

HEADQUARTERS
ADVANCED ECHELON
FIFTH AIR FORCE
APO 929

ECW/wjw.

6 April, 1943.

SUBJECT : Report on Battle of Bismarck Sea.

TO : Commanding General, Fifth Air Force, APO 925.

1. Enclosures I to VII (both incl.) give data on forces available, sorties made and the results achieved.

2. Our plan of attack was to begin hitting the convoy as far out as weather and radius of our bombers permitted. In each attack we used all air force units, which had sufficient radius, in one coordinated attack. Once the convoy was within the operating radius of our attack bombers, we used medium level bombing to divert enemy AA and fighters and the attack bombers to make the "kills." The medium level bombing was surprisingly effective. Strafing by our attack bombers and the RAAF Beaufighter Squadron proved adequate in the neutralization of destroyer and light cruiser AA. The fighter cover over each coordinated attack effectively neutralized the enemy fighter force permitting our bombers to make their runs without enemy fighter interference. Except on destroyers and light cruisers several hits by 500 lb. bombs were required for immediate results.

3. It should be kept in mind that the enemy had not been subjected to such an attack previous to this. Surprise undoubtedly was a considerable factor in our attack bomber success. In my best judgment the caliber .50 gun is adequate for strafing such targets. The 8-gun B-25-C-1 has, however, only half enough fire power. From 15 to 20 caliber .50 guns firing forward would give a suitable covering fire for attack bomber operations against warships. One thousand pound bombs will, in the future, be used in attack bomber operations against shipping when their use is feasible.

Ennis C. Whitehead
ENNIS C. WHITEHEAD,
Major General, A. U. S.,
Deputy Air Force Commander.

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**AIRPLANE STATUS DURING BATTLE
AND
SORTIES CARRIED OUT**

**STATUS OF TACTICAL AIRPLANES
FIFTH AIR FORCE**

March 1 to March 5, 1943

A - Airplanes Assigned or Attached to Units
B - Airplanes In Combat Commission.

FIFTH FIGHTER COMMAND

DATE			1st		2nd		3rd		4th		5th		
GP	SQ	TYPE	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	
49th	7	P-40 Series	25	20	25	20	25	21	25	23	25	25	
	8	P-40 Series	25	23	24	18	24	22	24	12	24	x	x.No report en-route new Station
	9	P-38 Series	23	13	24	20	24	22	24	20	24	19	
35th	39	P-38 Series	24	17	24	18	24	19	21	16	25	10	
	40	P-39 Series	25	23	25	24	25	24	25	25	25	23	
	41	P-400 P-39	25	20	24	18	24	20	24	20	25	18	
9 OG 71 Wing (RAAF)	75	P-40	17	17	16	16	18	15	18	15	20	11	** Refer to footnote
	77	P-40	24	16	24	12	24	11	24	18	24	17	** " " "
8th		P-39 P-400	Relieved from Operational Duties because of Malaria.										

FIFTH BOMBER COMMAND

3rd	8	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	13	B-25C,D	9	6	9	6	9	6	9	0	9	6	
	89	A-20	18	15	18	15	18	14	18	11	18	13	
	90	B-25C-1	16	11	16	9	16	12	15	3	15	10	
22nd		B-26	A/C undergoing Major Overhaul No replacements Available										
38th	71	B-25C,D	8	5	8	5	8	7	8	6	8	5	
	405	B-25C	9	6	9	7	9	8	9	8	9	8	
43rd	63	B-17	10	9	10	7	9	5	8	6	9	7	
	64	B-17	11	8	11	7	11	9	10	6	10	1	
	65	B-17	8	7	9	7	9	6	9	4	8	5	
	403	B-17	9	4	9	5	9	6	8	3	7	4	
90th	319	B-24	11	x	11	x	11	x	10	x	10	x	x.No report All A/C in DARWIN
	320	B-24	5	4	5	4	5	1	5	3	7	3	
	321	B-24	6	5	6	2	6	3	6	1	7	4	
	400	B-24	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	0	0	
9 OG (RAAF)	6	Hudson	4	4	4	3	4	2	4	3	5	5	** Refer to footnote
	7	B'fort	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	** " " "
	22	Boston	9	6	9	6	9	5	9	5	9	4	** " " "
	30	B'fiter	17	13	18	14	18	15	18	11	18	12	** " " "
	100	B'fort	21	13	22	13	22	16	22	17	22	17	
8th	PHO	F-4	8	2	8	2	8	0	8	0	8	0	

TOTALS

DATE	1st		2nd		3rd		4th		5th		
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	
Fighters	188	154	186	146	188	154	185	149	192	123+	+Planes of one Squadron excluded enroute New Station
L. Bombers	44	34	45	35	45	34	45	27	45	29	Includes Beaufighters
M. Bombers	63	41	64	40	64	49	63	34	63	46	Airplanes or recco and escort duty excluded
H. Bombers	52	39	53	34	52	33	42	26	48	24	

++UNITS OF 9TH OPERATIONAL GROUP UNDER OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF ADVANCE ECHELON, FIFTH AIR FORCE.

AIRPLANE ATTACKING

1. Number of U.S. Sorties (Bombers only) by Type and Squadron.

12 A-20A's	89th Sq.	1 Squadron Mission
33 B-25C's	90th Sq.	3 Squadron Missions
21 B-25C's & D's	71st & 405th Sq. (Combined)	3 Squadron Missions
12 B-25C's & D's	13th Sq.	2 Squadron Missions
21 B-17's	63rd Sq.	3 Squadron Missions
5 B-17's	63rd Sq.	Individual Reccos
36 B-17's	64th & 403rd Sq. (Combined)	4 Squadron Missions
19 B-17's	65th Sq.	3 Squadron Missions
4 B-17's	65th Sq.	Individual Reccos
2 B-24's	321st Sq.	1 Squadron Mission
5 B-24's	321st Sq.	Individual Reccos
4 B-24's	320th Sq.	Individual Reccos

Of Airplanes engaged in Squadron Missions (Strikes) 9 failed to reach target due to weather.

2. Number of Australian Sorties (Bombers only) by Type and Squadron.

13 Beaufighters	30th Sq.	1 Squadron Mission
10 Beaufighters	30th Sq.	1 Squadron Mission
5 A-20A's	22nd Sq.	1 Squadron Mission
5 A-20A's	22nd Sq.	1 Squadron Mission

(Unable to locate target-remaining DD)

Only 3 of airplanes engaged failed to reach target due to weather.

3. Number of U.S. Sorties (Fighters only) by Type and Squadron.

55 P-38's	39th Sq.	4 Squadron Missions
17 P-38's	9th Sq.	2 Squadron Missions
43 P-40's	7th Sq.	3 Squadron Missions
14 P-40's	8th Sq.	1 Squadron Mission

4. No Australian Fighter Sorties were made.

**CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT
OF
BOMBINGS AND SIGHTINGS**

C O N F I D E N T I A L

CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF BOMBING ATTACKS AND SIGHTINGS

MARCH 1 TO 5, 1943

This attempt to picture the result of our attacks on the enemy convoy sighted the afternoon of March 1, 1943, and followed into the Huon Gulf, must be prefaced with certain statements concerning the accuracy of this report. Many conflicting sightings and reports had to be reconciled and adjusted; simultaneous sightings at slightly varied locations had to be assessed as to whether or not they were the same sighting; errors in time had to be allowed for; wide discrepancies in judgments of sizes of ships attacked and sighted were found and to all these factors add the fact that oftentimes the weather was not conducive to accurate sightings and the fact that over 100 friendly planes and scores of attacking enemy fighters were in the compact area and it can readily be understood that no irrefutable story or history can be told of this event other than that it represents a complete and annihilating victory.

Below is a chronological listing of bombings and sightings with comments:

March 1, 1943

All times given are "L" time.

- 1600 (RECCO) A fourteen ship convoy of 6 warships, 6 AK, and 2 large AP sighted north of New Britain, course 270. 321st Squadron.
- 2030 to 2130 Searched area East to 15100E. 12 flares released, nil shipping sighted.
- 2040 At 0450S-15202E, received bursts pom pom and ack ack. Dropped bomb every 15 minutes for 1 hour, no further ack ack or indication of presence of convoy.

March 2, 1943

- 0730 Did not spot convoy due bad weather.
- 0825 A fourteen ship convoy again picked up. 7 DD. 320th Squadron.
- 0930 to 0935 16 F38 missed convoy due to weather and at 9000 feet intercepted 3 Oscars NW Arawe. 4 of our A/C were holed and 3 Zekes were probably destroyed. 39th Squadron.
- 0955 9,000 ton AP--2 hits. 63rd Squadron. Ship "A".
- 1000 Large AP observed burning fiercely by 65th Squadron. Ship "A".
- 1005 Convoy of 2 large DD, 4 or 5 DD, 2 large AP, 4 to 6 AK (12 to 15). 63rd Squadron.
- 1015 6,000 ton AK--1 hit. 65th Squadron. Ship "B".
- 1020 14 ship convoy of 5 warships, 8 AK, 1 large ship. Of these, two were damaged and difficult to assess for size; one ship observed afire ("A") and one listing and sinking ("B"). 321st Squadron.
- 1029 Cargo ship exploded and turned over. ("B").
- 1032 5,000 ton AK afire forward. ("C"). 8,000 ton ship listing badly, large portion of bottom side showing, fore-castle under water. ("B"). 64th Squadron.
- 1030 6,000 ton AK--1 hit on bow. 64th Squadron. Ship "C". Convoy reported of 14 ships--6 DD, 6 or 7 AK, 1 9,000 ton vessel, and 1 1,000 ton vessel. This could add up to 15 ships.
- 1035 8,000 ton AP burning and exploding ("A"). 5,000 ton AK burning forward hold ("C"). 65th Squadron.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

- 1040 6,000 ton ship exploded violently. ("A"). 64th Squadron.
- 1110 Two ships on fire sighted; being left by convoy. Probably ships "C" and "D". Observation by 63rd Squadron.
- 1100 Two near misses on 500-800 ton ship causing fire within few minutes. Ship "D". This observation with one the following day reporting a small tanker that exploded in one large burst might indicate that two small ships in the convoy carried fuel or ammunition. (See Truclos?).
- 1115 6,000 ton AK--1 hit, burst into flames, rolled over and sank in two minutes. Ship "E". 63rd Squadron. A 5,000 ton AK was observed hit and to sink within two minutes by 65th Squadron proving both original observation and difficulty of assessing sizes of vessels.
- 1120 Late report states a large AP burning fiercely and disappeared while aircraft was circling. This was ship "A" sinking. 63rd Squadron.
- 1130 5,000 ton ship--2 or 3 possible hits and several near misses. Also near misses on two other ships in convoy but no damage was noted although one of these ships stopped immediately.
- 1145 9,000 ton AP--1 hit. Convoy in Dampier Straits. Course 200 degrees. Speed 8 knots.
- Note: No further observations of ship "B" which was considered sinking by several observers and with much of its bottom exposed must be taken as evidence that this ship sank about this time for there was no further report after 1032 of any ship listing badly.
- 1405 Convoy of 4 AP or AK, 3 or 4 DD course 280 degrees. 0500-14720. In flight report this gives rough confirmation to above note for it indicates that three of the original convoy of 14 ships had sunk--ships "A", "B", and "E".
- 1600 Convoy of 15 ships at 0500-14720, course 280 degrees. Convoy milled around in this area for many hours and apparently 4 or 5 other ships joined the convoy here. A sighting at 1545 (63rd Squadron) stated that two U/I ships joined convoy then and gave composition of 15 ships as 6 DD, 9 AK or AP.
- 1745 Convoy of 16 ships sighted as follows: 2 DD south of convoy at 0540-14730, course 180 degrees, speed 20 knots. Convoy of 4 DD, 2 8-10,000 ton AK and 8 3-6,000 ton AK of which two of smaller AK were on fire (possibly ships "C" and "D").
- 1820 6,000 ton AK--2 hits, definitely sinking. Ship "F". Near misses on 9,000 and 5,000 ton ships.
- 1830 Convoy of 15 ships, indicating sinking of ship "F". One group milling around 0505-14730 of 7 DD, 2 AP, 4 AK and then 2 CL at 0525-14740, course 170 degrees, speed 18 knots.
- 1815/2 to 0330/3 Recco of Vitiaz and Dampier Straits. Nil sightings.
- Note: There were no further sightings this day. Summation as follows: Of a fourteen ship convoy, one of two very large transports, and three AK of about 6,000 tons were sunk; one small AK of 800 tons and a 6,000 ton AK were probably completely gutted by fire, and several other ships received varying degrees of damage from near misses. Of the enemy fighter escort provided, three were destroyed and 7 probably destroyed by our bombers.

March 3, 1943

0830 1 DD low in the water at 0450-14730.

Note: The main convoy was located in the general area, 0710-14820, but was spread over such a large area that many discrepancies in sightings and reports were noted. However, an observer in one of the first planes (B17) to attack this day made a careful count of ships in the area and his count of 16 ships is undoubtedly the most accurate obtainable. Our attacks on these sixteen ships were so closely timed and heavily concentrated in time that it is considered impossible to ascertain which airplane or squadron actually sank each ship. Nearly every ship was hit more than once by different squadrons as will be noted in a careful reading of the full reports. After the first fifteen minutes of our attack (from 1000 to 1015), over ten of the ships were seriously damaged.

1000

Attack by 89th Squadron.

6,000 ton AK--2 hits.

6,000 ton AK--3 hits, flames and explosions.

8,000 ton AK--2 hits.

800 ton AK--2 hits, exploded in large blast. (Sea Truck?).

6,000 ton AK--1 hit.

6,000 ton AK--1 hit.

10,000 ton AK--1 hit.

Attack by 90th Squadron.

5,000 ton AK--hit, burst into flames and sank in two minutes.

8,000 ton AK--hit and left burning violently.

5,000 ton AK--2 hits, stopped and settling.

3,000 ton AP--1 hit, heavy black smoke.

5,000 ton AP--2 hits, needed assistance from DD.

6,000 ton AP--1 hit, blew up and left smoking.

6,000 ton AP--1 hit, observed smoking.

Large DD --2 hits, smoke to 1,500 feet.

Large DD --2 hits, large smoke columns.

DD --1 hit, rolled over and sank before squadron left area.

Attack by 38th Group.

Medium size AK--1 hit.

5,000 ton AK --2 hits, fire and smoke.

8,000 ton AP --1 hit, left smoking.

3,000 ton AK --1 hit (also hit by B25C1) and ship blew up.

1010 6,000 ton AK--1 hit, burned violently and probably sank. 6,000 ton AK--1 hit on bow and hit again on second run. 64th Squadron.

1000 to 1020 13 Beaufighters strafed 10,000 ton AP. Deck cargo burst into flames. Strafed 2 5,000 and 1 8,000 ton AK. 2,000x20 mm and 10,000x30. At 5,000 feet encountered 5 Zekes at 1010. Two personnel injured. 30th Squadron.

1000 16 P38 at 15,000 to 25,000 feet engaged 20 to 25 Zekes, Oscars, Haps, and U/I types. 3 P38 missing. 10 enemy fighters destroyed and 3 damaged. 39th Squadron.

1010 5,000 ton AK--1 hit, fire started. 4,000 ton AK--2 hits, exploded and sank. 65th Squadron.

1015 7,000 ton AK--1 probable hit, left smoking. 13th Squadron.

1018 15 ships observed of which five were burning. This could account for the one ship that sank in two minutes by 90th Squadron. From this point on, it is more and more difficult to account ship by ship but more by the beginning and ending inventory method to assess enemy ship losses.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

1020 One large DD stationary at 0520-14750. Probably the one sighted at 0830. The distance between these two sightings could easily be covered by even a slightly damaged warship.

1022 One DD observed to sink. Observation by 64th Squadron. Damaged probably by 90th Squadron.

1025 11 ships and two burning sighted by 63rd Squadron.

1200 to 1320 14 H40 at 7,000 to 10,000 feet. 2x300 on Lae drome, unobserved results, convoy not sighted. Intercepted by Zekes at 1220 4,000 to 6,000 feet. 4 Zekes destroyed, 3 probably destroyed. 8th Squadron.

1220 5 ships burning and four standing by. Observation by 63rd Squadron.

1230 to 1350 9 P38 acted as high cover at 12,000 feet for H40 dive bombing convoy. Strafed small vessel Lae harbor which was beached smoking. Attacked by 3 Zekes at 9,000 feet. 9th Squadron.

1230 to 1245 15 H40 unable to locate convoy. Bombed and strafed Lae and Salamaua, at 50 to 12,000 feet. Sunk barge. Intercepted by 5 to 7 Zekes. 1 of our airplanes damaged. Destroyed 2 Zekes. 7th Squadron.

1410 4 warships 0640-14805, course 300 degrees, speed 30 knots.

Note: It is difficult to explain 4 DD apparently in good condition leaving the scene of battle with hundreds or thousands of enemy troops in life boats, on rafts, or in the water. From the timing, it is highly conceivable that these DD had already picked up many survivors and were making for the nearest port, Finschhafen. This is the most logical explanation of this movement. A reconnaissance airplane of the 321st Squadron later in the day came down from Open Bay through Vitiaz Straits with perfect visibility and failed to find these ships although they were searching specifically for them. Therefore, it would seem that these four DD again went back into the combat area and attempted to pick up more survivors. These DD were probably the ones reported hit so severely in the afternoon strike, for in reading the account below, note the number of hits on warships, although it does appear that most of the hits are on two specific warships--one a large, and the other a regular DD.

1505 5 burning ships; also one DD and one large DD, course North, speed 35 knots. Sighting by 63rd Squadron.

1512 1 AK sank. Report by 65th Squadron.

Note: At 1512, 1 AK sank which gave a total to this date of 9 M/V sunk, 8 definite and 1 probable. At 1515, (three minutes later) 5 burning ships were sighted, estimated tonnage 1 9,000 ton and 4 5,000 ton. This gives total of at least 13 and probably 14 M/V, of which at least one and possibly two were small 500 to 1,000 ton so-called sea trucks.

1515 5 burning ships--1 9,000 and 4 5,000 tons.

1515 Large DD--3 hits and left smoking and sinking.
Small DD--4 hits and left sinking.
Burning AK--hit again and sank immediately.
Burning AK--hit again and caused fire to grow larger.
90th Squadron.

1517 DD--3 hits, left burning and exploding.
Large DD--3 hits, big explosion. 8 ships reported by 38th Group after attack, all burning.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

1518 1 DD sank. Reported by 64th Squadron.

1519 2 AK, 2 U/I, and one DD--all smoking. Reported by 321st Squadron.

1520 Large DD--2 hits, exploded, burning violently.

1520 DD--1 hit causing fire and explosions. 4 burning ships and 2 disabled DD sighted in area on leaving. 65th Squadron.

1525 5,000 ton AK--2 hits, exploding and sinking at 1545. 64th Squadron. DD--hit, smoke and flames. Previously hit by B25's.

1525 5 AK burning, 1 DD burning, 1 large DD stationary. 63rd Squadron.

1525 Large DD--4 hits by 13th Squadron.

1536 Hits observed on 6,000 ton AK. No strike claims this so it may be explosions within the ship itself. Reported by 64th Squadron.

1545 1 AK sank.

1615 Large AK and 2 DD hit by 90th Squadron. One DD on fire, other listing.

1720 3 burning AK and 1 large stationary DD.

1740 No ships in Lae harbor.

1757 Undamaged DD with Zero cover at 0711-14806. This may be the vessel reported by Navy which was fired upon but missed in a PT attack later in the night.

1830 3 ships afloat and burning at 0704-15803. 1 undamaged DD headed for Lae with cover of 7 Zeros.

1930 1 AK and 1 large DD all that is sighted afloat. This may have overlooked the one undamaged DD reported headed toward Lae.

Note: An attack by some PT boats this night sank one ship and fired torpedoes at, but missed a second that in some manner evaded further action. It is considered unlikely that a floating hulk would have been missed or if so could have evaded further action by our forces. This is apparently the undamaged DD reported above. One of the severely damaged ships sighted at 1930 probably sank without further action on our part.

March 4, 1943

0800 to 1231 (RECCO) At 0800/4, 5 landing barges 20 miles E. Finschhafen heading Finschhafen. At 1025/4, 0305S-15045E, course 300 degrees, speed 10 knots, 2 10,000 ton cargo ships, 2 6,000 ton cargo ships, 1 3,000 ton cargo ship, and 1 DD. One cargo vessel, course Rabaul and DD at 1035/4 S. of Kavieng, course 130 degrees. Stationary DD (burned out) at 0740S-14820E. At 1205/4, small lifeboats 0520S-14835E. 320th Squadron.

0820 to 1130 At 0820/4, 0650S-14750E, 6 power launches with 50 troops, strafed sinking one. (RECCO) At 1100/4, 0505S-14910E, life boats and wreckage scattered over 10 mile area, boats appeared empty, strafed. At 1130/4, 0655S-14725E, crates, boxes, and debris floating in area. 63rd Squadron.

0910 1 DD--2 hits, left listing and sinking. No other ships in the area. Position 0730S-14830E. 65th Squadron.

1205 to 1311 11 Beaufighters strafed Malahang strip destroying 6 fighters and truck. 2,250x20 mm and 14,000x30. Two of our airplanes holed and one crashed. 30th Squadron.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

- 1220 to 1245 8 P38 cover at 8,000 to 12,000 feet. 1,500x50. Intercepted by 10 to 15 Haps at 8,000 feet. Two Haps destroyed and two probably destroyed. 9th Squadron.
- 1230 12 P38 escort at 7,000 feet. 4,000x50 and 100x20 mm. Intercepted by 10 to 12 Zekes, 1 our Airplanes hit and Oscars and Zekes destroyed at 7,000 feet. Two Oscars, 2 Zekes destroyed. Four Oscars and 3 Zekes probably destroyed. 39th Squadron.
- 1300 1 DD--stationary and burned out at 0740-14020. Probably the same DD as mentioned above.
- 1516 to 1616 12 P40 escort over Cape Ward Hunt at 4,000 feet. 7th Squadron.
- 1600 1 DD--1 hit, left sinking. Stationary when hit. 90th Squadron.

March 5, 1943

- 0830 to 0850 16 P40 attacked by Oscars over Malahang at 6,000 to 8,000 feet. 1,700x50. Three Oscars destroyed. 7th Squadron.
- 1422 to 1615 5 Beaufighters strafed 1 Type B barge, 1 large MLC, already being attacked by Hudson. At least 30 men in each. Type B sunk. MLC sinking, few, if any survivors. Position within sight of Tribriands. Another Type B containing 30 Japs left sinking 20 miles NE of Cape Ward Hunt. Small steel barge, 12 miles E of Cape Ward Hunt containing Japs left sinking. 1,250x20 mm and 10,000x30. 30th Squadron.
- 1620 to 1650 5 Beaufighters located 4 groups 25 miles from Cape Ward Hunt, bearing 50 degrees. Group A: 5 Type B small barges and 1 small boat. 4 barges 25 men each, 1 barge stores. Group B: 14 rafts, 12 men each and 4 lifeboats, 6 men each, 2 lifeboats heading ashore. Group C: 4 empty "B" small barges. Group D: 4 empty small barges. Group A strafed, stores barge sunk, another sinking, remainder settling. Group B strafed, many killed. Ammunition exhausted. 30th Squadron.
- 1815 (RECCO) Motor launch beached 500 yards S. of Cape Turner. 65th Squadron.

March 6, 1943

- 0825 to 0900 (RECCO) Search made 10 to 40 mile radius N.E. Cape Ward Hunt. Observed: 6 lifeboats, 2 containing stores, 1 wooden dinghy, 2 empty rafts, 1 life boat with White flag. Nil personnel in boats. Nil attack made. Possible serviceable lifeboat on beach Cape Ward Hunt. 22nd Squadron.

March 7, 1943

- 1045 to 1100 (RECCO) Strafed small barge loaded with supplies, beached small island N. of Mindrugutu. 89th Squadron.

March 8, 1943

- 1500 (RECCO) At 0900S-15000E, and 0849S-14948E - 3 boats and 1 box, 6 to 12 Japs each strafed and sunk, 100% casualties. 65th Squadron.

March 9, 1943

- 0720 to 1130 (RECCO) At 0658S-15015E, Jap life boat, 10 men some dead. 403rd Squadron, attached to 65th Squadron.
- 1721 to 1740 (RECCO) At 0528S-14820E, W. of Cape Gloucester, bombed Jap landing barges 90' to 120' long, bombs landed among men. 64th Squadron.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

March 11, 1943

1045 (RECCO) Two life boats 0145S-14927E, nil life. 320th Squadron.

March 14, 1943

1121 (RECCO) At 0855S-15048E, empty lifeboat. At 0845S-15020E, 3 barges drifting, nil personnel. 65th Squadron