

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

RESTRICTED
(Reclassify when filled out)

I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting VMO-251 (b) Based on or at PIVA NORTH BOUGAINVILLE (c) Report No. 9 01254
 (d) Date of Action 25 August, 1944 (e) Take off: Time 0815 L (~~GCT~~); Lat 6°13'S Long 155°07'E
 (f) Mission Bomb and strafe (g) Time of Return 1115 L (~~GCT~~)

II. OWN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALLY COVERED BY THIS REPORT.

(a) TYPE	(b) SQUADRON	(c) NO. OF SORTIES	(d) NO. ENGAGING ENEMY A/C	(e) NO. ATTACKING TARGET	(f) BOMBS AND TORPEDOES CARRIED (PER PLANE)	(g) FUZE, SETTING
F4U-1	VMO-251	15	None	11	9 planes 1x1000 lb.	1/10 sec. delay
FG-1A	"	3	"	1	1 plane 1x1000 lb.	1/10 sec. delay

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
F4U-1	VMF-223	18	Same as VMO-251				
SBD	VSB-236	17	"				

IV. ENEMY AIRCRAFT ENCOUNTERED (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			(GCT)			
			(GCT)			
			(GCT)			
			(GCT)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) _____
 (i) Weather and Clouds at Location of Encounter(s) _____
 (j) Sun or Moon _____ (k) Visibility _____

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		
None						

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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	(e) EXTENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE, REMARKS
1				
2				
3				
4				
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).

(a) NO.	(b) SQUADRON	(c) NAME, RANK OR RATING	(d) CAUSE	(e) CONDITION OR STATUS

VIII. RANGE, FUEL, AND AMMUNITION DATA

(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, PLANES RETURNING			
						NO. OF PLANES	.30	.50	20MM MM.
F4U-1	214	214	3.0	344	230			6,000	

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

- | |
|---------------------------------------|
| SPEED, CLIMB,
at various altitudes |
| TURNS |
| DIVES |
| CEILINGS |
| RANGE |
| PROTECTION |
| ARMAMENT |

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(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

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

AA SUGAR, west side of SIMPSON HARBOR

(a) Location of Target(s) Barges, " " " " " (b) Time Over Target(s) 0945 L ~~GMT~~

(c) Weather and Clouds Over Target Solid cloud bank 4-11,000 ft. just over the target.
Elsewhere, CAVU.

(d) Sun or Moon _____ (e) Visibility Unlimited

XI. TARGETS, RESULTS OF ATTACK.

(a) DESCRIPTION OF TARGET (List All Ships in Group, Whether or Not Individually Attacked)	(b) A/C ATTACKING (c) SQUADRON	(d) BOMBS AND AMMUNITION EXPENDED, EACH TARGET	(e) ALTITUDE OF RELEASE	(f) HITS
¹ 2 Autos, SE side of VULCAN CRATER	2 VMO-251	2x1000 lb.	3,000ft.	Within 40 yards.
² Derelict barge lying near VULCAN BARGE HIDE	2 VMO-251	2x1000 lb.	"	Missed.
³ Huts on DUKE OF YORK ISLAND	1 VMO-251	1x1000 lb.	2,500ft.	Unobserved
⁴ Buildings, RAPUI, NEW BRITIAN	1 VMO-251	1x1000 lb.	5,000ft.	"
⁵ 10 MG position, west side of SIMPSON HARBOR	2 VMO-251	2x1000 lb.	1,800ft.	1 direct 1 Unobserved
⁶ 1 Auto, west side of SIMPSON HARBOR	1 VMO-251	1x1000 lb.	1,800ft.	Area hit.
⁷ Suspected AA position just north of VULCAN CRATER	1 VMO-251	1x1000 lb.	2,500ft.	" "
⁸ BARGE HIDE, MALAGUNA to CAPE GAZELLE	4 VMO-251	6,000 rds. 50 Cal.		Unobserved

(g) RESULTS: (FOR SHIP TARGETS 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, WITH DIAGRAMS OR CHARTS WHERE DESIRABLE. DESCRIBE TARGETS FULLY IN (a), AND IN REPORTING DAMAGE OR DESTRUCTION, IDENTIFY BY NUMBERS AT LEFT. USE ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY).

Observation of results was negative except for seeing one column of grayish brown smoke going up to two hundred feet, from a point just to north of VULCAN CRATER; plus one fire burning near TONGOL, TALILI BAY which was caused by the SBD's.

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(h) Were Photographs Taken? _____ Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached.

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filled out)**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

This was a combined operation, with the following plan of attack: 17 SBD's of VMSB-236 to hit AA targets ABLE, consisting of most of the important AA guns on the north and west sides of SIMPSON HARBOR; 10 fighter bombers of VMO-251 plus 10 of VMF-223 to hit AA target SUGAR, which consists of other AA along the SW shore of SIMPSON HARBOR; 16 fighters (8 from VMO-251 and 8 from VMF-223) to strafe barges along west shore of the harbor.

The attack was seriously handicapped by a solid bank of white clouds directly over the target 4-11,000 ft., while elsewhere in the area the weather was perfectly clear. The dive bombing attack by VMO-251's 10 fighter bombers was made from 10,500 feet, in 50-60 degree dive, with releases at 3,000 feet. However, three planes could not locate their assigned targets in the first run so returned and dropped from 1,800 feet in a very shallow glide beneath the cloud layer. Three other planes did not drop on their assigned targets for the following reasons respectively; (1) One pilot's windshield became covered with oil so he couldn't see; (2) One pilot did not turn on his master gun switch and so the bomb did not release in the run; (3) One pilot was showered with urine that had collected in a clogged up relief tube, just after he pushed over to make his run. These pilots selected other targets, as indicated in paragraph XI.

Several planes, unable to locate their targets because of the cloud layer, circled and dropped at altitudes as low as 1,800 feet, in a slight glide.

The two divisions of strafing fighters did not attempt to strafe because of the reduced visibility over the target. They could not see whether all bombers were out of their way or not. All planes of VMO-251 returned safely to base, though one SBD of VMSB-236 was hit by AA over the target and crash landed at GREEN ISLAND.

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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

Relief tube in Plane #387 was stopped up, and overflowed into the cockpit just as the pilot was going into his dive. Result: One bomb not dropped on the assigned target.

MISSION LOG

<u>PLANE NO.</u>	<u>PILOT</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
036	BACHELER	Area hit.
942	PIRAGES	" "
221	SPINDLER	" "
037	SWICK	Missed.
895	JOLINK	Jettisoned.
387	ENDERS	Unobserved.
044	BOWERS	Area hit.
032	CORMAN	Unobserved.
691	ROSELLEN	Direct hit.
265	MAC LACHLAN	Unobserved.
305	HART	No bomb load. Did not strafe.
119	ERDMANN	Same applies to this division.
742	CRUTCHER	
394	FLICKINGER	
065	FOWLER	No bomb load. Did not strafe
413	MC CABE	" "
739	JOHNSON, A.	Strafed barges.
353	JOHNSON, H.	" "

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REPORT PREPARED BY:

H. B. Welch

H. B. WELCH, 2ndLt., A.C.I.O.

SIGNATURE

RANK AND DUTY

APPROVED BY:

W. L. Bachelier

W. L. BACHELER, Major, 25 August, 1944.

SIGNATURE

Actg. CO.

RANK AND DUTY

DATE