114

Reg. No. 262-020

MARINE FIGHTING SQUADRON TWO FIFTY ONE,
MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP FOURTEEN, FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING, FMF,
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

# COMBAT TOUR

# OF

# DUTY

# OF

# MARINE FIGHTING SQUADRON TWO FIFTY ONE

From

1 March, 1945,

to

31 March, 1945

DISTRIBUTION:

1.- Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.
1 - Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet.
original-1 - Commandant, of the Marine Corp.
1 - Commanding General, Aircraft, FMF.
1 - Commanding General, First Marine Aircraft Wing.
1 - File.

114246

/

War Diary of VMF-251. March, 1945.

Geographical location of VMF-251:

SAMAR, PHILIPPINES

Name of the Commanding Officer:

WILLIAM L. BACHELER, Major, USMCR,(NA).

Name of Next Higher Echelon:

MARINE AIR GROUP FOURTEEN.

Composition as of 1 March, 1945:

| | Officers | Men |
|---|---|---|
| Marine Corps Pilots | 37 | |
| Marine Corps Ground | 8 | 208 |
| U.S. Navy | 1 | 8 |
| | 46 | 216 |



2

## PILOTS ROSTER

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BACHELER, William L. | Major | Commanding Officer. |
| FURLOW, Thomas W. | Major | Executive Officer. |
| HART, Joseph P. | Capt. | |
| SCHROEDER, Frank A. | Capt. | |
| CUNNINGHAM Russell F. | 1st Lt. | |
| ERDMANN, William A. | 1st Lt. | |
| GARRETT, James D. | 1st Lt. | |
| HENLEY, Paul B. | 1st Lt. | |
| INGLEHART, George G. | 1st Lt. | |
| JENNINGS, Francis C. | 1st Lt. | |
| MAC LACHLAN, Archibald W. | 1st Lt. | |
| NEILSON, Russell H. | 1st Lt. | |
| PIRAGES, William J. | 1st Lt. | |
| ROSELLEN, Robert R. | 1st Lt. | |
| SCHOETZ, David J. | 1st Lt. | |
| SCOVILLE, William H. | 1st Lt. | |
| SMITH, Howard F. | 1st Lt. | |
| WARREN, Arthur J. | 1st Lt. | |
| BARTON, Wilson G. | 2nd Lt. | |
| BEATTIE, Alexander D. | 2nd Lt. | |
| DAIGLE, Bernadin J. | 2nd Lt. | |
| EVANS, Arthur, C. | 2nd Lt. | |
| FRANK, Lewis C. | 2nd Lt. | |
| HARRIS, Archibald "A" | 2nd Lt. | |
| IRWIN, Hugh E. | 2nd Lt. | |
| JERNIGAN, Curtis D. | 2nd Lt. | |
| KAMMEYER, Preston L. | 2nd Lt. | |
| LINDSEY, Robert E. | 2nd Lt. | |
| LINGENFELTER, Virgil A. | 2nd Lt. | |
| POOR, Ernest E. | 2nd Lt. | |
| RHODES, Frank J. | 2nd Lt. | |
| ROBINSON, James W. | 2nd Lt. | |
| SANDBACH, Harold G. | 2nd Lt. | |
| SCOTT, Charles | 2nd Lt. | |
| WARD, Ray G. | 2nd Lt. | |
| WOLF, John C. | 2nd Lt. | |
| WYATT, John W. | 2nd Lt. | |

War Diary of VMF-251. March, 1945.

Note; All times in this diary are "Item".

1 March, 1945.

Target for today was PARANG, Jap-held village on the western shore of central MINDANAO. Major FURLOW led the first attack with SCOVILLE, CUNNINGHAM, and FRANK; and INGLEHART, SCOTT, KAMMEYER, and LINGENFELTER. Loaded with one thousand pounder each, these eight planes took off at 0715 and at 0830 bombed the string of buildings along the shore. There were no fires and no observed damage, but the afternoon flight reported that many buildings were seriously damaged by this attack.

Captain HART led the afternoon strike, which was delivered at 1420 against the three large warehouses located two miles inland, also at PARANG. WYATT and BARTON both scored direct hits on a large building, completely demolishing it, and damaging hits were scored by other pilots in the flight. One bomb blew out one end of another large building. Both flights expended a total of 13,500 rounds of fifty calibre ammunition strafing the respective targets.

Six other planes of this squadron flew cover for a friendly convoy in the MINDANAO SEA, andfour of our planes flew LEYTE GULF patrol, all with negative results.

2 March, 1945.

Fifteen Corsairs of this squadron, led by Major BACHELER, Squadron Commander, bombed SAN JOSE, second largest city on PANAY ISLAND. Pilots participating were: BACHELER, BEATTIE, PIRAGES, and IRWIN; SCHROEDER, EVANS, DAIGLE, and JERNIGAN; SMITH, NEILSON, ROSELLEN, and MAC LACHLAN; and JENNINGS, ERDMANN, and WOLF. The flight took off at 0645, with a bomb load of one half tonner per plane. Each division was assigned the following target: (1) Radio station and air raid shelter; (2) Radar station; (3) Pill box in town; and (4) Large H-shaped building. Pilots reported on landing that the targets were next to impossible to find, and that there were no observed results of t eir bombing. SMITH had engine trouble on the way out and had to jettison his bomb and return to base, escorted by his wingman, NEILSON, who also jettisoned his bomb.



4

War Diary of VMF-251. March, 1945.

3 March, 1945.

Two eight-plane bombing and strafing attacks were executed today against COTABATO, enemy-held gateway to the KABACAN DELTA located in west-central MINDANAO. The morning flight, off at 0705, was led by Major FURLOW, with SCOVILLE, CUNNINGHAM, and FRANK; and HENLEY'S division of BARTON, SCHOETZ, and WARD. The attack was delivered at 0830 o'clock, with little observed damage except for two small fires at the northwest end of the target. However, guerilla radio reported that this and the afternoon strike killed or wounded approximately one hundred fifty enemy troops.

Captain HART led the second strike, consisting of his division, (WYATT, GARRETT, and POOR); and INGLEHART, SCOTT, KAMMEYER and LINGENFELTER. There were several direct hits on buildings, scored by POOR, INGLEHART, SCOTT, and KAMMEYER, one of these causing a large explosion. Though the target had stopped smoking when our planes departed, an undetermined number of the buildings were destroyed.

Joined 2ndLt. Benjamin A. DUDLEY, 1stLt., Lynford S WALTERS. Major Howard E. KING temporarily attached to Squadron.

4 March, 1945.

SAN JOSE, PANAY, was hit again today by sixteen fighter-bombers of VMF-251, led by Major BACHELER. Pilots going on this strike were: BACHELER, HARRIS, PIRAGES, and IRWIN; SCHROEDER, EVANS, DAIGLE, and JERNIGAN: SMITH, NEILSON, ROSELLEN, and MAC LACHLAN: JENNINGS, ERDMANN, and WOLF. The flight took off at 0700, attacked at 0815, and landed at 0950. All sixteen half-tonners were put right in the target, a fortified hill east of the town, and two strafing runs were made by all planes, using a total of 7,500 rounds. Though no specific damage was seen by the pilots, the hill was thoroughly blasted and strafed. Light AA fire was received for a point WNW of the hill, and white smoke was seen to rise from the NE section of the target.

5 March, 1945.

The Jap-held village of PIKIT, MINDANAO, located thirty miles inland from COTABATO, and on the KABACAN DELTA, was the target for today. Major FURLOW took three divisions, his own consisting of himself, SCOVILLE, NEILSON, and MAC LACHLAN; HART's, with WYATT, GARRETT, and POOR: and INGLEHART's, with SCOTT, KAMMEYER, and LINGENFELTER. Each plane carried two five hundred pound general purpose bombs. Takeoff was at 0720 and attack at 0920. Bad weather was encountered en route, which accounts for the length of time taken to reach the target, two hundred and sixty nautical miles away. There was excellent coverage of the village, with many direct hits.

5

5 March, 1945. (Cont'd)

The entire town was demolished, excepting a few buildings left standing which had their sides blown in. Three strafing runs were made by all twelve planes.

During this attack, Captain HART's bomb hung, and on the way back to base the tail fin dropped off. Inspection of the plane by his wingman showed that also, the arming van had unwound and dropped off, thus arming the bomb. Unable to drop the bomb, HART, returned with the flight to base and was instructed to abandon his plane over LEYTE GULF. This he did, bailing out at 7,000 feet, without injury to himself.

The morning strike did such a thorough job that operations decided to cancel the other scheduled strike against the same target, and so instead sent the afternoon flight to check in with guerilla fighter director on CEBU for a target. Major FURLOW taking SCOVILLE, FRANK, and NEILSON; and INGLEHART's division took off for CEBU. FURLOW blew a tire while taxing and did not get off. The leadership of the strike was taken over by INGLEHART, second division leader. They placed fourteen quarter-tonners on buildings in CEBU CITY, south of the race track, with four direct hits, and four fires were still burning when our planes left the scene.

In addition to the above strikes, the squadron also furnished eight planes to cover a convoy; mission was accomplished with negative sightings or results. The following pilots who have just joined the squadron flew familiarization hops: Major KING and Lieutenants DUDLEY and WALTERS.

6 March, 1945.

Twelve Corsairs, led by Major BACHELER, took off at 0730 with two five hundred pound bombs each, to hit MALABANG an enemy-occupied village in west-central MINDANAO, thirty miles up the coast from COTABATO. Results of the bombing were not apparent, but strafing caused one of the outposts to put up a thin column of white smoke to five hundred feet. Flight returned to base at 1030 o'clock. Pilots on this strike were: BACHELER, HARRIS, PIRAGES, and IRWIN; SMITH, NEILSON, ROSELLEN, and MAC LACHLAN; WOLF, ERDMANN, WARD, and BEATTIE.

The afternoon strike, also led by Major BACHELER, was directed against the village of PARANG, located likewise on the west coast of central MINDANAO, and twenty miles south of the morning target. The same pilots flew, except that SCHROEDER's division ( EVANS, DAIGLE, and JERNIGAN) replaced WOLF's in the lineup. The results of this strike were much better, with three good sized fires and two smaller ones.

Excellent coverage of the target was had with all twenty-four bombs, except the two which hung and had to be jettisoned, and two strafing runs were made on the village by all planes. 6

6 March, 1945(Cont'd)

HARRIS' plane was hit either by anti-aircraft fire or by debris from a bomb, so he jettisoned his belly tank. It exploded on striking the ground, causing a large grass fire. Pilots saw AA fire coming from a house in the southern end of town.

In addition to the above flights, the squadron furnished eight planes for LEYTE GULF patrol, with negative sightings. WALTERS, DUDLEY, and Major KING flew familiarization hops.

7 March, 1945.

MALABANG was again hit today, by two eight-plane strikes from this squadron. Major FURLOW led both attacks, at 0820 with thousand pound instantaneous-fused bombs and at 1605 with 8-second delayed fuse bombs. These two attacks serve to illustrate how much more effective are delayed-action bombs dropped from low altitude, against pin-point targets, than are instanteous-fused bombs dropped in a dive, from two or three thousand feet.

The target consisted of a group of buildings located near a river-fork. In the morning attack there was no visible result of the bombing, with instanteous-fused bombs. In the afternoon, with our planes coming in and releasing at tree-top level, there were two direct hits on the fort (a 50x100 foot building) reducing it literally to a pile of debris and stones. There were two direct hits on a large "mansion" in the village, destroying the entire center section of it, and blowing out the walls of the two wings.

Pilots on the morning strike were: FURLOW, SCOVILLE, FRANK, and POOR; and HENLEY, BARTON, WARD, and SCOTT. In the afternoon the lineup read: FURLOW's division and INGLEHART's, with SCOTT, HENLEY, and BARTON. Direct hits in the afternoon attack were chalked up by FURLOW, POOR, INGLEHART, and SCOTT.

RHODES and WALTERS, and SANDBACH and DUDLEY flew patrol over a convoy; and KAMMEYER and LINGENFELTER made two escort hops to protect a C-46 delivering supplies to guerillas on NEGROS and CEBU ISLANDS. Pilots reported that the fried chicken and fresh bananas served them by the guerillas at TUBURAN, CEBU tasted mighty good.

8 March, 1945.

Two eight-plane bombing strikes against COTABATO again today, both led by Major BACHELER. The first flight was off at 0645, with one half-tonners per plane; attack was made at 0805 to 0820, and the flight returned to base at 1000. Pilots participating were: BACHELER, HARRIS, IRWIN, and ROBINSON; and SCHROEDER, BEATTIE, DAIGLE, and JERNIGAN. ROBINSON scored the one direct hit, destroying one building. Though no fires were started, several buildings were smoking by strafing.

On the afternoon strike against the same target, SCHROEDER's division was replaced by NEILSON, SMITH, MAC LACHLAN, and WYATT. Also, JENNINGS and IRWIN made up the second section of Major BACHELER's division. The target for this division was a group of huts and buildings on the south side of MANPAY CREEK, in the town of COTABATO. Three bombs were unobserved, as far as results go, but JENNINGS scored a direct hit, which set fire to one building. NEILSON's division bombed a group of trees reported to be a bivouac of enemy troops, also unobserved results. This flight took off at 1230, was over target from 1355 to 1410, and landed at 1530.

When Major BACHELER released his bomb, the belly tank fell off at the same time, evidently striking the bomb because there was a premature explosion below his plane. His wingman thought he must have been hurt, but no damage was suffered by pilot or plane.

WOLF and WALTERS flew the LEYTE GULF patrol, with negative results, Major KING flew two familiarization hops, and JERNIGAN flew two bomb-release hops.

9 March, 1945.

Four divisions, led by Major FURLOW, were off at 0650, with thousand pounders, to hit DUMAGUETE, the only remaining Jap-held airfield on Southeast NEGROS ISLAND. The flight ran into solid weather west of LEYTE, so thick that the division became separated from each other. Eight planes jettisoned their bombs and returned to base. Five planes jettisoned their bombs and landed at DIPILOG, MINDANAO, a guerilla-held field. POOR's division, less DUDLEY, reached the target and dropped its bombs on buildings at the west end of the airfield, with unobserved results. Pilots flying this mission, in order of divisions, were: FURLOW, SCOVILLE, CUNNINGHAM, and FRANK; POOR, DUDLEY, WYATT, and SANDBACH; HENLEY, BARTON, SCHOETZ, and WARREN; and INGLEHART, SCOTT, KAMMEYER, and LINGENFELTER.

Those planes which landed at DIPILOG, mentioned above, returned to SAMAR later in the day.

9 March, 1945.(Cont'd)

At 1515, when the weather had broken, this same flight took off again with the same bomb load, reached the target and put fifteen of the sixteen bombs on the group of buildings hit by our three planes in the morning. Major FURLOW scored the one direct hit, destroying one building 20x50 feet in size, and strafing started several small fires among the huts on the north side of the field. Pilots reported, however, that the target "didn't look like much".

Joined the following Officers from MADS-1: Second Lieutenants James I. ELLIS, Henry FINK, Martin H. KALVELAGE, Orville S. KEMP, Ernest A. LA MARRE, David W. LINDNER, Roy A. MC ALISTER, Mahlon MORRIS, Thomas K. PETERSON, Douglas D. PETTY, Robert RAUSE, Paul F. ROMBERG, Howard W. SCHEWE, Samuel R. SMITH, Joseph G. WAGNER, Thomas H. WALSH, Robert N. WELCH.

Joined thirty-seven enlisted men.

10 March, 1945.

Because of weather, flying was secured today, except for four test hops, and Major FURLOW and his wingman SCOVILLE's flying to DIPOLOG, MINDANAO, to take a starter cord to NEILSON, who had to remain there overnight because his plane would not start. These three pilots returned to SAMAR later in the day.

11 March, 1945.

We were ordered to send two flights of eight planes each to bomb and strafe the road leading from SAN ROQUE to KITCHARARAO, which lies along the eastern shore of LAKE MAINIT, in the northernmost sector of MINDANAO. Major FURLOW led both hops, the first taking off at 0740, with SCOVILLE, NEILSON, and FRANK; and GARRETT, POOR, WYATT, and RHODES. The flight leader was unable to locate the assigned target because of dense jungle, and lack of identifying features of the target. Consequently, rather than attack a target he was not sure of, he led the flight to CEBU ISLAND, and there communicated with the guerilla leaders for instructions as to what they would like to have hit on that island.

Guerilla radio directed the flight to bomb a ridge located two miles north of CEBU CITY, where the Japs had dug underground tunnels containing supplies. A moment before the attack, an AA battery beside the target opened fire on our planes. Major FURLOW dived on this position. His bomb hit very close or directly on the spot, silencing the guns. The other planes bombed the ridge as instructed, and afterward, the guerilla fighter director stated that all bombs were where he wanted them.

War Diary for VMF-251. March, 1945.

11 March, 1945.(Cont'd)

In the afternoon, takeoff was at 1515, attack at 1545 to 1645, and landing at 1715. Pilots participating were: FURLOW, DUDLEY, KAMMEYER, and LINGENFELTER; and HENLEY, BARTON, SCHOETZ, and SCOTT. The target was located, and bombed and strafed, but no results were seen by the pilots.

Four of our planes flew a convoy cover today, and the following new pilots flew familiarization hops: RAUSE, WELCH, SCHEWE, LINDNER, WAGNER, KALVELAGE, WALSH, FINK, ELLIS, KEMP, MORRIS, SMITH, ROMBERG, PETERSON, PETTY, LA MARRE, and MC ALISTER.

12 March, 1945.

Eight planes flew LEYTE GULF patrol, and two flew convoy cover, all with negative sightings.

13 March, 1945.

Flying secured because of weather.

14 March, 1945.

Flying secured because of weather. BARTON and KEMP, on standby, were scrambled to intercept a bogey reported by CABRANK, the Ground Control Intercept station, but were unable to penetrate the weather.

15 March, 1945.

Flying secured. Weather.

Joined Second Lieutenant James S. COLLINS.

Joined Captain Francis E. DOUGHTY.

16 March, 1945.

WARD, KEMP, LINGENFELTER, and MORRIS took off at 1430 with one thousand pounder each, to give ground support to the guerillas on CEBU. The target given the division leader by the fighter director consisted of a clump of trees near a road fork eighteen miles from TUBURAN AIRFIELD, on a course of 050 degrees. After some difficulty the target was located and two of the bombs were seen to explode well within the target. Results were unobserved, however, our planes also put 2,200 rounds of fifty calibre into the area. Flight landed at 1700.

16 March, 1945(Cont'd).

Four flights of two planes each flew LEYTE GULF patrol, with negative sightings. NEILSON and MAC LACHLAN were escort for a C-46 delivering supplies to the guerillas on CEBU and MINDANAO. On departing from TUBURAN, CEBU, they were taken to their planes in a Packard Sedan, which had been hidden away in a cave for three years, during the Jap occupation of that area.

Joined Second Lieutenant Danny "W" JOHNSON.

Joined four enlisted men.

Transferred one enlisted man.

17 March, 1945.

Six divisions were busy today bombing targets assigned by the guerilla fighter director on CEBU ISLAND. The flights, of four planes each, lasted all through the day, the bomb load in each one being one thousand pounder. Targets attacked included the following: (1) Houses 1½ miles inland and ½ mile south of the enemy near the capitol at CEBU CITY; (3) MAYA VILLAGE; (4) MEDILLIN VILLAGE; and (5) Enemy troop concentration south of ILIHAN.

A total of 15,000 rounds of ammunition was expended by all planes during the day, but results in all instances, of bombing and strafing, were not visible to pilots. Attacks were hampered by cloud at 2000 to 6500 feet. During the morning, Captain SCHROEDER landed at TUBURAN at the request of guerillas and was furnished a packet of leaflets, with instructions that a later flight distribute them along the main highway north and south of CEBU CITY. Major BACHELER handled the distribution during his hop, of the leaflets, which advised all Filipinos to avoid the main roads and towns, else they might be killed by our attacks.

Four flights of two planes each covered a convoy today, with negative results. All pilots of this squadron were briefed tonight by the M.A.G. 14 Intelligence Officer, on the Army invasion of PANAY, which is to take place tomorrow. We are to provide air support for this operation.

18 March, 1945.

Six of our planes, in two-plane flights, went to PANAY today to work with the PT boats operating in GUIMARAS STRAIT, the waters adjacent to the Army's landing on PANAY, south of ILOILO, however, the landing was unopposed, and the PT boats could not furnish our planes any targets. One flight checked



11

18 March, 1945. (Cont'd)

in with the guerillas on CEBU on the way back to base, and was directed to bomb SAC SAC, CEBU, which it did, dropping its four quarter-tonners on that village, with unobserved results. This flight was Major FURLOW and his wingman, Lieutenant POOR. The other two flights were handled by BARTON and RHODES; and WARD and SANDBACH.

Ten flights, of two planes each, covered the convoy which took the Army to PANAY. No enemy opposition encountered. DOUGHTY and JOHNSON flew familiarization hops.

19 March, 1945.

Twenty-four planes of this squadron, in flights of divisions, flew continuous combat air patrol over the Army's operation on PANAY ISLAND today, but not a single enemy plane came anywhere near the area. Six flights of two planes each flew LEYTE GULF patrol, with negative results. MC ALISTER flew a familiarization hop.

20 March, 1945.

Again today we flew patrol over PANAY ISLAND and western NEGROS. Five divisions were thus employed, but no targets appeared during these patrols. However, our planes did manage to expend 18,000 rounds of fifty calibre ammunition on their way home. Most attacks were concentrated along the northeastern part of the island, at such villages as SAGAY, SOGOD, and LUGO. Results in all instances were unobserved. One flight over PANAY was given a target by the Army's fighter director. The target consisted of wooded area where enemy troops were believed to be concealed. Results of the strafing were not visible to pilots.

Joined one enlisted man.

21 March, 1945.

Combat air patrol over PANAY ISLAND and the Army's operations there was negative for the third straight day. This squadron handled the job, using twenty-four Corsairs, in four-plane flights. Three divisions, however, checked in with the guerilla radio on CEBU on the way back to base, and got in some pretty good strafing, one flight in particular. WARREN's division, with PETTY, JERNIGAN, and LA MARRE, expended 2,000 rounds of ammunition on a grove of trees on the northern edge of SAGAY, which was supposed to conceal an enemy bivouac. Results unobserved.

Major KING's division, with JOHNSON, IRWIN, and WALTERS, strafed the same target, likewise with unobserved results.

21 March, 1945 (Cont'd)

WOLF's division, with MC ALISTER, ROBINSON, and WALSH, were the lucky ones. They found, and secured permission from the fighter director to strafe a forty-five foot boat and a thirty foot barge along the northwestern shore of NEGROS ISLAND; and a fifteen-car double-engined freight train at DAGA, on the northern tip of NEGROS. Neither boat would sink, but each was thoroughly riddled with fifty calibre so that it should never see service again. The train, however, or at least one of its engines, explodes in a most satisfying manner. The train was standing still when our planes came upon it, but both engines had steam up. The second engine as well as all fifteen box cars, were thoroughly strafed by repeated passes by all four planes. Two P-38's happened along, and the pilots, not wanting to miss anything, joined in the fun. It was when ROBINSON, the second section leader, had one of the two locomotives in his sights that it exploded.

Transferred one enlisted man.

22 March, 1945.

Five two-plane flights covered a convoy today, and three two-plane flights flew LEYTE GULF patrol. Other flights cancelled because of weather.

23 March, 1945.

All flights cancelled today because of weather, except one four-plane cover for the Army on PANAY. WOLF, MC ALISTER, ROBINSON, and IRWIN handled this job, taking off at 1545 and landing at 1900. The patrol was negative.

Joined First Lieutenant Dewitt C. FISHER.

Joined forty-four enlisted men.

Transferred eighty enlisted men.

24 March, 1945.

Twenty Corsairs of this squadron were utilized today in covering two friendly convoys from 0700 to 1800. All patrols were negative as far as seeing any enemy is concerned.

All pilots of the squadron were briefed tonight by M.A.G. Intelligence and the Army Liason Officer attached to this group, on the subject of the Army's new landing on CEBU ISLAND, which is to occur tomorrow morning, at a point ten miles south of CEBU CITY, capital and largest city on the island.

13

War Diary of VMF-251. March, 1945.

25 March, 1945.

Four flights of four-planes each covered the convoy today which is taking the Army to its new invasion point on CEBU ISLAND.

Detached the following Officers: Captain Joseph P. HART; 1stLts. Russell F. CUNNINGHAM, William A. ERDMANN, James D. GARRETT, Paul B. HENLEY, Francis C. JENNINGS, Russell H. NEILSON, William H. SCOVILLE, and Howard F. SMITH; and 2ndLts. Bernadin J. DAIGLE and Robert E. LINDSEY.

26 March, 1945.

Six divisions supplied air cover for the Ameri-Cal Division's of CEBU ISLAND today. It was the first, Major FURLOW's division which saw the fireworks and the assault landing, which occurred about 0730, several hours sooner than was expected. However, it was the later flights which had some good shooting, of enemy trucks and troops escaping into the hills to the north of CEBU CITY.

Three divisions did the shooting: BARTON, KEMP, RHODES, and MORRIS; DOUGHTY, SCHEWE, WYATT, and LINDNER; FRANK, WAGNER, SCOTT, and KALVELAGE. Most of BARTON's division attacked ten trucks and other vehicles parked near a jetty at CEBU CITY, burning two of them and probably destroying the others. It also strafed a large six-wheel truck near southwest tip of LAHUG AIRFIELD, north of the city. Six Japs jumped out of this truck as it was being strafed, and may or may not have been killed. The truck did not burn, but was thoroughly strafed.

DOUGHTY's division was ordered by the fighter director to strafe an area north of LAHUG AIRFIELD, supposed to conceal enemy troops. The strafing was done, with no observed results. FRANK's division strafed eight to ten trucks, all near and northwest of LAHUG AIRFIELD, on the road leading up into the hills to the west. Two of the truck s were set afire, one with a violent flash of flame, and the others were well holed. The enemy appeared to be evacuating CEBU CITY and sacking it, as the town was covered with a thick pall of smoke, and the traffic was moving northwest to the hills.

27 March, 1945.

The Ameri-Cal Divisions operation on CEBU was again covered today, but by only twelve planes of this squadron. The patrols reported that the Army appears to be doing a good job, and there was nothing for our planes to attack.

14

28 March, 1945.

Flying secured because of weather.

2ndLt. Lewis C. FRANK accepted the appointment to the rank of 1stLt.

29 March, 1945.

All hops cancelled except two two-plane Leyte Gulf Patrols and one four plane Combat Air Patrol over the Army's ground forces on CEBU, all of which were negative patrols. The CEBU patrol was handled by WOLF, MC ALISTER, ROBINSON, and WALSH.

30 March, 1945.

Flying secured because of weather.

31 March, 1945.

Flying secured because of weather.

(A) Strength as of 31 March, 1945:

| | Officers | Men |
|---|---|---|
| U. S. Marine Corps Pilots | 48 | |
| U. S. Marine Corps Ground | 10 | 212 |
| U. S. Navy | 1 | 8 |
| | 59 | 220 |

(B) AIRCRAFT

1. 11 F4U-1D's at the end of the month available and 21 assigned.
2. Operational losses: One (1).
3. Combat losses: None.

(C) OPERATIONS

1. Total hours flown for month: 1847.9.
2. Total number of individual flights: 557.
3. Total number of individual flights on combat missions: 519
4. Total number of flights where enemy opposition was encountered: None.

(D) ENEMY PLANES DESTROYED

1. None.

(E) ENEMY SHIPPING DESTROYED

1. None.

15

War Diary of VMF-251. March, 1945.

PREPARED BY:

HENRY B. WELCH,
First Lieutenant, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve,
A. C. I. Officer,

APPROVED BY:

WILLIAM L. BACHELER,
Major, U. S. Marine Corps Reserve,
Commanding Officer.

SQUADRON SUMMARY of MISSIONS, HOURS, and FRIENDLY and ENEMY LOSSES

31 MARCH (date) VMF-251 (squadron) 11 (number of planes available) F4U-1D (type)

at end of month

| NAME | combat missions | | | all missions number | | | | | | enemy planes destroyed this month | | | | enemy planes destroyed total | | | enemy shipping destroyed | enemy shipping damaged | friendly losses PLANES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | started | completed | total hours | started | completed | engaged enemy | day | night | total hours | number | type | air or ground | brot forward | number | type | air or ground | | | combat | operational | Bureau number | pilot lost ? |
| BACHELER | 11 | 11 | 35.6 | 11 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 35.6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BARTON | 18 | 18 | 55.4 | 19 | 19 | 0 | 19 | 0 | 56.7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BEATTIE | 8 | 8 | 24.1 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 24.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DAIGLE | 4 | 4 | 12.5 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 12.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DOUGHTY | 6 | 6 | 22.5 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 25.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DUDLEY | 8 | 7 | 29.1 | 13 | 12 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 36.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ERDMAN | 8 | 8 | 25.2 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 25.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CUNNINGHAM | 4 | 3 | 12.8 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 12.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ELLIS | 5 | 4 | 15.0 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 17.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| EVANS | 8 | 8 | 29.2 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 29.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SQUADRON TOTALS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SQUADRON SUMMARY of MISSIONS, HOURS, and FRIENDLY and ENEMY LOSSES

31 MARCH VMF-251 11 F4U-1D

(date) (squadron) (number of planes available) (type)

at end of month

| NAME | combat missions | | | all missions number | | | | | | enemy planes destroyed this month | | | | enemy planes destroyed total | | | enemy shipping destroyed | enemy shipping damaged | friendly losses PLANES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | started | completed | total hours | started | completed | engaged enemy | day | night | total hours | number | type | air or ground | brot forward | number | type | air or ground | | | combat | operational | Bureau number | pilot lost ? |
| FINK | 6 | 6 | 19.3 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 21.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FRANK | 15 | 13 | 47.2 | 15 | 13 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 47.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FURLOW | 17 | 16 | 61.0 | 19 | 18 | 0 | 19 | 0 | 66.6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GARRETT | 5 | 5 | 16.8 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 16.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| HARRIS | 10 | 10 | 28.9 | 10 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 28.4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| HART | 4 | 4 | 15.8 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 15.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| HENSEY | 9 | 8 | 28.2 | 9 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 28.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| INGLEHART | 9 | 8 | 28.8 | 9 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 28.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| IRWIN | 14 | 14 | 45.1 | 14 | 14 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 45.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| JENNINGS | 7 | 7 | 19.7 | 10 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 21.9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SQUADRON TOTALS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SQUADRON SUMMARY of MISSIONS, HOURS, and FRIENDLY and ENEMY LOSSES

(date) (squadron) (number of planes available) (type)
at end of month

| NAME | combat missions | | | all missions number | | | | | | enemy planes destroyed this month | | | | total | | | enemy shipping | friendly losses | PLANES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | started | completed | total hours | started | completed | engaged enemy | day | night | total hours | number | type | air or ground | brot forward | number | type | air or ground | destroyed | damaged | combat | operational | Bureau number | pilot lost ? |
| JERNIGAN | 12 | 12 | 40.9 | 14 | 14 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 41.9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| JOHNSON | 2 | 2 | 7.6 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 10.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| KALVELAGE | 4 | 4 | 18.3 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 20.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| KAMMEYER | 18 | 17 | 64.1 | 19 | 18 | 0 | 19 | 0 | 64.6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| KEMP | 7 | 7 | 23.1 | 9 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 26.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| KING | 7 | 7 | 28.0 | 11 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 32.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LAMARRE | 4 | 4 | 16.1 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 17.9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LINDNER | 2 | 2 | 8.2 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 12.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LINGENFELTER | 15 | 14 | 116.8 | 16 | 15 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 48.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MCALISTER | 6 | 6 | 25.9 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 28.6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SQUADRON TOTALS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SQUADRON SUMMARY of MISSIONS, HOURS, and FRIENDLY and ENEMY LOSSES

31 MARCH (date) VMF-251 (squadron) 11 (number of planes available) at end of month F4U-1D (type)

| NAME | combat missions | | | all missions number | | | | | | enemy planes destroyed this month | | | | total | | | enemy shipping destroyed | friendly losses damaged | PLANES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | started | completed | total hours | started | completed | engaged enemy | day | night | total hours | number | type | air or ground | brot forward | number | type | air or ground | | | combat operational | Bureau number | pilot lost ? |
| MAC LACHLAN | 16 | 16 | 52.4 | 16 | 16 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 52.4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MORRIS | 7 | 7 | 18.4 | 11 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 22.9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NEILSON | 15 | 13 | 43.8 | 16 | 14 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 45.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PETERSON | 3 | 3 | 10.4 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 13.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PETTY | 4 | 4 | 16.1 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 20.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PIRRGES | 6 | 6 | 19.5 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 19.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| POOR | 15 | 15 | 53.6 | 16 | 16 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 55.6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| REUSE | 7 | 7 | 31.1 | 9 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 32.7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RHODES | 12 | 12 | 42.1 | 14 | 14 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 43.9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ROBINSON | 15 | 14 | 54.3 | 16 | 15 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 55.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SQUADRON TOTALS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SQUADRON SUMMARY of MISSIONS, HOURS, and FRIENDLY and ENEMY LOSSES

31 MARCH (date) — VMF-251 (squadron) — 11 (number of planes available) at end of month — F4U-1D (type)

| NAME | combat missions | | | all missions | | | | | | enemy planes destroyed | | | | | | | enemy shipping | friendly losses | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | number | | | | | | this month | | | | total | | | | | | PLANES | | |
| | started | completed | total hours | started | completed | engaged enemy | day | night | total hours | number | type | air or ground | brot forward | number | type | air or ground | destroyed | damaged | combat | operational | Bureau number | pilot lost ? |
| ROMBERG | 5 | 4 | 14.2 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 16.9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ROSELLEN | 6 | 6 | 18.5 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 18.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SANDBACK | 9 | 9 | 35.4 | 10 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 36.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SCHEWE | 5 | 5 | 17.5 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 20.7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SCHOETZ | 7 | 5 | 20.0 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 20.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SCOTT | 13 | 12 | 41.0 | 13 | 12 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 41.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SCOVILLE | 10 | 9 | 32.4 | 11 | 10 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 35.4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SCHROEDER | 12 | 11 | 33.8 | 12 | 11 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 33.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SMITH, H.F | 15 | 13 | 43.8 | 16 | 14 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 45.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SMITH, S.R | 3 | 3 | 10.6 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 13.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SQUADRON TOTALS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SQUADRON SUMMARY of MISSIONS, HOURS, and FRIENDLY and ENEMY LOSSES

31 MARCH — VMF-251 — 11 — F4U-1D

(date) (squadron) (number of planes available) (type)

at end of month

| NAME | combat missions | | | all missions number | | | | | | enemy planes destroyed this month | | | | enemy planes destroyed total | | | enemy shipping destroyed | enemy shipping damaged | friendly losses PLANES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | started | completed | total hours | started | completed | engaged enemy | day | night | total hours | number | type | air or ground | brot forward | number | type | air or ground | | | combat | operational | Bureau number | pilot lost ? |
| WAGNER | 5 | 4 | 16.8 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 19.7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WALSH | 6 | 6 | 25.8 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 28.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WALTERS | 10 | 10 | 35.8 | 17 | 17 | 0 | 17 | 0 | 44.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WARD | 12 | 11 | 41.0 | 12 | 11 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 41.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WARREN | 10 | 10 | 33.7 | 11 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 34.7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WELCH | 6 | 6 | 18.6 | 10 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 24.7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WOLF | 16 | 16 | 57.3 | 16 | 16 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 57.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WYATT | 16 | 16 | 57.0 | 16 | 16 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 57.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SQUADRON TOTALS | 519 | 498 | 1715.1 | 578 | 557 | 0 | 578 | 0 | 1847.9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |