

HISTORY OF USS RAZORBACK (SS 394)

Though commissioned when less than a year of the war remained, the USS RAZORBACK completed five successful patrols to sink an unofficial total of 22,350 tons of Japanese shipping. The ship's keel was laid on 9 September 1943 at the Navy Yard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Named for a brilliantly colored food fish of the sunfish family which is found in the Great Lakes, the USS RAZORBACK was christened by Mrs. H. F. D. Davis, wife of Captain H. F. D. Davis, USN, at the launching on 27 January 1944. She was accepted by the Navy at the commissioning ceremonies on 3 April, and turned over to her first commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander A. M. Bontier, USN.

An intensive training period and shakedown cruise was conducted off Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Newport, Rhode Island. On 5 June 1944, Commander Roy S. Benson, USN, relieved Lieutenant Commander Bontier. On 19 July the RAZORBACK reported to the Commander Submarines, Pacific Fleet and set course for Pearl Harbor.

The first war patrol was conducted east of Luzon by the RAZORBACK as a member of an offensive group in support of the Palau landings. The Japanese did not venture forth to oppose this offensive, and the only enemy contact consisted of frequent encounters with anti-submarine planes. Upon her return to Midway for refit on 21 October 1944, Commander Benson was relieved as skipper by Lieutenant Commander D. Donald Brown, USN.

On 15 November the RAZORBACK sailed from Midway in company with the TREPANG and SEGUNDO. Topping off at Saipan the wolf pack headed for the Luzon Straits. First contact was made on two large vessels escorted by three gunboats and heavy air cover. Due to the inability of the submarine to close to good torpedo range, no hits were scored. Several days later radar contact was made on several enemy ships. The RAZORBACK made a submerged approach, and the targets were identified as a hunter-killer group consisting of a destroyer and two smaller anti-sub craft. An attack was made on the destroyer, but the counter-attack by the anti-submarine vessels precluded an assessment of damage done. However, torpedo hits and breaking up noises were heard amid the depth charge explosions as the RAZORBACK slipped away from the scene.

On the night of 6 December, the TREPANG reported a convoy 40 miles from the RAZORBACK. By the time the RAZORBACK arrived the TREPANG and SEGUNDO had sunk all but one ship, that having been stopped by the latter submarine. After skirting an escort at 2000 yards the target was closed sufficiently for attack. The RAZORBACK's torpedoes left the 6,933 ton freighter KENJO MARU in a mass of flames. The submarine surfaced and eluded the convoy's escorts. She returned to Saipan for additional torpedoes, then rejoined the SEGUNDO to continue her patrol. On the last day of the patrol, contact was made on a four ship convoy escorted by the old destroyer KURETAKE, a destroyer escort, and a float plane. Hits were obtained on a medium tanker, and shortly afterwards the bow was blown off the old destroyer. The RAZORBACK then retired, surfacing that night to again pursue the convoy. The moon forced a submerged attack, which resulted in two more hits. The escort prevented further attack, but the

RAZORBACK was credited with the probable kill of a large cargo ship. She arrived at Guam on 5 January 1945 for her second refit.

On 15 February the submarine set out for the East China Sea for her third war patrol, in company with the SEGUNDO and SEACAT. Difficulty was encountered in finding targets by this time. Two unsuccessful torpedo attacks were conducted on a transport and a three-masted schooner. With the patrol coming to a close and the score still zero, the RAZORBACK sank four wooden ships in three separate surface gun actions. The three Japanese prisoners taken were deposited in Guam, and the RAZORBACK steamed to Pearl Harbor to terminate her patrol on 26 March 1945.

Refit and training were completed by 7 May 1945, and the RAZORBACK headed for the Nanpo Shoto and Tokyo Bay area for lifeguard duty. Much of this fourth patrol was spent on the surface uncomfortably close to Tokyo. At night the fires resulting from the air raids lighted the horizon. The RAZORBACK's efforts were rewarded by the rescue of four B-29 pilots and a fighter pilot during this period. She returned to Midway on 27 June for refit by the USS AEGIR.

On 22 July the RAZORBACK departed Midway for patrol in the Okhotsk Sea. On 2 August a number of wooden cargo ships were sighted. In the ensuing surface gun action, six ships were sunk and two damaged. The remainder of the patrol was spent performing lifeguard services off Paramuchiro for Alaskan based planes. On 31 August the RAZORBACK entered Tokyo Harbor with eleven other submarines to take part in the formal surrender of Japan. She departed on 3 September, arriving at Pearl Harbor on 11 September and San Diego on the 20th.

The USS RAZORBACK was awarded five battle stars on the Asiatic-Pacific Area Service Medal for her participation in the following operations:

1 Star/Western Caroline Islands Operation

Capture and occupation of southern Palau Islands -- 6 September - 14 October 1944

Assault on Philippine Islands -- 6-24 September 1944

1 Star/Second Submarine War Patrol -- 15 November 1944 - 5 January 1945

1 Star/Iwo Jima operation

Assault and occupation of Iwo Jima -- 15 February - 9 March 1945

1 Star/Okinawa Gunto Operation

Assault and occupation of Okinawa Gunto -- 19 May - 17 June 1945

1 Star/Fifth Submarine War Patrol -- 22 July - 22 September 1945

She also received the Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia, for the periods 2-3 September 1945, 4-11 January 1948, 8-16 February 1948, and 7-27 August 1949. The China Service Medal was awarded for the period 12 January - 7 February 1948, and 2 - 6 October 1949.

The RAZORBACK remained active with the U. S. Pacific Fleet until August 1952, when she was decommissioned and placed in the U. S. Atlantic Reserve Fleet. She is now being reoutfitted at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and is scheduled to be recommissioned in March 1954.

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STATISTICS

OVERALL LENGTH	312 feet
BEAM	27 feet
SPEED	20 knots
DISPLACEMENT	1525 tons
COMPLEMENT	8 officers and 72 men

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(A) PROLOGUE

Arrived Midway from first patrol for refit alongside USS PROTEUS (AS19), 19 October 1944; Lt. Comdr. C. Donald BROWN, USN, relieved Commander Roy S. BENSON, USN, as commanding officer on 21 October 1944; from 22 to 24 October 1944, drydocked in USS ARD-8; on 3 November 1944, the crew relieved Submarine Division 201 Relief Crew #2; and Ensign W. H. PATTILLO, D-V(G), USNR, File #270073, reported aboard for duty. In addition to routine items, the following alterations were accomplished during refit:

- (a) Installed Mk VIII, Mod. O, TBT's, Shipalt SS240-K.
- (b) Modified sound powered telephone and call bell circuit, Shipalt SS246-K.
- (c) Installed bow plane rigging indicator light, Shipalt SS248-K.
- (d) Installed travelling nut type lower limit switch on periscope hoist.

Satisfactory sound test conducted, magnetic signature determined ship degaussed for Lat. 20 N.

Had 7-day training period with Commander D. L. WHELCHER, USN, (Comsubdiv-201) as training officer. Ready for sea on 15 November 1944.

(B) NARRATIVE

15 November

Underway from Midway; carried out special periscope sighting exercise for training O.O.D.'s and lookouts with USS TILEFISH. Took departure, proceeding independently in accordance with CTG 17.5 orders of 14 November 1944, to rendezvous with USS THEPANG (Comdr. A. M. DAVENPORT, USN) and USS SEGUNDO (Comdr. J. D. FULP, Jr., USN); making frequent training dives and conducting daily battle problems.

17 November

Skipped this date.

19 November

Distance unit of Berdix Log out of commission. (See derangements.)

Conducted satisfactory test on 4" gun which had failed to come back to battery during training "battle surface".

20 November

At sunrise, joined USS TREPANG and USS SEGUNDO; proceeding in company enroute Saipan, Commanding Officer USS TREPANG, pack commander of ROY'S RANGERS. Notified Group Commander of Bendix Log spare required at Saipan. Made three training dives, conducted tracking problem.

21 - 22 November

Conducting training dives, exercising radar tracking parties.

23 November

0800(K) Took position on right flank of scouting line, searching for downed B-29 personnel in accordance with C.T.G. 17.7 despatch orders of 22 November.

1130(K) Exchanged calls with eastbound USS BUEFISH (SS312).

24 November

0055(K) Radar contact - SARAGAN ISLAND.

0115(K) Sighted SARAGAN.

0600(K) Arrived rendezvous - no escort.

1235(K) Sighted USS DUNLAP (DD384) reporting as escort.

Resumed scouting line with escort leading USS TREPANG.

1600(K) Discontinued search, joined column behind USS TREPANG.

1612(K) Moored port side to USS TREPANG, alongside USS FULTON, TANAPAG HARBOR, SAIPAN.

25 November

Lt. James H. KING, USN, File #178354, was transferred to, and Lt.(jg) E. L. JOHNSON, USN, File #197292, was received from SubDiv-82 Relief Crew. Having been unable to sleep or eat properly since departure from Midway, KING was not considered physically fit for combat duty.

1545(I) Having completed minor voyage repairs, got underway enroute operating area in accordance with ComTaskForce 17 Operation Order #383-44. Proceeding in company with USS TREPANG, USS SEGUNDO and USS SPARFISH, with USS CASE (DD 370) as escort.

1645(I) Made trim dive.

2200(I) USS CASE completed duty as escort.

26 November

Made section dives, exercised radar tracking party.

1917(I) Radar contact on eastbound USS SHAD (SS235) and USS REDFISH (SS395); exchanged recognition signals with the former.

27 November

0125(I) Radar contact accompanied by SJ interference; opened, made unsuccessful attempt to exchange recognition signals. Assumed contact to be eastbound USS KINGFISH (SS234) expected at this time.

28 November

1651(I) Surfaced from battle problem; SD contact 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles; dived. (Aircraft contact #1.)

1721(I) Surfaced, all clear.

29 November

0200(I) Entered waiting area.

0210(I) Exchanged recognition signals with eastbound USS ATULE (SS403).

0841(I) Shortly after surfacing from trim dive, sighted an unidentified single-engine aircraft; dived. (Aircraft contact #2.)

0926(I) Surfaced, all clear.

1147(I) SD contact, 21 miles; sighted unidentified large aircraft; turned toward and slowed down. We had been keying the SD for ten seconds at irregular intervals between one and two minutes. Increased times between keying SD and the plane disappeared. No IFF was noted. (Aircraft contact #3.) Conducted battle problem.

30 November - (Unless otherwise designated, all times following are "H".)

0230 Entered patrol area.

0510 Submerged. As we are ahead of schedule, intend to remain submerged this date to prevent detection as we approach CALIGUIN ISLAND.

2240 Entered area assigned by pack commander.

1 December

- 0335 Sighted DIDICAS ROCKS. The Coast Pilot is right when it says they can easily be mistaken for ships. At 13 miles they looked like a convoy of two large ships with small escort, distance about 10,000 yards.
- 0520 Dived, with CALIGUIN ISLAND bearing 213°T , distant $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles, conducting submerged patrol.
- 1622 Sighted three FRANCES' which made a sweep from BABUYAN to CALIGUIN and back, disappearing to east of the former island. The return sweep was directly over us, at about 100 feet over the water. (Aircraft contact #4.)
- 1633 Sighted column of smoke on south side of BABUYAN ISLAND, bearing 342°T , which drew to right slowly. Came to course 020°T , speed standard, depth 100 feet.
- 1701 Up for a look - sighted JAKE (twin float plane) patrolling to eastward of BABUYAN on easterly heading, still indicating a target heading in that direction. Smoke still drawing right, but no tops in sight. (Aircraft contact #5.)
- 1705 Sighted tops of small escort bearing 313°T , which appeared to be working well out on starboard flank of our target as his course at sighting was to southward. Went to battle stations. Discovered smoke target to be a fire on BABUYAN Island, a good trick if the Japs meant it as we interpreted it.
- 1707 Turned toward escort at 70 turns, a Chidori or large P.C., and shortly thereafter sighted a large pair of kingposts bearing 317°T . Sound picked up three separate pingers who apparently alternated from pinging to listening. They were suspicious because near pinger, about 1500 yards, kept shifting scales. Angle on bow of AK was, at sighting, 70 port, range 12-14,000 yards.
- 1709 Sighted another large ship, no masts, no kingposts, went ahead standard to close track at 1712.
- 1718 Slowed to have another look, remained between 40 and 70 turns from then on tracking continuously. The targets crossed showing the large previously unidentified vessel to be the closer (we thought now it was a large AP); we shifted to this target. It was getting pretty dark, though silhouettes were reasonably clear against a rapidly failing sunset.

I knew we had a mighty long range for Mark 18's but decided to shoot for the following reasons:

(a) Convoy appeared to be headed for harbor at CALIGUIN, as they kept zigging toward in small increments. If they went on, the pack could not follow them into BABUYAN CHANNEL tonight.

(b) Though our ranges were pretty uncertain, they checked fairly well on a logical speed, and the bearings were right on from the second observation of the problem.

(c) The course was almost a surety because of a 90° angle on the bow check shortly before firing.

(d) The target looked important enough to warrant a gamble.

1739 With range 4200 yards, angle on the bow 95°P, speed 9.5 knots, bearings checking on, fired a full bow nest with a spread of 1000 feet normal to torpedo track. (Attack #1)

Kept periscope on target throughout torpedo run, bearings still checking on TDC. Target started blinking lights about two minutes after firing, but did not change course. Hopes and prayers not answered.

1744 Forward torpedo room reported one explosion. None were heard or seen in conning tower.

1746 Three depth charges, apparently dropped by escort which had pulled over where we dived this morning between CALIGUIN and us, distant about two miles. Started working out to eastward as current was sweeping us to northwest.

1842 When a bright full moon disappeared temporarily behind a cloud, surfaced and cleared vicinity at four engine speed.

1910 Received SEGUNDO report that she had heard our convoy and seen its air escort at 1430.

1934 Turned away from object close aboard reported as periscope by lookout, momentary radar contact 450 yards dead astern after turn of 90° which may have been our wake, maybe not.

1935 Sent report of our attack to rest of pack.

2010 Exchanged radar signals with pack commander.

Had numerous airborne radar contacts on APR, as many as three at a time, which usually faded out when we secured the SJ, but at,

2121 Submerged for saturated signal on APR.

2214 Surfaced.

2 December

- 0305 Submerged for saturated signal on APR.
- 0342 Surfaced.
- 0537 Submerged to patrol area to eastward of CALIGUIN thinking it wiser to wait a day before returning to the scene of our attempted crime.
- During the day, seas increased from force 1 to 4, sky overcast.
- 1757 Surfaced.

3 December

Planes are still flying in spite of very rough weather, but we got away with it until

- 0345 Dived for saturated signal on APR.
- 0444 Surfaced.
- 0517 Dived for submerged patrol. Depth control is difficult and we can't see much, even at 50 feet.
- 1755 Surfaced and started working our way out to northward to change areas in accordance with pack instructions. Sea has increased to 5.
- 1850 Received pack commander instructions to remain in area pending weather change and further instructions.
- 2209 Dived for steady APR contact near saturation which appeared suddenly and increased rapidly. There was no low intensity warning on this contact.
- Jap aviators are using tactics we did not see last patrol. Often when there's a good, steady, and increasing contact, the enemy radar is cut off suddenly. As he makes his approach, he cuts in again at various intervals. We have no other data on which to rely, so dive on saturated signal. We have tried unsuccessfully to catch him on the SD while diving. When I refer to the Jap radar being cut off, am sure it is not the result of an unsuccessful search through our sector (because that appears as a rotating antenna) but rather actually switching off his radar to minimize our detection advantage as he approaches.
- 2244 Surfaced.
- 2336 Dived for saturated APR signal.

4 December

- 0020 Surfaced. Took water in conning tower to deck level - no damage.
- 0517 Dived for submerged patrol. Sea is still about 5.
- 1755 Surfaced.
- 2000 Having received instructions to shift area, started for entrance to BALINTANG CHANNEL.
- 2152 Dived for saturated APR signal.
- 2225 Surfaced.

5 December

- 0526 Radar contact, three targets, range 14,000 yards, bearing 235°T which tracked on an easterly course. Went to four engines on course 150°T to get ahead of targets. It was getting light fast to eastward placing us at a disadvantage, so at
- 0535 Submerged to periscope depth. Radar approach not feasible, the possibility of broaching being very real in a force 6 sea.
- 0550 Sighted two ships with sharp angle on bow. There were three pips, one medium and two small at time of diving. Sound had continuous pinging soon after submergence. Kept headed toward what I thought was the bow escort and soon found he was a DD. The other two ships were visible from time to time and identified as torpedo boats of Chidori or similar class. As no other target was in sight, made approach on DD. Left periscope up entire approach as high seas kept it from view most of the time.
- 0616 Fired full bow nest, torpedo run 2350, track 87 starboard, depth set 5 feet, torpedoes fired across sea. Each torpedo broached initially but appeared to run hot, straight, and normal as tracked by sound. (Attack #2)
- 0618 With what I thought were six broachers on the way, rigged for depth charge and sought a gradient. After torpedo room recorded three distinct muffled explosions ten seconds apart, first one two minutes and ten seconds after firing.
- 0623 First depth charge. One set of screws and one pinger heard during countermeasures.

0625 Three depth charges, a single followed a few seconds later by two very close together.

0626 Same.

0712 Lost contact with screws.

0900 Came up for look, all clear, continued normal submerged patrol.

1818 Surfaced.

6 December

0158 Exchanged recognition signals with USS GUNNEL (SS253).

0222 OOD sighted red and green flare - submerged.

0257 Surfaced.

0524 Submerged for patrol off CAPE BOJADOR.

1810 Surfaced.

2000 Having received contact report from pack commander, started in to intercept convoy headed for BABUYAN CHANNEL.

2234 Radar contact bearing 070°T, range 17,250 yards. This target proved to have four escorts, and may have been previously damaged as he tracked at two to four knots. This apparently was the only ship left in the convoy.

We avoided the bow escort, which passed down our starboard side, then we headed toward the target.

With target plainly visible in forward TBT and coming in nicely, we found ourselves naked, as a bright moon came out from behind the clouds, so with range 5000 yards

2315 Dived. Lost some time and experienced some confusion finding ourselves one lookout short as we started to close the hatch. Seemed ages before we started down, so went to periscope depth. Target dimly visible through periscope, later zigging toward affording good stern tube set-up.

2343 Fired full after nest, torpedoes spread 300 feet normal to line of sight. (Att ack #3)

2345 Three timed hits heard in the conning tower, control room, after torpedo room and by sound. Hits heard three minutes and four seconds after firing first fish.

2348-52-53 Single depth charges.

2355 Target showed a light which soon proved to be the beginning of a dandy fire.

7 December

Target now burning fiercely, could see sky under about forty feet of stern and she looked as though she'd soon be down, but after watching it for some time, closed, tried single ping range with no results, and at

0008 Fired four torpedoes forward, spread 250 feet normal to line of sight. (Att ack #4)

0012 Torpedo explosion heard by sound.

0015 Three depth charges.

0052 Explosion observed on stern forcing flames well above mast.

0102 Explosion heard on sound in direction of target.

We were getting close to BABUYAN CHANNEL so evaded four befuddled escorts at periscope depth. No screws were heard although one pinger made a complete circle around us just before we surfaced.

0126 Surfaced and cleared area at four engine speed, nearest escort 2000 yards to southward.

0205 Three large explosions on target about a minute apart, observed by OOD, to light up the sky. Immediately after second explosion the fire disappeared. Radar lost contact at 20,000 yards.

0215 Momentary flame observed by OOD in vicinity of our target.

0221 OOD saw explosion bearing 070°T, distant 10,000 yards. Our position, Lat. 18° 47' N, Long. 120° 49' E.

Received good news of Pack Commander's Jap slaughter; sent information on our last two targets, and SJ radar deception encountered last two nights; then received further dope on excellent results of SEGUNDO. TREPANG and SEGUNDO had the escorts completely beaten down and befuddled by the time we arrived on the scene because they bothered us little.

0534 Submerged.

Definite radar deception was encountered throughout nights of 5 and 6 December, emanating from Luzon. One to thirty-two false targets appeared on a line of bearing. The true bearings of this deception from various positions in the area intercepted roughly on Luzon, Lat. 18-12-N, Long. 121-00-E. See particulars under part (U).

1811 Surfaced.

8 December

0525 Submerged.

1742 Surfaced, started beating toward BALINTANG CHANNEL against a state 6 sea.

1808 Radar contact, proved to be USS TREPANG.

2016 Proceeding to Saipan in compliance with Comsubpac despatch orders of 7 December.

9 December

0521 Submerged with BABUYAN ISLAND bearing 150°T, distant 16 miles.

1801 Surfaced. For some time after surfacing, we had much SJ radar interference to northward of us which indicated at least three friendly submarines in the vicinity.

2124 Dived for saturated APR contact.

2215 Surfaced.

10 December

0125 Dived for saturated signal on APR.

0217 Surfaced.

0515 Submerged.

1755 Surfaced.

11 through 14 December

Enroute Saipan, conducting training dives, tracking and battle problems.

15 December

0500 Rendezvous with PC-1599.

1058 Arrived Saipan, tied up alongside USS FULTON.

15-17 December

Removed four electric torpedoes, loaded twenty-four air torpedoes, received 54,000 gallons of fuel, and completed minor voyage repairs.

17 December

- 1414(I) Underway in accordance with C.T.G. 17.7 secret despatch orders of December 1944. We are in company with USS SPOT (Comdr. W. S. PORT, Jr., USN, group commander), USS BALAO, and USS ICAMISH, with AM-101 as escort.
- 2030(I) Escort completed duties, commenced steaming independently enroute patrol area.

18 through 21 December

Enroute patrol area, making daily section dives and conducting battle and tracking problems.

19 December

- 1305(I) SD contact 34 miles; dived when contact closed to 8 miles, no IFF. (Aircraft contact #6.)

21 December

- 1235(I) SD contact 27 miles. Plane did not close, visibility poor. (Aircraft contact #7.)

22 December (Unless otherwise indicated, times below are "H".)

- 0400 APR indicated presence of a plane varying the output power on his radar. See Section (U).
- 0530 Submerged for patrol with Y'AMI bearing 235°T, distant 15 miles.
- 0944 OOD sighted BETTY through periscope distance 1/4 mile which apparently passed directly over us just prior to our raising the periscope - altitude 100 feet. He must have surveyed a wrench as he went over because the forward torpedo room reported a hammer-like blow on the hull at the same time. Plane was not seen again. (Aircraft contact #8.)
- 1047 Sound contact 175°T. Sighted a northbound power fishing boat which crossed our stern and disappeared at 1125.
- 1807 Surfaced.

1827 Submerged for saturated APR signal.
1910 Surfaced.
2230 Reported E.T.A. on station to USS SEGUNDO.

23 December

0202 Radar contact bearing 028°T, distant 33,000. Closed on four engines and soon found same type of radar deception encountered off N.W. coast of LUZON on 5 and 6 December. Hope the deception is followed by as profitable a contact as the last time we encountered it.
0330 On assigned station, patrolling with USS SEGUNDO (Commander J. D. FULP, Jr., USN, Pack Commander).
0454 Submerged for saturated APR signal.
1806 Surfaced.

24 December

0536 Submerged.
1417 Sighted BETTY bearing 039°T, distant 5 miles. (Aircraft contact #9.)
1813 Surfaced.
1913 Having received contact report of USS SEGUNDO indicating convoy harbored at SABTANG, headed for BALINTANG CHANNEL at 3-engine speed adding #4 when available from charge.

25 December

0420 Submerged for saturated APR signal; contact on SJ as we went down, distant 8000 yards and coming in fast. (Aircraft contact #10.)
0500 Surfaced.
0523 Submerged for saturated APR signal, on station, with BALINTANG ISLAND bearing 062°T, distant 21 miles.
0940 OOD sighted medium AK, hull down, bearing 291°T.
0951 Having determined the target drawing to left went ahead standard to close CALAYAN ISLAND in case he chose to come our way; estimated angle on the bow 35 port. After several observations, noted an old AO to be leading the AK.

1020 Radical zig of targets produced a 70° starboard angle and headed them toward SABIANG. The minimum range on these targets at any time was 12,000 yards. Saw no escorts, but sound heard pinging at various times in the general direction of the targets.

1133 Targets disappeared on course 025°T, speed about 6 knots. We were too close to land to surface for an end around.

1820 Surfaced.

Received SEGUNDO's report that convoy had circuited them and possibly harbored at MUSA BAY. Reported our contact and the location of our patrol for tomorrow.

26 December

0526 Submerged about 25 miles N.W. of SABIANG ISLAND on possibility that our contact of yesterday might be northbound today.

1800 Surfaced.

Reported negative contact and requested instructions from SEGUNDO. No receipt for message.

27 December

0529 Submerged with BALINTANG ISLAND bearing 066°T, distant 23 miles.

1804 Surfaced.

Received negative contact from SEGUNDO, word that her transmitter was out last night, and orders for resumption of patrol in areas previously designated by TREPANG for the 29th.

28 December

0538 Submerged 33 miles bearing 295°T from Y'AMI ISLAND.

0708 Sighted RUFE bearing 110°T, distant 7 miles. (Aircraft contact #11.)

0729 Sighted RUFE bearing 280°T, distant 1 mile. (Aircraft contact #12.)

0820 Sighted large unidentified plane bearing 165°T, distant 9 miles. (Aircraft contact #13.)

0845 Sighted three unidentified single engine planes bearing 298°T, distant 4 miles. (Aircraft contact #14.)

Much activity indicated, but no ships sighted.

1804 Surfaced and headed toward BASHI CHANNEL.

29 December

0240 APR contact with half saturation signal; simultaneous SJ contact on fast moving target; range 26,000 yards. (Aircraft contact #15.)

0543 Dived for saturated APR signal; our position bearing 056°T, distant 15 miles from Y'AMH.

1802 Surfaced.

Received message from USS SEGUNDO giving us permission to patrol independently. Informed pack commander we would patrol line between FORMOSA and islands to the southeast, and headed back through BASHI CHANNEL. All traffic indications have been to and from the west coast of FORMOSA.

30 December

0102 Dived for saturated APR signal. Discovered #4 main engine outboard exhaust valve inoperative.

0148 Surfaced.

0515 Submerged, with ITBAYAT ISLAND bearing 130°T, distant 15 miles. #4 main engine outboard exhaust valve is now holding sea pressure.

0935 Sighted unidentified float plane bearing 040°T, distant 6 miles. (Aircraft contact #16.)

1047 Sighted several ships bearing 250°T, distant 10,000 yards.

1053 Went ahead full speed on course 320°T attempting to get in on targets. The convoy consisted of 2 AO's and 2 AK's escorted by a DD and TB or DE, with air coverage - one J.K.E. (Aircraft contact #17.)

1241 Changed course to 285°T. First two targets were by, so closed for shot on trailing AO with DD on her starboard quarter.

1245 Changed course to 290°T giving us a 112° starboard track. Fired six torpedoes spread 800 feet normal to line of sight, range 3200 yards, torpedo run 3400 yards. Started reload forward. (Attack #5)

1247 / Timed hits 2m 12s and 2m 20s after firing. The first of these was a terrific explosion not observed by me as I had swung to

the DD which was coming along much closer to us. When I looked at the target again he had swung 90°L and visible damage was a 5° starboard list, and he was smoking heavily. Did not see him again.

- 1248 Three explosions heard throughout the ship, not depth charges. (All the latter were preceded by a definite click.) Came left for stern shot at DD.
- 1249 / Two depth charges.
- 1250 Loud breaking up noises reported from control room and engine rooms.
- 1252 Several distant explosions.
- 1255 Steadied on course 140°T.
- 1258-30 Fired full stern nest at DD with 110 S track, range 1800 yards, spread 200 feet normal to line of sight at speed 13 knots. (Attack #6)
- 1259-30 Torpedo hit disintegrated bow of destroyer in great orange ball of flame. Dull thud heard throughout ship. Foremast of DD leaned over to 80°.
- 1310 Amazed to find destroyer had lost no freeboard and was on an even keel, in spite of loss of bow, so swung around to finish him off. All hands were topsides, manning the rail and the remaining high vantage points.
- Air coverage still in vicinity.
- 1345 Steady on course 311°T, fired two bow tubes, at range 750 yards, spread 100 feet normal to line of sight. Thirty-nine seconds later one hit swung the destroyer 20° to her right and put her well down forward. Right after this hit, breaking up noises were heard on sound. (Attack #7)
- 1346 After a look at the other escort, looked all around and found that one AKA-TAKE had disappeared.
- Since the other escort was a Chidori or DE, evaded at periscope depth. During the attacks approximately thirty depth charges were dropped, none close.
- 1601 Surfaced for end around. Pinging was still heard but targets and Chidori were not in sight. Went ahead standard on three main engines on 350 T.
- 1610 Radar contact 315°T, distant 26,000 yards.

- 1612 SD contact, distant 12 miles. (Aircraft contact #18.)
- 1632 SD contact closed to 6 miles - dived.
- 1655 Surfaced, continued end around, keeping nearest target at minimum range 18,000 yards during daylight.
- 1706 Sent contact report to SEGUNDO - no receipt.
- 1820 Sent second contact report to SEGUNDO - no receipt.
- 1850 Went to battle stations and started attack as targets were approaching the restricted area to S.E. of FORNOSA. (We were about 4 miles to eastward of the restricted zone when we started in.)
- 1900 Cleared contact report to SEGUNDO.
- 1922 With the scene brightly lighted by the moon, slowed and turned directly toward the convoy to reduce own silhouette. At this time we were sharp on their port bow, distant 16,000 yards.
- 1932 Dived to radar depth at 13,000 yards.
- 1952 At range 5300 yards, with three targets plainly visible in the periscope, went to 55 feet.
- Targets were on line of bearing, 225° relative from leading target. Our firing position was dead ahead of the trailing (or our right-hand) target.
- 1959 Fired three torpedoes at leading target, range 3400 yards, 35 port track, spread 300 feet normal to line of sight. (Attack #8)
- 2000 Shifted to middle target, fired remaining three forward fish, range 3480, 25 port track, spread 300 feet normal to line of sight. Swung right to get off trailing target's track for stern tube shots. (Attack #9)
- 2001(-) One minute and thirty-five seconds after first torpedo was fired, observed flash of hit on first target. This explosion was the loudest heard on this ship to date and visibly shook the ship. Eight seconds later we timed another hit. Both hits were heard plainly on the QB gear; only one torpedo was heard running in the direction of the first target following the second explosion.
- 2002 One minute and forty-five seconds after first torpedo of second salvo, observed flash on second target which coincided with first of two timed hits heard on JK sound gear.

- 2004 Observed gunfire on targets. Indiscriminate firing of small caliber guns and flashes, which I attributed to Y guns, were observed on both the targets at which we had fired. At about this time indiscriminate depth charging started, some singles, some in groups.
- It was my intention to fire stern tubes at the third ship, but #1 target presented us a 90° port angle on the bow at short range. He zigged left 180° giving us a 90° starboard track. Started tracking the #1 target.
- 2012 Having two ping ranges of 1400 yards, fired four stern tubes, 100 starboard track, spread 300 feet normal to line of sight. (Attack #10)
- 2013 / One minute and sixteen seconds after the first torpedo was fired, there was a blinding flash followed by a shower of sparks between us and the target, in the right-hand edge of the periscope field. Swung the periscope to the right and could find only one other target about twenty-five degrees to the right of the flash. One explosion was heard which coincided with the flash. As I could distinctly see three targets shortly before the stern tubes were fired and only two directly after the blinding flash, am sure the middle ship walked into a torpedo meant for the target which had reversed course and was partially overlapped by it. At any rate, it disappeared in a matter of minutes. It was bright moonlight throughout the attack and visibility was excellent.
- Am convinced that the target at which we fired twice was a "Q" ship. The hits in her apparently caused her no embarrassment and she caused us considerable concern during evasive tactics. We evaded at periscope depth, keeping our stern toward her.
- 2027 The "Q" ship gave us a zero angle on the bow and fishtailed toward us. Every time I started off his track he changed course to change his angle on the bow from port to starboard and vice versa.
- 2050 Pulled off his track at standard speed and slowed down. He passed across our stern, distance 400 yards and shoved off. We really felt naked with those empty stern tubes pointed his way.
- 2110 Heard pinging and sighted our DE or CHIDORI bearing 257°T, distant 5000 yards.
- 2118 CHIDORI closed to 2500 yards, appeared suspicious, pinging shifted to short scale, and he unloaded about a dozen depth charges. We kept him astern and pulled clear.

- 2130 Lost sight of CHIDORI.
- 2201 With two pingers still in the vicinity, surfaced and cleared area at full speed on three main engines. SJ radar had one target bearing 210°T, distant 24,000 yards.
- Clearing area in accordance with ComSubPac despatch orders of 30 December.
- 2250 Reported to SEGUNDO attack completed, remaining ships scattered, and that we were departing from area.
- 2255 SEGUNDO requested our position.
- 2331 Sent SEGUNDO our position and results of attacks.
- 2359 SEGUNDO reported her position NE of KOTO SHO, her search negative, and requested enemy course, which we reported as unknown. The SEGUNDO may very well have wondered at the lack of information from us on the convoy attacked. As we did not know the SEGUNDO's position and the convoy was approaching restricted waters, I felt delay in our attack was unwarranted. Developments of the night attack could not be reported due to submergence of this vessel. On surfacing the situation was as follows:

Of the original convoy of two escorts and four merchantmen, there remained one CHIDORI, one undamaged LRU, and one damaged but still efficient "Q" ship. Of these, the undamaged merchantman was the only favorable target. We had lost contact with her shortly after 2015 and believed the "Q" ship our lone radar contact on surfacing at 2200.

In view of losing contact two hours previously so near to the restricted area, I felt that further search was futile.

31 December

- 0955 SD radar contact 12 miles. (Aircraft contact #19.) Range closed slowly to 10 miles, then opened. Remained on the surface.
- 1954 Received Comsubpac instructions telling RAZORBACK and SEGUNDO to proceed to GUM for refit.
- 2307 Received instructions from SEGUNDO to rendezvous with her tomorrow at 1000.

1 January

- 0235 Exchanged recognition signals with USS SEGUNDO.
- 0325 Made radar contact on USS SEGUNDO and proceeded to station 9000 yards on her port beam.

31 December - 5 January

Proceeding in company with USS SEGUNDO enroute GUAM, conducting training dives, and radar tracking drills.

5 January

- 0445 Radar contact bearing 081°T, distant 15,000 yards.
- 0500 Exchanged recognition signals with PC-1591, who is our assigned escort.
- 0529 Proceeding to GUAM in column behind USS SEGUNDO, escort leading.
- 1215 Arrived GUAM for refit.

FT12-10/116-3(15) SUBMARINE FORCE, PACIFIC FLEET

Serial 0164

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20 January 1945

THIRD ENDORSEMENT to
RAZORBACK Report of
Second War Patrol.

NOTE: THIS REPORT WILL BE
DESTROYED PRIOR TO
ENTERING PATROL AREA.

COMSUBSPAC PATROL REPORT NO. 642
U.S.S. RAZORBACK - SECOND WAR PATROL.

From: The Commander Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet.
To : The Commander-in-Chief; United States Fleet.
Via : The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: U.S.S. RAZORBACK (SS394) - Report of Second War Patrol
(15 November, 1944, to 5 January, 1945).

1. The second war patrol of the RAZORBACK, under the command of Lieutenant Commander C. Donald Brown, U.S. Navy, was conducted in the Luzon Strait Area. The RAZORBACK, along with the U.S.S. TREPANG (SS412) and the U.S.S. SEGUNDO (SS398), formed a coordinated attack group with the commanding officer of the TREPANG, Commander R. M. Davenport, U.S. Navy, as the group commander. The RAZORBACK, midway through the patrol, returned to Saipan for a reload of torpedoes, then rejoined the SEGUNDO for coordinated attack with Commander J. D. Fulp, Jr., U.S. Navy, as group commander.

2. This outstanding patrol resulted in six good contacts. A total of ten aggressive torpedo attacks were delivered on escorts as well as on cargo carriers which resulted in severe damage to the enemy.

3. Award of the Submarine Combat Insignia for this patrol is authorized.

4. The Commander Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet, congratulates the commanding officer, officers, and crew for this aggressive and highly successful patrol; a fighting performance for which the RAZORBACK can well be very proud. Unfortunately, available evidence in the case of Attack No. 2 permits assessment of damage only. The RAZORBACK is credited with having inflicted the following damage upon the enemy during this patrol:

S U N K

1/2* - Large AP (EU)	- * 5,000 tons (Attacks Nos. 3 & 4)
1 - Medium AO (EU)	- 7,500 tons (Attack No. 5)
1 - DD (WAKETAKE Type) (EC)	- 800 tons (Attacks Nos. 6 & 7)
1 - Large AK (EU)	- <u>7,500</u> tons (Attacks Nos. 9 & 10)

TOTAL SUNK 20,800 tons

* One-half credit to SEGUNDO who had previously damaged this ship.

FF12-10/116-3(15) SUBMARINE FORCE, PACIFIC FLEET

Serial 0164

Care of Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California,

20 January 1945

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THIRD ENDORSEMENT to
RIZORBACK Report of
Second War Patrol.

NOTE: THIS REPORT WILL BE
DESTROYED PRIOR TO
ENTERING PATROL AREA.

CO SUBSPAC PATROL REPORT NO. 642
U.S.S. RIZORBACK - SECOND WAR PATROL.

Subject: U.S.S. RIZORBACK (SS394) - Report of Second War Patrol
(15 November, 1944, to 5 January 1945).

D A M A G E D

1 - DD (SHIGURE Type) (EU)	-	1,400 tons (Attack No. 2)
1 - Medium AK (EU)	-	<u>4,000</u> tons (Attack No. 8)
TOTAL DAMAGED	-	5,400 tons
TOTAL SUNK & DAMAGED	-	26,200 tons

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E. L. HYRES, 2nd,
Flag Captain

Serial 07

Care of Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California,
10 January 1945.

CONFIDENTIAL

SECOND ENDORSEMENT to
CO RAZORBACK Report of
Second War Patrol.

From: The Commander Submarine Squadron Ten.
To : The Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : (1) The Commander Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet.
(2) The Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: U.S.S. RAZORBACK (SS394) - Second War Patrol - Comments on.

1. Forwarded, concurring in the remarks of the first endorsement.

2. Of the six ship contacts made, RAZORBACK attacked all except one, which could not be closed, inflicting severe damage on the enemy's escort forces as well as on his cargo carriers. The Commanding Officer states that in the attack of 1 December (the first for the RAZORBACK as well as for himself) there was no reasonable probability of hitting, due to the excessive torpedo run for Mk. 18 torpedoes, and that torpedoes should not have been fired. The Commander Submarine Squadron Ten concurs. Although the firing ranges were, in general, high, the results obtained with 16 hits from 42 torpedoes fired speak well of the fire control organization.

3. The successful use of ping ranges, without alerting the escorts, is worthy of note.

4. The Commander Submarine Squadron Ten congratulates the Commanding Officer, officers, and crew of the RAZORBACK for this alert and aggressive patrol, and recommends that the damage inflicted be assessed as follows:

SUNK

1	DD SIGURE (EU)	1,400 tons (2nd attack)
* $\frac{1}{2}$	AP - AK large (EU)	5,000 tons (3rd & 4th attacks)
1	AO (EU)	8,000 tons (5th attack)
1	DD WAKATAKE (EC)	800 tons (6th & 7th attacks)
1	AK large (EU)	<u>7,500 tons</u> (9th & 10th attacks)

Total - 22,700 tons

* - $\frac{1}{2}$ credited to SEGUNDO, who had previously damaged this ship.

DAMAGED

1	AK medium (EU)	4,000 tons (8th attack)
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Total sunk and damaged - 26,700 tons.


G. L. RUSSELL.

8 January 1945

C-O-M-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

From: The Commander Submarine Division EIGHTY-TWO.
To : The Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : (1) The Commander Submarine Squadron TEN.
(2) The Commander Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet
(3) The Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet.
Subject: U.S.S. RAZORBACK (SS394) — Report of Second War Patrol.

1. The second war patrol of the U.S.S. RAZORBACK was conducted in the LUZON STRAITS Area and was of fifty-one days duration. Twenty-one days were spent in the area. Time in area was broken into two parts by a trip to SAIPAN in order to obtain a reload of torpedoes. The RAZORBACK was a member of the TREPANG-SEGUNDO-RAZORBACK coordinated attack group commanded by Comdr. R. M. Davenport in the TREPANG for the first part of the patrol. After the return from SAIPAN the RAZORBACK rejoined the SEGUNDO with Comdr. J. D. Fulp, Jr. as pack commander. This was the first war patrol of the commanding officer, Lieut.: Comdr. C. D. Brown, in command.

2. A summary of attacks follows:

(a) FIRST ATTACK: (1 December 1944)

The target group, which was contacted at dusk, consisted of two ships, one being a large AP. This group had three surface escorts and an air screen. A periscope approach was made and because of value of the target (the large AP) six torpedoes (Mk. 18-1) were fired at a range of 4,000 yards which was the minimum range that could be obtained. The decision to fire at this range was greatly influenced by the fact that the targets probably would reach port by dark. No hits were made.

(b) SECOND ATTACK: (5 December 1944)

This attack was made at dawn against an apparent Hunter-Killer group consisting of one SHIGURE destroyer (EU) and two CHIDORI Torpedo boats. The initial contact was made by radar just prior to dawn, and continued on the surface until the RAZORBACK was forced to dive. Six torpedoes were fired at the SHIGURE DD. Mean range was 2,430 yards. Tracks varied between 92° and 82°, gyros 012 to 031. Sea state was 6. All torpedoes were observed to breach after firing but sound reported them running toward the target. Three correctly timed hits were heard.

(c) THIRD ATTACK: (6 December 1944)

The target, a large AP-AK, was contacted by radar. This contact had been developed from the pack commander's contact reports. Two escorts were present. This target was making about 2 knots through the water as the result of a previous attack by the SEGUNDO. At a range of 5,000 yards the moon came out from behind the clouds forcing the commanding officer to dive. Four torpedoes were fired from the stern tubes at a range of 2,600 yards; mean track 69°, mean gyros 24°L; and the depth was set at 10 feet. Three correctly timed hits were heard and target was seen to catch on fire.

C-O-M-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

8 January 1945

Subject: U.S.S. RAZORBACK (SS394) — Report of Second War Patrol.

(d) FOURTH ATTACK: (7 December 1944)

This was a continuation of the previous attack on the same target. The AP was observed to be burning fiercely and the stern was seen to rise clear of the water. However it was seen to settle back so the commanding officer decided to give her the coup de grace. Four torpedoes were fired at range 2,900 yards; track angle 152 degrees; and depth set 10 feet. One hit was reported as being heard. Immediately after this the fire increased in intensity. Explosions were seen and heard on the target for the next hour. The fires were observed to flare up and die out during the last series of large explosions soon thereafter the target disappeared from the radar screen as if it had sunk because of boiler or ammunition explosions.

(e) FIFTH ATTACK: (30 December 1944)

The target group consisting of two AO's and two AK's was escorted by one CHIDORI and one destroyer. Six torpedoes were fired at the trailing AO, a large tanker (EU) of about 8,000 tons. The range at firing averaged 3,200 yards; track angle 112°; depth set 10 feet with small gyro angles. Two heavy exactly timed hits were heard.

At this point an approaching DD occupied the commanding officer's attention. However the AO was observed to turn 90° away and assume a list. Three loud explosions which were neither depth charges nor end of run explosions were heard from the direction of the target, about one minute after the hits followed by loud breaking-up noises. This AO was not seen in company with this convoy during the later attacks and is believed to have sunk.

(f) SIXTH AND SEVENTH ATTACKS: (30 December 1944)

The WAKABANE DD(EO) that approached the RAZORBACK after the fifth attack made its last error of judgment. Four torpedoes were fired at a range of 1,800 yards, on track angles of 109°. One hit blew the bow off this DD. Since it did not sink and was drifting with the wind two more torpedoes were fired (attack number 7) at a range of 750 yards. One hit was made which sank the target in two minutes.

(g) EIGHT, NINE AND TENTH ATTACKS: (30 December 1944)

Contact was regained with convoy, attacked earlier, upon surfacing after sunset. The approach was started on the surface but the excellent visibility forced submergence to radar and then periscope depth. With the exception of the DD sunk and the AO probably sunk the convoy consisted of the same ships as were first seen. Three torpedoes were fired from the bow nest at the leading AK (Attack 8). Range 3,400 yards, track angle 35°, average gyros 03°, depth setting 6 feet. Two hits were obtained. The set up was then shifted and the remaining three torpedoes from the bow nest were fired at the second ship in column. This was the largest ship in the convoy and considered to be an AK or AO(UN) of approximately 8,000 tons. Range was 3,600 yards, track angles averaged 25°, gyro angles 015, depth set at 6 feet. Two hits were made. This target blew up and sank during the next attack.

Serial (001)

~~C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L~~Subject: U.S.S. RAZORBACK (SS394) — Report of Second War Patrol.
-----(g) EIGHTH, NINTH AND TENTH ATTACKS: (30 December 1944) (Cont'd)

It had been the commanding officer's intention to fire the after most at the last ship in column but the AK first attacked was seen to reverse course and stand down the column despite the two hits previously received. Four torpedoes from the after most were fired (Attack 10), at a range of 1,400 yards. Track angles averaged 101°; gyro angles 202° and depth set at 6 feet. One timed hit was obtained. Whether this hit was on the AK fired at or on the AK/AO fired on in the ninth attack is uncertain since these vessels were overlapping on opposite courses when the hit was heard. The AK/AO blow up and sank at this time.

3. The remarks of the commanding officer in Section U concerning enemy radar deception should be noted inasmuch as the first time they were encountered a convoy was picked up shortly thereafter.

4. On the last attack a vessel that gave every indication of being a "Q" ship was reported as being the leading ship of the convoy.

5. The RAZORBACK returned from patrol clean and shipshape. The material condition appeared to be very good. A normal refit is indicated.

6. The Commanding Officer, Officers, and men of the RAZORBACK are to be congratulated on the completion of this aggressive and very effective patrol.

Lowell T. Stone
LOWELL T. STONE.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

5 January 1945

From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. RAZORBACK (SS394).
To: Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
Via: (1) Commander Submarine Division
(2) Commander Submarine Squadron
(3) Commander Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet.
(4) Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: U.S.S. RAZORBACK (SS394), Report of War Patrol
Number T.O.

Enclosure: (A) Subject Report.
(B) Track Chart (To ComSubPac).

1. Enclosure (A), covering the SECOND War Patrol of this vessel conducted in the LUZON STRAIT area during the period 15 November 1944 to 5 January 1945, is forwarded herewith.

C. DONALD BROWN