

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

055988

I. GENERAL

Kerama

(a) Unit Reporting VPB-26 (b) Based on or at USS NORTON SOUND, Retto (c) Report No. 5-45

(d) Take off: Date 20 June 1945 Time (LZT) 1715 I (Zone); Lat: 26-15N Long. 127-20E

(e) Mission Night search - call 91V464 (f) Time of Return 0823 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)		
PBM-5	VPB-26	1		1	6GP AN-M-30 (100 lb)	AN-M115 4-5 seconds

III. OTHER U. S. OR ALLIED AIRCRAFT EMPLOYED IN THIS OPERATION. None

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
Unknown	2	2	0052 I (ZONE)	31-40N, 122-26' N	None observed	Unknown
			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) night interception

Did Any Part of

(i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? yes If so, Describe Clouds sea fog up to 300 ft. in patches 5/10ths
(YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

Time of Day and Brilliance

(j) of Sun or Moon night; fairly bright moon (k) Visibility 2 miles
(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		
	No shooting by either party					

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
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(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)
C O N F I D E N T I A L

REPORT No. ██████ **5-45**

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

- (a) Target(s) and Location(s) One tug and towed barge (b) Time Over Target(s) 0050 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 but at night (e) Visibility 2 miles
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (MILES)
- (f) Bombing Tactics: Type level Bomb Sight Used Seaman's Eye
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)
- Bombs Dropped per Run 3 Spacing 25 Altitude of Bomb Release 400
(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 Tug	90 ft. 225 tons	1 VPB-26	3 X 100 G.P.	Unknown	Unknown
2 Barge	150 ft. 400 tons	same run	Strafing	Slight	
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).

Tug was towing barge, latter being some 300 feet behind. As the plane attacked the tug, the barge was strafed. No explosives were seen on the tug immediately after the run was made, but at a distance of about 15 miles, some 7 minutes after the drop, a big flash and explosion was seen where the tug and barge were.

The pilot, Lt. Williams, believes that his bombs came close enough to damage the rudder of the tug. Slight damage both to the barge and the tug is probable. See the narrative subsequent hereto.

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

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

REPORT No. 5-45

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

Lt. William L. Williams, of VPB-26, as Patrol Plane Commander, and his crew were assigned a night search and tracking mission on June 20-21, with the call of 91V464. Taking off before dark from their base at Kerama Retto, they headed for the China Coast about 90 miles above Formosa.

After prowling Northward along the coast, they reached the mouth of the Yangtze River, and picked up two targets on radar, close together, at 31-40N, 122-26E. Fortunately the moon was out, which enabled them to identify the targets as a seagoing tug, about 90 feet long, towing a barge about 150 ft. in length.

An attack was made from a down moon position, with the tug and barge silhouetted. On a run approaching the starboard bow of the tug, 3 X 100 GP bombs were dropped from an altitude of 400 feet. Strafing was withheld until just before the drop, so as not to alert the target, and then the bullets were directed at the barge, scoring hits. There was no observed result from the drops.

Another run was out of the question, because the lights of an aircraft were seen coming from the Northwest, at an altitude of about 1500 ft and on a course of approximately 135 degrees. The PBM immediately turned North and made for some patches of sea fog. At about 15 miles distance from the tug and barge, a big flash was seen where the targets were. It could not be determined whether the explosion was from the barge or the tug. Lt. Williams thinks that one of his bombs probably damaged the rudder of the tug.

Meanwhile, the radar showed two planes following the PBM, which by now was getting partial protection from fog patches. After going North for about 25 miles, Lt. Williams made a sharp turn to East, trying to throw off his pursuers, but they made the turn very readily, apparently having good radar or homing equipment. After 20 miles on an Easterly course he turned North for 60 miles, then East for 30 miles, always keeping down moon from the planes. After a few miles on the second easterly course, the plane disappeared from his screen, at about 0150I. Their closest approach had been about 4 miles.

Some 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours later, Lt. Cdr. Donald C. Coy made an attack on a tug and barge near the same location. See VPB-26 ACA Report 6-45. The position given by Lt. Williams, and the one Lt. Cdr. Coy gave differed only in 7 miles. Even if possible errors in navigation are considered, very small progress was made by the tug and barge, and they may have been the same. When seen by Lt. Williams, the tug and barge were on a course of 330°, which would take them Northward along the China coast. When sighted by Lt. Cdr. Coy, the tug and barge were headed Southwest (about 225 deg.), as if to put into Shanghai. The slow speed at the time of sighting by Coy, plus the other evidence given above, would indicate that the targets had been damaged by Lt. Williams, and had turned back to port when caught by Lt. Cdr. Coy.

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OPNAV-16-V-#537
Form AOA-1
Sheet 5 of 5

C O N F I D E N T I A L

REPORT No 5-45

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

Aarmor; 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:

Frank Guitard
FRANK GUITTARD, Lieutenant, ACI Off.

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

APPROVED BY:

R. S. Null
R. S. NULL, Lt. Cdr., USNR Cd'g.

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

7-14-45

DATE