

Footnote 2 - Aircraft Action Report 80
Squadron: VC-81 - 3 March 1945

OPNAV-16-11-8337
Form ACA-1
Sheet 1 of 2

AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

USS Natoma Bay

I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting VC-81 (b) Based on or at USS NATOMA BAY (c) Report No. 80
(d) Take off: Date 3 March 1945 Time (LZT) 0700 King (Zone); Lat. 24-19 N Long. 149-03
(e) Mission Strike on shipping, Futaba Harbor (f) Time of Return _____

II. OWN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALLY COVERED BY THIS REPORT.

TYPE <small>(a)</small>	SQUADRON <small>(b)</small>	NUMBER			BOMBS AND TORPEDOES CARRIED (PER PLANE) <small>(d)</small>	FUZE, SETTING <small>(e)</small>
		TAKING OFF <small>(c)</small>	ENGAGING ENEMY A/C <small>(c)</small>	ATTACKING TARGET <small>(c)</small>		
F4U	VC-81	6		6	6 - H.H. Rockets	.02 Delay, Tail
F4U	VC-81	2		2	Full ammo	

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

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
TBM	VC-85	8	USS HARBOR BAY				

IV. ENEMY AIRCRAFT OBSERVED OR ENGAGED (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

<small>(a)</small> TYPE	<small>(b)</small> NO. OBSERVED	<small>(c)</small> NO. ENGAGING OWN A/C	<small>(d)</small> TIME ENCOUNTERED	<small>(e)</small> LOCATION OF ENCOUNTER	<small>(f)</small> BOMBS, TORPEDOES CARRIED; GUNS OBSERVED	<small>(g)</small> CAMOUFLAGE A MARKING
None						

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) None
(i) Did Any Part of Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? NO If so, Describe Clouds 8000, Alto-cumulus, -6
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENDRY OF COVER)
Time of Day and Brilliance Day, Day (k) Visibility 6 miles
(ORIENT, BRIGHT MOON, DAY, OVERCAST, ETC.) (MILES)

V. ENEMY AIRCRAFT DESTROYED OR DAMAGED IN AIR (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

<small>(a)</small> TYPE ENEMY A/C	<small>(b)</small> DESTROYED OR DAMAGED BY:				<small>(c)</small> WHERE HIT, ANGLE	<small>(d)</small> OR CL
	TYPE A/C	SQUADRON	PILOT OR GUNNER	GUNS USED		
None						

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(Excluded when
filled out)

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VI. LOSS OR DAMAGE, COMBAT OR OPERATIONAL, OF OWN AIRCRAFT (of those listed in II only).

(1a) TYPE OWN A/C	(1b) SQUADRON	(1c) CAUSE: TYPE ENEMY A/C, TYPE GUN, OR OPERATIONAL CAUSE	(1d) WHERE HIT, ANGLE (list error, self-sealing tanks, equipment hit)	(1e) EXTENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE, (Give Bureau serial number of planes destroyed)
1 FB-2	VO-61	Probably heavy AA	Not known	Destroyed - Bufile 74007
2 FB-2	VO-61	Light AA - .50 Cal.	Leading edge of port wing from 12 o'clock	Missing
3				24037
4				
5				
6		Probably HEAVY AA Fire.		
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).

(1a) NO.	(1b) SQUADRON	(1c) NAME, RANK OR RATING	(1d) CAUSE	(1e) CONDITION OR STATUS
1	VO-61	1A(1c) J.N. HUSTON J.M. HUSTON	Hit by anti-aircraft fire and crashed	Missing, considered dead

VIII. RANGE, FUEL, AND AMMUNITION DATA FOR PLANES RETURNING

(1a) TYPE A/C	(1b) MILES OUT	(1c) MILES RETURN	(1d) AV. HOURS IN AIR	(1e) AV. FUEL LOADED	(1f) AV. FUEL CONSUMED	(1g) TOTAL AMMUNITION EXPENDED				(1h) NO. OF PLANES RETURNING
						.30	.50	20MM	MM	
FB-2	193	100	4h 40m	255	195	0000				7

IX. ENEMY ANTI-AIRCRAFT ENCOUNTERED (Check one block on each line).

CALIBER	NONE	MEAGER	MODERATE	INTENSE
HEAVY — Time-fused shells, 75mm and over				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MEDIUM — Impact-fused shells, 20mm-50mm				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LIGHT — Machine gun bullets, 6.5mm-13.2mm				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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

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

No Data.

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(Classify when filled out)

REMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE

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

(a) Target(s) and Location(s) PTC and TB class ships, Putani Harbor, Chichi Jima (b) Time Over Target(s) 0945 E (Zone) 0950 E
(FOR SHIP TARGETS ONLY, SEE AREA UNDER ATTACKS)

(c) Clouds Over Target 8000, Alto-Cumulus, 4
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND EXTENT OF COVER)

(d) Visibility of Target Heavy (e) Visibility 6 miles
(CLEAR, BRY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (TWICE)

(f) Bombing Tactics: Type _____ Bomb Sight Used _____
(LEVEL, HIGH OR STEEP) (TYPE)

Bombs Dropped per Run _____ Spacing _____ Altitude of Bomb Release _____
(NUMBER) (FEET) (FEET)

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

(I) AIMING POINT	(II) DIMENSIONS OR TONNAGE	(III) NO. A/C ATTACKING (A) SQUADRON	(IV) BOMBS AND AMMUNITION EXPENDED, EACH AIMING POINT	(V) NO. HITS ON Aiming Point	(VI) DAMAGE (None, slight, serious, destroyed or sunk)
1 PTC	1000 - 2000 tons	1 VC-81	4 - H.H. Rockets 600 - .50 Cal.	0 Undeter.	Slight
2 PTC	1000 - 2000 tons	1 VC-81	4 - H.H. Rockets 600 - .50 Cal.	2 near Undeter.	Undetermined
3 PTC	1000 - 2000 tons	1 VC-81	500 - .50 Cal.	Undeter.	Slight
4 PTC	1000 - 2000 tons	2 VC-81	10 - H.H. Rockets 600 - .50 Cal.	Unobserved Undeter.	Undetermined
5 PTC	1000 - 2000 tons	2 VC-81	2 - H.H. Rockets 600 - .50 Cal.	Unobserved Undeter.	Slight
6 TB	6000 - 8000 tons	3 VC-81	4 - H.H. Rockets 1000 - .50 Cal.	1 near Undeter.	Undetermined
7 Warehouse or Barracks Bldg.	80 ft. x 180 ft.	1 VC-81	2 - H.H. Rockets	1 hit	Serious
8 Anti-aircraft positions		7 VC-81	2 - H.H. Rockets 4500 - .50 Cal.	Unobserved Undeter.	Undetermined

(a) 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 hit and location of hits. For all targets give location and effect of hits, and identify by numbers above. Use additional sheets if necessary.)

The aircraft covered in this report were to coordinate with and cover the torpedo bombers on a strike on shipping in Putani Harbor, Chichi Jima. The first run was made against the shipping in the harbor. No direct rocket hits were scored on any of the ships. Three were short and may have caused damage but there was no evidence of damage reported. 8800 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition was fired at the ships with undetermined damage. Two rockets were fired at some barracks or warehouses. One warehouse, about 80 ft. by 180 ft., was hit and a small explosion observed. The second and third runs were strafing attacks on the anti-aircraft positions to assist the torpedo bombers. Damage was undetermined.

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

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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
- Defensive 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
- Offensive Tactics, Enemy
- Defensive Tactics, Own
- Defensive Tactics, 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

- Evade Tactics, Shot
- Concealment
- Searchlights
- Night Fighter Tactics
- Use of Jamming

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Bombing Tactics
- Tripole Tactics
- Effectiveness of Bombs, Tripoles
- Selection of Targets
- Fuels
- 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

During the night shipping was reported as being in Fuzhou Harbor, Michi Jins. A strike, consisting of 8 F4U aircraft from this unit and 1 F4U aircraft from the USMC, was dispatched at 0700 Hrs, to destroy the shipping. The fighter aircraft fired rockets at and strafed the ships, furnished fighter cover and strafed ground positions to keep anti-aircraft fire down.

They made the first run from 4000 feet approaching in a 30 degree glide from the northeast. Runs were as indicated in the supplement opposite this page. Twenty-four rockets and 3500 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition were fired at the six largest vessels. Five of the vessels were identified as being F7U or F7U class freighters of approximately 1000 to 2000 tons. One new appearing, larger transport type vessel was anchored south of the above vessels as indicated in the diagram. This vessel had high freeboard and a large centrally located island. It was estimated as being approximately 4000 to 6000 tons and was thought to be of the T3 class. There were no direct hits by rockets; three were in the water and 30-40 feet short. These three may have caused damage but none was evident, nor was there evidence of damage from the strafing. In addition to the above ships, there were six SC class freighters tied up east of the seaplane base and there were several small craft moving about the harbor. Rockets were fired at about 1500 feet and most of the strafing was done between altitudes of 2000 and 1000 feet. The F4U aircraft passed over the target at a speed of 250 knots. One of the fighters fired two rockets at some barracks or warehouses on the east side of the harbor (see #7 on diagram). A small secondary explosion resulted from a hit on a building 50 feet by 150 feet but there was no further observation of this target.

All aircraft recovered to the east toward the entrance of the harbor. Heavy anti-aircraft took them under fire from each side of the harbor. It was thought to be 3 inch batteries. Lt(jg) J. H. MORTON was apparently hit by this fire as he approached the harbor entrance. Some of the other pilots saw a hit and his airplane was not on fire, but it suddenly nosed over into a 45 degree glide crashing some 100 feet into the water, exploding and burning. At the time the plane nosed over, it was at about 1500 feet altitude and was estimated to have crashed while making about 175 knots. There was no wreckage left afloat and only a greenish yellow spot on the water marked the crash. There was no evidence of a survivor and it is believed that it would have been impossible to survive the crash and resulting explosion. (Position of crash is indicated on diagram). The position of the crash is in enemy territory but possibilities of compromise of classified material is considered improbable. He may have been hit and killed by light fire as no one reported observing any damage to the plane; most of the rockets in the vicinity where he crashed were from 3 inch (or equivalent) guns.

In the second and third runs the pilots went to 2000 feet and used the cloud cover over the eastern part of the island. They made their approaches out of the clouds and attacked in steeper runs. These attacks were on the anti-aircraft positions which surrounded the harbor. Two rockets and 4500 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition were expended on these positions. The pilots fired at the gun flashes. They made high speed runs, 300 knots indicated air speed, and stayed above 1000 feet altitude. Tracks of all runs have been indicated on the chart. The strafing attacks are considered to have lessened the effectiveness of the anti-aircraft fire, aiding and protecting the F4U aircraft. One head hit, on ships, was observed, the fighters were not in position to see most of the bombing attacks.

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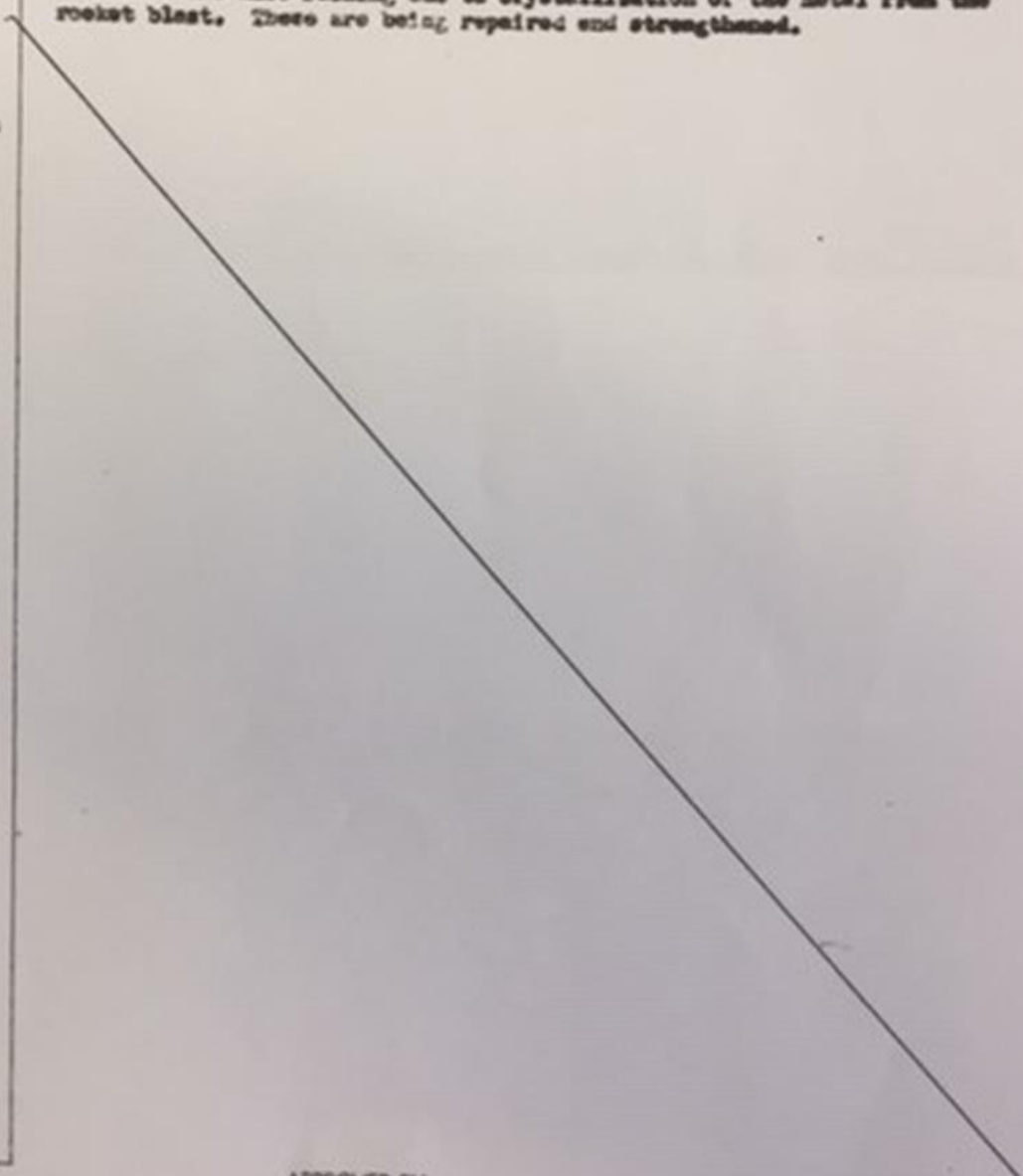
RESTRICTED
(Declassify when
filled out)

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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 Racks
- COMMUNICATIONS**
 - Radio, Radar
 - Homing Devices
 - Visual Signals
 - Codes, Ciphers
- RECOGNITION**
 - IFF
 - Signals
 - Rattle 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
 - Door 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 Power
 - Lights
- FUEL SYSTEM**
- FLIGHT CLOTHING**
- MAINTENANCE**
- BASE FACILITIES**
 - Plane Servicing Equipment
 - Personnel Facilities

All equipment operated normally. The zero length rocket launchers on the F4U aircraft are the same as those on the TBM aircraft. We have experienced no difficulty with these on the TBM aircraft. However, those on the F4U aircraft have been pulling off. Most of the rocket equipped fighter planes are now short one or two launchers. (Six of thirty-six on aircraft on this attack, were broken.) The flaps of the launchers are also failing, due to crystallization of the metal from the rocket blast. These are being repaired and strengthened.



REPORT PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

SIGNATURE E. W. MURPHY, LTJG, USN
VC-81, AC10

SIGNATURE S. S. SICKOL, CAPT., USN NO DUTY
COMMANDING, USS HATAMA BAY

DATE

VC-81 FM-2 AIRCRAFT
STRIKE ON CHIKI JIMA
3 MARCH 1945

