



*The Hornet under attack on 26 October, with smoke from one of the bomb hits visible just forward of the island. A Val is diving on the carrier, while a Kate escapes horizontally after launching its torpedo.*

by fifteen dive-bombers and twenty torpedo bombers which appears reasonably accurate.

At 0909 the *Hornet's* 5-inch batteries commenced firing at the dive-bombers from a range of 10,000 yards. The carrier had an armament of eight 5-inch guns, but as these were mounted on either side of the ship initially only half could engage the incoming Vals.

Only two minutes later the Vals pushed over in their dives, which were relatively shallow approaches as compared to the steep angles used by the SBDs. The Vals were now engaged by the *Hornet's* five quadruple 1.1-inch guns and 32 x 20mm Oerlikon cannons. Although this gunfire was considerable, it was mainly effective at close range when the Vals had already released their bombs. Meanwhile the *Hornet* began evasive manoeuvres while on a general northerly course.

One of the early attackers scored a direct hit with a 250-kilogram semi-armour piercing bomb amidships in the centre of the flight deck. It penetrated three decks before exploding inside the carrier. By luck or good planning, the subsequent attacks came in quick succession from different directions, and a second hit occurred when a 250-kilogram "land" (general purpose) bomb hit near the aft starboard edge of the flight deck, wiping out a nearby anti-aircraft gun position. This was followed by a third not far from the second hit. Another 250-kilogram semi-armour piercing bomb, this passed through four deck levels before exploding.