

NAVY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
DIVISION OF NAVAL HISTORY (OP-09B9)
SHIPS' HISTORIES SECTION

HISTORY OF SHIPS NAMED JACK

USS JACK (SS(N)-605) is the second ship of the fleet to bear the name of a fish known scientifically as Caranx hippos (pronounced: Kai-anks hip-os). She is named in commemoration of fleet submarine JACK (SS-259) who was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation and seven battle stars for outstanding service in the Pacific during World War II.

The Jack of commercial importance as a food fish, is abundant along both coasts of North America from Chesapeake Bay and the Gulf of California southward to the Rio Plata. It reaches a length of about two feet with a maximum weight of about twenty pounds. The breast of the JACK is naked except for a small triangular patch of scales immediately in front of the pelvic fins and it has several canine shaped teeth on the anterior part of the lower jaw. Other distinguishing characteristics are its color which is bluish green or greenish bronze above the light silvery, sometimes with yellow blotches, on the lower parts.

The first JACK (SS-259) was built by the Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut. Her keel was laid 2 February 1942 and she was launched 16 October 1942, under the sponsorship of Mrs. Frances Seely, Navy Gold Star Mother and employee of the Electric Boat Company. The fleet submarine was placed in commission at New London, Connecticut on 6 January 1943, Commander Thomas M. Dykers, USN, in command.

JACK (SS-259) had a length overall of 311 feet, 9 inches; extreme beam of 27 feet, 3 inches; standard displacement of 1526 tons; mean draft of 15 feet, 3 inches; submerged displacement of 2424 tons; designed depth of 300 feet; designed surface speed of 20.25 knots; designed submerged speed of 8.75 knots; and a designed complement of 6 officers and 54 men. Her original armament was ten 21-inch torpedo tubes; one 3-inch .50 caliber gun; two .50 caliber machine guns and two .30 caliber machine guns. She was designed to carry twenty-four torpedoes.

After shakedown training along the New England coast, JACK departed the submarine base at New London on 26 April 1943 for service in the Pacific. Steaming by way of the Panama Canal, she reached her base of Pearl Harbor on 21 May. She left that port on 5 June 1943 for her first war patrol that took her off the coast of Honshu, Japan.

JACK's first encounter with the enemy was in the morning daylight of 20 June 1943, when the premature explosion of her torpedo on the way to target spoiled her chance of success and she was boxed in by anti-submarine patrol craft for almost two hours. JACK gave these hunters the slip and went unrewarded until the morning darkness of 26 June when she moved in on a 5-ship convoy for a series of five attacks that sank the 4,163-ton passenger-cargo ship TOYO MARU and the 5,859-ton cargo ship

SHOZAN MARU in Latitude 33°-22' North; Longitude 138°-56' East. After this vicious foray in which she expended twelve torpedoes, a ship in column swung toward the submarine and she prepared for a "down the throat shot." This shot never came off because an aircraft dropped aerial depth charge that landed close to her port quarters and blew JACK's stern right out of the water. Her bow and stern diving planes went out of commission and the submarine nosed over about twenty-five degrees. She gained depth control quite a ways down, having been saved from ramming by her intended target, either by the depth charge by the aircraft or the nearby presence of a lifeboat from one of her victims. Her crew's swift efficiency saved the day and she retired from the scene to effect repairs.

On the afternoon of 4 July 1943 JACK began tracking a smoke signal, losing contact for a time in a rain squall, then managed to regain contact and move between the target and the escort. At 1613 she let go with a salvo of three torpedoes at the 6,529-ton NIKKYU MARU, which went under the sea so speedily that Commander Dykers reported she beat JACK to the 250-foot ocean depth. This sinking was in Latitude 34°-31' North; Longitude 138°-35' East. Three days later, fifteen minutes past high noon, JACK attacked a convoy of three merchant ships which was under escort of a submarine chaser. The three torpedoes sent toward the lead ship should have hit but no explosions were heard. Whether faulty torpedoes or detection were to blame is not certain. The submarine dived for deep water and endured thirty-nine depth charge explosions before she could get away. She returned to Midway on 15 July 1943 and reached Pearl Harbor for repair of damage and refit on 19 July 1943.

JACK departed Pearl Harbor for her second war patrol on 5 September 1943 and topped off with fuel at Midway Island on the 9th. Her main engine crankshaft carried away because of vibration and metal fatigue on 24 September. She intended to terminate her patrol to avoid a possible complete breakdown but got news of a crippled auxiliary aircraft carrier and bent on full speed in an unsuccessful attempt to intercept. Four torpedoes missed a destroyer the morning of 27 September but all missed as the submarine went deep to avoid depth charges. She refueled at Midway (5-6 October) and returned to Pearl Harbor on the 10th.

JACK conducted her third war patrol in the South China Sea along enemy shipping lanes running from Singapore and the home islands of Japan. She left Pearl Harbor on 16 January 1944 and was on the Singapore-Japan traffic lane at 0358 of 19 February when she made radar contact with a convoy of five large tankers. As she approached for attack she discerned two columns. To starboard were four tankers in column and on the flank to port was a ship leading three escorts. At 0443 three torpedoes were let go at the port column as one ship overlapped another in the starboard column. This deadly salvo from JACK was immediately followed by a spread of three more torpedoes at the last ship in the tanker column which was

hit twice. Flames ran forward and aft along the decks of this target and about two seconds later the victim exploded with flames shooting hundreds of feet in the air. Two of the three torpedoes of the first salvo were heard to hit something on the far side of the formation but the brilliance of the burning tanker precluded seeing what it was.

Making an "end around" on the convoy during the day of 19 February 1944 the wiley submarine closed in at nightfall on four ships, now in box formation and zigging frantically. Two torpedoes were fired at the leader of the right column and the trailing ship in the left column as they overlapped and both ships went up in a tremendous explosion.

JACK surfaced at 1920 and moved to attack a trailing ship in one column but missed with three torpedoes. The target answered with 5-inch gunfire and one shell passed over the forward deck of JACK, just below the bridge level, shaking the whole submarine. She reloaded her forward torpedo tubes, made another attack approach, and at 2233, 19 February 1944, she let go with four torpedoes for three hits which exploded another target. By this time the fifth, and only remaining ship, had cleared the scene. JACK's victims in this series of attacks were officially credited as the 5,154-ton tanker KOKUIE MARU, the 5,019-ton cargo ship NANEI MARU; the 5,162-ton tanker NICHIRIN MARU; and the 5,106-ton ICHIYO MARU.

JACK sighted a heavy cruiser on 29 February 1944 but could not get close enough for attack. The following morning she attacked a convoy which included a tanker, three cargo ships and two escorts. At 0305 she fired three torpedoes which caused two violent explosions in the target. Ten minutes later she let go four more torpedoes, hearing two hits on the bridge, followed by underwater explosions. An escort chased her for about fifteen minutes before returning to his convoy and JACK found herself out of torpedoes. She set course for Fremantle, Australia where she arrived for refit on 13 March 1944.

JACK departed Fremantle on 6 April 1944 for her fourth war patrol in the South China Sea. She missed a convoy with four torpedoes on the night of 14 April and put a periscope astern on the 25th. Shortly thereafter a light aircraft bomb explosion shook her as she passed the 150-foot depth. From about mid-day of the 25th she played tag with a mile-long convoy heavily guarded by surface escort and aircraft. Moving in shortly after midnight, she pressed home three attacks which left three burning targets and sank the 5,425-ton passenger-cargo ship YOSHIDO MARU NO. 1 in Latitude 18°-06' North; Longitude 119°-47' East. She destroyed the radio-equipped trawler DAISUN with gunfire on 27 April and sent another under the sea the following day.

JACK terminated her fourth war patrol at Fremantle on 10 May 1944. During refit, 25 May 1944, Commander Thomas M. Dykers, USN, was relieved as commanding officer by Lieutenant Commander Arthur E. Krapf, USN.

JACK left Fremantle for her Fifth War Patrol in the South China Sea on 4 June 1944. A few minutes past midnight of 24 June she made an attack approach on a convoy of about twelve ships and five escorts which hugged the coastline under the added protection of float planes. Two salvos of three torpedoes each was rewarded by the sight of a large column of yellow flame from one target and heavy smoke and flame from a second. Evading one escort the submarine returned to the convoy in approaching daylight of the 25th but was forced away by aircraft. Sunk in this attack was the 7,268-ton tanker SAN PEDRO MARU in Latitude 16°-07' North; Longitude 119°-44' East.

During the day of 29 June 1944 JACK trailed a convoy while keeping a watchful eye through her periscope on patrolling aircraft overhead. At moonset (past midnight) she started in for attack on the lead column but was blocked by swift actions of a surface escort and altered her course to a second column. Three successive torpedo attacks brought six explosions and deck gunfire from an escort as the convoy scattered. Reloading, the submarine headed back for the remnants, running between two confused escorts to get in two more salvos of four torpedoes each at different targets. Three explosions were heard after this attack which expended the last of JACK's torpedoes. She had sunk the 4,625-ton cargo ship TSUKUSHIMA MARU and the 3,825-ton cargo ship MATSUKAWA MARU in Latitude 14°-25' North; Longitude 119°-47' East. The submarine returned to Fremantle from her fifth war patrol on 14 July 1944.

JACK's sixth war patrol was spent in the Celebes Sea. She departed Fremantle on 6 August 1944, destroyed a coastal freighter of about 150 tons on the 25th; and attacked a convoy shortly after midnight of the 28th. A hit on one target "resulted in 4th of July fireworks" as one of the ships cut out on a tangent with JACK in hot pursuit. This target turned directly about and met the head-on bow shot from the submarine which caused the target to be enveloped in a mass of smoke and flames. Now JACK decided to fire a "killer" shot at a bold escort. She missed target and cleared her bridge in record time when shells whistled overhead from six hundred yards away. Back into the fray after evasive tactics, she fired two torpedoes and had the satisfaction of leaving only a high column of smoke where her adversary had once been on the surface. Victims of JACK in these attacks was the 492-ton minesweeper #28 and the 3,825 cargo ship MATSUKAWA MARU. She returned to Fremantle on 24 September 1944. During her refit, 9 October 1944, Commander Arthur E. Krapf, USN, was relieved as commanding officer by Lieutenant Commander Albert S. Fuhrman, USN.

JACK departed Fremantle for her Seventh War Patrol on 27 October 1944, setting course for the South China Sea. She attacked a coastal convoy on 14 November 1944, sinking the 5,396-ton cargo ship NICHIEI MARU who went up in a tremendous explosion in Latitude 11°-19'-08" North; Longitude 109°-01'-05" East. It was barely past midnight when she pressed home a second attack that sank the 6,859-ton cargo ship YUZAN MARU #2 with two

hits amidships. Gunfire broke out in the convoy, and in the face of this, and the danger of shallow water, she withdrew from the area. She returned from this seventh patrol to Pearl Harbor on 24 December and was routed on to San Francisco where she arrived on 6 January 1945 for major overhaul in the Bethlehem Steel yard.

JACK returned to Pearl Harbor from San Francisco on 1 April 1945 and passed out to sea for her eighth war patrol on the 26th. Her major job on this patrol was lifeguard station duty for the aerial strikes on Japan. During the fast aircraft carrier air strikes of 8 June 1945, she rescued pilot Lieutenant Murray Henry Tyler, USNR. The submarine returned to Guam for refit on 18 June 1945 and left that port on 12 July for her ninth war patrol. This patrol was devoted to lifeguard station duty for troop transport aircraft shuttling between Luzon in the Philippines to the newly won bases on Okinawa. During this service, 27 July 1945, she made her 1000th dive with four men aboard who had made all of them. Hostilities with Japan ceased while she was on the high seas. She joined four other submarines on 18 August, arrived at Saipan for logistics on the 22nd, then proceeded to Midway where she terminated her ninth war patrol on 29 August 1945.

JACK departed Midway Island for the eastern seaboard of the United States on 5 September 1945. After debarking 20 enlisted passengers at Pearl Harbor, she transited the Panama Canal for New York where she arrived on 3 October 1945. She shifted to the Submarine Base at New London, Connecticut on 8 January 1946 for inactivation and was decommissioned there on 8 June 1946. During the inactivation period, Lieutenant Commander Albert S. Fuhrman, USN, was relieved as commanding officer on 23 January 1946, by Lieutenant William C. Logan, Jr., USN, who remained in command until decommissioning.

JACK was recommissioned at Philadelphia on 20 December 1957, Lieutenant Commander Charles H. Hake, USN, in command. This was in preparation for her loan to the Government of Greece. She remained in the Philadelphia Shipyard until 5 March 1958, when she commenced training operations out of New London, Connecticut. She was in the last named port on 21 April 1958 when she was decommissioned, turned over and immediately placed in the service of the Royal Hellenic Navy as H.H.M.S. AMPHITRITI (Y-17). Attending the ceremony was His Excellency George J. Melas, Ambassador of Greece and other Department of State Officials. As of 20 February 1963, JACK still serves in the Royal Hellenic Navy. Her illustrious name was cancelled on 28 April 1959 to permit assignment to a newly authorized nuclear-powered submarine.

SHIPS NAMED JACK

In addition to the Presidential Unit Citation for her outstanding First, Third and Fifth War Patrols, JACK (SS-259) earned seven battle stars for the operations listed below:

1 Star/FIRST WAR PATROL-PACIFIC: 5 Jun-15 Jul 1943

1 Star/THIRD WAR PATROL-PACIFIC: 16 Jan-13 Mar 1944

1 Star/FOURTH WAR PATROL-PACIFIC: 6 Apr-10 May 1944

1 Star/FIFTH WAR PATROL-PACIFIC: 5 Jun-15 Jul 1944

1 Star/SIXTH WAR PATROL-PACIFIC: 6 Aug-24 Sep 1944

1 Star/ OKINAWA GUNTO OPERATION:

. Assault and Occupation of Okinawa Gunto: 14 May-13 Jun 1945

The second JACK (SS(N)-605) is under construction by the U.S. Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The keel of the nuclear-powered submarine was laid 16 September 1960 and she is scheduled for launching in April 1963, under the sponsorship of Mrs. Leslie R. Groves, wife of Lieutenant General Groves who headed the Manhattan Project and was in charge of development, production and planning for the use of the atomic bomb.