

1 November 1944.

From: The Executive Officer.  
To: The Commanding Officer.  
Subject: Action Report, period 5-31 October 1944.  
Reference: (a) U.S.N.R., Article 948.

1. The following is submitted in accordance with reference (a). In view of the minor and continuing nature of the actions in which IOWA actively engaged during the operation, all against aircraft, this report covers the period of 5-31 October. During this period IOWA opened fire against enemy planes 7 times.

2. In each action, or promise of action, the conduct of officers and crew was beyond criticism. The morale and devotion to duty of all hands has continued consistently high. This is to be expected, but is noteworthy in view of the fact that the current operation is of more than two months duration, the previous one was of sixty-seven days duration for this ship, and in the 18 day period intervening there was very little, if any, chance for relaxation and rest for most of the crew. The last liberty for the crew was in Panama, for one watch, on 7 January 1944.

3. There have been no incidents considered noteworthy which are not covered in the ship's action report. The aircraft rescue mission flown by IOWA pilots on Sunday, 29 October, from which Ensign Ace John Riggins, A-V(N), USNR, 363608, has yet failed to return, is covered in Part V, para. 1 (c) of the action report. In view of the particularly hazardous nature of this mission, resulting apparently in the loss of Ens. Riggins, but in the ultimate rescue of the two downed aviators for whom the rescue was originated, the Executive Officer is of the opinion that both Lt.(jg) D. S. Geiser, A-V(N), USNR, and Ens. A. J. Riggins, A-V(N), USNR, merit recommendations for special awards. *Per Rigs*

4. The performance on 14 October of the port machine gun batteries and particularly of Sergeant John C. Villante, 383178, USMC, operator of no. 4 40 millimeter director, is considered worthy of special mention. On this occasion only the cool and accurate performance of duty on the part of Villante enabled the machine guns to blast apart a Judy headed for a crash dive on the bridge area. With the plane headed apparently at the director Sergeant Villante picked up and maintained an accurate fire. The plane was knocked down close aboard.

5. No others of the officers or crew are considered to have merited either particular praise or censure.

-1-

Enclosure (A)(1)

18

How near?

22. Number near bomb misses \_\_\_\_\_ Casualties from near misses \_\_\_\_\_

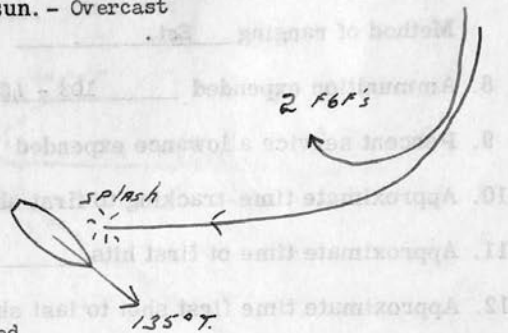
21. Hits on ship \_\_\_\_\_ Was ship strafed? \_\_\_\_\_ Size gun \_\_\_\_\_

**REVISED FORM FOR REPORTING A. A. ACTION BY SURFACE SHIPS**

- Location of ship East of Formosa U. S. S. Iowa
- Time 1516 Date 14 October, 1944
1. Surprise attack (yes or no) No
  2. Method picking plane up (Radar, binoculars, naked eye) Eye  
(If by Radar, state type of set) \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Range plane was picked up (50, 30, 10, less than 5 miles) 3 miles
  4. Number of planes 1 Type of plane (fighter, scout, dive bomber) Judy
  5. Speed and altitude (high and fast, intermediate and fast, low and fast, high and slow, intermediate and slow, low and slow) Low & Fast (Shallow Dive)
  6. Guns firing (size and number) 5 - 40MM; 2 - 20MM
  7. Method of control Mk 51 Director Method of spotting \_\_\_\_\_  
Method of ranging Est. Method of firing Rapid
  8. Ammunition expended 108 - 40MM; 23 - 20MM
  9. Percent service allowance expended - -
  10. Approximate time-tracking to first shot 5 sec.
  11. Approximate time of first hits 5 sec.
  12. Approximate time first shot to last shot 10 sec.
  13. Approximate position angle open fire 25° 2 01505
  14. Approximate position cease fire 5°
  15. Approximate bearing first shot 300° Rel. - 075° T.
  16. Approximate bearing last shot 300° Rel. - 075° T.
  17. Approximate range first shot 1,600 yds.
  18. Approximate range last shot 400 yds.

(over)

- Location of ship \_\_\_\_\_  
East of Formosa \_\_\_\_\_  
U. S. S. \_\_\_\_\_  
TOWA \_\_\_\_\_
- REVISID FORM FOR REPORTING A. W. ACTION BY SURFACE SHIPS
21. Hits on ship 0 Was ship strafed? No Size gun - -
22. Number near bomb misses - - Casualties from near misses 0  
How near? \_\_\_\_\_
23. Planes shot down: Sure 1 Possible - Damaged -
24. By what size guns were planes shot down? 40MM
25. Details of damage to target by gunfire if available Engine & Right Wing  
Burst into flame
26. Performance of ammunition (excellent, good, bad, poor) Excellent
27. Pattern sizes (large, small, excessive) - -
28. What failures in material occurred in this action? None
29. Comment on personnel performances Excellent - hits obtained with first burst
30. Sketch: (a) Indicate direction of attack relative ship's head.  
(b) Show relative position of sun. - Overcast  
(c) Indicate own maneuvers.



Judy was being chased by 2 F6F's which broke off just before ship opened fire. Judy attempted to dive into ship, but 40MM fire hit engine and base of right wing causing plane to fall off on right wing and crash 400 yards on port beam.

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report, Period 6-30 October 1944.

6. At 2106 bogies were again picked up and from then until 0204, 13 October, enemy planes were always in the vicinity of the formation, but no further attacks were made. At 2331 a single enemy plane approached the formation from the west at an altitude of 7,000 feet and at 2332 dropped a series of six flares directly over the center of the formation. The plane was clearly visible in the light of the first flares and is believed to have been a single-engined plane. It turned north after dropping the flares and was fired on by several ships in the western and northwest part of the formation. The whole formation was brilliantly illuminated by these flares which burned for about 1½ minutes, but no attack developed. At 2340 a plane was shot down in flames to the north, presumably by the destroyer picket stationed there.
7. At 0145, 13 October, a bogey which had been orbiting 30 miles to the eastward for several hours, began to close the formation. The Iowa at this time was on course 295, and at 0152 a track had been established on the bogey by two AA directors giving a course of 240, speed 150 knots, altitude 5,000 feet. The destroyers on Iowa's starboard quarter opened fire and the target turned left, passing under the stern at a range of 12,000 yards. Iowa opened fire at 0154½ with ten 5"/38 guns, and checked fire 13 seconds later at a range of 14,000 yards, having expended 28 rounds. The AA directors continued to track the target, and at 0157 reported that two distinct pips were visible, one of which appeared to be astern of the other and losing altitude. C.I.C. reported at 0158 that the bogey had separated into two targets, and at 0200 a plane hit the water and burst into flames bearing 210° at a range of 35,000 yards. Only one bogey remained on the screen, and several minutes later it was lost on a southwesterly course at about 40 miles. It is believed that the plane which burned at 0200 was damaged by the fire of Iowa and other ships in the screen, causing it to lose altitude and crash.
8. In the late afternoon of 13 October, enemy planes were reported in the vicinity, and at 1834 radar contact was made on a low-flying plane 20,000 yards to the northeast. Radar contact was lost at 15,000 yards, but at 1835½ a Betty was sighted on the starboard bow, low on the water and on a southwesterly course at a range of 8,000 yards. All ten guns of the starboard battery opened fire at 1836 and checked fire one minute later, when the range reached 14,000 yards. 117 rounds were expended, the only visible effect being to cause the Betty to turn left to a southerly course and make radical changes of altitude. The initial bursts were astern of the target, but were brought on in deflection by increasing target speed from 220 to 240 knots. Except for one destroyer which fired a short burst of 40MM, no other ship in the disposition fired on this plane which was visible from this ship for only 1½ minutes. For the next two hours, many radar contacts were made on enemy planes in the vicinity of the formation but no attacks developed and no planes approached within gun range.
9. At 1513, 14 October, a report was received from the CAP of an enemy raid of about 15 planes approaching from the east. The weather was squally

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report, Period 6-30 October 1944.

-----

with low clouds, and the task group was in disposition 5-V-5 on a course of 135° T, Iowa being in the van of the screen. At 1515½, three enemy planes came out of a rain squall on the port bow of the formation, each being chased by two Hellcats. One turned east and was shot down by the fighters. Another crossed ahead of the formation and was shot down in flames by fighters south of the formation. The third plane (a Judy) headed directly for the Iowa's port beam and went into a shallow dive towards the ship. As the friendly fighters pulled up sharply and turned west, five 40MM quads and two 20MM guns opened fire at 1516 at a range of about 1,000 yards. All tracers appeared to hit squarely in the engine and right wing of the plane which burst into flames, fell off on the right wing and crashed 300 yards on the port beam, sinking immediately. The plane was identified as a Judy, and was painted light brown with bright red Jap markings on the wings.

10. At about 1710, a raid developed on Task Group 38.3 which was 10 miles away to the southeast. At 1714 one enemy plane, a Jill, was observed retiring north from T.G. 38.3, still carrying its torpedo. At 1715 fire was opened on this plane with ten guns of the starboard battery at a range of 12,000 yards. The plane crossed the bow at 11,000 yards and fire was continued with eight guns of the starboard battery until 1718 when the plane had reached a range of 15,000 yards. 212 rounds were expended, the plane making the customary violent evasive maneuvers, and changing altitude between about 15 feet and several hundred. The Jill was lost to view in a rain cloud, but was still carrying its torpedo when last seen.

11. There was no further action with the enemy during this period.

C. 1. During the period from 16 - 20 October, the Iowa operated with Task Group 38.2 in the areas east of Luzon, covering the retirement of the Canberra and Houston. There were several radar contacts with enemy aircraft during this time, but no action involving this ship took place.

D. 1. From 21 - 23 October, Task Group 38.2 operated east of Samar, sending air strikes and fighter sweeps against airfields in the Visayas, and on 23 October, the Iowa fueled.

E. 1. At 0150 on 24 October, an enemy snoopers approached within 15 miles of the ship, but was fired on by destroyer pickets and turned away.

2. At 0920, 24 October, several bogies were reported to be within 20 miles of the formation, and shortly thereafter the Combat Air Patrol reported shooting down a Judy. At 0947, while steaming at 15 knots on course 070 in formation 5-V-5, a bomb struck the water about 200 yards on the port quarter of the Independence, which was 5,000 yards, 10 degrees on Iowa's port bow. About 15 seconds later a single enemy plane was sighted about 5,000 yards on the port

BB61/A12-1  
Serial ( 0118 )

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: War Diary - October 1944.

17 NOV 1944

day but none attacked this Task Group until late afternoon when a total of six raids, some of which were estimated to consist of 15 planes, were contacted by radar and closed to attack this Task Force at very low altitude. Only one of these came within gun range of Task Group 38.2 and was fired on by the IOWA and other ships of the group without success, due to an extreme range of 10,000 yards. IOWA fired 202 rounds 5" ammunition. The IOWA stood by for an attack until 2030, at which time Condition of readiness III was set. The enemy evidently attacked the other Task Groups and retired. During the rest of the night enemy planes were frequently contacted by radar but none approached close enough to warrant calling all hands to General Quarters.

The Task Groups did not retire to the southeast as scheduled but cruised in an area between 75 and 125 miles from Formosa affording protection to a crippled ship (CANBERRA) and her escorts.

<u>Positions</u>	<u>0800</u>	<u>1200</u>	<u>2000</u>
<u>Latitude</u>	22-57. N	22-57.5 N	22-58. N
<u>Longitude</u>	122-16. E	122-15. E	122-59. E

Saturday, 14 October:

At 0800 Task Group 38.2 was 85 miles west of Formosa and 85 miles southwest of Iriomota Jima proceeding slowly northeast and affording protection to the crippled group by making a fighter strike against Formosa in the morning. At noon Task Groups 38.1, 38.2 and 38.3 retired to the southeast toward a fueling rendezvous. Task Group 38.2 continued in cruising disposition "5-V-5" in anticipation of further air attacks.

No enemy planes were contacted until mid afternoon when a raid was picked up at 35 miles to the east closing Task Group 38.2 at a very low altitude. IOWA went to General Quarters. This raid closed rapidly and there is some doubt as to whether they were making an attack or were being chased over the Task Group by our fighters on their tails. When they arrived over the formation they began dropping in the water as our fighters shot them down. One was observed approaching our port beam with two fighters in hot pursuit and firing. The IOWA opened fire at 1000 yards range with 40 MM whereat the fighters pulled away and the enemy (Judy) crashed 300 yards abeam. This raid consisted of about eleven fighters and nine were seen to crash in the vicinity of the formation. IOWA fired 108 rounds 40 MM and 28 rounds 20 MM.

There were two other raids, at 1600 and at 1730, tracked by radar but these did not approach Task Group 38.2 and were not observed visually.