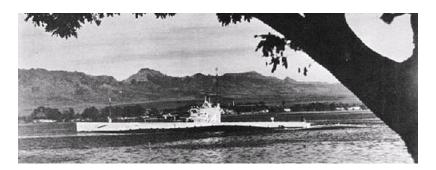


Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

USS S-44 (SS 155) October 7, 1943 - 56 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. Whitemore, 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.

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

Erhart, 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

Survivors

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

Wood, J. C. F1