The Swede

Setting

Date: 8 May 1942 1000 hours
Location: The Coral Sea
History: May 7th, 1941 witnesses the first naval battle fought exclusively with aircraft carrier in history. The Battle of the Coral Sea was a Japanese tactical victory but a strategic defeat. During the fight the American flyers sunk the Japanese Light Carrier Shoho. Stanley ‘Swede’ Vejtasa leading a flight of SBDs personally planted a bomb on the deck of the Shoho contributing to its demise. The following day Vejtasa was placed on anti-torpedo plane patrol and was leading his flight when suddenly they were jumped by a group of Zeros. Vejtasa managed to escape the first attack but when he looked for his wingmen he realized he was alone…except for three angry Zeros.

Conditions: Max/Auto Visibility: 30/15; Sun: Edge 4
CAB: SURFACE LOW.
Clouds: Table Clouds: none; Cloud Border: none
Japanese Orders: Destroy the SBD.
Allied Orders: Destroy or drive off all three Zeros.
Game Length: Game ends when the last Zero is destroyed or driven off the board or the SBD is destroyed.

Scenario Rules:

1. The SBD-3 is NOT loaded and is played as a fighter; treat its “BFF” weapons as “FF”. It has RT: 2xLMG vice 1xLMG.
2. The Zeros pilots at this point in the war should all be skilled +1 but due to the strain of the previous days fighting they were fatigued and thus are rated as green +0.
3. The RT LMG can NOT fire on any turn that the SBD executes an extreme turn or a special maneuver.

Japanese Navy

Elements of Zuikaku Airgroup
3x Mitsubishi A6M2 Zeros with green (+0) aircrew
(enter turn one individually anywhere on board edges 1,2,3 or 5 at any speed and TAL. Randomly determine from which board edge each Zero enters)

Variable Rules:

1-3 “A good night’s sleep.”
One green (+0) pilot is changed to skilled (+1) pilot.

4-6 “Stick together!”
All of the Zeros must enter from the same board edge.

7-10 None

Author’s Note: This makes an excellent first Check Your 6! scenario. Special thanks to Mark “Wildcat” Fastoso for writing it.

United States Navy

Stanley “Swede” Vejtasa and his Tail Gunner
1x SBD-3 Dauntless w/ ace (+3) aircrew
(set up first anywhere in board area C at any speed and TAL)

Variable Rules:

1-4 “Light Trigger Finger”
Vejtasa will never run out of ammo.

5-8 “Eagle Eye”
Vejtasa may claim a ‘tailing’ advantage out to five hexes.

9-10 Use both variable rules above

Aftermath

Vejtasa yelled to his radio man: “Son, we’re in for a scrap. Keep your head and conserve your ammunition…. I’ll take care of the rest.” He knew he could not outrun them so he would have to defeat them. Almost immediately the Zeros dove in with their 20mm cannons blazing. Turning into every attack, Vejtasa was able to increase the angle of deflection for the enemy fighters and maneuver into position to use his own forward-firing .50 caliber guns. Two Zeros went down when he tore into their lightly armed airframes and they burst into flames. The last Zero began to make a head on pass and Vejtasa thought the attacker must surely be out of cannon ammo…but he wasn’t and tracers began to fly by his windscreen. Vejtasa jerked on the stick and hit the rudder turning his plane on its side in an attempt to avoid the cannon fire. As the planes where about to collide Vejtasa pulled a little harder and he heard a loud crash. Amazingly, his wing had cut right through the Zero causing it to crash. His rugged SBD suffered no damage and returned to the USS Yorktown with three kills! Soon after he was recruited into a fighter squadron and became an ace of the Pacific War.