

SECRET

CV8/ALB-3
Serial 0018

OF10/LA

June 13, 1942

Subject: Report of Action - 4-6 June 1942.

(Ray Davis)
enemy force at this time was thought to bear 325° T., distant 240 miles from Midway, and to consist of 2 BBs, 4 CAs, 1 CV and some DDs. At 2004, having failed to sight any major enemy force after conducting a 315-mile search, the attack group attacked an enemy CL or DD in a position 278 miles bearing 315° T. from the HORNET position at time of launching. No direct hits were observed; it is estimated that 5 500-lb. bombs landed within 100 feet of the target. All planes returned with the exception of one which landed in the water near the ENTERPRISE due to fuel exhaustion; personnel were recovered in a fine manner in the darkness by the AYLWIN. Most of the landings were made after complete darkness had set in. Few of the pilots had previous night carrier landing experience. All planes returned with very little gas; one plane landed, out of fuel, in our arresting gear. *(C. G. Washburn)*

14. Course 280° T., speed 15 was maintained during the night, the enemy having been reported to be heading slightly south of west, probably to join the Southern forces. Shortly before sunrise ENTERPRISE launched a reconnaissance flight to search the area from 180° through West to 360° for a distance of 200 miles. Contact was made by the pilot in the section 230° - 240° T., the enemy bearing 239° T., distant 150 miles from this force. The contact report made by radio and due to voice error the expression "BB" was heard as "CV". Accordingly, 1 CV was reported to Commander Task Force 16. The pilot immediately returned to base and reported correctly 1 BB, 1 CA, 3 DD, by message drop and verbally. Cruisers were then ordered to gain and maintain contact with their SOCs, track the enemy and keep the OTC informed. It is conceivable that, had this procedure been followed on the previous day, some enemy units which escaped might not have been able to do so.

15. At 0957, commenced launching air group of 26 VSB and 8 VF. The latter were ordered along in case of previously undetected air opposition. They aided in the attack by effectively strafing destroyers. At 1150 the Air Group commenced its attack on the enemy force which consisted of 1 BB, 1 CA, and 3 DDs, 142 miles bearing 235° T. from HORNET 1015 position, resulting in the following: 2 1000-lb. bombs and 1 500-lb. bomb on the BB plus two 1000-lb. near misses within 50 feet of BB; two 1000-lb. hits on a CA; one 500-lb. hit on the stern of a DD. Four VF strafed one DD which probably sustained heavy personnel casualties on the bridge and upper works. One of HORNET VSB was apparently hit and shot down by AA fire in this attack. All pilots of this attack insist that the principal target was definitely a BB (probably KIRISHIMA class) and not a CA. All planes except the one shot down were recovered at 1245 and rearmed.

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