



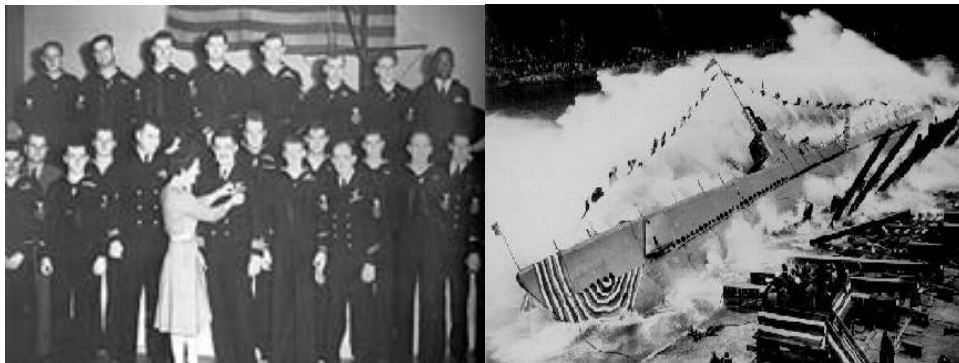
Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

USS ROBALO (SS 273)

July 26, 1944 - 81 Men Lost

ROBALO under Cmdr. M.M. Kimmel, departed Fremantle on June 22, 1944 to conduct her third war patrol in the South China Sea in the vicinity of the Natuna Islands. After traversing Makassar and Balabac Straits, she was to arrive on station about July 6th and stay there until dark on August 2, 1944.

On July 2nd a contact report stated ROBALO had sighted a Fuso-class battle ship with air cover and two destroyers for escort, just east of Borneo. No other messages were received from ROBALO and when she did not return from patrol, she was reported as presumed lost.



The following information was received via the Philippine guerrillas and an U.S. Navy enlisted man who was a prisoner of war at Puerto Princesa Prison Camp, Palawan, P.I. On August 2, 1944, a note dropped from the window of the prison cell in which survivors from ROBALO were held was picked up by an American soldier in a work detail and given to H.D. Hough, Y2c, USN, another prisoner. On 4 August, Hough contacted Mrs. Trinidad Mendosa, wife of guerrilla leader Dr. Mendosa, who furnished further information on the survivors. From these sources, he put together the following facts.

ROBALO was sunk July 26, 1944, two miles off the western coast of Palawan Island as a result of an explosion of her after battery. Four men swam ashore, an officer and three enlisted men: Samuel L. Tucker, Ens.; Floyd G. Laughlin,

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QM1c; Wallace K. Martin, SM3c, and Mason C. Poston, EM2c. They made their way through the jungles to a small barrio northwest of the Puerto Princesa camp. They were captured there by Japanese Military Police, and confined in the jail. They were held for guerrilla activities rather than as prisoners of war, it is said. On August 15, 1944, a Japanese destroyer evacuated them, and nothing further is known of their destination or whereabouts. The Japanese may have executed them or the destroyer may have been sunk. At any rate, they were never recovered and their note stated that there were no other survivors.

It is doubted that a battery explosion could be sufficiently violent to cause the sinking of the ship; more likely ROBALO struck an enemy mine.

In her first patrol, in the area west of the Philippines, ROBALO damaged a large enemy freighter. Her second patrol was in the South China Sea near Indo-China where she sank a 7,500-ton tanker.

Sailors Lost On USS ROBALO (SS-273) 7-26-1944

Ackley, J. W. S1
Bailey, J. B. TM2
Bell, R. W. SM1
Boehles, J. P. TM1
Breedon, C. E. EM3
Brereton, W. A. MOMM1
Brokman, G. S1
Cagle, C. "L", Jr. MOMM1
Carter, H. E. LCDR
Changary, S. J. MOMM3
Clark, E. O. S1
Clifford, M. "D" "R" S1
Cooperman, H. M. RT2
Cotterman, S. N. PHM1
Cress, D. C. RM3
Dickerson, D. E. CMOMM
Dittman, C. L. TM2
Downey, W. L. MOMM2
Dvoracek, J. L., Jr. F1
Ervin, L. F. MOMM1
Fell, C. W. LCDR
Fink, D. E. RM3
Flanagan, A. J. GM3
Fondon, G. M. F1
Fricke, J. J. SC2
Gerdes, H. J., Jr. ENS
Gleaton, E., Jr. CK2

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Graham, K. E. EM1
Hamilton, H. L., Jr. TM3
Hart, J. F., Jr. TM3
Hood, H. T. TM3
Jurst, J. A. MOMM2
Ivey, H. B. RT1
Jackson, N. M. TM2
Jambor, W. E. GM1
Johnson, E. H. MOMM1
Johnson, N. Y. SC1
Kesterson, W. G. MOMM2
Kimmel, M. M. LCDR
Konen, A. C. S2
Laughlin, F. G. QM1
Leahey, R. J. SC3
Lefebvre, J. W. CEMA
Levy, D. J. MOMM3
Lovell, D. W. EM1
Lutman, J. A. ENS
McKnight, H. F., Jr. LTJG
Martin, R. E. EM2
Martin, W. K. SM3
Marx, M. J. EM2
Matthews, W. G. Y1
Nichols, H.E. F1
Niclas, J. R. MOMM2
O'Brien, J. J. MOMM2
O'Rourke, E. P. F1
Paw, E. J. FC2
Phelps, B. B. TM1
Poston, M. C. TM1
Priddis, J. F. CEM
Proseus, R. J. LT
Ramsier, H. L. MOMM1
Root, C. A. MOMM1
Russell, S. J. F2
Smith, S. W. GM3
Sonemann, W. F. RM3
Speener, R. W. S1
Spencer, S. E. CTMA
Taylor, H. P. MOMM1
Tucker, S. L. ENS
Usealman, H. E. S2
VanDeurzen, J. R. MOMM3
Varney, E. G. S1
Virga, C. R. F1

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Vogel, F. P. TM3
Wilkerson, D. f. MOMM2
Williams, D. L. STM1
Wilson, F. J. CMOMM
Winnan, R. O. EM3
Wlodarczyk, S. J. S1
Wood, C. E., Jr. QM3
Zea, C. K. TM3