

H.M. L.S.T. 430

12th September, 1943

FROM 199/949

1. I have the honour to submit the following report of proceedings in accordance with Commodore, Force "N"'s orders, AVON/N 12, paragraph 44©.
2. At approximately 0915 on 9th September 1943, His Majesty's L.S.T. 430 was ordered by the Principal Beach Master to beach on Sugar Amber Beach. It was observed, on arrival off the beach, that the other L.S.T.s were already there and it was decided to beach to starboard of L.S.T. 365. The approach to the beach was made at 200 revolutions and when about 50 yards from the shore "430" grounded heavily on a sand bar. The depth of water under the ramp being too great to allow vehicles to be off-loaded, it was seen that another attempt would have to be made.
3. In the meantime, L.S.T. 365, who also had grounded some distance off shore, was unbeaching. She swung rapidly to starboard when her starboard bow door hit 430's port after davit, causing severe damage. By this time 430 was almost beam on to the beach and the direct hit by an enemy 75m/m shell was scored, entering the ship's side, starboard aft, immediately above the main exhaust. Almost at once the bridge received a direct hit and Lieutenant Commander H. Laws, R.D. R.N.R., the Commanding Officer, was seriously wounded in the back, legs and arms.
4. At approximately 1125 I assumed command and unbeached the ship. Whilst turning for the run in, a third shell hit the port side, entering the tank space and causing some damage and casualties. Using flank ahead on both engines, I beached at a point some 100 yards to the south of the beach limits. The surface here, although not firm enough for wheeled vehicles, could take tanks and one medium and three heavy tanks were discharged. This lightened the ship considerably and no difficulty, using full ahead on both engines, was experienced in beaching alongside H.M. L.S.T. 319 within the beach limits.
5. Whilst the ship was leaving the beach for the second time, a second shell hit was sustained on the starboard side. This shell entered the tank space and set alight a large motor truck containing ammunition. The fire was extinguished before much damage was done. In this connection I would like to mention the excellent work done by W.D.G. Miller, Warrant Engineer, R.N.R. who was principally instrumental in getting the fire under control. He tackled the job in a very courageous manner, alone at first, although he was aware of the contents of the truck and although the truck crew and other military personnel in the vicinity were retreating rapidly towards the beach. Had he not been on the scene and got the fire-fighting apparatus working immediately the consequence might have been extremely serious.

6. During this period a fifth shell struck the ship, holing port 22 oil tank approximately six inches above the water line. Two trucks on the upper deck were also hit a few minutes later, the shell however, failed to explode on impact, merely passing through the upper works of the trucks and bursting in the sea, causing no damage to the ship. Throughout this time the vehicles were being discharged, the beach and ship were under heavy shell fire and a continuous stream of wounded troops from the beaches was coming on board for first aid. This impeded the off-loading to a considerable extent and was stopped. Further off-loading was completed and the ship unbeached. A list of damage sustained is attached. In all there were seven serious casualties suffered on board, six being military personnel.

1st Lieut P. Davey R.N.V.R.

H.M.S. L.S.T. 430

BALTIMORE	FEB 26 1943	-----	MAR 10 1943
NORFOLK	MAR 11 ---	-----	MAR -- --
NEW YORK	MAR -- ---	-----	APL 28 --
ORAN	MAY 26 ---	-----	MAY 28 --
MOSTAGANEN	MAY 28 ---	-----	JUN 4 --
BIZERTA	JUN 7 ---	-----	JUN 20 --
BOUGIE	JUN 22 ---	-----	JUN 25 --
BONA	JUN 25 ---	-----	JUN 25 --
SOUSSE	JUN 28 ---	-----	JUN 29 --
SFAX	JUN 30 ---	-----	JLY 8 --
SICILY	JLY 10 ---	-----	JLY 10 --
MALTA	JLY 11 ---	-----	JLY 12 --
SICILY	JLY 13 ---	-----	JLY 13 --
MALTA	JLY 14 ---	-----	JLY 15 --
SOUSSE	JLY 16 ---	-----	JLY 17 --
SICILY	JLY 19 ---	-----	JLY 21 --
MALTA	JLY 22 ---	-----	AUG 15 --
TRIPOLI	AUG 16 ---	-----	AUG 17 --
SICILY	AUG 19 ---	-----	AUG 19 --
TRIPOLI	AUG 21 ---	-----	SEP 6 --
SALERNO	SEP 9 ---	-----	SEP 10 --
BIZERTA	SEP 12 ---	-----	SEP 27 --
CATANIA	SEP 28 ---	-----	SEP 30 --
BIZERTA	OCT 1 ---	-----	OCT 11 --
TARANTO	OCT 14 ---	-----	OCT 20 --
BIZERTA	OCT 24 ---	-----	OCT 27 --
NAPLES	OCT 30 ---	-----	OCT 30 --
BIZERTA	NOV 2 ---	-----	NOV 3 --
TARANTO	NOV 7 ---	-----	NOV 9 --
BIZERTA	NOV 12 ---	-----	NOV 19 --
NAPLES	NOV 21 ---	-----	NOV 21 --
BIZERTA	NOV 23 ---	-----	DEC 14 --
TARANTO	DEC 17 ---	-----	DEC 18 --
BIZERTA	DEC 21 ---	-----	DEC 25 --
NAPLES	DEC 27 ---	-----	DEC 28 --
BIZERTA	DEC 30 ---	-----	JAN 4 1944
TARANTO	JAN 8 1944	-----	JAN 9 --
NAPLES	JAN 11 ---	-----	JAN 20 --
ANZIO	JAN 22 ---	-----	JAN 28 --
NAPLES	JAN 28 ---	-----	FEB 10 --
ANZIO	FEB 11 ---	-----	FEB 11 --
NAPLES	FEB 12 ---	-----	FEB 18 --
NAPLES	FEB 18 ---	-----	FEB 18 --
ANZIO	FEB 19 ---	-----	FEB 19 --
NAPLES	FEB 20 ---	-----	FEB 22 --
ANZIO	FEB 23 ---	-----	FEB 23 --
NAPLES	FEB 25 ---	-----	MAR 4 --
ANZIO	MAR 5 ---	-----	MAR 5 --
NAPLES	MAR 6 ---	-----	MAR 10 --
ANZIO	MAR 11 ---	-----	MAR 11 --
NAPLES	MAR 12 ---	-----	MAR 13 --
BIZERTA	MAR 14 ---	-----	MAR 17 --

STANDING BY IN BIZERTA BAY WAITING FOR ORDERS FOR U.K.