



*Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet*

## *USS S-44 (SS 155)*

### *October 7, 1943 - 55 Men Lost*

On 26 September 1943, S-44 (Lt. Cmdr. F.E. Brown) departed Attu to begin her fifth war patrol in the Kuriles. She was not heard from again by the shore bases, but the story given here is taken from statements made by her two surviving crewmen, E.A. Duva, CTM, and W.F. Whitmore, RM3c. One day out of Attu, a plane which dropped several depth charges forced S-44 down. Then nothing was seen until 2030 on the night of 7 October, when radar contact was made on what was thought to be a small merchant ship. S-44 went in very close on the surface and started firing her deck gun, and immediately the destroyer they had underrated opened up with all guns.

The Captain ordered, "Taker her down!" The diving alarm was sounded, but the ship did not submerge, for reasons not made clear in the statements of the survivors. Meanwhile, the destroyer had scored a hit below the water line in the control room, one in the conning tower, and one in the forward battery. The order was given to abandon ship, and a pillowcase was waved from the forward room hatch, in the hope that the enemy would cease firing, but they did not. The destroyer scored several more hits.



About eight men got off the ship and into the water before she sank, but only two were picked up by the destroyer. They were taken to the Island of Paramushiru for several days, and then to the Naval Interrogation Camp at Ofuna for a year. Finally, they were forced to work in the copper mines of Ashio until released by Allied forces at the close of the war.

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During her first four patrols, all conducted in the Solomon Islands area, S-44 sank three ships and damaged a fourth. Her first patrol was conducted off the east coast of New Britain, and on 12 May 1942 she sank a small freighter. While covering the area west and south of Florida Island on her second patrol, S-44 sank the 1,051-ton converted gunboat KEIJO MARU on 21 June 1942. Her greatest satisfaction and important contribution to the Allied war cause came during her third war patrol, conducted on New Hanover. On 10 August 1942, S-44 hit the heavy cruiser KAKO with four torpedoes and sank her. This sinking was particularly opportune as KAKO was one of the four Japanese heavy cruisers of Cruiser Division Six, who at the very time were returning from the first battle of Savo Island. The night before in that battle they had sunk four Allied heavy cruisers without losing of themselves or suffering more than moderate damage. On her fourth patrol, off New Georgia, S-44 damaged a destroyer type vessel.

### *Sailors Lost On USS S-44 (SS-155) 10-7-1943*

Beck, B. M. S1  
Biller, T. R. S1  
Brown, F. E. LCDR  
Butters, L. E. CCSA  
Calvert, C. F. MOMM2  
Carrier, P. A. EM3  
Cleverdon, T. CPHMA  
Cooper, T. O. S2  
Cutright, P. P. MOMM1  
Dillow, w. CMOMM  
Ellis, W. H. RM3  
Ehrt, W. E. S1  
Erico, D. B. CHBOSN  
Fees, R. R. MOMM1  
Ferrell, E. D. Y2  
Gander, D. E. MM3  
George, F. EM3  
Giles, F., Jr. MM3  
Glenn, C. CK2  
Gillen, F. E., Jr. S2  
Godfrey, E. W. MOMM2  
Goodin, T. L. F2  
Green, L. J. F2  
Harasimowicz, A. CEM  
Howard, H. J. MOMM2  
Hugyo, N. A. MOMM1  
Jaworski, P. J. GM2  
Johnston, C. N. MOMM2  
Klink, L. N. MOMM2

## USS S-44 (SS 155)

Miller, A. L. CMOMMA  
Mitchell, H. M. STM2  
Morris, W. I., Sr. TM3  
Moss, C. E. GM1  
Nash, B. M. LTJG  
Parr, T. S., Jr. SM2  
Queen, B. M. SC2  
Queen, F. L. LTJG  
Raugh, E. M. EM3  
Rodgers, R. G. MOMM2  
Rodin, L. J. S2  
Rosenberg, H. RM3  
Rubits, J. V. MOMM2  
Sloan, J. H., Jr. MM3  
Smith, A. E. TM3  
Smith, C. W. EM1  
Smith, G. F. CSMA  
Stephens, J. R. RM1  
Stephenson, J. T., Jr. LT  
Stromsoe, H. A. CTM  
Thompson, D. R. MOMM2  
Turner, F. A., Jr. QM3  
Velebny, J. A. TM1  
Warburton, R. L. S1  
Watson, F. L. MOMM2  
Wester, G. S. S1  
Wood, J. C. F1

### *Survivors*

Duva, E. A. CTM  
Whitmore, W. F. RM3