

# Jap Busters Dumped All Over Kiska in Raid by 72 Planes

## ONE-TON BOMBS ARE DROPPED FOR FIRST TIME

Nips Kept Jumping to Cover for Over Nine Hours.

(By EUGENE BURNS.)

An Advanced Alaska Base, March 23.—(A. P.)—United States army airmen dropped "Jap busters" for the first time March 15 in the heaviest aerial smash of the war against Japanese-held Kiska island.

The big one-ton bombs made their Aleutian debut as part of forty-seven tons of explosives rained on the enemy island base in day-long operations. Eleventh air force headquarters reported the exact figure was 94,540 pounds, scattered variously by light and heavy bombers and even bomb-carrying fighter planes.

The heaviest previous bomb total reported for a single day's operations was thirty tons.

### JAPS KEPT DUCKING FOR NINE HOURS.

The punishing raid March 15 kept the invader ducking intermittently for cover during nine hours and one minute. Six groups of raiders swept over Kiska thru a day that must have seemed longer to those aground in the coldest and foggiest of the long Aleutian winter. The six raids set a new record for the course.

The Kiska Japanese got a glimpse—if any of them kept their heads out of their battered shelters—of at least seventy-two United States planes. That was more than they ever had seen over Kiska in one day.

Only one flyer, a fighter pilot, was lost in the Americans' big show. He died in a forced landing on the water.

Demolition bombs, fragmentation bombs and incendiaries rained down on the enemy emplacements. At times the anti-aircraft fire was heavy—but its damage was slight.

Only three Japanese Zero fighter planes were seen in the air all day, and they weren't looking for a fight. They limited their operations to challenging an observation patrol plane sent out to make a pre-raid check on the weather.

The weather plane reported that with "evasive action and machine gun fire, we drove off the enemy fighters." One group of four Lightning fighter planes flew to Kiska just to find those three Zeros. It was a fruitless search.

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### TWENTY-FOUR PLANES ATTACK IN ONE WAVE.

Four-motored Liberators, Mitchell medium bombers and the swift Lightnings participated in the raiding waves. Lightnings opened the attack after the weather plane's morning report—and beat the latter to Kiska. The second sweep was by twenty-four planes, including fighter escort. The day's finale saw twenty planes over Kiska.

One of them carried a camera. What it caught was reward enough to the grinning airmen for their busy day.

On March 18 .50 caliber machine guns and 20-millimeter aerial cannon poured a withering fire into Japanese workers building a landing strip for fighter planes on Kiska island.

This strafing by two groups of Lightning pilots highlighted a day in which six heavy Liberator bombers and six medium Mitchell bombers dropped hundreds of heavy bombs on the enemy-occupied island.

### ALREADY COMPLETED RUNWAY BLASTED.

The twelve bombers drew little anti-aircraft fire but the Lightnings attacking the nearly completed runway had everything in the book thrown up at them, including coastal defense gunfire. There was no attempt at air interception by Japanese float planes known to be based on Kiska.

Two Lightnings were damaged. The landing gear on one of the planes was smashed and the pilot made a forced belly landing at 100 miles an hour.

The fighter strip on which the Japanese were working—even during the attack—has been built thru persistent day and night effort. The workmen painstakingly remove filler from the mountains and transport it by handcart along narrow gauge rails.

The Eleventh air force command has pointed out that the fighter strip means the enemy is prepared to defend its captured foothold in the outer Aleutians come what may, and that even offensive action against the American mainland, may be contemplated.

## Two Sunday Raids Made on Kiska

Washington, March 23.—(A. P.)—The navy reported Tuesday that army bombers raided the Japanese base at Kiska in the Aleutians twice Sunday starting a large fire.

Communique No. 321 said:

"North Pacific:

"1—On March 21 two groups of army Liberator heavy bombers (Consolidated B-24) and Mitchell medium bombers (North American B-25) with fighter escort, attacked Japanese positions at Kiska. Except for one large fire, results were not observed."

The Sunday raids raised to twenty-one the total number of American air attacks on Kiska so far reported this month.