[redacted]

Intelligence

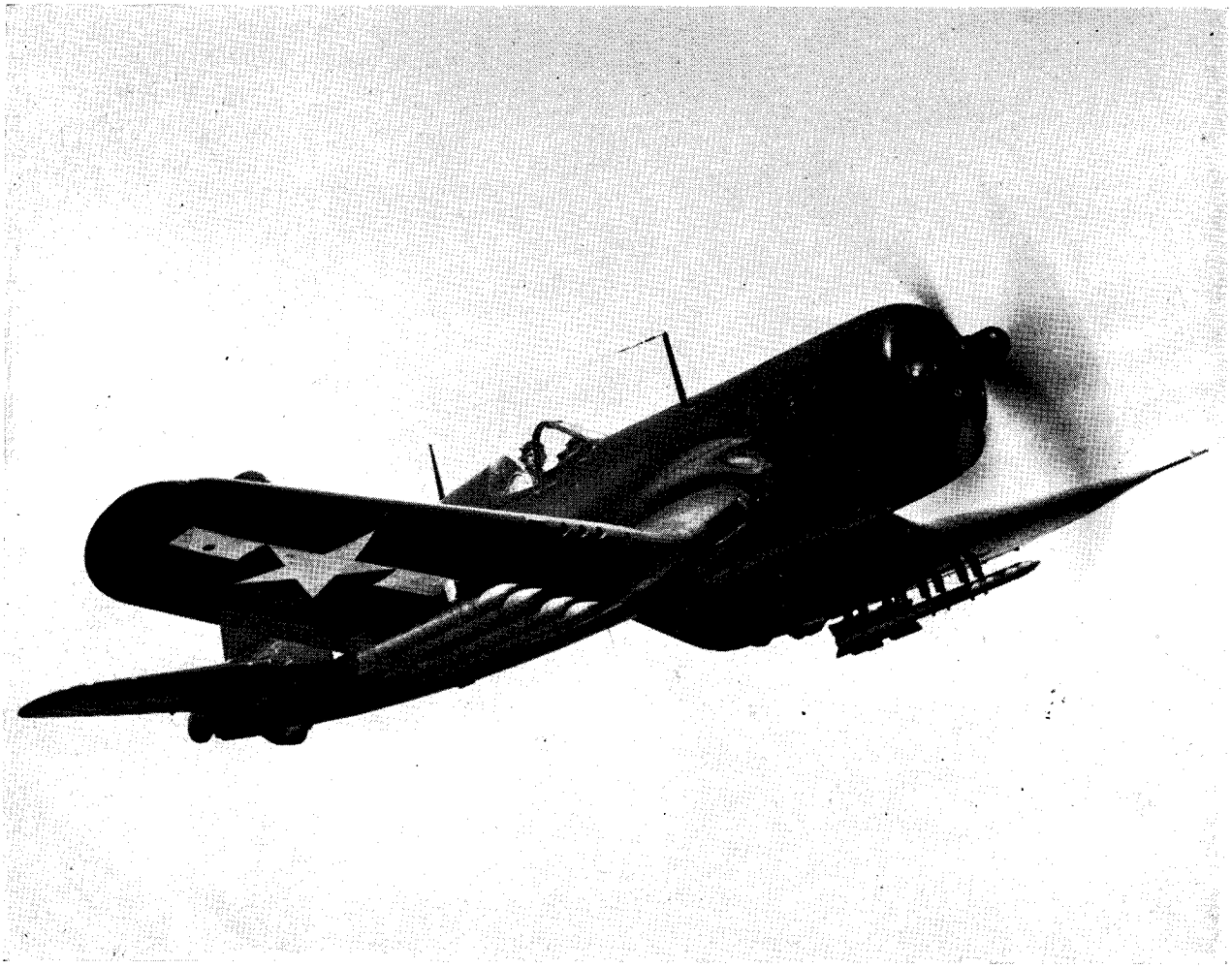
YAK vs. CORSAIR

IT WAS ALL OVER in 10 minutes. Two heavily loaded F4U-4's proved more than a match for four Russian made Yak's—a name made famous in World War II.

Things started popping when an early morning reconnaissance patrol from the escort carrier *Bataan* were abruptly introduced to the much-touted Red jobs—near Choppeki Point off the west coast of Korea.

Of the four Marine *Corsairs* launched in the group, two had been sent to escort a helicopter ordered to pick up a *Corsair* pilot from another flight who had bailed out because of engine trouble.

The two remaining *Corsairs* continued toward their designated targets to the northeast. The flight climbed for altitude over Hojang-do in open formation with the flight leader about 500 yards at 7 o'clock from his wingman. It was just a routine combat patrol until—



Corsair, *which saw much honorable service in World War II, is most active propeller driven fighter still seeing active combat service in this era of the turbojet. Corsair-Marine pilot team is death of many Reds*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Famed Red Yak *about which we learned little even when it was being used against a common enemy has been prominent in Korean skies. It has proved no match for U. S. N. counterpart when it ventures across Yalu*

The flight leader first spotted the enemy aircraft when the first two *Yaks,* either YAK–3's or YAK–9's, opened fire, sending a bullet through his *Corsair* aft of the cockpit. The *Corsairs* were at about 2,000 feet when taken under attack by the *Yaks,* which came barreling in an altitude of 5,000 to the northwest.

Flying in a loose right echelon the four enemy fighters made a right and then a left turn, at approximately 10 o'clock, toward the *Corsairs* and made a run on the flight leader. Apparently, the Reds had not yet spotted the second *Corsair.*

Scratch Three.—The second F4U pulled in behind the attacking *Yaks* and followed their No. 3 man, with their No. 4 plane at 7 o'clock from him. Following this the second *Corsair* broke away from behind the No. 3 man and dove to the left and below the No. 4 man who was firing at him. He then made a climbing 360° turn and opened fire on two of the enemy aircraft with unobserved results. Tailing in at 4 o'clock on another enemy, the Marine flier opened fire, hitting the Red's tail, fuselage, and wing. His hits caused the starboard wing of the *Yak* to break off and the plane crashed and went up in a burst of flames.

Meanwhile, the *Corsair* flight leader, upon being hit, did a "Split S" to pick up speed and made a climbing turn to the left. Two enemy aircraft made firing runs from astern, but overshot and turned wide while he pulled in behind and returned fire on the two *Yaks* with unobserved results. While the flight leader was in a climbing left turn one enemy aircraft crossed in front of him from right to left. At that instant a *Yak* was seen by the flight leader to crash into the ground and burn. This was his wingman's kill. Meanwhile the *Yak* crossing the flight leader's nose was taken under fire and sent spinning into the ground smoking. This second enemy aircraft crashed and burned about one-half mile west of the spot where the first *Yak* was burning.

The flight leader turned to the left and headed eastward when he observed three aircraft flying ahead of him also heading east. The wingman was pursuing one enemy aircraft, with the second enemy aircraft

[redacted]

[redacted]

following to the left and turning right on his tail. The flight leader called his wingman and told him to pull up as the *Yak* was on his tail.

The wingman turned hard to the left and dropped his *Corsair* under and astern opening fire on the *Yak* as it overran him. His fire started the enemy plane smoking out of both sides of the cockpit from around the wing roots.

The flight leader continued tailing the enemy lead plane and his opening fire started this aircraft smoking. Attempting to evade the fire, the *Yak* pilot turned to the south, and then to the west but the pursing fire caused the enemy plane to puff smoke. The Red did a "Split S" and headed west. Following through, the *Corsair* continued to tail in on him firing. The enemy plane began smoking from both wings and the fuselage while fragments of the aircraft kept falling off. Papers were seen coming from the cockpit. Following this the pilot jettisoned his hood and then bailed out. A few seconds later the *Yak* plunged into the water. The pilot's parachute opened and he descended into the water, apparently unhurt.

The two *Corsairs* then joined up and climbed to 6,000 feet, orbiting over the downed enemy pilot's location. The helicopter previously ordered to pick up the ditched *Corsair* pilot, was asked also to pick up the enemy pilot. The section orbited this area for about 10 minutes and then headed south toward Changyon.

The fourth enemy aircraft was last seen climbing east into the sun, smoking from both wingroots.

A rough engine in the wingman's *Corsair* and smoke in the cockpit of the flight leader's aircraft forced the flight to return to the *Bataan*. The flight landed without mishap at 0820.

Poorly Executed.—All the aerial action took place between 2,000 and 3,000 feet. This unexpected attack found both of the F4U's carrying a belly tank and a 500-pound bomb, or a napalm tank, which were not jettisoned until the combat was nearly over. Each aircraft, also was carrying a wing load of six HVAR rockets and two 100-pound bombs which were not jettisoned until the flight headed for the ship.

The enemy aircraft were identified as either YAK–3 or YAK–9 fighters. These low-wing Soviet built fighters and their versions are powered by in-line engines ranging from 1,085 to 1,580 horsepower. Maximum speed for the *Yak* prop fighter is 360 knots at 15,000 feet. Armament consists of one 20-mm. gun, hub-mounted and two 12.7-mm. guns in the nose.

The markings on the aircraft were white circles outlined in red with a red star in the center. These markings were located on the fuselage aft and below the cockpit, and on the underside of left wing. The aircraft were painted in camouflage that ran from silver to light green.

It was the opinion of the two *Corsair* pilots that the attack by the enemy, with both numerical superiority and altitude advantage, was very poorly executed. The Reds also had an opportunity to make the attack out of the sun, but didn't. Instead they made it 90° to the sun. Furthermore, the fact that all four enemy aircraft made the initial attack on the two *Corsairs* cast doubt on the enemy tactical wisdom.

The air discipline of the enemy pilots was good as they effectively kept together, providing mutual support. The Reds pressed home their attack with determination and did not attempt to leave the area until they were smoking from hits. Their marksmanship, however, was poor on deflection shooting.

The F4U–4, even when heavily loaded, apparently is more maneuverable than the YAK–3 or YAK–9 at speeds between 140 and 160 knots.

Moreover, the *Yak* fighters flown by the Communist pilots were considered inferior in speed and rate of climb to the F4U–4. Maximum speed used by the *Yak's* was about 200 to 250 knots. Most maneuvering after the first pass was below 200 knots. Since no effective evasive action was taken by the *Yak* pilots it is believed they lacked training or experience.

SOVIET TYPE 28 FIGHTER

THE DESIGNATION "Type 28" has been assigned to a new single engine Soviet jet fighter. The new plane bears a noticeable resemblance to the Russian Type 16. The latter is itself a modification of the YAK–15 which is distinguished mainly by the stepped effect of its fuselage profile, due to the location of the ventral jet exhaust. Type 16 retained most of the characteristics of the earlier Yakovlev design, but differs principally in a reshaped tail and the addition of a semiretractable nose wheel.

[redacted]