



April 18, 1942

AMERICA STRIKES BACK

A LOOK AT THE DOOLITTLE RAID

In the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Lt. Col. James H. Doolittle, U.S. Army Air Forces, and Vice Adm. William F. Halsey, Jr., U.S. Navy, led a joint Army-Navy bombing operation on the Japanese mainland aimed to inflict both material and psychological damage upon the enemy.



THE PLANES

The U.S. Army Air Forces provided 16 B-25 Mitchell medium bombers. Each plane held a crew of five men. These bombers, which had never been used in combat before, had the range and the wingspan that would allow for carrier takeoff. Lt. Col. Doolittle flew the first B-25 to launch in this raid,



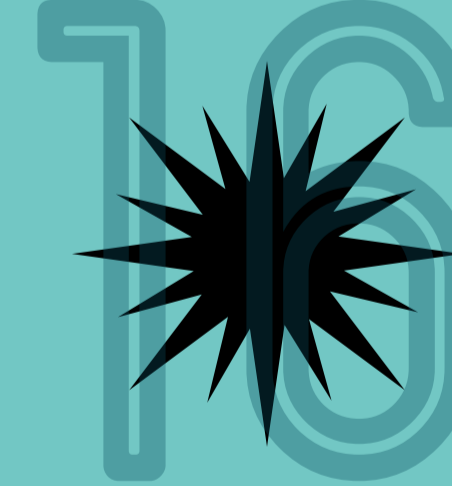
THE SHIPS

The U.S. Navy provided two aircraft carriers: USS Hornet (CV 8), commanded by Captain Marc A. Mitscher, from which the B-25s would launch and USS Enterprise (CV 6) which provided support. Vice Adm. Halsey commanded the task force in this plan.



THE HITS

After being spotted by enemy vessels and having to launch at approximately 650 miles from Japan vice 400 miles as originally planned, the B-25s still managed to hit at least five major areas: Tokyo, Yokosuka, Yokohama, Kobe, and Nagoya.



THE CRASH SITES

Taking off 250 miles sooner than planned had the planes nearly empty on fuel as they headed toward the eastern coast of China. Of the 16 planes, 15 either crash-landed or the crew bailed out. Only one plane landed – in the USSR – where the crew was held as prisoners with liberal privileges. Seven Doolittle Raiders were killed in the mission.