

INTERVIEW OF

Lieutenant Colonel Ira L. KIMES, USMC,  
Commanding Second Marine Aircraft Wing, Midway,  
during the Battle of MIDWAY,  
in the

Bureau of Aeronautics  
August 31, 1942.

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On the morning of June 4th, at five minutes to six, we got our first information on the approach of enemy aircraft to attack Midway Island. It was from two sources. A Patrol Plane sighted a formation of enemy aircraft coming in, and at the same time they appeared on the Radar Screen. Our radar reading put them 90 miles away and according to our calibration chart they were at eleven or twelve thousand feet.

The information was passed to our planes and the fighters took off immediately. Previous to this time, we had had the usual morning patrol of four fighters in the air and a submarine patrol of scout bombers. The word was passed to them by radio.

The fighter squadron, guided by fighter director, climbed to 14,000 feet and headed in the direction of the approaching enemy formation. Forty miles out in that belt they intercepted the Japanese. We began to get "Tally-Ho's" over the radio as they made contact. After that we heard little from them until it was time to come back. They were pretty busy out there.

When they sighted the Japanese planes they found they had their fighters underneath their bombers, thinking probably they would surprise us at Midway and that their fighters would meet ours as they came up to attack. This gave our people one pretty free pass at their bombers. Their score was quite good. After that the Zeros began to come through and they were busy with them as they tried to get more shots at the bombers.

The plan for our dive bombers, in case of an attack, was to have them proceed to a rendezvous point twenty miles off the island, east or west, depending on which direction the raid came from. We sent them to the east as the raid was from the west. Prior to their departure we were able to give them the direction, bearing, course and speed of the enemy carriers. We weren't positive that the news got to all hands so we repeated it over the radio.