firing button on Second Lieutenant B.J. Kelleher's plane.
All other material and equipment performed in a satisfactory manner.

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H.H. RIDDER,
SIGNATURE USMCR

Capt.
GR. ACIO
RANK AND DUTY

APPROVED BY:
N.T. POST, Jr.
SIGNATURE USMC

LtCol
GrOp10f.
RANK AND DUTY
4 July 1945
DATE

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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

VMF-422:

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Two bombs failed to release. One was later jettisoned in the ocean and the other was brought back. No mechanical reason for the failure was found.

VMF-314:

Rockets did not fire because the pigtail became unloosened.
There were three stoppages during the strafing attacks.
a. Left outboard gun failed to eject a cartridge probably due to a weak ejector spring.
b. Two right guns did not function because of a failure to feed properly. The wing had been folded which caused improper feeding.

VMF-113:

Nine rockets failed to release and were returned to base. Examination disclosed faulty bodies.
Eight rockets were released in the sea due to a defective spring in the firing button on Second Lieutenant B.J. Kelleher's plane.
All other material and equipment performed in a satisfactory manner.

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REPORT PREPARED BY:

H.H. RIDDER,
SIGNATURE USMCR

Capt.
GR. ACIO
RANK AND DUTY

APPROVED BY:

N.T. POST, Jr.
SIGNATURE USMC

LtCol
GrOp1Of.
RANK AND DUTY

4 July 1945
DATE