



**F**LYING LOW beneath broken clouds, Torpedo Squadron Eight went after the Japs. They lost contact with the other squadrons off the **HORNET** during the first hour, so when they finally topped the horizon and spotted the Jap warships moving away from Midway, they were completely alone.

Breaking radio silence, they notified the **HORNET** of the position and strength of the enemy, then dropped to torpedo-attack level. Skipper Waldron wiggled his wings, opened the throttle, and headed straight for the target, the squadron screaming after him.

The sky swarmed with Zeros. Torpedo Eight had neither fighter cover nor accompanying dive-bombers to divert some of the concentrated defensive fire from the Jap warships. The squadron hit the curtain of fire like a pine plank heading into a

buzz saw. Anti-aircraft bursts were searing faces and tearing off chunks of fuselage from the old planes but the Jap carriers were dead ahead, crowded with planes rearming and refueling. Torpedo Eight had a mission and nothing was going to stop them!

The odds were heartbreaking. Plane after plane of the gallant squadron plummeted into the sea; yet the few who were left kept boring in, dropping their torpedoes at point blank range almost under the shadows of the carriers. In this way they made certain for the task force and for the Navy that the Japs' air power was crippled from the start.

One last plane dropped its torpedo, zoomed over the carrier, then disappeared into the sea. Forty minutes later, dive-bombers from the **HORNET** arrived and pounded the confused