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73D FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
APO # 244

18 NOVEMBER 1944

312TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION #11-51
73D FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION #11-7

1. A. FOURTEEN P-39L'S (TWO DID NOT TAKE OFF AND ONE RETURNED SHORTLY AFTER TAKE-OFF.
B. FOUR SINGLE-ENGINE FIGHTERS.
2. A. NONE.
B. NONE.
3. ESCORT TWO F-5'S ON PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE MISSION TO TWO JIMA.
4. MAJOR WILLIAMS, LTS SITTON, MCCOY*, STOLZ (VIOLET 1).
CAPT TENNANT, LTS REEFIELD*, AMON*, SULLIVAN (VIOLET 2).
CAPT OTTENSTEIN, LTS ERBELE, EUSTACE, RIVAS (VIOLET 3).
LTS KANE*, GARDEN (VIOLET 4).

* 73D FIGHTER SQUADRON PILOTS.

TAKE-OFF: 0602 OVER TARGET: 1010 LANDING: 1357

LTS REEFIELD (VIOLET 2-2) AND AMON (VIOLET 2-3) DID NOT TAKE OFF DUE TO MECHANICAL TROUBLE. LT KANE (VIOLET 4-1) RETURNED TO BASE SHORTLY AFTER TAKE-OFF DUE TO HIS TRIM TAB HANDLE BREAKING OFF. LT. GARDEN (VIOLET 4-2) JOINED VIOLET 3 FLIGHT FOR THE MISSION.

THE THREE FLIGHTS RENDEZVOUSED WITH TWO F-5'S AND FOUR B-24'S OVER MARPI POINT AT 0810. THEY CLIMBED TO 11,000 FEET AND PROCEEDED TO PAJAROS ISLAND, ARRIVING THERE AT 0800. THE FLIGHTS GRADUALLY LET DOWN TO 200 FEET AND ARRIVED AT THE IP (23-55' N 140-40' E) AT 0945. THEY THEN PROCEEDED TO THE TARGET ON A VECTOR OF 35 DEGREES TC, ARRIVING OVER THE TARGET AT 1005.

VIOLET 1 COVERED THE PHOTO RUN OF THE F-5 FLYING ALONG THE WEST SHORE OF TWO JIMA. FLYING AT 200 FEET, ECHELOMED AWAY FROM THE ISLAND, VIOLET 1 ENCOUNTERED MEAGER, INACCURATE AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE EMMANATING FROM COAST POSITIONS. WHEN THE FLIGHT WAS APPROXIMATELY ONE MILE NORTHWEST OF THE VOLCANIC CRATER, THE LEADER OBSERVED TWO SINGLE-ENGINE ENEMY AIRCRAFT DUE EAST OF AIRFIELD #2, ALTITUDE 2,000 FEET, HEADING IN A SHALLOW DIVE TOWARD THE ISLAND. VIOLET 1 LEADER CALLED IN THE BOGIES TO THE OTHER FLIGHTS. AFTER COMPLETION OF THE PHOTO RUN, VIOLET 1 MADE A 180 DEGREE TURN AROUND THE NORTH END OF TWO JIMA AND HEADED FOR THE RENDEZVOUS POINT -- MINAMI ROCK.

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4. CONTINUED:

VIOLET 3 COVERED THE PHOTO RUN OF THE F-5 FLYING ALONG THE EAST SHORE OF IWO JIMA. THE FLIGHT CAME IN AT 50 FEET ALTITUDE IN A LINE - ABREAST FORMATION. HALF WAY UP THE ISLAND, THEY TURNED TO THE RIGHT AND HEADED FOR MINAMI ROCK. AS THEY COMPLETED THE TURN, FOUR SINGLE-ENGINE ENEMY FIGHTERS WERE OBSERVED HEADING FOR THE FLIGHT AT 2,000 TO 3,000 FEET. ONE OF THE BOGIES DROPPED A PHOSPHOROUS BOMB, WHICH EXPLODED WELL AHEAD AND ABOVE THE FORMATION. A SECOND ENEMY FIGHTER DIVED AND OPENED FIRE ON VIOLET 3 - BROKE AWAY AND HEADED FOR IWO JIMA. A THIRD ENEMY FIGHTER EXCHANGED PASSES WITH VIOLET 3-1, THEN DIVED FOR THE DECK AND HEADED TOWARD IWO JIMA. VIOLET 2-2 OBSERVED THE FOURTH ENEMY FIGHTER AT 2,000 FEET, AND IN A CLIMBING TURN OPENED FIRE AT MAXIMUM RANGE. THE ENEMY IMMEDIATELY BROKE AWAY TO THE LEFT AND RETURNED TO THE NORTH. ALL ATTACKS BY THE ENEMY FIGHTERS WERE UNAGGRESSIVE. NO A/A WAS OBSERVED BY VIOLET 3. ONE 2-ENGINE AIRCRAFT WAS OBSERVED ON #2 AIRFIELD AT IWO JIMA. THE FLIGHT PROCEEDED TO MINAMI ROCK AFTER THE ENEMY INTERCEPTION AND ORBITED THE RENDEZVOUS POINT WHILE THE OTHER FLIGHTS REFORMED.

VIOLET 2 TURNED OFF 3 MILES SOUTH OF IWO JIMA AND, AS THE BALANCE OF THE FORMATION REACHED THE TARGET, STARTED TO CLIMB TO 5,000 FEET WHERE THEY ORBITED UNTIL VIOLET 3 LEFT THE ISLAND. VIOLET 2'S MISSION WAS TO PROVIDE HIGH COVER FOR THE F-5'S. VIOLET 2, AFTER COVERING THE WITHDRAWAL OF VIOLET 3, PROCEEDED TO THE SOUTH TIP OF IWO JIMA TO COVER WITHDRAWAL OF VIOLET 1. THEY THEN PROCEEDED TO THE RENDEZVOUS POINT -- MINAMI ROCK.

ALL THREE FLIGHTS LEFT MINAMI ROCK AT 1020 AND HEADED FOR BASE. THEY ARRIVED AT EAST FIELD, SAIPAN, AFTER FLYING A TOTAL OF 1,516 STATUTE MILES.

5. A. 3/10 CUMULUS AT 3,000 FEET OVER TARGET. RETURNING TO BASE, THE FLIGHTS RAN IN TO A FRONT, BASE 600 FEET, TOPS 18,000 FEET, APPROXIMATELY 300 MILES NORTH OF SAIPAN.
B. LOUD AND CLEAR.
6. NONE.
7. 420 ROUNDS CAL. 50. 83 ROUNDS 20 MM. 7,315 GALLONS GAS.
8. NO RADIO CONTACT MADE WITH DUMBOS. NO SHIPPING OBSERVED.

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