

U.S.S. GAMBIER BAY (CVE-73)

CHRONOLOGY OF AIR ATTACKS ON 17, 18 & 19 JUNE, 1944

17 June 1944

1800 - GENERAL QUARTERS.

1802 - Engineers reported manned and ready for General Quarters.

1802 ½ Navigation, ditto

1803 Communications, ditto

1803 Air Department, ditto

1803 ½ Gunnery, ditto

1805 C & R ditto

1805 Medical ditto

1805 Supply ditto

1805 ½ All departments reported manned and ready for General Quarters in five (5) minutes. (Report made to Captain and O.O.D.)

KITKUN BAY launched CAP.

Moved into position with KITKUN BAY, CORAL SEA, and CORREGIDOR.

(Following reports rec'd on bridge from C.I.C. and TBS transmission.)

1818 - Large bogey bearing 183 - 100 miles.

1823 - Bogey coming out of fade at 230 - 55 miles.

1823 - Large bogey bearing 183 - 93 miles.

1825 - Large bogey bearing 170 - 86 miles to 94 miles.

1825 - CAP reports running fight with Betty at 70 miles.

1826 - CAP reports shooting down Jap Betty at 50 miles distance.

1827 - Large bogey now at 186 - 70 miles. Bogey at 70 miles appears to be ten (10) to fifteen (15) planes.

1829 - Large bogey at 177 - 62 miles. Another bogey at 175 - 74 miles is closing.

1830 - Large bogey at 130 - 71 miles and opening.

1830 - Large bogey at 170 - 68 miles appears to be 3 to 4 planes.

1830 - (Griffin to Slide Rule) We have a large bogey at 178 - 65 miles of from 20 to 30 planes. We have another bogey at 130 - 38 miles.

1832 - Bogey at 130 - 31 miles did appear to be opening is now closing.

1833 - Bogey with ten (10) to fifteen (15) planes bearing 185 - 54 miles.

Bogey with 3 or 4 planes 170 - 64 miles. Bogey that has 10 to 15 planes bearing 185 - 49 miles.

1835 - Bogey with 2 to 3 planes bearing 165 - 76 miles.

1835 - Large bogey bearing 136 - 26 miles.

1836 - Large bogey bearing 145 - 43 miles.

1836 - Large bogey (10 to 15 planes) bearing 190 - 40 miles.

1836 - (Slide Rule from Exposition) Large bogey 160 - 46 miles.

1838 - Bogey at 165 - 44 (3 to 4 planes).

1839 - Bogey appears to be opening at 154 - 28 miles.

1839 - Bogey coming in at bearing 1000 - 30 miles (10 to 15 planes).

1840 - Large bogey now at 165 - 29 miles.

1840 - It appears that all three groups of planes will join together.

1842 ½- V2 Bogey still closing at 150 - 28 miles.

1844 - Talleyho group at 185 - 23 miles, friendly and enemy mixed.

1844 - Another Talleyho group closing at 240 - 27 miles.

1844 - Another Talleyho group at 160 - 21 miles.

1844 - A group of 3 to 4 going out at 130.

1844 - The enemy planes; coming in are evidently coming in at fifteen (15) to twenty (20) thousand feet.

1844 - Another Talleyho group bearing 170 - 19 miles.

****(Above reports were given in rapid succession commencing at 1844).

1846 - Another bogey group bearing 230 - 86 miles.

1846 - A Talleyho group at 160 - 15 miles. 1847 - A Talleyho group at 210 - 18 miles.

1847 - A Talleyho group now closing at 140 - 14 miles.

A merged plot at 120 - 23 miles (Time on merged plot -- 1846).

1848 - A bogey at 100 - 36 miles. The merged plot at 120 now at 16 miles.

1849 - They are coming in high and dead ahead. Altitude when first spotted as they come thru overcast appears to be approximately 8 thousand feet, AA fire appears to be falling short and ineffective at first, until they peel off and commence dive bombing run. AA fire effective -- Near bomb miss on port bow near #44 gun, water splashed up on

guns and flight deck. Planes going down on port two , near bomb misses reported astern. JA-6d Talker and I observe 7 planes show down burning on water. Two definitely owned by our AA fire. Two planes shot 1 down on port might be included in those 7 we have observed as ship is zig- zagging. Plane coming in on carriers on port side very low, AA fire downed same. Another plane coming in on port side very low just above water caught in fire between CORAL SEA and GAMBIER BAY explodes, result of fire CORAL SEA. Approximate number of planes attacking by bombing - 17 two planes attempt abortive torpedo runs both shot down. CORAL SEA and GAMBIER BAY appeared to bear brunt of attack, possibly because of position and planes on deck. Nine planes in attacking groups definitely known to be shot down, with possible score of eleven. All attacking planes made run either directly overhead or slightly to port, or on ships to port of our position. None were observed attacking ships in position to starboard. Two torpedo planes did not attack until after bombing run was over, apparently timing was broken up by CAP.

1901 - Emergency turn #6 executed.

1902 - A large number bogies coming in at 110 - 9 miles.

1904 - Emergency turn #6. Gunfire observed on Starboard side - no plane sighted.

1905 - A large bogey at 220 - 35 miles.

1906 - Bogies coming in dead ahead, also some slightly to port, very high, none shot down, no bombing observed, 2 1/2 minutes AA fire, enemy retain altitude failed to press home attack, number of planes unknown.

1909 - Emergency turn #3 executed.

1911 - Destroyer firing on starboard side. No plane sighted.

1912 - Screen is clearing, except for friendly aircraft.

1914 - Slide Rule advises all ships to hold fire, friendly aircraft coming in to land, fighters are low on gas.

1914 1/2 - Gunnery Officer advised to hold fire as anything on port side without specific authorization, and to hold fire on planes on starboard side with lights on.

1917 - Bogey aircraft bearing 244 - 40 miles, opening.

1920 - KITKUN BAY and destroyers firing on friendly aircraft, none hit.

1922 - Friendly planes now attempting landings on carriers in group.

1925 - Destroyers advised to take position, 1000 yards off port beam of both Tigress and Night Hawk.

1930 - Firing on port several miles away (AA fire).

1933 - Holster advised to clear deck to take planes aboard -- none were taken.

1938 - Com Task Force - flash white.