

Navy Department  
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (Op-29)  
Division of Naval History  
Ship's Histories Section

### HISTORY OF USS PADDLE (SS-263)

USS PADDLE (SS-263), first ship of the Fleet to bear the name, was built by the Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut. Her keel was laid 1 May 1942, and she was launched on 30 December 1942 under the sponsorship of Mrs. William M. Fechteler, wife of Captain Fechteler, USN, who later became Chief of Naval Operations, now retired with the rank of admiral. PADDLE was placed in commission at the U. S. Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut on 29 March 1943, when Lieutenant Commander R. H. Rice, USN, assumed command.

From date of commissioning, PADDLE conducted intensive training operations in and around New London, including torpedo tube contract firing at Newport, Rhode Island. On 8 June 1943, she departed New London for Coco Solo, Canal Zone, where voyage repairs were accomplished and PADDLE reported to Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet for duty. After making transit of the Panama Canal, she sailed for Pearl Harbor, arriving 5 July 1943. Fifteen days were spent in Pearl Harbor, including an advanced training period of seven days.

PADDLE departed Pearl Harbor on 20 July 1943 to conduct her first war patrol in waters south of Japan. On 13 August 1943, she made her first attack on a large escorted freighter scoring a hit directly under the stack but observation of damage was prevented by alert escorts who dropped over eighty depth charges in a counter-attack which was maintained for thirteen hours.

PADDLE was slightly damaged on 19 August by seven aerial bombs dropped by enemy search planes which had apparently sighted PADDLE as she conducted submerged patrol off the coast of Japan. However, the damage was repaired and she continued patrol.

On 23 August 1943, PADDLE attacked an escorted passenger-cargo vessel, obtaining two hits which sank ATAKA MARU of 5,248 tons (34°-37'N; 137°-53'E). The crew of ATAKA MARU was observed abandoning ship when PADDLE was forced down by bombs from escorting aircraft. She returned to Pearl Harbor 12 September 1943.

After one week of refit, she rendered valuable services to the Destroyers Pacific Sound School. She then underwent a brief refit during which she was furnished with weather observing instruments and pibal balloons for taking upper air soundings, and an enlisted aerologist was assigned preparatory to the forthcoming operations in support of carrier forces in which controlling factors were weather conditions for carrier strikes and conditions on the beach at Tarawa where landings would be made during operations against the Japanese held Gilbert and Marshall Islands. She departed Pearl Harbor, 17 October 1943, to take station off Nauru and furnished constant weather reports to the carrier task force which made attacks against Gilbert and Marshall Islands and covered the landing at Tarawa. In addition, she surfaced



twenty miles south of Nauru Island and transmitted continuous signals to home U. S. Army B-24 bombers on their first raid on Tarawa. While enroute back to Pearl Harbor, she conducted a torpedo attack on a tanker of estimated 10,000 tons off Eniwetok but a severe depth charge attack by two enemy escorting destroyers prevented observation of the damage inflicted. PADDLE returned to Pearl Harbor on 9 December 1943. The following day, Lieutenant Commander B. H. Nowell, USN, relieved Commander Rice of command.

PADDLE arrived at the Mare Island Navy Yard on 17 December 1943 for overhaul and new engines and on 26 February 1944, departed for Pearl Harbor where voyage repairs were made and training exercises were conducted.

On 19 March 1944, PADDLE departed Pearl Harbor on her third war patrol of 53 days duration, 29 of which were spent in the Mulukka Sea, Ceram Sea and Banda Sea. In a brilliant night attack, 16 April 1944, conducted on a three ship convoy with four escorts, she torpedoed and sank passenger cargo MITO MARU of 7,061 tons; and cargo HINO MARU NO. 1, of 2,671 tons (2°-02'S; 127°-20'E). With all torpedo tubes empty, she was forced to break off attack by enemy escorts. At dawn she returned in an attempt to sink a tanker guarded by escorts and aircraft which had arrived on the scene. She fired four torpedoes at a destroyer who promptly counter-attacked and several other attacks were broken off by bombs of escorting enemy aircraft. PADDLE returned to Fremantle, Australia, on 12 May 1944.

After refit, fast repair trials and training, PADDLE departed Fremantle, 5 June 1944, to conduct her fourth war patrol. The first phase of this patrol was spent on armed reconnaissance in the eastern approaches to Davao Gulf to prevent a sortie by units of the Japanese at the time United States forces were preparing for the initial landings on Saipan. During this duty, only one contact worthy of torpedo fire was encountered but PADDLE was unable to close within range for an attack.

On 30 June 1944, after moving into the Celebes Sea, PADDLE was bombed by a two-engined bomber which caused minor damage throughout the ship and put all forward torpedo tubes out of commission. After repairing damage she continued patrol, and on 6 July, a convoy of two large freighters under escort of two destroyers and a smaller patrol vessel was contacted. PADDLE scored two torpedo hits on a large freighter and sank destroyer HOKAZE of 1,300 tons (3°24'N; 125°-28'E) before she was forced down by remaining enemy escorts. PADDLE returned to Fremantle, West Australia, on 29 July 1944.

PADDLE departed Fremantle, 22 August 1944, to conduct her fifth war patrol in the Sulu Sea. This patrol was marked by a scarcity of ship contacts. On 7 September 1944, one convoy was attacked for damage to one vessel and cargo SHINYO MARU of 2,518 tons was sunk (8°-11'N; 122°-40'E). PADDLE returned to Mios Woendi Lagoon on 25 September 1944. During refit, Commander J. P. Fitz-Patrick, USN, relieved Lieutenant Commander Nowell of command.

PADDLE departed 3 October 1944 on her sixth war patrol. Her primary mission was lifeguard duties in the Balikpapan area with very brief periods of normal offensive patrol duties. No major targets were contacted but two oil-laden sea trucks were sunk in a night gun action, and a schooner was sunk



with gunfire. PADDLE returned to Fremantle, West Australia on 1 November 1944.

On 25 November 1944, PADDLE departed on her seventh war patrol in the South China Sea and West Luzon areas. Heavy weather hampered offensive operations to a large degree. On the evening of 7 December 1944, while making an approach on a heavily escorted convoy of tankers, PADDLE was detected and fired upon by an escort. After drawing the enemy away from the main body, PADDLE fired three torpedoes which missed but caused the enemy to abandon chase. The next morning, she returned and teamed with HAMMERHEAD to sink tanker SHOEI MARU of 2,854 tons off southwest Borneo (40-03'N; 111°-31'E). Hits were also obtained for unconfired damage to an enemy destroyer. Despite heavy gunfire of escorts, PADDLE made good her escape, returning to Pearl Harbor on 18 January 1945. She departed Pearl Harbor on 21 January 1945, arriving at San Francisco for overhaul in the navy yard on 28 January 1945.

PADDLE departed San Francisco on 18 April 1945 and after training exercises at Pearl Harbor, departed 15 May on her eighth war patrol which was conducted in the Yellow Sea and East China Sea areas. Four torpedo attacks were made on small ships which unfortunately were unsuccessful. During one of these attacks, made on two patrol vessels, she was forced to dive by intense gunfire and held down in shallow water for a period of twenty-one hours. With no large ships in sight, she sank eight schooners and picket boats and exploded or sank twenty-five floating mines with gunfire. She returned to Guam on 18 July 1945.

After refit at Apra Harber, Guam, PADDLE departed Guam, 13 August 1945 for lifeguard mission off southern Honshu. Offensive operations against Japan were concluded with the surrender on 14 August 1945, and on 17 August, PADDLE was ordered to report to Midway. After a week at Midway she steamed for Pearl Harbor, and after receiving fuel and water, set course for Panama, then departing for Tompkinsville, Staten Island, New York, where she arrived on 30 September 1945. She steamed to Boston, Massachusetts on 23 October 1945 and received visitors during the Navy Day Celebration. On 30 October 1945, she arrived at New London, Connecticut, where she was placed out of commission in reserve on 1 February 1946, and assigned to the New London Group, Sixteenth Fleet.

PADDLE was again commissioned 31 August 1956, preparatory to being transferred to the Government of Brazil. She was decommissioned and transferred to Brazil under terms of the Mutual Defense Assistance Program, on 18 January 1957. Rear Admiral Luiz F. Pinto da Luz, Brazilian Naval Attache, accepted PADDLE for commissioning in the Brazilian Navy.

PADDLE earned nine battle stars for operations as listed below:

- 1 Star/~~GILBERT~~ ISLANDS OPERATION: 19 Nov-8 Dec 1943
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 20 Jul-12 Sep 1943
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 17 Oct-9 Dec 1943
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 19 Mar-12 May 1944



- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 5 Jun-29 Jul 1944
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 22 Aug-25 Sep 1944
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 3 Oct-1 Nov 1944
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 25 Nov 1944-18 Jan 1945
- 1 Star/SUBMARINE WAR PATROL - PACIFIC: 15 May-18 Jul 1945

ORIGINAL STATISTICS

LENGTH OVER-ALL:	311'9"
EXTREME BEAM:	27'3"
STANDARD DISPLACEMENT:	
Tons:	1526
Mean Draft:	15'3"
SUBMERGED DISPLACEMENT:	
Tons:	2424
DESIGN SPEED:	
Surface: .	20.25 knots
Submerged:	8.75 knots
DESIGN COMPLEMENT:	
Officer:	6
Enlisted:	54
ARMAMENT:	
Main:	(10) Torpedo Tubes
Secondary:	(1) 3"/50
	(2) .50 caliber machine guns
	(2) .30 caliber machine guns
Torpedoes:	24

COMPILED AND STENCILED  
4/17/58 (Wn)