

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

(-10K)

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) 1 x 2500 ton AK, Yap Town Buildings, Yap Island (b) Time Over Target(s) 1400-1500 (Zone)

(c) Clouds Over Target Scumulus clouds 2000' .5 (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target Clear (e) Visibility 20 miles (MILES)

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type Slide Bomb Sight Used Mk VIII, Mod. 5, illuminated (LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run one to 12 Spacing 50', 150 knots Altitude of Bomb Release 2500'-3500' (NUMBER) (FEET)

(g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed None 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)
1 Radio Building Yap Town		1 x VB-3 VF-31	1 x 500# SAP	0	None
2 Buildings, Yap Town		2 x VB-3 VF-31	2 x 500# SAP	1	Unobserved
3 Warehouse, Yap Town		1 x VB-3 VF-31	1 x 500# SAP	0	None
4 Building area, Yap Town		3 x VB-1c's VF-31	24 x 100# frag. 8 x 100# G.P. 9 x incendiary clusters	36 in area	Small fires started
5 AK in cove north of Yap Town	2500 tons	1 x VB-1c VF-31	2 x 100# G.P. 1 x incendiary cluster	3	Fire started
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).

1. Near miss.

2. Unobserved.

3. Near Miss.

4. Small fires were started in the warehouse district along the southern side of the inlet.

5. a 2500-ton AK, well camouflaged and smoking slightly, was sighted in a cove north of Yap Town. Three bombs were dropped and a small fire started.

(p) Were Photographs Taken? Yes. Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached By Staple.

XII. TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA. (Narrative and comment. Describe action, both tactical and operational.)

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
- Attitudes
- 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

After take-off, the GABOT flight, led by Lieut. A. Mancin, who also led one division of fighters, rendezvoused in the sector assigned to the GABOT at 2000'. The four VF were led by Lt.(jg) J. B. Russell, while Lieut. C. H. Turner led the other division of fighters. A running rendezvous was made with the planes from the U.S.S. YORKTOWN and U.S.S. ROBERT. True course to the target was 330°, speed 130 knots (indicated), climbing to 10,000'. The VF were flying in a four-plane diamond division, with the VF flying close and intermediate normal cover. The entire GABOT flight was behind and slightly below the other two air groups.

Yap Island was approached from the southeast, from which bearing YORKTOWN and HORNET planes immediately went into their attack. CAROT planes proceeded to a point northeast of the island and circled waiting for the target area to clear. When the first attack was completed, Air Group 31 flew south to a point almost opposite Yap Town and then turned to the northwest, crossing to the western side of Yap Island over Gagil-Tamil Island and arriving at a point northwest of Yap Town. Attacks were initiated from this point, push-over being from 10,000'. Lieut. Hanson's division went in first in a strafing run on gun position in the portion of Yap Town south of the inlet. Lieut. Turner's division followed the bombing with a strafing attack on the same positions.

The primary target for the VT were the building areas of Yap Town and a total of 17 fragmentation clusters, eight 100# G.P.'s and 9 incendiary clusters were dropped in this area. After the first run, three of the torpedo planes and one division of fighters joined up east of the island, while the other division of fighters withdrew to the northeast preparatory to making other strafing runs. At the rendezvous, Lt. (jg) D. L. Hornberger reported hung bombs, and two fighters of Lieut. Meakin's division were directed to escort him in another run over the target, while the other two made photographic runs on the target area for damage assessment.

Lt. (jg) Hornbarger had noticed a smoking camouflaged ship in a small cove north of Yap Town, and coming in again from the northwest he dropped two 100# G.P.'s and an incendiary cluster on the ship, causing another fire. His other bombs dropped without damage on the southern portion of Gagil-Tonil Island during his withdrawal.

Lieut. Turner's division, carrying one 500# SAP each, bombed the buildings on the north side of the inlet, strafing at the same time. Their run was made after the VT attack, and was also from northwest to southeast. Releases were between 2500' - 3000'.

On the recovery, all planes were directed to the rendezvous point, with the exception of one TBM, piloted by Lt.(jg) J. E. Russell, who had been ordered to make photographic runs for obliques. After making two runs on Yap Town at 1500' and 900' from south to north and north to south, respectively, Lt.(jg) Russell proceeded southwest past the airfield taking photographs as he went. After passing over the southern tip of Yap, Lt.(jg) Russell turned north again, having noticed some apparently undamaged aircraft on the field.

XII. Tactical and Operational Data. (continued)

and wanting to get pictures of them. He had made this run from southwest to northeast and had just passed the northern end of the field at 1600' and was turning toward the sea when his plane was hit with what is believed to be 3" anti-aircraft fire. The entire plane almost immediately burst into flames fore and aft. The cockpit was so filled with smoke and flame that the instrument panel was invisible. Lt.(jg) Russell immediately prepared to abandon ship, but before doing so, he tried to notify his radioman and gunner to jump. The 108 was apparently damaged for although the crew heard Russell, he was unable to get an acknowledgment from them. He remained in his cockpit to give them the maximum time to jump. By this time flames were enveloping his feet and the stick itself so that he was unable to hold it for more than a few seconds at a time, even with gloves. Finally, when the cockpit was completely unendurable, one of the crewmen got through with the word that they were bailing out and Lt.(jg) Russell jumped. All three parachutes were shot at during the descent but landed safely in the water about one mile off the northwest of the southern tip of the island.

Webster, the radioman, was about 40 yards from Russell, while Bennett, the gunner, was about a city block away. Russell had his seat back life raft, but due to the severe burns on his hands, he was unable to open it. He called to Webster who immediately swam to his side, opened the raft and helped Russell into it. By this time, Russell had gone blind from the smoke and fire. Shore batteries were firing, several of the shells landing close to Webster and Russell. Bennett, in the meantime was swimming in his life jacket, and shortly after Webster and Russell had got into their life raft, another torpedo plane came by and dropped a raft to Bennett. Lieut. Bennett's division of fighters covered the downed pilot and crew until they were forced to depart for base. Meanwhile a rescue call had been sent in and two hours after the parachutes had landed in the water, two Q32U's from the U.S.S. MOBILE arrived at the scene. The rescue submarine had also been notified, had surfaced and was proceeding to the rescue but the MOBILE planes arrived first.

All during this time, Webster and Russell had been trying to paddle out of range of the shore batteries. They had no oars and used their bare hands. Webster directing Russell, who could not see. When the Kingfisher landed, Webster was able to get aboard into the rear cockpit, while Russell crawled up to the forward part of the main pontoon and held onto the strut while the plane taxied out of range of the shore batteries which by this time were firing again. Webster then assisted Russell into the rear cockpit and the plane, after considerable difficulty because of overloading, took off. In the meantime the other Kingfisher had been circling and when the first one was airborne, Russell indicated to the pilot the presence of Bennett, his gunner. The second Kingfisher landed near Bennett and picked him up. Both planes then returned to their base with all passengers safe. All three survivors were burned, Russell worse than either of the others.

The remaining planes of the original flight, in the meantime, had returned to base without further incident.