

THE HISTORY THE UNITED STATES SUBMARINE BLACKFIN

On April 10, 1944, a new submarine was born when Congress approved the authorization to let out the contract for the building of the USS BLACKFIN. The Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut was awarded the contract and on June 10, 1943 the keel of the BLACKFIN was laid and construction had commenced. Gradually the steel frames and plates took shape and finally on March 12, 1944, the BLACKFIN slid down the ways into the Thames River. Her sponsor was Mrs. Charles A. LOCKWOOD, wife of Admiral LOCKWOOD, Commander Submarines, Pacific Fleet. By this time many of the officers and crew had reported for prospective duty on board the BLACKFIN and thus started the beginning of many long hours of work necessary in making the ship's complement an efficient fighting unit.

On our National Day of Independence, July 4, 1944, the USS BLACKFIN was commissioned at the Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut with LCDR George H. LAIRD, Jr, U. S. Navy, as her Commanding Officer. The other ship's Officers were:

Lieutenant Commander C. L. RAGUETT, USN	Executive Officer
Lieutenant C. W. BUNTING, USNR	Engineering Officer
Lieutenant F. W. SMITH, Jr., USNR	Gunnery & Torpedo Officer
Lieutenant A. B. BARRETT, USN	First Lieutenant
Lieutenant (JG) L. B. MISNER, USNR	Asst. Engineering Officer
Ensign W. E. TAVERNA, USNR	Communications Officer
Ensign O. D. LEFFINGWELL, USN	Commissary Officer

During the next few weeks an extensive training period was undertaken in and around New London. For a diversion during this period, the BLACKFIN went up to Cape Cod Bay where she made a practice mine plant. With most of her shakedown trials completed and her officers and crew rapidly developing into a fine fighting team, the BLACKFIN bade farewell to the shores of the good old U.S.A. and on August 14, 1944, set her course for Panama enroute to join the Pacific Fleet. On August 29, 1944, the BLACKFIN departed from the Canal Zone and reported for duty to Commander Submarines, Pacific Fleet.

On September 10, 1944, the BLACKFIN arrived at Pearl Harbor. After several days of voyage repairs, she experienced another extensive training period in the operating area off Pearl Harbor. By September 30, 1944, she was spoiling for action and it was on this date that the BLACKFIN departed on her first war patrol which lasted 66 days. Having been slated for duty in the Southwest Pacific Area the BLACKFIN proceeded to Saipan for further orders and to top off on fuel oil, arriving at Saipan on October 19, 1944. This was the first look at conquered Jap territory for many of the officers and crew. On 13 October 1944 the BLACKFIN departed Saipan and headed for enemy waters in the vicinity of the northern approaches of Palawan Passage in the Philippines. While enroute to her area an unidentified submarine was sighted and thus on October 18th, all hands went to battle stations for the first time when it meant "for keeps". This first contact, however, did not materialize, as contact with the target was lost, probably due to her diving.

The BLACKFIN was in Philippine waters during the initial invasion of the Philippines by Allied Forces. It was on the night of October 26th that actual contact with the enemy was made. A radar contact was made on a large ship and her escort. Again all hands went to their battle stations and the approach was started. However, during the approach, the escort turned and headed for the BLACKFIN and as the range began to close rapidly she was forced to submerge in order to evade. Since two contacts had already been made and both had been frustrated, all hands were spoiling for a "kill". On the morning of the first of November in the western approaches to West Apo Pass, the O.O.D. reported smoke on the horizon through the periscope, the BLACKFIN being submerged at the time. Immediately the captain ordered the course changed for the smoke. Shortly thereafter, one merchant ship (4,000 tons) with four escorts were seen coming over the horizon. Again all hands went to their battle stations and this time "contact" was made. As a result of this attack the BLACKFIN sent her first victim to the bottom with several torpedo hits and proceeded to clear the area, leaving behind four very much confused escorts. On November 3, 1944, a lighted ship was sighted in the early night hours. After a thorough investigation of this contact, it was definitely classified as a hospital ship. However, soon after on the 7th of November, a large Jap tanker (10,000 tons) with three escorts was sighted through the periscope and immediately another attack on the Japanese merchant marine ensued. This time, however, even though two torpedoes were known to hit the tanker, only damage could be claimed. Towards the end of the patrol, the BLACKFIN was ordered to perform a special mission. On the 18th of November, 1944, with one ship definitely sunk, one ship damaged and a special mission completed to her credit, the BLACKFIN set her course for Fremantle, West Australia, via Darwin. Enroute she crossed the "line" and Neptuneus Rex had his realm increased by three-fourths of a submarine crew. During these festivities, the Royal Barber had a "field day". On December 4, 1944, the BLACKFIN arrived at Fremantle, W.A. from her first war patrol. The Submarine Combat Pin was authorized for all hands for this successful patrol and the Commanding Officer was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Lieutenant Commander RAGUETT and Lieutenant BARRETT were awarded the Letter of Commendation with Ribbon, the former posthumously as he had been reported missing on the U.S.S. BARBEL.

Upon the completion of her refit by the USS EURAYLE and the relief crew of Submarine Division 182, the BLACKFIN again underwent an extensive training period prior to starting on her second war patrol. During this refit, her Commanding Officer, Commander LAIRD, became ill and was relieved by Lieutenant Command William L. KITCH, U.S. Navy.

On January 2, 1945, under her new Commanding Officer, the BLACKFIN set forth on her second war patrol for forty-five days duration in the South China Sea. Upon arrival on station off the Western Coast of the Malayan Peninsula she became one of a wolf pack which was covering that area. The first days on station were relatively quiet and it wasn't until January 24th that contact was made with the enemy. In the early morning hours she contacted a convoy consisting of a large Japanese tanker (10,000 tons) escorted by four escorts, some of them destroyers. About an hour before dawn BLACKFIN, having called in the other submarines of the wolf pack, was in position for an attack. During the attack on the tanker one of the escorts reporting the target got dangerously close and would have been attacked if not for the fact that after firing several torpedoes at the tanker from the bow to

Commanding Officer decided it would be necessary to attack the destroyer before finishing off the tanker. A hit was observed just aft of the bridge of the destroyer and immediately she became enveloped in smoke and sank. One hit was observed in the first salvo fired at the tanker. This 1500 ton destroyer now out of the way, the Commanding Officer swung around and brought the stern tubes to bear on the tanker for a second salvo. A torpedo was seen to hit the tanker from this second salvo. By this time the other escorts had come out of their confusion and at about the same time of the second hit on the tanker, one of the escorts began firing his deck gun at BLACKFIN at 1700 yards. The captain decided that it was time for him to depart "in haste" and changed course accordingly. The one escort gave chase and fired several rounds; but after a few minutes with the BLACKFIN gradually opening the range he gave up - much to BLACKFIN's relief. By this time one of the other submarines of the wolf pack had started an attack on the same convoy. Later on in the same day contact was again regained with the convoy. The speed of the convoy had slowed down considerably, indicating that the tanker had probably just been damaged. Upon starting to get into position for another attack on this same convoy, another ship and escort were sighted on the high periscope. Thus the attack on the first convoy was broken off and the chase was started on this second contact. Just as the BLACKFIN was starting to get into position for a possible attack, a Jap plane came on the scene and spoiled the show by forcing the BLACKFIN to submerge. In the early afternoon one of the other submarines in the wolf pack was contacted and it was decided that both convoys had reached the shallow waters approaching Singapore so that any further hopes for an attack had to be abandoned. Later that night the BLACKFIN came across a "hunter-killer" group which consisted of destroyer escorts and similar craft that were searching the area for our submarines. Being a bright moonlit night one of the "killers" sighted the BLACKFIN and for the second time in less than twenty-four hours the BLACKFIN played gunnery target for the Japanese Navy. After being chased for a considerable period with the BLACKFIN again opening range throughout the chase, the escort ship gave up and once again all hands breathed a little easier. It was only a few days later when one of the other boats in the wolf pack reported a night radar contact with another Jap convoy. Upon receiving this contact report, the captain headed toward the position given at flank speed. The moon again was present with all its brilliance. No sooner had BLACKFIN picked up the Jap ships on radar when explosions were heard from the direction of the enemy. Immediately one of the Jap ships burst into flames and sank. The captain decided since it was nearing daylight that a day periscope approach would be more successful so he started to get into position accordingly. By daybreak BLACKFIN was stealthfully approaching the enemy at periscope depth but as she approached the targets it was found that they were small escorts which draw little water making them a difficult target for a torpedo and a very unpleasant ship to have around in case you miss. With this in mind, the attack was abandoned and the BLACKFIN cleared the area. At this time the BLACKFIN received orders to take station for life-guard duty and thus she left the wolf pack to carry out her orders. A couple of days later she was ordered to join a wolf pack to patrol the western approaches to Balabac Strait where plane contacts with Jap flying boats were common. During this period one of the wolf pack was lost. After several days in the vicinity of the strait, the BLACKFIN was ordered to attempt to contact a larger Japanese naval force heading north.

from Singapore to the Japanese Empire. After a few days the BLACKFIN was on her scouting station with several other U. S. submarines keeping a sharp lookout for this Jap task force. The excitement started around noon on the 12th of February when a radar contact was reported to the southward at a range of 13 miles. At first the only thing visible in that direction was a large rain squall. Suddenly from out of the rain squall loomed the pagoda foremast of a Japanese battleship of the ISE Class. Immediately the BLACKFIN began tracking the target and alerted all other submarines by radio. Soon it was found there were two battleships, a heavy cruiser and at least three destroyers in this task force. Heading northward into heavy seas making flank speed, the captain commenced maneuvering the ship to get in a position for an attack. As she closed the enemy task force, one of the destroyers was seen to break away from the formation and head toward her. The enemy must now know that she was in the vicinity, as the destroyer kept heading toward her with a zero angle on the bow. Since the BLACKFIN was tracking him by high periscope and radar, and the periscope at this distance is virtually impossible to be sighted, it was surmised that he must have picked up our radar interference. This action by the destroyers left no alternative but to open out and at the same time to try and maintain contact with the enemy. At this time the Japanese made a radical change of course away, thus making the position for a possible attack unfavorable. Due to the enemy being able to make better headway into the sea, a gradually opened range and after another hour contact was lost. The BLACKFIN, however, had already sent in a contact report as to the enemy's position and had the satisfaction of knowing she had at least done something to aid in his destruction. Upon losing contact the captain changed course in hopes that as the Jap task force changed course to northward again that he might again gain contact. After many hours of an arduous chase it was learned from a contact report from another U.S. fleet unit that the enemy force had gotten ahead of the BLACKFIN. After checking her position to make doubly sure that there was no chance of her getting in an attack, she slowed down to standard speed. Soon after the BLACKFIN received orders to proceed to Subic Bay for her refit. The BLACKFIN was one of the first three submarines to enter Subic Bay, in fact upon her arrival on February 14, 1945, our ground forces were still fighting for the town of Olongapo, the main sea port of Subic Bay. The Second patrol was considered successful. For the damage inflicted on the enemy the Commanding Officer was awarded the Silver Star Medal, LCDR J. L. HAINES, the Executive Officer, and LT BUNTING were awarded Bronze Star Medals. The Letter of Commendation with Ribbon was awarded to LT BARRETT, Chief Motor Machinist's Mate WATSON, Electrician's Mate First Class BONFIG and Radio Technician First Class AUNBELL.

Due to the shortage of personnel at Subic Bay, the BLACKFIN accomplished her own refit aided by the repair force of the USS GRIFFIN. On March 6, 1945, after one day's training exercises, the BLACKFIN set forth on her third war patrol of 34 days in the South China Sea in the vicinity of Cam Ranh Bay, where again she was part of another, but very large, wolf pack.

All was fairly quiet until around the last of March when a plane reported a heavily escorted convoy moving up the Indo China coast. Immediately the wolf pack was assigned stations in an attempt to intercept the enemy convoy. On the morning of March 28th, the BLACKFIN was patrolling at periscope depth close to the coast line just north of Camranh Bay when the sound operator reporting "pinging" to southward. Soon afterwards the tops of masts were sighted through the periscopes. The captain ordered all hands to battle stations and commenced the approach on the Jap convoy. When the plane had reported that the convoy, which consisted of two ships, was heavily escorted he wasn't kidding, for there were at least eight escorts. The convoy was hugging the coast line which made it necessary for the BLACKFIN to enter shallow waters to press home an attack. It was after the BLACKFIN had evaded all but one of the escorts that hell broke loose. It was just as she had gotten through the outer screen of escorts and in torpedo range of the largest of the two ships of the convoy that one escort picked her up on his sound gear and immediately headed toward from 800 yards at full speed. His initial attack almost sank the BLACKFIN, putting most of her equipment out of commission. Her hopes for an attack on the convoy gone, the only hopes was for survival. After laying on the bottom for several hours in 150 feet of water, the escorts gave up and the BLACKFIN was able to clear the area. Later on that afternoon she surfaced and headed for open sea to lick her wounds which were numerous. She learned shortly thereafter that one of the other submarines in our wolf pack had been able to get in and had damaged the large ship of the so badly that the enemy was forced to beach her. The fact that the BLACKFIN had drawn off several of the escorts had enabled her sister ship to make a successful attack. This helped to console the BLACKFIN for the beating she had taken. After a careful survey of the damage inflicted upon her the BLACKFIN reported to the wolf pack commander that it would be necessary for her to remain out in the open sea to effect the necessary repairs. Because of the damage received the BLACKFIN was ordered to head for Fremantle, W.A. for refit. For this attack, the Commanding Officer was recommended for a Bronze Star Medal and the following for a Letter of Commendation with Ribbon:

LODR J. L. HAINES, USN
LTJG L. E. THOMPSON, USNR
COSTA, Ernest Anthony, CIM(T), USN
KELLER, Samuel Frederick, Jr., CMM(T), USN
PARKA, Ahti (N), MoMM1C, USN
LIVRSEY, Wayne (N), RM1C(T), USN
CHAPPELL, Ray Lloyd, MoMM2c, USN

On April 9, 1945, the BLACKFIN arrived in Fremantle Harbor where she underwent a refit by the Advanced Training and Relief Crew Number Five and Submarine Repair Unit at Fremantle.

On completion of a normal refit and training period at Fremantle, the BLACKFIN departed May 7, 1945 on her fourth war patrol. This patrol was to be made in the vicinity of Singapore, but was cut short by engineering failures. After spending two days on station the BLACKFIN was ordered into Subic Bay for repairs.

In Subic Bay the repair force of the USS ANTHEDON and the Relief Crew of Submarine Division 261 attempted to make the necessary repairs. It was finally decided that the repairs were beyond the capacity of the tender and relief crew so the BLACKFIN prepared to proceed to a continental port of the U.S. for overhaul. From Subic Bay the BLACKFIN proceeded to Saipan where she received voyage repairs and fuel from the USS ORION. From Saipan she proceeded on to Pearl Harbor and was held there to be refitted by the Relief Crew of Submarine Division 105 and the Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor.

After a three week refit in Pearl Harbor and a pleasant rest period at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel for the officers and the crew, the BLACKFIN departed on July 17, 1945, for the fifth war patrol.

She proceeded from Pearl Harbor to Midway Island and spent the period from 21 to 29 July training and getting further repairs from the U.S.S. BUSHNELL. The BLACKFIN then left Midway and proceeded to Saipan. She arrived at Saipan on August 7, 1945 and received voyage repairs from the USS ORION. On the 11th of August she departed Saipan for patrol in the Yellow Sea area. While in the eastern approaches of the Nansei Shoto enroute to patrol area the "cease fire" order was received. However, the BLACKFIN proceeded on to the Yellow Sea and passed the time by sinking floating mines. Sixty-one mines were sunk on this patrol. On August 29th, 1945, received orders to depart area and set course for Guam. She passed through a typhoon while enroute but finally arrived at Guam. She received voyage repairs and fuel from the USS SPERRY and proceeded on to San Diego, California via Pearl Harbor.

The USS BLACKFIN was assigned as an active unit of the Pacific Fleet as part of Submarine Squadron ONE.

On 19 December 1945, Commander Richard M. FARRELL, USN relieved Commander William L. KITCH, USN, as Commanding Officer. On 2 January 1946, the BLACKFIN departed for Guam, M.I. via Pearl Harbor, with units of Submarine Squadron ONE, including USS BUSHNELL. She remained at Guam until 20 February 1946, at which time the BLACKFIN sailed for Mare Island, California for shipyard overhaul. On 28 June 1946, she departed Mare Island to participate in "Operation Iceburg", with CDR L. A. RAMAGE, USN as Task Group Commander. She arrived in Pearl Harbor and topped off with supplies and fuel; left Pearl Harbor in company with TRUMPETFISH, enroute to the Arctic Ocean via Dutch Harbor, T.A. At Dutch Harbor, the CUSK and the DIODON joined forces with the BLACKFIN and the TRUMPETFISH and proceeded north via the Bering Straits to the ice pack. The BLACKFIN crossed the Arctic Circle and all hands were enrolled in "The Royal Order of the Blue Nose". She departed the Arctic Ocean on 30 July 1946 for Guam, M.I. via Nome, Alaska and Marcus Island. She arrived at Guam on 12 August 1946 and reported to Commander Marianas for duty and A/S warfare services. While at Guam, a cruise was made to Truk, Caroline Islands for recreation and sightseeing purposes.

The BLACKFIN returned to her Squadron at Pearl Harbor on 26 September 1946 where she remained until 8 July 1947, taking part in various inter-type exercises and the fleet war maneuvers.

On 3 July 1947, CDR James G. ANDREWS, USN, relieved CDR Richard M. FARRELL, USN, as Commanding Officer. The BLACKFIN departed Pearl Harbor on 8 July 1947 for San Diego, California, stopping first at Portland, Oregon for the annual ELKS Convention. All hands had an extremely pleasant time while in Portland. On 23 July 1947 the BLACKFIN arrived in San Diego and reported to Commander Submarine Squadron THREE for temporary duty involving ASW services and remained in that area until 6 September 1947 at which time she returned to her Squadron in Pearl Harbor. The BLACKFIN underwent shipyard overhaul at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard from October 1947 to February 1948.

On 1 May 1948, CDR James L. HUNNICUTT, USN, relieved CDR James G. ANDREWS, USN, as Commanding Officer. The BLACKFIN remained in the Hawaiian Islands area until 21 May 1948 when she departed on her simulated war patrol number 2 in northern waters. Brief stops were made in Adak, T.A. and Kodiak, Alaska while enroute to Mare enroute to Mare Island, California for decommissioning. The BLACKFIN reported to Commander Mare Island Group, Pacific Reserve Fleet on 1 July 1948 and was decommissioned on 19 November 1948.

The BLACKFIN was taken out of the Moth-ball Fleet, Mare Island, California on 1 November 1950 and the U.S. Naval Shipyard there started her conversion from a Fleet Type submarine to that of a Guppy 1-A class. Conversion was completed and BLACKFIN was recommissioned on 15 May 1951. CDR Donald M. KABLE, USN, assumed command with LCDR Charles K. SCHMIDT, USN as his Executive Officer.

After four weeks of completion trials, BLACKFIN proceeded to San Diego, California to join Submarine Squadron THREE. Arriving in San Diego on 30 June 1951, BLACKFIN completed basic and advanced training and was then available for the usual services offered to surface and aviation commands. BLACKFIN terminated her services in the San Diego area on 14 December 1951 and proceeded to Pearl Harbor, T.H., enroute to Yokosuka, Japan. Arriving in Pearl Harbor on 21 December 1951, BLACKFIN received special foul weather clothing and other necessary supplies and then departed for Yokosuka on 23 December 1951. Upon arrival in Japan on 4 January 1952, BLACKFIN rendered services until she departed Yokosuka on 8 February 1952 for Okinawa, conducting "Hunter-Killer" exercises while enroute. Arriving in Okinawa on 15 February 1952, BLACKFIN continued services until she departed 24 February 1952 on return "Hunter-Killer" exercises to Yokosuka.

BLACKFIN returned to Yokosuka on 1 March 1952, resuming local operations with surface and aviation commands. On 18 March 1952 BLACKFIN left Yokosuka and proceeded to an area in the Western Pacific for a fifty day patrol. Upon completion of the patrol, BLACKFIN returned to Yokosuka on 15 May 1952.

BLACKFIN departed Japan for home on 24 May 1952, arriving in Pearl Harbor on 4 June 1952, enroute to San Diego. Leaving Pearl Harbor on 7 June 1952, BLACKFIN arrived in San Diego a week later and resumed her duties in Submarine Squadron THREE. During her tour of duty in Western Pacific Waters she earned for all hands the Korean, China Service and United Nations Ribbons.

On 12 July 1952, LCDR C. M. ESLER, Jr., USN relieved CDR KABLE as Commanding Officer. The BLACKFIN continued her San Diego operations under her new commanding officer with the exception of the period 17 November 1952 to 27 February 1953 when she retired to the San Francisco Naval Shipyard for her scheduled periodic overhaul.

On June 26, 1953, LCDR Lawrence H. BUTT, USN, relieved LCDR ESLER as Commanding Officer of the BLACKFIN. The BLACKFIN departed San Diego on July 2, 1953, enroute to Pearl Harbor, where she arrived on July 10, 1953. After one day of operating locally and several days of loading fuel, stores and equipment, the BLACKFIN departed Pearl Harbor July 16, on BLACKFIN's special patrol #4.

The BLACKFIN returned to Pearl Harbor on September 11, and after two days of voyage and liberty, departed Pearl enroute to San Diego.

On September 21, 1953, the BLACKFIN arrived at her home port, San Diego, and again resumed her operations and services as a unit of Submarine Division 31, a unit of Submarine Squadron THREE.

March 6, 1954, CDR Charles W. RUSH, Jr., USN, relieved LCDR BUTT as Commanding Officer. Two days later, on March 8, the BLACKFIN officially changed her home port to Pearl Harbor and was assigned to Submarine Division 11, under Submarine Squadron ONE.

The BLACKFIN departed San Diego on March 10, for Pearl Harbor, via San Francisco, and on the 23rd of March arrived at her new home. BLACKFIN resumed providing services to the Navy's anti-submarine forces and training her crew.

Between June 1, 1954 and October 5, 1954 the BLACKFIN underwent a scheduled overhaul at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. On the 8th of June, 1954, LCDR Charles H. TISDALE, Jr., U.S. Navy, relieved CDR RUSH as the Commanding Officer of the BLACKFIN.

After the shipyard overhaul the BLACKFIN again operated locally in the Pearl Harbor area until January 4, 1955. On this date the BLACKFIN departed Pearl Harbor with orders to report to Commander Submarine Group, Western Pacific, and to Commander Naval Forces, Far East. On the 18th of January the BLACKFIN arrived in Yokosuka, Japan, which was to be her "home" port for the next six months.

During the six months in the Western Pacific the BLACKFIN operated under Commander SEVENTH Fleet providing services to the Western Pacific ASW Forces and under Commander Naval Forces Far East while on her special patrol #5. While in the Far East Area, the BLACKFIN visited Okinawa twice, provided services to the Nationalist Chinese ASW Forces and spent four days in Hong Kong.

On June 28, 1955, the BLACKFIN arrived in Pearl Harbor and resumed type training and providing services as part of Submarine Division 11, a unit of Submarine Squadron ONE.

From June 28, 1955 to July 25, 1955 the BLACKFIN enjoyed a month of rest and repairs after her six months in Western Pacific waters.

On July 25, 1955 the BLACKFIN resumed providing services to the Navy's anti-submarine forces and training her crew.

On December 10, 1955 LCDR James C. RUSSELL, USN relieved LCDR Charles H. TISDALE, Jr., USN as Commanding Officer of the BLACKFIN.

The first three quarters of 1956 the BLACKFIN spent in local operations in the Pearl Harbor area, participating in type-training exercises and providing services to surface and air anti-submarine units. In addition to training exercises, BLACKFIN made three "dependents cruises" in May and June for the purpose of permitting the wives and families of the crew to see first-hand some of the routine operations of the BLACKFIN.

On 31 July 1956 the BLACKFIN was presented with the "E" award for Submarine Squadron ONE for Fiscal Year 1956.

The weekend of 15 September a recreation trip for the crew was made to Hilo on the island of Hawaii.

On 12 October the BLACKFIN entered the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard for a routine overhaul.

On 1 March 1957 BLACKFIN completed overhaul and commenced a period of refresher training in preparation for deployment to the Western Pacific.

Departing from Pearl Harbor on 6 May BLACKFIN visited ports in the Western Pacific including Yokosuka, Japan, Kaohsiung, Taiwan and Hong Kong, B.C.C. While in WestPac the BLACKFIN participated in various exercises with U.S. and Nationalist Chinese Anti-Submarine Forces and submarine type training exercises. She also conducted patrols #6 and #7 during this period. On 1 July 1956 BLACKFIN was assigned to Submarine Division 72, a unit of Submarine Squadron SEVEN.

Returning to Pearl Harbor on 1 November 1957, BLACKFIN spent four weeks in port and resumed Pearl Harbor local operations until the commencement of the year-end holiday season.

After the holidays and for the first three quarters of 1958, BLACKFIN spent in local operations in the Pearl Harbor area.

March 1958, LCDR Maurice A. HORN, USN relieved LCDR James C. Morrison, USN as Commanding Officer of the BLACKFIN (SS 322).

Armed Forces Day 1958 was spent in Hilo, Hawaii with "open house" for visitors and rest and recreation for the crew.

In addition to training exercises, the BLACKFIN made a "dependents cruise" on 6 June 1958.

On 31 October 1958 the BLACKFIN departed Pearl Harbor for the Western Pacific, conducting special patrol #8 while enroute.

While in the Western Pacific, BLACKFIN participated in training exercises with various ASW units of the Philippine Navy, Nationalist Chinese Navy, Republic of Korea Navy and units of the United States SEVENTH Fleet.

Ports visited during the six month tour in the Western Pacific included the Japanese ports of Yokosuka, Kobe, Sasebo, Iwakuni and Beppu. In addition, visits were made to Okinawa; Hong Kong; Subic Bay, Philippine Islands; Chinhae, Korea; Kaohsiung, Taiwan; Guam, Marianas Islands - some of these on several occasions.

After departing Guam, Marianas Islands in April, 1959, BLACKFIN set course for Australia, where she was to participate in the Coral Sea Celebration ceremonies at Brisbane and Newcastle. During the journey, approximately three-fourths of the crew were introduced to Neptunus Rex, Davy Jones and Company and initiated into the Order of the Deep and proclaimed "Shellbacks".

Departing Newcastle, Australia on 4 May 1959, BLACKFIN returned to Pearl Harbor on 15 May where she spent four weeks in port prior to resuming local operations.

During the period June to October 1959 BLACKFIN participated in local operations in the Hawaiian area and made recreation trips to Kona, on the island of Hawaii and to Wailuku, Maui.

On 9 November 1959 BLACKFIN entered the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard for a scheduled overhaul.

On 14 November 1959 LCDR George B. CLEGG, III, USN relieved LCDR Maurice A. HORN, USN as Commanding Officer, of the BLACKFIN.

On 16 May 1960 BLACKFIN completed the overhaul and commenced a period of refresher training and local operations in the Pearl Harbor area in preparation for deployment to the Western Pacific.

On 19 August 1960, BLACKFIN departed Pearl Harbor for her fifth tour of duty in the Western Pacific since recommissioning in 1951.

While in the Western Pacific, BLACKFIN participated in training exercises with units of the United States Seventh Fleet, The Japanese Maritime Defense Forces, and the Republic of Korea Navy.

Ports visited during the tour included the Japanese ports of Yokosuka and Sasebo in addition to China, Korea, Okinawa and Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. The year ended with the BLACKFIN on a recreation visit to Hong Kong.

The BLACKFIN returned to Pearl Harbor on February 1961 after completing a successful tour in the Western Pacific, for which BLACKFIN received a Commander Submarine Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet Unit Citation. After a short upkeep and leave period, BLACKFIN began local operations, in the Pearl Harbor area, rendering services and participating in various submarine and anti-submarine exercises. In September 1961 BLACKFIN departed the Pearl Harbor area for an Alaskan cold weather training cruise. While in the Alaska area the ports of Adak and Kodiak were visited.

Upon returning to Pearl Harbor, near the end of October, BLACKFIN participated in local operations until mid December. Holiday and leave period was being enjoyed by BLACKFIN as the year ended.

On 6 January 1962 Lieutenant Commander John W. KLINEFELTER, USN relieved Commander George B. CLEGG, III, USN as Commanding Officer of the BLACKFIN.

The BLACKFIN spent the first quarter of 1962 operating in the Pearl Harbor area conducting submarine and anti-submarine exercises.

In early April, BLACKFIN departed Pearl Harbor for the Pacific Northwest for a regular 3 month deployment. During this period BLACKFIN provided services to VP-VS Squadrons, reserve submarine divisions and conducted guest and VIP cruises. While on this 86 day deployment BLACKFIN was underway 66% of the time. During the month of May BLACKFIN was underway every day except Memorial Day. While in the Northwest BLACKFIN visited the Ports of Seattle, Port Angeles, Victoria, B.C., Vancouver, Washington, and Portland, Oregon. BLACKFIN was present during the opening of the Seattle World Fair on 21 April. BLACKFIN also participated in the world famous Rose Festival in Portland. During the Northwest deployment BLACKFIN hosted over 10,000 visitors.

Upon returning to Pearl Harbor late in June, BLACKFIN participated in local operations until early November when she entered the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard for a regular overhaul.

On 15 March, having completed her face lifting, she returned to the business of submarining with a brief period of intensive refresher training, which included a very pleasant week-end at Kauai.

In April BLACKFIN prepared herself for an East Pac adventure, departing Pearl Harbor April 17, BLACKFIN's first port of call was Newport, Oregon, 27 April, where she helped to celebrate Newport's second annual Loyalty Day Festival. Leaving Newport on 30 April after an extremely hospitable stay, BLACKFIN made her way to Dabob Bay, near Bangor, Washington, to undergo a fire control alignment inspection. After completion of the tests at Dabob Bay BLACKFIN spent a week of rest and relaxation in the city of Seattle, Washington. After Seattle, Northward for two enjoyable days in Vancouver, British Columbia. From Vancouver BLACKFIN worked her way southward to the Golden Gate City of San Francisco. Departure from San Francisco found BLACKFIN again heading South. In the San Diego area a months operations with local naval units included BLACKFIN's movie debut in the Doris Day film "Move Over Darling". Finally in Mid-June BLACKFIN was homeward bound, arriving in Hawaii by late June.

The remainder of the summer was spent in the Pearl Harbor area working with air, surface and subsurface forces and making preparations for an impending WestPac deployment.

On 15 November 1963 Lieutenant Commander Carl H. SEBENIUS, Jr., USN relieved Commander John W. KLINEFELTER, USN as Commanding Officer of the BLACKFIN.

On November 27th BLACKFIN departed Hawaii for Yokosuka, Japan, arriving there in early December. The last weeks in the year were completed by working with Seventh Fleet Forces and the celebration of Christmas and New Years Days in Sasebo, Japan.

BLACKFIN operated in the Japan area until March providing services to the U.S. Seventh Fleet, JMSDF, and patrol squadrons throughout Japan, and participating in fleet and special operations. She then proceeded to Naha, Okinawa for further services and operations. From Okinawa BLACKFIN operated in transit to Subic Bay, Philippine Islands.

In late April BLACKFIN proceeded to Brisbane, Australia to participate in the Coral Sea Celebration. Nine glorious days were spent in Brisbane and three days in MaKay.

BLACKFIN returned to Pearl Harbor in late May. After a well deserved rest and upkeep in June, BLACKFIN spent the summer participating in local operations.

In late August BLACKFIN deployed for two months, returning in time to participate in three weeks of the PACFLT PERMIT Class evaluation. BLACKFIN ended the year in Pearl Harbor, with the crew having a wonderful Holiday period with their family and friends.

The first three months of 1965 were spent in a leave and upkeep status, with occasional local operations. In March, the Ship again deployed to WestPac. During this tour, in support of Seventh Fleet Operations, BLACKFIN visited such ports of call as Yokosuka and Sasebo, Japan; Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines; Hong Kong and Bangkok, Thailand. In July 1965 BLACKFIN was awarded the Battle Efficiency "E" for the second consecutive year.

In early September BLACKFIN returned to Pearl Harbor and spent the next several weeks in leave and upkeep. From Mid-October to Mid-December the Ship provided local services and participated in SUBASWEX 4-65.

On 11 December 1965, Lieutenant Commander Robert M. BROWN, U. S. Navy relieved Commander Carl H. SEBENIUS, Jr., U. S. Navy as Commanding Officer.

Immediately following a holiday leave and upkeep period, BLACKFIN entered Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. During the yard period which lasted until August 1966 the Ship's silhouette was altered with the addition of the fiberglass conning tower fairwater, and new superstructure forward.

The post overhaul months were busy since BLACKFIN was once more preparing to head west. The crew drilled extensively at battle stations and in a period of two weeks fired 26 exercise torpedoes. A short break was taken at Kailua Kona on the big island of Hawaii from August 12 to 14. October was spent in an extensive upkeep period followed by more training and torpedo firings.

On November 16 families and friends again waved as BLACKFIN backed out of her slip at Subase Pearl and began the now familiar journey to Yokosuka. Arriving on 30 November, the Ship underwent six days of voyage repairs and again resumed a position with the U.S. Seventh Fleet. Christmas holidays were spent in Okinawa but the crew bid farewell to 1966 while underway enroute from the South China Sea to Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines.

The first three months of 1966 were spent transiting back and forth from Subic to the Tonkin Gulf, where BLACKFIN operated with the Seventh Fleet in the Vietnam area. Members of the Ship's company were awarded the Vietnam Service Medal for these operations.

Leaving Vietnam and Subic behind, BLACKFIN started south on 15 April on a voyage which would bring her back to her wartime homeport of Fremantle, Australia. The reason for the visit was again the annual Coral Sea Celebration.

Before entering Australian waters BLACKFIN made two stops, the first was at Zamboanga on the Philippine Island of Mindanao. During a two day port visit from April 19 to 21, some 2000 Zamboangan residents toured the boat. The second stop was made while Neptunus Rex, Ruler of the Raging Main and his court boarded to initiate some two thirds of the BLACKFIN crew in the solemn mysteries of the ancient order of the deep.

Coral Sea 1967 brought BLACKFIN to Fremantle from April 30 to May 5 and Hobart, Tasmania from May 11 to May 15. The last stop before returning to Pearl Harbor was Pago Pago, American Samoa.

After nearly seven months deployed BLACKFIN returned to Pearl on June 6 and commenced a four week leave and upkeep period. On July 5 BLACKFIN returned to sea for local operations with a rested crew and new paint job which again included the Battle Efficiency "E". This was BLACKFIN's third "E" in four years.

On November 4, 1967 Lieutenant Commander John G. FLETCHER relieved Commander Robert M. BROWN as Commanding Officer.

BLACKFIN made her comeback in Motion Pictures on 30 November; this time as a character actor. BLACKFIN portrayed the USS TIGERFISH (SSN509) in the underway scenes of the MGM production "ICE STATION ZEBRA".

SHIP HISTORY

CALENDAR YEAR 1968

THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW YEAR FOUND BLACKFIN ENGAGED IN LOCAL OPERATIONS IN THE PEARL HARBOR AREA IN PREPARATION FOR HER FORTHCOMING DEPLOYMENT TO THE WESTERN PACIFIC. OPERATIONS DURING THIS PERIOD AFFORDED BLACKFIN THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT LAHAINA, MAUI FROM 7 TO 9 MARCH 1968 AFTER CONDUCTING A FLEET SERVICE MINE TEST.

AFTER MONTHS OF PREPARATION AND TRAINING BLACKFIN DEPARTED PEARL HARBOR ON 28 MARCH 1968 AND ARRIVED IN YOKOSUKA, JAPAN ON 11 APRIL 1968. ON 21 APRIL 1968 BLACKFIN DEPARTED YOKOSUKA AND PROCEEDED TO SEA FOR 52 DAYS OF EXTENDED AT SEA OPERATIONS AND TRAINING. SHE RETURNED TO YOKOSUKA, JAPAN 11 JUNE 1968 FOR A 10 DAY UPKEEP PERIOD FOLLOWED BY 2 DAYS OF SERVICES IN NEARBY WATERS. ON 25 JUNE BLACKFIN AGAIN ENTERED THE NOW FAMILIAR WATERS OF SAGAMI WAN AND TURNED TOWARD THE SOUTH ARRIVING IN BUCKNER BAY, OKINAWA ON 30 JUNE 1968 FOR A ONE DAY STAY FOLLOWED BY A FIVE DAY VISIT TO THE COLORFUL CITY OF HONG KONG, BRITISH CROWN COLONY FROM 10 JULY TO 15 JULY 1968. THIS PERIOD AFFORDED THE CREW AN OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT SUCH HISTORIC SIGHTS AS VICTORIA PEAK AND THE NEW TERRITORY OF KOWLOON AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE EXCELLENT SHOPPING FOR WHICH HONG KONG IS NOTED.

BLACKFIN RETURNED TO YOKOSUKA, JAPAN 20 JULY 1968 FOR A 6 DAY UPKEEP PERIOD BEFORE CONDUCTING A SECOND EXTENDED AT SEA PERIOD OF OPERATIONS WHICH COMMENCED ON 26 JULY 1968. AFTER 55 ARDUOUS BUT HIGHLY REWARDING DAYS AT SEA, BLACKFIN RETURNED TO YOKOSUKA ON 19 SEPTEMBER 1968 AND BEGAN A SHORT PERIOD OF LEAVE AND UPKEEP.

BLACKFIN BID FAREWELL TO JAPAN ON 4 OCTOBER 1968 AFTER 184 DAYS OF SERVICE WITH THE U. S. SEVENTH FLEET. DURING THIS PERIOD SHE TRAVELED 18,243 MILES AND COMPLETED 2 EXTENDED CRUISES FOR A TOTAL OF 107 DAYS. TIME AT SEA COMPRISED 74 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL TIME SPENT IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC.

BLACKFIN RETURNED TO HER HOMEPORT AT PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII AND THE TRADITIONAL LEI GREETING ON 12 OCTOBER 1968. A WELL DESERVED LEAVE AND UPKEEP PERIOD CONTINUED THROUGH MID NOVEMBER. FROM MID NOVEMBER UNTIL 13 DECEMBER BLACKFIN PARTICIPATED IN VARIOUS TRAINING EXERCISES WHICH INCLUDED TWO WEEKS OF PROSPECTIVE COMMANDING OFFICER OPERATIONS IN LOCAL OPERATING AREAS.

1 DECEMBER 1968 MARKED THE END OF BLACKFIN'S HIGHLY TOUTED CAREER AS A UNIT OF SUBMARINE SQUADRON ONE. BLACKFIN BECAME A UNIT OF SUBMARINE SQUADRON THREE HOMEPORTED IN SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA DURING CEREMONIES HELD AT THE MARINE BASE, PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII. BLACKFIN REMAINED IN PEARL HARBOR THROUGH THE 1968 HOLIDAY SEASON.

APPROVED:

J. G. FLETCHER, CDR, USN
COMMANDING OFFICER
USS BLACKFIN (SS 322)

COMMAND HISTORY 1969

The first days of the new year were spent in port Pearl Harbor. On 23 January 1969, BLACKFIN left the warm waters of Hawaii and proceeded to the San Francisco Bay area. Following a recreational visit to Alameda, California, BLACKFIN spent some time at sea training members of submarine reserve units.

On 5 February BLACKFIN arrived at the San Francisco Bay Naval Shipyard, Mare Island for her regularly scheduled overhaul of five months.

With a successful overhaul and sea trials accomplished, BLACKFIN on 10 July departed the Bay area for her new home port of San Diego and a short upkeep period. On 21 July BLACKFIN put to sea for a visit to our neighbors in the south. 25 July commenced a four day visit and open house to the people of Mazatlan, Mexico. The successful public affairs and rest period ended on 29 July and BLACKFIN departed Mexico for her trip back to San Diego.

The month of August was to be a month of intensive refresher training for BLACKFIN and her crew. The long overhaul had left behind its staleness of inactivity in both men and machine, and the operational testing and training at sea was designed to mold once again a fighting unit. Weapons systems accuracy trials (WSAT) were conducted in Dabob Bay, Washington between 14 and 24 August and once again BLACKFIN was certified to exercise her main battery.

During a brief rest period in Seattle, Washington, Commander Leo S. MASTERSON relieved Commander John G. FLETCHER as Commanding Officer, USS BLACKFIN (SS-322) on 23 August.

Final weapons systems alignment was completed at the Naval Weapons Station Keyport and BLACKFIN departed for a visit to Canadian neighbors on 26 August. BLACKFIN once again opened her hatches to friends in Vancouver, B.C. and at the same time her crew was welcomed at the Pacific Northwest Exposition which was being held in that city.

BLACKFIN departed Canadian waters on 31 August for the return to San Diego and upkeep. The month of September was spent in upkeep and in-port training for the crew and equipments. Following a week of advanced training at sea, BLACKFIN once again supported local submarine reserve units with underway training from 22 to 26 September.

October continued as a month of underway and inport training for BLACKFIN and her crew. On 6 October BLACKFIN transited to the San Francisco Bay area and provided additional training to submarine reserve units between 10 and 15 October. BLACKFIN returned to San Diego on 19 October and continued to operate at sea providing services for training antisubmarine warfare units of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

November and December found BLACKFIN engaged in an extensive upkeep period in her home port of San Diego as well as enjoying a well-deserved holiday and leave period.

U. S. S. BLACKFIN (SS-322)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco 96601

HISTORY OF THE
U.S.S. BLACKFIN (SS-322)
COMMANDED BY

JUL 44 - DEC 44	LCDR George H. LAIRD JR., USN
DEC 44 - DEC 45	LCDR William L. KITCH, USN
DEC 45 - JUL 47	CDR Richard M. FARRELL, USN
JUL 47 - MAY 48	CDR James L. HUNNICUTT, USN
MAY 48 - NOV 50	Inactive Reserve Fleet
NOV 50 - JUL 52	CDR Donald M. KABLE, USN
JUL 52 - JUN 53	LCDR Clifford M. ESLER, USN
JUN 53 - MAR 54	LCDR Lawrence H. BUTT, USN
MAR 54 - JUN 54	CDR Charles W. RUSH JR., USN
JUN 54 - DEC 55	LCDR Charles H. TISDALE JR., USN
DEC 55 - MAR 58	LCDR James C. RUSSELL, USN
MAR 58 - NOV 59	LCDR Maurice A. HORN, USN
NOV 59 - JAN 62	LCDR George B. CLEGG III, USN
JAN 62 - NOV 63	LCDR John W. KLINEFELTER, USN
NOV 63 - DEC 65	CDR Carl H. SEBENIUS JR., USN
DEC 65 - NOV 67	CDR Robert M. BROWN, USN
NOV 67 - AUG 69	LCDR John G. FLETCHER, USN
AUG 69 -	CDR Leo S. MASTERSON, USN

(A) PROLOGUE

The U.S.S. BLACKFIN returned from her first war patrol on 4 December 1944. The officers and crew, after two weeks at the rest camp, returned to the ship 18 December 1944.

The boat was sound tested and had one day's independent training at the end of which time the Commanding Officer, Cmdr G. M. LAIRD, Jr., U.S. Navy, was admitted to the sick list.

Lt. Commander C. L. RAGUET, U.S. Navy, took the boat out the following day for a wolf pack training exercise with the U.S.S. BESUGO and U.S.S. EARDEAD.

On return to Fremantle the following day, 22 December 1944, Lt. Commander W. L. KITZEL, U.S. Navy, took command of the BLACKFIN. There followed three days of independent operations, firing exercise torpedoes on the final day.

After one day for loading, the U.S.S. BLACKFIN departed Fremantle on 26 December 1944 for Exmouth. Enroute Exmouth tracking exercises were held on an obliging north-bound tanker.

While alongside the empty tanker in Exmouth the port screw was damaged in a heavy wind and sea and the BLACKFIN returned to Fremantle arriving New Year's Day.

The boat was docked, the port propeller renewed, and cuts taken on both port and starboard shaft bearings. The woods had swollen considerably since installation during refit.

Lt. Frank Walker Smith, Jr., was transferred to Submarine Division 262 because of a physical ailment and Lt.(jg) Lawrence E. Thompson reported on board for duty. This left us with only one COD qualified in submarines.

Two enlisted men (30M2c and CCS) were likewise replaced because of physical ailments.

Enroute Lombok Strait and while moored in Exmouth drills, tracking exercises, and practice dives were made.

(B) NARRATIVE

2 JAN.

1958(H) Departed Fremantle in company with escort for swept channel.

2320(H) Exchanged recognition signals with U.S.S. FLOUNDER in submarine operating area.

3 JAN.

2020(H) Exchanged radar recognition signals with U.S.S.
HAWKBILL.

4 JAN.

2050(H) Exchanged radar recognition signals with U.S.S.
BECUNA.

5 JAN.

0200(H) Moored alongside tanker (Y10) at Exmouth. Took
on 22410 gallons of fuel oil.

1900(H) Underway for Lombok.

1930(H) Exchanged visual recognition signals with U.S.S.
BECUNA. Discovered she was some 200 miles North
of us the night before when radar signals were
exchanged.

8 JAN.

2000(H) Commenced transit of Lombok Strait.

2113(H) Ten miles inside strait favoring West side
slightly. Radar contact bearing 060° T, range
7000 yards. Commenced tracking and found target
was also making a transit of Lombok from the
South. His speed 15, no radar interference.
Commenced to work ahead. We became suspicious
immediately. First conclusion, U-Boat returning
from patrol enroute Soerabaya. If he turns West
after transit of Lombok, we will be in position
to trail him from ahead until dawn for recogni-
tion and attack.

2313(H) Five miles clear of Lombok. Stranger has not
headed for Soerabaya. Second radar contact
bearing 040° T, range 5,000 yards, closing.
Changed course-left to avoid and commenced
tracking second target. This is apparently a
patrol boat and is between us and first radar
contact. Maneuvered around to Northwest and
lost contact bearing 150° T, range 7,000 yards.

2328(H) Changed course to 020° T to regain radar contact
with our first friend.

2344(H) Regained radar contact, range 9,000 yards, bear-
ing 135° T. His course is 025° T and he has

slowed to 11 knots. We are now convinced he is a submarine. No radar interference, so it must be British or enemy. Only British sub it could be is SPIRIT and he should be a day ahead of us.

- 9 JAN. Have worked ahead of the stranger, keeping him 9,000 yards directly astern.
- 0430(H) Went ahead full to enable us to dive one hour ahead of him.
- 0530(H) Submerged 10 miles East of Kangeon Island.
- 0558(H) Battle Stations Torpedo.
- 0608(H) Sighted submarine bearing 205° T. Commenced approach.
- 0643(H) Submarine identified as British. Did not close within 4,000 yards. Very disappointed after all our planning.
- 0710(H) Surfaced.
- 0750(H) Established visual communication with H.M.S. SPIRIT. Continued transit of Java Sea.
- 2216(H) While passing 15 miles South of St. Mesalombo Island, ST contact and interference bearing 260° T. Exchanged recognition with U.S.S. HAMMERHEAD.

10 JAN.

- 0910(H) Sighted enemy aircraft (JETE), bearing 245° T, elevation 3°, distant about 7 miles, headed in. Aircraft contact #1. Submerged to 120 feet in 150 feet of water.
- 0920(H) Heard very distant bomb explosion.
- 0924(H) Heard very distant bomb explosion.
- 0936(H) Heard very distant bomb explosion.
- 0940(H) Heard very distant bomb explosion.
- 1050(H) Periscope depth. The last two were slightly closer but so far away we wondered what his target was.
- 1051(H) Surfaced.
- 1632(H) Sighted object beyond horizon bearing 238° T, distant about 10 miles (high periscope). Ship contact #1. Decided this was a submarine when at
- 1637(H) Submarine submerged after emitting a puff of dark smoke. Believe this submarine was O-19. Did not remain in vicinity to confirm belief

for to do so would have delayed transit of
Karimata Strait one day.

2000(H) Commenced transit Karimata Strait.

12 JAN. Enroute area.

1600(E) Entered assigned area at latitude $4^{\circ} 00'N$, longi-
tude $106^{\circ} 00'E$ and commenced surface patrol.

14 JAN.

0600(H) Converted #4 FBT to main ballast tank.

0746(E) Sighted SONIA type plane bearing $000^{\circ} T$, eleva-
tion 5° , distance about 9 miles. Aircraft con-
tact #2. Submerged.

0904(H) Surfaced.

0907(E) Sighted U.S. submarine (believed to be HARBORHEAD)
bearing $316^{\circ} T$, 11 miles.

0920(H) Sighted plane, 8 miles (SONIA). Aircraft contact
#3. Submerged.

1031(H) Surfaced.

1032(H) Sighted plane (SONIA), 10 miles. Aircraft contact
#4. Submerged.

1205(H) Surfaced. (Hope plane has gone to lunch.)

1303(H) Sighted BESUGO surfacing 9,000 yards away, bear-
ing $012^{\circ} T$. He suggests we back up his scouting
line off Redang Island to southward. Have been
unsuccessful in trying to raise GURNARD.

1500(H) Sighted white smoke column of explosion of mine-
sweep COBIA sank, bearing $265^{\circ} T$.

1602(E) Sighted plane bearing $261^{\circ} T$, 2° elevation, about
7 miles away. Aircraft contact #5. Submerged.

1725(H) Surfaced.

2105(H) SJ interference and exchanged recognition signals
with GURNARD, bearing $160^{\circ} T$.

2138(H) SJ interference and exchanged recognition signals
with COBIA, bearing $290^{\circ} T$.

15 JAN.

0120 SJ interference and exchanged recognition signals
with COBIA moving out to Southeast. Received
message from GURNARD to patrol off Redang. From
breakdown of BESUGO's messages, she is covering
that spot. Told GURNARD this. GURNARD asked
BESUGO to assign us spot to patrol. Received
word from BESUGO to patrol 15 miles Northeast of
Redang.

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- 0940(H) Plane contact on SD radar 26 miles. Closed to 14 miles. Submerged. Aircraft contact #6.
1109(H) Surfaced.
1125(H) Plane contact on SD radar 17 miles. Aircraft contact #7. Closed to 8 miles. Submerged.
1245(H) Surfaced. Received word HARDHEAD had been attacked by plane.
1518(H) Sighted BESUGO bearing 330° T, 8 miles away.
1930(H) and continuing through the night - SJ interference from the BESUGO to the Northeast.

16 JAN.

- 2000(H) BESUGO and HARDHEAD moved further to Northeast. Received message from GURNARD to patrol latitude 5° 15' N, longitude 103° 30' E.

17 JAN. Patrolling on surface in assigned position along 20 fathom curve.

- 0300(H) APR contact. Looks like Jap aircraft radar. No SD contact. Secured SJ manning it intermittently.
0400(H) Lost APR contact.
2145(H) Have SJ interference from GURNARD bearing 140° T.

18 JAN. Patrolling assigned position along 20 fathom curve.

- 1937(H) Passed what appeared to be a floating mine, latitude 5° 17' N, longitude 103° 17' N, longitude 103° 27' E. Mine quickly passed out of sight; we could not see to destroy it.
2000(H) Told GURNARD, BESUGO, and HARDHEAD of mine and requested permission of GURNARD to shift patrol position to latitude 5° 45' N, longitude 103° 20' E, which was granted.

19 JAN. Patrolling on surface 12 miles East of Pulau Yu Besar in 29 fathoms of water.

20 JAN. Patrolling area on surface.

21 JAN.

- 1125(H) Plane contact on SD radar, 20 miles. Aircraft contact #8. Closed to 10 miles. Submerged.
1302(H) Surfaced.

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- 1430(H) Sighted mine, latitude 5-40 N, longitude 104-12 E.
Sank mine with rifle fire. This mine had the
appearance of a torpedo war head with no nose
ring.
- 1655(H) Plane contact on SD radar 8 miles closing. Air-
craft contact #9. Submerged.
- 1750(H) Surfaced.
- 1915(H) Sighted sphere-shaped mine, latitude 5-50 N,
longitude 103-55 E. Sank mine with rifle fire.
- 2130(H) Received orders to join BESUGO pack.

23 JAN.

- 0322(H) Radar interference from BESUGO.
- 2120(H) SJ radar out of commission. Submerged as we
needed light to work on it.
- 2240(H) SJ back in commission. Power switch faulty.
Removed and jumped out of circuit. Surfaced.

24 JAN.

- 0502(H) SJ contact bearing 325° T, range 20,000 yards,
2 pips, latitude 6-00 N, longitude 103-48 E.
Ship contact #2. Commenced tracking. Enemy
course 180° T, speed 14. We will have to make
this quick to get in on the surface before dawn.
- 0503(H) Sound picked up pinging from direction of target
group.
- 0515(H) Reported contact to BESUGO and HARDHEAD.
- 0523(H) Now have 4 targets, 1 very large pip and 3
small ones, range 17,000 yards.
- 0504(H) Went to Battle Stations Torpedo.
- 0550(H) With target bearing 300° T, range 15,000 yards
and on right leg of their zig plan, turned in
at flank speed and commenced approach. Sent
second report to BESUGO and HARDHEAD and added,
"We are attacking on surface". We now have 5
pips. Enemy disposition: leading escort ahead
of tanker, port and starboard quarter escorts,
trailing escort. Escorts zigging on 5 to 8
minute legs, tanker zigging inside screen on 2
to 4 minute legs.
- 0608(H) All ahead 2/3.
- 0609(H) With target nearly dead ahead, 120° port track,
torpedo run about 1500 yards, port quarter escort
slightly on starboard bow, 80 port angle on bow,
commenced firing bow tubes.

- 0609-05 Fired #1 - to hit.
0609-15 Fired #2 - spread $3\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ left.
0609-25 Fired #3 - spread $2\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ right. Port quarter escort now nearly dead ahead, range 200 yards. Shifted set up to escort as his proximity necessitated his removal before we could turn and fire stern tubes with any degree of safety.
- 0610-05 Fired #4 - to hit.
0610-22 Fired #5 - spread $3\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ left.
0610-35 Heard and observed hit in escort between bridge and stack as target started to zig away. Escort was immediately enveloped in a large low cloud of white smoke. Checked fire just in time to save #6.
- 0610-39 Heard second explosion, more distant, apparently hit in tanker which was now completely obscured by smoke from escort. Right full rudder, all ahead flank.
- 0612(H) Enormous cloud of black smoke emerged from spot where escort was hit.
- 0614(H) Commenced firing stern tubes. Target had zigged left nicely. Torpedo ran about 2500 yards.
- 0614-15 Fired #7 - to hit.
0614-27 Fired #8 - spread $3\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ left.
0614-40 Fired #10 - spread $3\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ right. (Did not fire #9 tube. See part (K) Major Defects and Damage.)
- 0615(H) Trailing escort observed, bearing 250° relative, angle on the bow 0° , range about 2,000 yards. Turned to give him 180° angle on bow, making full power.
- 0617(H) Heard and observed hit in after part of tanker. Target started blinking small searchlight aft. HARMED also saw hit. Range to escort now 1720 yards. Escort fired deck gun - missed.
- 0618(H) EESUCO reported contact 322° T, range 12,500 yards. No position given.
- 0623(H) Clearing immediate vicinity under forced draft with effective Winton smoke screen between escort and BLACKFIN, range now 3,000 yards. Escort tried again with deck gun. These ships do not have flashless powder.
- 0625(H) Observed starboard quarter escort making furious depth charge attack, bearing 200° relative. Well clear. About 10 depth charges. Smoke has now cleared from vicinity of port quarter escort. He is no longer visible. Radar confirmed report that he is now non-existent. He must have submerged and lost depth control. Only tanker and

- 0622(H) 3 escorts left by radar and binocular search. Trailing escort fired third and last projectile at us, range 3,500 yards. The leading escort still seems confused and undecided. Tanker appears to have turned to port. Plot reports she has stopped.
- 0647(H) BESUGO reports she is diving to attack.
- 0648(H) Large flash in vicinity of tanker, range now about 20,000 yards. Could be either gun fire or internal explosion.
- 0711(H) Submerged.
- 0717(H) Heard first of twenty depth charges.
- 0747(H) Heard last explosion.
- 0837(H) Surfaced and headed back towards scene of attack to regain contact - all tubes reloaded and #9 back in commission.
- 0913(H) Heard two more explosions.
- 0914(H) Sighted masts of one ship and two escorts bearing 240° T, distant 12 miles. (Ship contact #3 probably same as #2.) My position latitude 6-00 N, longitude 103-50 E. Target still in approximately same spot as when we hit him this morning.
- 0919(H) Received report from HARDHEAD that she was ahead of a south-bound, damaged, 6-knot tanker and two escorts.
- 0924(H) Sent our contact report.
- 0951(H) HARDHEAD submerged for an attack. We were able to gain bearing easily on target until at
- 1038(H) With our target group at 280° T, sighted another large ship and one escort at 233° T, range 12 miles. Immediately shifted to this target.
- 1135(H) Sighted spherical mine, latitude 5-14 N, longitude 104-00 E. Did not stop and around to destroy it.
- 1300(H) This target, which appears to be a large tanker with one escort, is making about 16 knots zigging. Conclusion is that this was not the tanker we hit in the morning for we got two hits and BESUGO claimed three in her. Don't think a tanker with five torpex heads in her can make 16 knots.
- 1303(H) Target now bears 270° T. Plane contact on SD radar 15 miles. (Aircraft contact #10.) Plane closed to 7 miles. Submerged. Decided pursuit was hopeless, for by the time we could overtake him now, he will be inside of 20 fathom curve in bright-moonlight and not far from Singapore.

We also had orders to be off Saigon for plane guard duty the following evening.

- 1414(H) Sighted U.S. submarine bearing 030° T on southerly course.
- 1436(H) Surfaced and exchanged calls with HARDHEAD. He agreed pursuit was futile. Headed North.
- 1825(H) Sighted masts of two ships through high periscope, bearing 305° T, distant about 11 miles on a southerly course, latitude 5-41 N, longitude 103-55 E. Ship contact #4. Sent contact report to BESUGO and HARDHEAD. Commenced tracking.
- 1843(H) Sighted floating spherical mine in latitude 05-43 N, longitude 104-00 E. Avoided and did not stop to sink it.
- 1849(H) Sighted second mine.
- 1851(H) Received message from HARDHEAD that she thought targets were escorts. One ship looked larger than the other so decided to continue chase.
- 1946(H) Received message from HARDHEAD that she was West of targets and that they were definitely patrol boats.
- 2019(H) Targets appear to be smaller than DE's on radar and both are the same size, so with escorts bearing 335° T, range 14,000 yards, we changed course to 030° T to open out. Advised HARDHEAD that we had reached some conclusion. It is interesting to note here that at one time during this chase we had escorts at 24,000 yards on our radar.
- 2031(H) Radar reported escorts 310° T, range 8,000 yards. Went ahead flank and put enemy astern. Japs forced 10, Blackfin guide, and we started the second race of the day.
- 2033(H) Rip in second place opened fire with his forward gun, range about 7,300 yards. Shell burst about 500 yards astern. Looked like a 4" shell's water column. We put low pressure blow on all tanks, blew safety and negative, and were tempted to pump bilges when at
- 2034(H) We were fired at again.
- 2037(H) Third salvo from our friend. We are opening out nicely, range about 8,500 yards. Pit log reads 19.8 knots.
- 2038(H) Fourth salvo.

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Number Two.

- 2039(H) Fifth and last salvo: all were short. These people are certainly eager beavers with their deck guns.
- 2100(H) Losing radar contact with escorts at about 18,500 yards. Nips are running a poor second and third but are still game. Started easing around to 045° T to head for life guard station. Began to wonder if these two were the two with our damaged tanker. If so, perhaps she sank.

25 JAN. - 27 JAN.

Enroute and at life guard station off Saigon.
No activity.

28 JAN.

- 0615(H) Exchanged recognition signals by SJ radar with U.S.S. FLOUNDER.
- 1230(H) Sighted what appeared to be marker buoy dropped by aircraft. Had appearance of small bomb and floated high in water. Sank it with rifle. Latitude 8-51 N, longitude 108-18 E.

29 JAN. Returned to BSUGO pack in latitude 7-00 N, longitude 105-05 E.

30 JAN.

- 1215(H) Plane contact 12 miles on SD radar. Aircraft contact #11. Submerged.
- 1258(H) Surfaced.
- 2042(H) Exchanged recognition signals by SJ radar with U.S.S. BSUGO.

31 JAN.

- 1229(H) Changed course South to head for new scouting position.

1 FEB.

- 0330(H) At new patrol station, latitude 5-00 N, longitude 104-11 E.
- 0900(H) Commenced guarding aircraft frequency for raid on Singapore.
- 1930(H) Secured aircraft frequency.

- 2255(H) Received message to shift patrol station to southern approaches to Palawan Passage. Changed course to 000° T.
- 2350(H) Received message from BESUGO: radar contact 015° T, 7 miles from latitude 5-04 N, longitude 104-28 E. Target course 190° T, speed 14 knots. Went ahead flank and changed course to converge on target.

2 Feb.

- 0017(H) Reported our position, course, and speed to BESUGO.
- 0025(H) Intercepted message from HARDHEAD to BESUGO giving HARDHEAD's position.
- 0026(H) Received message from BESUGO that targets were 4 ships, cruisers or destroyers.
- 0030(H) SJ interference bearing 240° T. Sent challenge. No reply.
- 0045(H) Sighted HARDHEAD bearing 225° T, 6500 yards. Since HARDHEAD had not answered challenge at
- 0052(H) Sent radio message to HARDHEAD telling her her bearing and distance from us.
- 0146(H) SJ contact bearing 068° T, range 12,000 yards. Our radar was not up to standard. We could now see the targets. Ship contact #5.
- 0155(H) Sent message to BESUGO we had contact.
- 0157(H) BESUGO sent, "Diving for attack."
- 0228(H) BESUGO's torpedo hit home. Large explosion, and target (thought to be cruiser) burst into flames. Could also see two escorts but not the third.
- 0245(H) Commenced talking to HARDHEAD by blinker. Requested permission to approach damaged ship submerged.
- 0315(H) Worked off to westward and requested permission to make submerged approach. No answer.
- 0328(H) Again requested permission to attack. Fire on target had died down and thought she might not sink unless hit again.
- 0340(H) Received "Attack at discretion" from HARDHEAD.
- 0352(H) Sent our position latitude 4-30 N, longitude 104-21 E, target bearing 065° T, range 13,000 yards.
- 0358(H) Submerged and headed for target.

- 0443(H) Had one escort bearing 058° T, range about 5,000 yards, not pinging, and maneuvering radically. Scene of attack bears 064° T, range 6,000 yards. Second escort in vicinity of sinking, flashing search light occasionally and pinging. Third escort not in sight but ping heard on same bearing as second escort. Heard pattern of sixteen depth charges, sounded much closer than they actually were. No sign of cruiser so assumed she sank.
- 0444(H) Turned away planning to return during daylight for a better look.
- 0558(H) Nine depth charges.
- 0743(H) Began to ease back in toward target (not in sight now but have three sets of "pingers").
- 0850(H) Sighted escort but no cruiser.
- 0940(H) Satisfied target sank and that escorts are not destroyers. Changed course to 310° T to clear area. Escorts appear to be a hunter killer pack searching on line of bearing.
- 1228(H) Surfaced. Nothing in sight.
- 1240(H) Sent message to BESUGO that we had not attacked escorts and that we were departing for new station.

3 Feb. - 5 Feb.

Enroute new patrol area - southern approaches to Palawan Passage and Balabac. Received assigned station from U.S.S. TUNA.

6 Feb.

- 0130(H) Converted #3 and 5 fuel ballast tanks to main ballast tanks.
- 0227(H) Exchanged calls by SJ radar with U.S.S. TUNA.

7 Feb.

- 1023(H) Sighted F4U type plane bearing 040° T distance 4 miles, 15 degrees elevation. (Aircraft contact No. 12). Submerged. Believed we must have been sighted but no attack was made.

1215(E) Sighted U.S.S. TUNA bearing 290° T, distance
4 miles.

1221(E) Surfaced and exchanged calls with TUNA.

8 Feb.

1551(E) Sighted MAVIS type plane bearing 300° T,
elevation 1½ degrees, distance 8 miles.
(Aircraft contact No. 13). Submerged.

1659(E) Surfaced.

10 Feb.

0530(E) Exchanged calls with U.S.S. TUNA by SJ radar.

0556(E) Submerged. Remained submerged because of
periscope TUNA had seen day before. Planes
apparently used to locate our boats for Jap
subs also in the area; this doesn't seem quite
fair.

1856(E) Surfaced.

2143(E) Received message from ComSubs to head west at
best speed. Did so.

11 Feb. Enroute to position in scouting line.

12 Feb.

0050(E) At assigned position.

1341(E) SJ radar interference bearing 295° T.

1430(H) Visibility poor, overcast, horizon dotted with
rain squalls. SJ contact bearing 205° T range
26,000 yards. Planned tracking party, three
pips, evidently large units. My course 025° T
speed 10. (Ship contact #6).

1433(H) Determined target course to be about 025° T,
speed about 15. Commenced sending contact
report on Wolf Pack frequency in TORCO and in
aircraft contact code on CM. After transmission
sent latter message on ship shore frequency.
Receipted for by radio Darwin.

1435(E) Sighted enemy through clear spot bearing 210° T
range about 25,000 yards. There appeared to be
6 ships; 2 battleships, one medium unit, and
3 escorts. The heavies were in line of bearing
battleships to eastward, each unit with an
escort ahead. Angle on bow 10 starboard.

- Changed course to 000° T, all ahead flank to move ahead to attack submerged.
- 1437(H) Battle stations torp do.
- 1442(H) Lost visual contact
- 1446(H) Dope shows targets have zigged radically to port.
- 1448(H) Lost radar contact at 32,000 yards. Changed course to 340° T to try to keep ahead and regain contact.
- 1453(H) Changed course to 320° T, slowed to full. Secured Battle stations torpedo.
- 1512(E) Changed course to 330° T, slowed to standard. Expected targets to zig back to right, in which case we would regain contact and be in an excellent position for an attack. Asked on wolf pack frequency if any subs had received our contact report. PARGO answered up so assumed message got through to all subs on the surface.
- 1515(E) SJ interference bearing 293° T. Felt this boat would be in attack position.
- 1517(E) Sighted object on horizon bearing 197° T. Thought we had regained contact with main force. Since we did not pick him up on radar hesitated to submerge.
- 1518(H) Changed course to 020° T, all ahead standard.
- 1522(E) Recognized object to be a destroyer, range 18,000 yards. He appeared to be searching vicinity. Angles on bow varied from 90° port to 90° starboard. Believe Jap battleships dog-foxed our SJ radar.
- 1525(E) Lost sight contact with destroyer.
- 1536(E) Concluded that Japs are still west of us probably with a base course of 345° T. Changed course to 320° T, all ahead full.
- 1540(H) Sighted PARGO bearing 290° T. PARGO moved ahead of us and paralleled our course.
- 1620(E) PARGO reported contact at 215° T and asked if we wished to attack. We had no contact so told her to go ahead.
- 1625(H) PARGO submerged to attack. No other subs have opened up on wolf pack frequency. Feel we are only boat on surface now. Still confident that we are ahead of Japs on their approximate track. Changed course to 025° T, all ahead full to maintain position and await developments. Feel the Japs must have run squarely into the FLOUNDER wolf pack.

- 1707(E) Believe Japs are still to west of us. Changed course to 290° T.
- 1709(E) SJ interfered bearing 203° T. Believe this to be PARCO - no communications.
- 1718(E) Sighted tops of two ISE type battleships through clear spot on horizon, angle on bow 90° starboard, bearing 265° T, range 24,000 yards. Manned tracking party.
- 1720(H) Sent out second contact report to all subs and radio Perth. Changed course to 050° T to open out as Japs were clearly visible. All ahead flank.
- 1723(E) Lost visual contact in haze.
- 1726(E) Lost radar contact at 30,000 yards.
- 1728(E) Changed course to 000° T.
- 1740(H) Changed course to 345° T SJ interference 180° T no communications.
- 1821(E) Changed course to 335° T.
- 1825(E) SJ interference 180° T - no communications.
- 1845(E) Same at 1670 T.
- 1937(E) Contact on SD radar (distance 14 miles. (Aircraft contact No. 14.)
- 1940(E) Closed to 8 miles. Submerged.
- 2020(F) Surfaced. SJ out of commission. Felt it was dangerous on surface without SJ tonight.
- 2025(E) Submerged to work on SJ.
- 2053(E) Surfaced to send out radio message. Contact on SD radar, 8 miles closing. (Aircraft contact No. 15). Submerged. Continued work on SJ.
- 2135(E) Sound picked up screws bearing 125° T, 150 RPM (Ship contact No. 7) This is probably one of our subs going north.
- 2145(F) Lost contact with screws. Last bearing 060° T.
- 2210(H) SJ radar back in commission.
- 2217(H) Surfaced. SJ interference bearing 020° T. Exchanged calls with U.S.S. PARCO. This was probably our sound contact. Continued chase of task force.
- 2220(H) Transmitted report of futile search after last contact with Jap force. Felt this negative information valuable as it might indicate Japs were headed for Carrank Bay.
- 2315(H) U.S.S. CHARR took charge in coordinated search for enemy directing our course and speed for remainder of the night.

2335(E) APR contact 180 nos - wondered if this was Jap
or our aircraft.

13 Feb.

- 0108(E) SJ interference and contact, bearing 065° T range
10,100 yards. Exchanged calls with U.S.S. CUITARRO.
- 0124(E) SJ contact bearing 140° T range 21,320 yards. Turned
out to be airplane (Aircraft contact No. 16).
Strong APR interference.
- 0140(E) SJ contact bearing 180° T range 36,800. Another
plane (Aircraft contact No. 17). In both these
contacts pip appeared large, bearing changed rapidly
and disappeared.
- 0721(E) Plane contact on SD radar 10 miles (Aircraft contact
No 18). Closed to 6 miles. Submerged.
- 0812(E) Surfaced.
- 0816(E) Plane contact on SD radar 2 miles (Aircraft contact
No. 19). Submerged. No bombs. Lucky.
- 0905(E) Surfaced.
- 1025(E) Sighted 4 planes on port beam, distance 8 miles,
headed south. Looked like Liberators. (Air-
craft contact No. 20).
- 1043(E) Sighted single plane about 8 miles away headed
in. (Aircraft contact No. 21). Submerged.
- 1135(E) Heard first of 28 distant explosions.
- 1145(E) Planed up to 45 feet to have a look and to search
with SJ. Visibility poor.
Plane contact on SD radar 20, 18, and 5 miles.
(Aircraft contact No. 22).
- 1202(E) Heard last explosion. These sounded like depth
charges, with a definite click before the boom.
- 1228(E) Surfaced.
- 1304(E) Plane contact on SD radar 13 miles. (Aircraft
contact No. 23). Closed to 8 miles. Submerged.
- 1413(E) Surfaced.
- 1414(E) Plane contact on SD radar, 14 miles (Aircraft
contact No. 24). Closed to 10 miles. Submerged.

CONFIDENTIAL U.S.S. BLACKFIN, Report of War Patrol
Number Two.

While on the surface received message
telling us of the good news. We are to go to
Subic Bay for refit.

1543(H)

Surfaced.

1710(H)

Sighted and exchanged calls by SJ with U.S.S.
CHARR.

14 Feb.

0630(H)

Set course for Subic Bay.

15 Feb.

0005(H)

SJ interference with BLUEBACK. Exchanged calls.
Continued in company with BLUEBACK for Subic
Bay.

1147(H)

Rendezvous with escort U.S.S. HOLT (DE706)

1600(H)

Arrived Subic Bay.

Serial 0557

20 March 1945

C-O-N-T-R-O-L-N-U-M-B-E-R

SECOND INCORPORATION to:
 USS BLIGHTIN Comd. Ltr. 113
 Serial 01-45, dated 15
 January 1945. Report of
 Second War Patrol.

From: The Commander Submarines, SEVENTH FLEET.
 To : The Commander in Chief, UNITED STATES FLEET.
 Via : The Commander, SEVENTH FLEET.

Subject: U.S.S. BLIGHTIN (SS322) - Report of Second War
 Patrol - Comment on.

1. The Second War Patrol of the BLIGHTIN was the first under her present Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Commander W. L. MITCH, U.S.N. The entire patrol was conducted in the SOUTH CHINA SEA, and from 14 January to 2 February she was a member of the NEBUCO (OTC), LEDFIELD, OUTWARD Group. The remainder of the patrol was spent in the area west of BALABAC STRAIT.

2. On 24 January, the BLIGHTIN executed a most interesting and skillful attack. The approach was made on a large tanker escorted by three DD. Three bow tubes were fired at the tanker from a range of 1,500 yards, angle on the bow 120° port, and one hit was made. At this time one DD was within 500 yards and would obviously be underfoot when time came for stern tube fire. Therefore, BLIGHTIN fired two torpedoes at the DD, one of which hit and blew it up. It was now clear for the stern tubes to fire, and the result was a second hit in the target. BLIGHTIN retired at high speed on the surface under gunfire from one of the remaining DD.

3. Valuable reconnaissance duty was performed in connection with U.S. re-occupation of the PHILIPPINE ISLANDS from 3 to 13 February.

4. The award of the Submarine Combat Insignia is authorized for this patrol.

5. The Force Commander congratulates the Commanding Officer, Officers and Crew of the BLIGHTIN on this well conducted and aggressive patrol during which the following damage was inflicted upon the enemy:

Serial 0557

20 March 1945

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

SECOND INDICATE to:
 USS BLACKTHORN-CONF. Ltr. 116
 Serial 01-45, dated 15 January
 1945. Report of Second War
 Patrol.

Subject: U.S.S. BLACKTHORN (SS522) -- Report of Second War
 Patrol - Comment on.

SIR

1 - DD (STEEL CLASS - EU) 1,500 Tons

DISPATCH

1 - AO (Large - EU) 10,000 Tons
 Grand Total 11,500 Tons

JAMES WIFE.

DISTRIBUTION

Cominch	(2)	Direct	COC-71.5	(2)
Vice Comv	(2)	Direct	COC-71.3	(2)
Vice Oper Op-23c	(1)		ComSubRon-26	(2)
Com1stFlt	(1)		DivComsSubRon-12	(1 each)
Com2ndFlt	(1)		DivComsSubRon-18	(1 each)
Com7thFlt	(2)		DivComsSubRon-26	(1 each)
ComSub1stFlt	(30)		S/N School, N.L. Conn.	(2)
ComSub2ndFlt	(4)		Comdt. IYD, Puget Sound	(1)
COC-71	(7)		Subd, Mare Island	(2)
COC-71.3	(2)		S/As 7th Flt	(1)

THIS REPORT WILL BE DESTROYED PRIOR TO
NAVY DESTRUCTION OF UNCLASSIFIED MATTERS.

J. P. Miller
 J. P. MILLER,
 Flag Secretary.

Serial 032

Care of Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California,
18 February 1945.CONFIDENTIALFIRST LIEUTENANT to
U.S.S. BLACKFIN Report
of Second War Patrol.

From: The Commander Submarine Squadron TWELVE.
To : The Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : (1) The Commander Submarines, SEVENTH FLEET.
(2) The Commander SEVENTH FLEET.

Subject: U.S.S. BLACKFIN (SS322) - Report of
Second War Patrol.

1. BLACKFIN's second war patrol was of 46 days duration, 36 of which were spent in the assigned area in the South China Sea. Lieutenant Commander W.L. Kitch, U.S. Navy, was in command and it was his first war patrol as such.

2. Three attacks were made on a convoy consisting of one large tanker which had four escorts, one of which was a SHIMO class destroyer (DD). A total of eight torpedoes were fired. Five other contacts were made; two of these were on small escort type vessels which were not attacked, while the third one was on a tanker with one escort that BLACKFIN could not close because she was forced down by a plane. The fourth contact was a task force of two BEs, one CA, and three DDs and the fifth contact was on the same two BEs of contact number four. BLACKFIN was unable to close contacts four and five but sent out two valuable contact reports.

- (a) Attack No. 1: The convoy was picked up by SJ radar at 0502, range 20,000 yards, and the first attack was made about an hour later on the surface firing three torpedoes at the tanker, range 1600 yards, for one timed hit. The target could not be seen at time of hitting because it was obscured by smoke from second attack.
- (b) Attack No. 2: This attack was made on the SHIMO class DD immediately after firing torpedoes on the first one; the DD which had been on the port quarter of the tanker was in position ahead of BLACKFIN, range 800 yards. Two torpedoes were fired at the destroyer at a range of about 500 yards for one observed hit between bridge and stack. It was the smoke resulting from this hit that completely enveloped the destroyer and blocked the visibility of the tanker for observation of the timed hit on the tanker in the first attack. A few minutes later smoke cleared and the DD was missing; tanker was again visible and BLACKFIN maneuvered for a third attack.


Serial 032

Care of Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California,
16 February 1945.CONFIDENTIALBLACKFIN to
U.S.S. BLACKFIN Report
of Second War Patrol.Subject: U.S.S. BLACKFIN (SS342) - Report of
Second War Patrol.

(c) Attack No. 3: This attack followed the second one by a few minutes and was also made on the surface. Three torpedoes were fired at the tanker, range 2000 yards, and one hit aft was observed. BLACKFIN cleared area after one of the remaining escorts commenced a gun attack on her. BLACKFIN did not attempt another attack on the tanker, which did not sink but was plotted as stopped, because the BLUGO, who was in the same area, reported diving for an attack on the tanker.

3. The BLACKFIN returned from patrol in excellent material condition. The lack of mechanical and electrical difficulty was largely the result of care in operation and attention to routine as evidenced by the condition of machinery at the end of this patrol. A normal refit will be accomplished by the GRIFFIN and Relief Crew 122.

4. The Commander Submarine Squadron TWELVE takes pleasure in welcoming the BLACKFIN into Subic Bay and congratulating the Captain, Officers, and Crew for the damage inflicted on the enemy in a fine and aggressive patrol.


C.M. WILKINS.

SS322/A16
Serial 01-45.

U. S. S. BLACKFIN (SS322)
Care of Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

15 January 1945

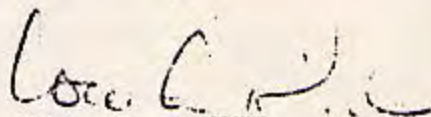
CONFIDENTIAL (Submarine Patrol Report Form)

From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. BLACKFIN(SS322)
To : Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : Official Channels.

subject: U.S.S. BLACKFIN, Report of War Patrol
Number Two.

Enclosures: (A) Subject Report.
(B) Track charts Nos.1-4. (For CTF 71)
(C) Plot of torpedo attacks(For CTF 71)

1. Enclosures (A), (B), and (C) covering the second war patrol of this vessel conducted in South China Sea during the period 2 January 1945 to 15 February 1945 is forwarded herewith.


Wm. L. KITCK

(A) PROLOGUE

The BLACKFIN arrived at Subic Bay on 15 February 1945 and was refitted by the U.S.S. GRIFFIN.

The officers and crew lived on board but were able to get ashore during the daylight for ball playing and recreation.

Five enlisted men were transferred and replacements received. Ensign Leffingwell was transferred to the Relief Crew and Ensign Murray Charles Airhart reported on board.

One day of training was held, only to be cut short by Jap submarine scare.

On 6 March 1945, the BLACKFIN departed for her third war patrol.

(B) NARRATIVE

6 March

- 0810(H) Underway for patrol area in company with U.S.S. HAWKBILL with U.S.S. DYSON as escort.
- 1155(H) U.S.S. DYSON, having completed her duty as escort, reversed course. Sighted several friendly planes during the day. Recognition signals were exchanged with those that closed sufficiently.

7 March

- 0852(H) SD contact, 14 miles (Aircraft contact #1). Did not show friendly on IFF.
- 0909(H) Sighted large unidentified plane coming in (Aircraft contact #2). Submerged.
- 0939(H) Surfaced.
- 1825(H) SD contact, 10 miles, closing rapidly (Aircraft contact #3). Submerged.
- 1855(H) Surfaced.

8 March

- 2021(H) Exchanged recognition signals by SJ radar with U.S.S. BLUEBACK and received further patrol instructions.

CONFIDENTIAL

U.S.S. BLAGKFIN, Report of War Patrol
Number Three.

9 March

- 0134(H) Exchanged recognition signals by SJ radar with U.S.S. BERGALL.
- 0617(H) Submerged for patrol off Cape Varella.
- 0820(H) Sighted B-25, bearing 130° T, headed North (aircraft contact #4).
- 1016(H) Sighted B-25, bearing 300° T, headed South (aircraft contact #5, probably same as #4).
- 1647(H) Sound picked up echo ranging bearing 340° T.
- 1705(H) Sighted two sub chaser type patrol boats, bearing 327° T, range about 6,000 yards, course South. Watched and tracked targets; they were making 10 knots and not on escort duty. Let them pass.
- 1926(H) Surfaced.

10 March

- 0833(H) Sighted U.S.S. FLASHER and gave them what information I could about the pack.

11 March

- 1325(H) Sighted smoke on horizon, bearing 088° T, course 010 (ship contact #1). Opened out to Northwest and began to work ahead. Plotted his speed as 14 knots.
- 1340(H) Sent out contact report (received for by HAWKBILL immediately and by BLUEBACK 10 minutes later).
- 1405(H) Received message from HAWKBILL that our contact was a hospital ship. Sounded logical, for target was unescorted, on a steady course, and smoking heavily.
- 1408(H) Changed course to Eastward to close target and satisfy myself that he was a hospital ship. Identified as AH-18, URAL MARU.
- 1425(H) Sighted a small, unidentified plane near target, coming in (aircraft contact #6). Submerged.
- 1515(H) Surfaced and headed for pack patrol position. Sent message to BLUEBACK telling of our action.
- 1645(H) Sighted BLUEBACK bearing 225° T, and headed toward her for exchange of information.

CONFIDENTIAL

U.S.S. BLACKFIN, Report of War Patrol
Number Three.

- 1750(H) Completed rendezvous and headed back for assigned patrol station.
2350(H) Sighted flashes and rockets bearing 060° T.
2359(E) Heard first of several explosions.

12 March

- 0010(H) Heard last explosion. They sounded like depth charges.
0045(H) SJ contact, 2 small pips, bearing 067° T, range 11,500 yards. Commenced tracking and determined their course was 200° T, speed 13 knots.
0051(H) Received message from FLASHER. She had contacted same hunter-killer group at BLUEBACK's approximate position.
0100(H) Sent out contact report. Began to work around to Northwest to remain clear of A/S patrol.
0117(H) Lost radar contact with enemy bearing 150° T, range 16,000 yards.
0615(H) Submerged.
1557(E) Surfaced.

13 March

- 2300(H) Held rendezvous with U.S.S. BLUEBACK and received mail brought up by U.S.S. SEAROBIN.

14 March

- 0606(E) Submerged for patrol 2 miles off Cape Varella. Sighted total of about 70 sailboats during the day. All on Southerly course and in close to the beach.
1931(H) Surfaced.

15 March - 16 March

Patrolling assigned stations on surface.

17 March

- 0615(H) Submerged for patrol off Cape Varella. Sighted numerous sailboats all on Southerly course and all in close to the beach.
1940(H) Surfaced.

18 March - 20 March

Patrolling assigned stations on surface; no activity.

21 March

0602(H) Submerged for patrol off Cape Varella.
1949(H) Surfaced.

22 March

0515(H) Exploded mine with 20 mm fire after small arms had failed to even cause a dent. (Lat. 12-45N, Long. 109-55E.)
2300(H) Held rendezvous with U.S.S. BLUEBACK and received mail brought out by U.S.S. GUAVINA.

24 March

0823(H) Sank mine. Lat. 13-18N, long. 109-41E.

25 March

0606(H) Submerged for patrol off Cape Varella.
2005(H) Surfaced.

26 March

1430(H) Set course for assigned life guard station off Camranh Bay.
1630(H) Arrived at station; no activity.

27 March

1500(H) Changed course North to rejoin pack.

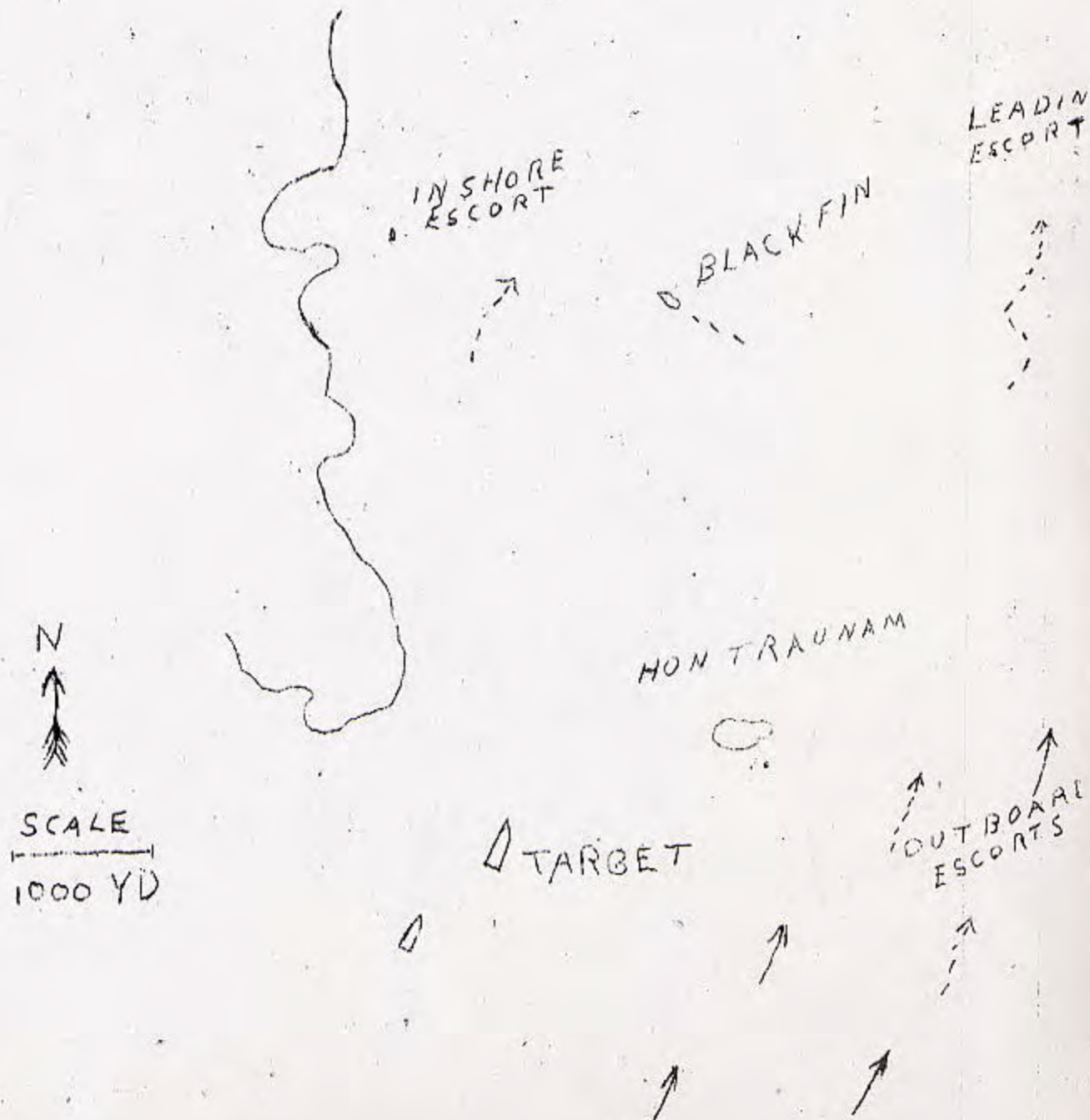
28 March

0010(H) SJ contact bearing 090° T, range 12,000 yards. Proved to be a plane patrolling along the coast (aircraft contact #7).
0557(H) Submerged for patrol 2 miles off Hon Treunam (Three Kings).
0715(H) Sighted U.S. submarine bearing 070° T, range 6,000 yards, course North. Had 4 inch gun forward. Probably U.S.S. BLUEGILL.
0850(H) Sound gear (JK) picked up pinging bearing approximately 230° T, (ship contact #2).
0913(H) Sighted mast of two DE's, bearing 220° T,

- range about 15,000 yards.
- 0919(H) Went to battle stations.
- 0940(H) Sighted PE2Y bearing 230° T, altitude 3 degrees, making a run on convoy. Flak was also observed in her vicinity.
- 0959(H) The convoy was now determined to be composed of eight escorts and two freighters.
- The two freighters were well inshore. Ahead of these two ships were two escorts. The leading outboard escort was zigging radically, showing large port and starboard angles on the bow. All four of these ships passed between Hon Traunam and Mongom Peninsula.
- Six additional escorts formed the off-shore screen and extended from the starboard bow of the leading ship to the starboard quarter of the second ship. These ships left Hon Traunam to port.
- The BLACKFIN was three miles Northeast of Hon Traunam. The current was South, 2.5 knots. We picked the leading freighter, a large Maru, as our target.
- 1005(H) Rigged ship for silent running. The target was tracked at eight knots on course 030°.
- 1013(H) The outboard leading escort had passed astern; the second leading escort had about a 25 starboard angle on the bow, our target zero angle on the bow. We turned to keep second leading escort nearly ahead to reduce our target and flooded the forward torpedo tubes.
- 1023(H) In good position, range to freighter 4,500 yards, angle on the bow 5 degrees port, started to turn in on target for attack. Sound reported pinging at 195° relative had shifted to short scale. Up periscope; nothing there except first of screening escorts about 4,000 yards, large angle on the bow. But on taking a second sweep discovered the second leading escort which had been showing a 30 starboard angle on the bow, range 1200 yards had turned toward us; sound had given us a reciprocal bearing. Thought this fellow had gone by.
- Shifted set up to this DE but before we were able to fire, range was too close.
- 1024(H) Ordered 200 feet, rig for depth charge attack, and rig in sound heads. Thought we had over 230 feet of water. At 100 feet began coming back up in spite of a full negative tank. The DE was passing overhead at this time and we were probably sucked up.
- 1024½ Caught the boat at 90 feet and started back down when seven very close depth charges were re-

CONFIDENTIAL U.S.S. BLACKFIN, Report of War Patrol Number Three.

SITUATION AT 1023(H)



ceived above and on the starboard hand. This greatly assisted our descent. The bow planes jammed on 8 degrees dive, lost power on the stern planes, numerous lights broke, gauge faces popped off, air leaks made a great deal of noise, and a report came from forward torpedo room that water was coming in. The boat was pushed down in the mud at 156 feet.

1025(H)

All stop. Began survey and correction of damage.

The outer doors on three tubes forward were open part way and could not be closed. Three torpedoes forward and one aft had hot runs.

The hydrogen burner rubber sockets were dislodged from tubes two and five and because the outer doors of these tubes were partially open, water was coming into the boat until wooden depth charge plugs were inserted. This would have been serious at greater depth. (For further details, see Sec. (K) MAJOR DEFECTS AND DAMAGE.)

Both sound heads were knocked off when we hit bottom. The heads were being rigged in when this occurred.

The main and auxiliary compasses were out of commission. Mercury had spilled out of the bowls.

The SJ was out of commission.

The after battery hatch trunk and the forward escape trunk were partially flooded.

Fifty-six light bulbs and three-fourths of the lights on TP-TR indicator board were knocked out.

Innumerable valves throughout the boat cracked open and many air leaks developed.

TBTs, bridge 7MC, bridge diving alarm, and searchlight were out.

Lost all radio antennae.

Collected bucket of miscellaneous bolts from deck throughout boat.

Numerous air leaks necessitated shut down of service air systems with the result that this system filled with salt water, which in turn contaminated the battery water system.

Smashed bridge pelorus. Chipped prism in #2 periscope and jarred both out of collimation.

The high vent on the heliometer line for stern planes jarred open, but the cause of the bow plane jamming was not found. Both were put back in commission.

A crack was found in fresh water lines to #3 and 4 main engines.

- 1050(H) Head what sounded like machine gun fire. Maybe plane strafing escorts.
- 1326(H) Received 79th and last depth charge; all except first salvo sounded to Northeast (seaward) but still too close for us to risk breaking away from bottom. Light screws passed overhead twice during this period but did not drop.
- 1430(H) Had only one very faint set of screws and pings bearing 025° T with a tug just inshore of him. Numerous sailboats were all around us collecting dead fish-no BLACKFIN. Began clearing area to Eastward.
- 2037(H) Surfaced. Sent messages to BLUEBACK and COBIA explaining present condition. U.S.S. BERGALL was ordered by pack commander to take over our life guard duties.

29 March

Continued to convert U.S.S. BLACKFIN into a fighting ship.

30 March

- 1600(H) Rendezvous with U.S.S. BLUEBACK. Gave detailed report of damage and present condition of boat. Ordered by U.S.S. BLUEBACK to clear the area and proceed Fremantle.

31 March

- 1445(H) Sighted and exchanged salutations with the U.S.S. MINGO, North bound.

4 April

- 0245(H) In bright moonlight, 15 miles Southwest of Great Masembo, sighted what appeared to be a submarine bearing 120° T, range 7,000 yards (ship contact #3). SJ radar did not pick up the

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U.S.S. BLACKFIN, Report of War Patrol
Number Three.

contact. Shortly after the contact was seen, it disappeared. This strengthened our suspicion that it was a submarine; we avoided to the northward.

- 0943(H) Sighted what appeared to be a mast on the horizon bearing 090° T, distant about 7 miles.
- 0945(H) Looked like submarine periscope shears. Changed course to North. Submarine submerged. Set course just far enough North so he could not "get in" and yet we would see him if he surfaced.
- 1033(H) Submarine surfaced bearing 180° T, range 7,000 yards. Exchanged calls with HMS STYGIAN.
- 1429(H) While passing 15 miles East of Sekla Island sighted what appeared to be tops of a conning tower bearing 215° T (ship contact #4) range about 7,000 yards. Shortly after sighting contact disappeared. Changed course and maneuvered around to the Southeastward.
- 2000(H) Commenced transit Lombok Strait.
- 2017(H) Picked up small patrol boat bearing 275° T, range 4,850 yards. His bearing drew aft fast and at
- 2030(H) Lost radar contact at 7,000 yards, bearing 340° T.
- 2210(H) Entered Indian Ocean.
- 9 April
- 1300(H) Entered Fremantle Harbor.

(C) WEATHER

No unusual weather was encountered. Weather was generally moderate.

(D) TIDAL INFORMATION

Current in the vicinity of Cape Varella was between 2.5 and 3.0 knots South. The strength of the current decreased with the distance from the shore line becoming zero about thirty-five miles off shore.

(E) NAVIGATIONAL AIDS

Cape Varella Light was observed during the day but not during the night.

(F) SHIP CONTACTS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Time</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>Lat</u> <u>Long.</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Initial</u> <u>Range</u>	<u>Dist.</u> <u>Course</u> <u>Speed</u>	<u>How</u> <u>contact-</u> <u>ted.</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1	1325 11 Mar	13-10N 110-17E	AP	20000 yds.	010°T 14 kts.	SD	Hospital Ship
2	0850 28 Mar	12-37N 109-28E	2 AK 8 es- corts	14000 yds.	030°T 8 kts.	Sound (JK)	
3	0245 4 Apr	5-50S 114-15E	SM(?)	7000 yds.		SD	
4.	1429 4 Apr	7-10S 116-20E	SM(?)	7000 yds.		SD	

NOTE: Vast numbers of small sailing vessels were seen about two miles off Cape Varella; these sailboats were observed on every occasion that Cape Varella was our petrol station, and their course was invariably South.

(G) AIRCRAFT CONTACTS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Time Date</u>	<u>Lat Long</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Initial Range</u>	<u>Est. Course Speed</u>	<u>How Contacted</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1	0852 7 Mar	14-36N 113-50E		14		R (SD)	
2	0909 7 Mar	14-35N 113-55E		7		SD	Probably same as #1.
3	1825 7 Mar	13-40N 112-20E		10		R (SD)	
4	0820 9 Mar	12-50N 109-39E	13-24	5	000	P	
5	1016 9 Mar	12-30N 109-35E	B-24	5	180	P	Probably same as #4.
6	1425 11 Mar	13-05N 110-08E	small	4		SD	
7	0010 28 Mar	12-38N 109-35E	PB2Y	4	090	P	Attacking ship contact #4.

NOTE: During patrol on station we had innumerable plane contacts with our own aircraft.

(H) ATTACK DATA

None.

(I) MINES

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
22 March	Lat.12-45N Long.109-55E	Exploded with 20 mm.
24 March	Lat.13-18N Long.109-41E	Sunk with 20 mm.

Both mines were spherical, about 30 inches diameter, and appeared to have been in the water for a considerable length of time.

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U.S.S. BLACKFIN, Report of War Patrol
Number Three.

(J) ANTI-SUBMARINE MEASURES AND EVALUATION TACTICS

Two hunter-killer groups encountered. One during the day on 9 March and one during dark on morning of 12 March, the latter being radar equipped. The convoy encountered on 28 March was composed of 2 ships and eight escorts. It is believed that we were picked up by the DE's sound gear. After the first depth charging, we were on the bottom in 165 feet of water with all machinery silenced. The anti-submarine vessels used pinging, and after the initial depth charging did not regain contact, but continued to drop charges where we were thought to be.

(K) MAJOR DEFECTS AND DAMAGE

The BLACKFIN was refitted in Subic by the U.S.S. GRIFFIN.

Departure on patrol was held up one day because of a bad bearing in #1 periscope. We went to sea with the periscope still unsatisfactory but usable provided it did not become worse. It became worse and in a few days was of little value. Prior to departure, also, it was explained to the tender that #2 periscope fogged badly for about 10 seconds whenever it ducked or was splashed with a wave. The tender checked the "dow point" and declared the periscope was as good as it could be made to be. The result was that periscope exposures with this periscope were twice as long as they should have been.

The pit log again on this patrol run was a constant source of trouble. No new bellows were obtainable and the log could not be adjusted to read the slow submerged speeds correctly.

Shunt resistors on compensating fields of #1 and #2 main motors were left disconnected when brushes were replaced. This caused an unbalance in load between the motors. The overload on #1 and #2 caused the solder on the brushes "pig tails" to melt. Noticed and corrected error when we found spots of solder on the commutators.

The Kleinschmidt stills were making battery water from sea water when we came in from the last run. After one week at sea only one still could do this and after the second week neither could do so. It is interesting to note that after our severe depth charging both stills could again make battery water. Perhaps this is a new way of cleaning stills.

MAJOR DEFECTS AND DAMAGE (Continued)

DEPTH CHARGING ON 28 MARCH

TORPEDO TUBES - Damage and Repairs.

I Forward Room - Mk. 18-1's loaded.

1. The muzzle doors were open on tubes #1, 2, 3, and 4 on first depth charging. In attempting to close these doors it was found that the torpedoes in tubes #2 and 4 had hot runs and had shifted forward, preventing complete closure of the outer doors. #5 also ran hot and partially forced open the muzzle door. The doors were subsequently closed by nudging the torpedoes with the muzzle doors operating in hydraulic power while the boat had a fifteen degree up angle, stop bolts lifted. In order to lift the stop bolts, all impulse pressure was drained off, the anti-drift interlock and firing interlocks were broken, the gyro spindle retraction levers were disengaged, and the tube then fired. Gaskets were apparently undamaged.
2. Gyro Spindles - The gyro spindles were bent ninety degrees and the spindle sleeves were torn on tubes #1, 2, 4, 5, and 6. No. 3 was slightly bent but still usable. The spindles were removed from tubes 1, 2, and 4 by pulling the entire gyro spindle housing and assembly. In order to remove the housing from tubes 5 and 6, it was first necessary to remove the gyro spindle main and cross drive gears and casing.
3. Stop Bolt Levers - The stop bolt levers on tubes 2 and 5 were bent down. When the stop bolt gibs were tightened up after inspection of the stop bolts, the stop cylinder pistons jammed against the shutter bars causing the ready-to-fire lever to bind. In working our the firing system it was found that the stop bolts would not return to the normal "down" position, apparently also caused by deformation of the stop bolt levers. A hydraulic jack was used inside the tube to bend the stop bolt levers up on tubes 2 and 5. One-half inch shims were installed behind the stop bolt spring and the tubes put back in commission. These tubes were hot runs, the stop bolts being forced to ride over the guide studs; nevertheless, no suitable

explanation can be found for the bending down of the stop bolt levers. Apparently they should have bent in the other direction. The stop bolts on tubes 2, 4, and 5 were slightly scarred. The stop bolt ribs on all tubes were undamaged.

4. Firing Valves and Pilot Valves - Tube #6 alone developed leaks.
5. Anti-Drift Interlock - Two shims were removed from muzzle door shaft of #6 tube to facilitate movement of ready-to-fire lever. Anti-drift lock was scarred and was rubbing on shaft.
6. Breech Door - Tube #2 leaked badly with outer door open during depth charging. It now opens with difficulty and may have been sprung.
7. Burner Wire Sockets - The rubber plug in tube #2 was pulled out by movement of the torpedo. The burner wire was pulled through the plug in #5 tube, having broken about 10 inches outside the tube. Subsequent leaks were stopped by driving in wooden depth charge plugs.

After five days work, repairs were completed and all tubes were back in commission. Inboard and water slugs were satisfactorily fired from all tubes, Gyro angles were set correctly by Gyro Indicator Regulator, and the operation of the poppet mechanism tested.

II After Room - Mk. 23's loaded.

1. Drain and Muzzle Door Interlock - The interlock lever operates with difficulty on tubes 7 and 8. The drain valve rods were probably bent by the first depth charging. At that time all drain valves were open preparatory to flooding the tubes.
2. Firing Interlock Mechanism - The ready-to-fire lever binds badly on tubes 7 and 8. This condition continues with both the firing interlock and anti-drift interlocks as well as the shutter-bar disconnected. Therefore, it is believed that the interlock sleeve head was knocked out of alignment, or the sleeve misaligned so that it is binding in the speed or depth setting mechanisms.
3. Firing Valves - Three valves developed leaks on all tubes.
4. Pilot Valve - All pilot valves except #9 developed leaks.
5. Gyro Spindles - The gyro spindles were engaged in tubes 9 and 10 during the depth charging and were bent, necessitating replacement.

6. Stop Bolts - The stop bolts were damaged on all tubes, #8 torpedo making a hot run. The stop bolts in tubes #8 and #10 were replaced with spares and the forward faces of those in tubes #7 and #9 were squared up.
7. Pressure Gauges - The glass was blown out of #7 and #9 stuck at twenty pounds.
8. Breech Door Ring - The ring was rotated considerably toward the open position on all tubes, the drain valves being open. No damage was done.

III CONCLUSIONS

1. The three hot runs forward of the Mk 10-1 torpedoes might not have occurred had the tubes been equipped with 1 1/2 inch stop bolts rather than 1 1/4 inch. The small stop bolt chewed right through the cold rolled steel guide studs. Replacement of this type guide stud with the new alloy steel type will also help to avert similar hot runs.
2. New gyro spindles were needed on all tubes. The six provided for by the allowance list were used to replace six irreparably damaged spindles. Four more would have simplified repairs.
3. A serious situation may develop if the hydrogen burner sockets are pulled out while the outer doors are jammed open and the boat is at deep submergence. It is impossible to install the bolt plugs against a stream of water. Wooden depth charge plugs were installed with some difficulty at 150 feet.

FORWARD TORPEDO ROOM

The service air to the escape trunk was jammed open, open causing pressure to build up in the trunk and forcing the door to open part way. It was believed the trunk was completely flooded because the water came out of the drain at such high pressure.

Both sound heads came up in the boat four feet when we hit bottom and the heads were probably knocked off. Both have zero grounds.

The driving gear for pitometer log pump motor was disengaged.

CONTROL ROOM AND CONNING TOWER

Bow planes jammed - cause not determined. Stern planes lost power because the high vent on the telemotor line was knocked open. Both gyros were put out of commission when half the mercury was spilled out of the bowls. Also the gimbal ring sprung out of adjustment on the master gyro.

Safety and negative tank indicator switches were knocked out of adjustment. Numerous service air valves were jarred open and system was secured; it filled with sea water and in turn contaminated the battery water.

Optics of both periscopes were knocked out of collimation.

AFTER BATTERY

After battery upper hatch was lifted momentarily and lower hatch was knocked off its seat allowing a small amount of water to enter the after battery compartment before the lower hatch could be secured.

AFTER ENGINE ROOM

Line from detached circulating water pump to #3 and #4 main engines developed leaks.

AFTER TORPEDO ROOM

The outer door of the signal gun was jammed open.

TOPSIDE

Yoke of five inch gun knocked out of line.

All antennae down.

Glass in bridge repeater broken and repeater flooded out.

Searchlight, 7 MC, diving alarm, and TBT's knocked out.

GENERAL

Fifty six light bulbs were knocked out. Various gauges were broken. A bucket of miscellaneous nuts and bolts was collected from the deck throughout the boat.

(L) RADIO

During this patrol the high frequency receivers were used for BAKERS, WOLF PACK, and LIFE GUARD frequencies. It is strongly recommended that an additional high frequency receiver be installed so that these three frequencies can be guarded at one time.

On March 14, the BAKER schedule was hard to copy because of low signal strength; signal strength remained low until after departure from the area, usually about a signal strength of three.

On March 20 we had interference on BAKERS frequency from a broadcasting station and on the following day from a station called MTS9.

On March 25 the signal on 12630 kcs. faded out, and we had a very poor signal on 4370 kcs. and no signal on 9250 kcs.

In general it was noted that VIXO on 9250 kcs. has a frequency drift which makes it difficult for the radioman to copy a message without stopping to retune the receiver.

On March 28, after a severe depth charge attack, upon surfacing we found that all three antennae were knocked down. The SD radar mast was used for reception while the other two antennae were restrung.

During this patrol the reception and transmission of messages to and from the planes was excellent. On VHF we obtained ranges of from 10 to 12 miles. On the WOPACO frequency the range was indeterminable over 100 miles.

Three CTF 71 serials were missed during the run but they were of no interest to us. These messages were missed after we surfaced on March 28.

(M) RADAR

OPERATION

SJ-1 Radar

Contacts with U.S. type submarines were made at 10,000 to 17,000 yards. A B24 plane was picked up at 25,000 yards - E3. Communication by SJ was in general satisfactory.

SD-4 Radar

The SD was used only a very limited amount. Contacts with planes were made at 8 to 10 miles.

APR

CONTACTS

LAT.	LONG.	PULSE RATE	FREQ.	pulse LENGTH	ANT. ROTATION
12-33N	110-14E	1000	150	3	Rotating
8-38N	116-42E	500	102	5	
13-9N	110-15E	500	220	5	
12-36N	110-2 E	250	170	4	
13-17N	109-41E	1000	140	10	
12-22N	110-42E	500	156	7	Rotating

RADAR MAINTENANCE

SJ-1 Radar

Nature of Operation

Trouble Found and Remedy

Low Ringtime

Replaced worn crystal connector rod.

Large center hole on PPI Scope. V 10 V 11 99% failed to glow.

Replaced R 44 Operation normal.

Average time for (9) type 5U4G was 450 hours.

SD-4 Radar

Average time for (6) type 8014's was 225 hours.

SPA PULSE ANALYZER

Past deterioration of type 2x2,5Y3,VR 150 30.

A 20,000 Ohm ground was found on the C.R.T. fill.ckt. This winding is neg. 1,500 volts to Gnd.

By taking the filament winding used for the sweep an liflor tubes and changing 5 leads, it was possible to put the winding with the

RADAR MAINTENANCE (Continued)

20,000 Ohm.Gnd. across 6.3
volts. This did not bother
operations.

(N) SOUND GEAR AND SOUND CONDITIONS

While patrolling on the surface at speeds up to 13 knots, the sound gear was manned. The sound heads were alternately used so as not to cause the training motor generators to overheat. Submerged the JP sound gear was also manned.

On 28 March, while the BLACKFIN was on the bottom undergoing a depth charge attack, the JP sound gear gave a good picture of the situation.

(O) DENSITY LAYERS

A pronounced density layer of 10° at 150 feet was noticed in the China Sea just off Cape Verolla.

(P) HEALTH, FOOD, AND HABITABILITY

HEALTH

DICKSON, Robert Windsor, TM3c, USNR, 285 29 59.

Pain in right inguinal region, cause undetermined.
Treatment: three days rest and hot applications.

LIVESEY, Wayne (A), RM1c, USN, 368 60 24.

Slight paralysis of right arm, possibly caused by strain.

Treatment: three days rest.

MC CRACKEN, David James, Jr., SM1c, USN, 201 72 20.

D.U. Malaria.

Treatment: routine atabrine treatment and rest. On sick list 19 days.

WATSON, George Franklin, CMOMM, USN, 375 73 69.

Diarrhea, cause undetermined.

Treatment: tincture of camphor. Opium & Bismuth subnitrate.

The health of the officers and crew other than above was good.

F O D

There was an improvement in the preparation

of the food this run, but the variety of food obtainable was still quite limited.

HABITABILITY

The number of men carried on board necessitates "hot bunking". It is strongly recommended that six additional bunks be installed in the after battery.

(Q) PERSONNEL

The officers performed their duties in an excellent manner.

The conduct of the men during our depth charging was highly commendable, as was their work afterwards to correct the damage done. (See section (U) REMARKS.)

(R) MILES STRAILED - FUEL USED

Subic to Area	715 miles	9,100 gals.
In area	6380 miles	86,600 gals.
Area to Fremantle	<u>1530 miles</u>	<u>14,150 gals.</u>
Totals	8625 miles.	109,850 gals.

(S) PERFORMANCE

Days enroute to area	2
Days in area	28
Days enroute to base	<u>6</u>
Total	36
Days submerged	6½

(T) FACTORS OF ENDURANCE REMAINING

Torpedoes	Fuel	Provisions	Personnel Factor
*24	8,100 gals.	20 days.	20 days.

Note: 4 torpedoes not useable.

Limiting factor this patrol - material condition of boat.

CONFIDENTIAL U.S.S. BLACKFIN, Report of War Patrol
Number Three.

(U) RADIO AND RADAR COUNTERMEASURES

None.

(V) REMARKS

While on station and on the surface daily, communications were held with search planes. Their cooperation was appreciated and it is believed that with this cooperation a very thorough area coverage was effected.

During our severe depth charge attack, an unknown plane tried to help us out by attacking the DE's. Evidence of this was scattered machine gun fire and what sounded like a small aerial bomb. Their assistance was much appreciated.

This patrol run, although not marked with enemy sinkings, brought out the fine character of the men on board. The below named personnel were outstanding and their conduct will be the subject of separate correspondence:

THOMPSON, L. E., Lt.(jg), USNR, 163109.
COSTA, E.A., CDM(T), USN, 212 44 45.
KILLER, S.F., CDM(AA), USN, 279 60 25.
PARKA, A., MoMMlc, USN, 272 38 49.
LIVESSEY, W., ID'lc(T), USN, 368 60 24.
CHAPPELL, R.L., MoMM2c, USN, 238 87 26.

Serial 0865

25 May, 1945.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SECOND ENDORSEMENT to:
 USS BLACKFIN Conf. Ltr.
 SS322/A16, serial 03-45,
 dated 9 March, 1945. Re-
 port of Third War Patrol.

From: The Commander Submarines SEVENTH FLEET.
 To: The Commander-in-Chief, UNITED STATES FLEET.
 Via: The Commander SEVENTH FLEET.

Subject: U.S.S. BLACKFIN (SS322) - Report of Third War
 Patrol, Comment on.

1. The Third War Patrol of the BLACKFIN; under the command of Lieutenant Commander W. L. KITCHE, U.S.N., was conducted in the SOUTH CHINA SEA. From 8 to 30 March, BLACKFIN was a member of the BLUEBLACK Group which maintained a continuous blockade of the INDO-CHINA Coast, off CAPE VARELLA. The patrol was terminated early because of damage received during the depth-charge attack on 28 March.
2. On 28 March, BLACKFIN submerged two miles North of HON TRAUNAM, and about the same distance off HON GOM PENINSULA, in order to be in position to attack a convoy previously reported by aircraft. At 0959 the convoy had been sighted and was observed to consist of two marus and eight escorts. Air cover was not observed and had probably been driven off by a PB2Y which had been observed making a run on the convoy a few minutes previously. Such a heavily escorted convoy naturally posed a most difficult approach problem, but BLACKFIN persisted in his attack and succeeded in penetrating the outer screen. However, at 1010 he was detected by the inner screen and several escorts detached themselves from the convoy and launched a particularly severe counter-attack. The same convoy, whose defense was weakened as a result of this attack, was further weakened when BLUEBLACK drew off several more escorts by attacking at 1058. These attrition tactics doubtlessly facilitated the final successful attack made at 1110 by BLUEGILL which resulted in a tanker being torpedoed, beached and destroyed. The enemy's inability to penetrate the air-submarine blockade off CAPE VARELLA, even with such formidable escort protection, has apparently resulted in stagnation of traffic in this area, because no further convoy movement has been observed since that date.

Serial 0865

25 May, 1945.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SECOND ENDORSEMENT to:
 USS BLACKFIN Conf. Ltr.,
 SS322/A16, serial 03-45,
 dated 9 March, 1945. Re-
 port of Third War Patrol.

Subject: U.S.S. BLACKFIN (SS322) - Report of Third War
 Patrol, Comment on.

3. The patrol was terminated on 30 March as a result of battle damage received during the aforementioned action of 28 March.

4. The award of the Submarine Combat Insignia is not authorized for this patrol.

5. The Force Commander congratulates the Commanding Officer, Officers and Crew of the BLACKFIN upon their aggressive and determined conduct on this patrol, and for their contribution to the success of the air-submarine blockade of the INDO-CHINA Coast.

JAMES FIFE

DISTRIBUTION:

Cominch	(3) Direct	CTG-71.8	(2)
Vice Opnav	(2) Direct	ComSubRon-22	(2)
Vice Opnav Op-23c	(1)	ComSubRon-26	(2)
Com1stFlt	(1)	ComSubRon-30	(2)
Com2ndFlt	(1)	DivComsSubRon-22	(1 ea)
Com7thFlt	(2)	DivComsSubRon-26	(1 ea)
ComSubslstFlt	(30)	DivComsSubRon-30	(1 ea)
ComSubs2ndFlt	(4)	S/M School, N.L. Conn.	(2)
CTF-71	(7)	Comdt; NYD, Puget Sound	(1)
OTC-71.5	(2)	SubAd, Mare Island	(2)
		S/Ms 7thFlt	(1)

THIS REPORT WILL BE DESTROYED PRIOR TO
 ENTRY INTO ENEMY CONTROLLED WATERS.

J. B. Miller
 J. B. MILLER,
 Flag Secretary.

Serial 27Care of Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California.
11 April 1945.C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-LFIRST ENDORSEMENT to
U.S.S. BLACKFIN (SS322) -
Report of Third War Patrol.

From: The Commander Submarine Squadron THIRTY.
 To : The Commander-in-Chief, UNITED STATES FLEET.
 Via : (1) Commander Submarines, SEVENTH FLEET.
 (2) Commander SEVENTH FLEET.
 Subject: U.S.S. BLACKFIN (SS322) - Report of Third War Patrol.

1. The Third War Patrol of the U.S.S. BLACKFIN (SS322), conducted in the South Sea Area, was of thirty-six days duration, twenty-eight of which were spent in the assigned area. From 3 to 30 March the BLACKFIN was a unit of a Coordinated Attack Group composed of the U.S.S. BLUEBACK (SS326) (OTC), U.S.S. FLASHER (SS249), U.S.S. BERGALL (SS320), and U.S.S. HAWKBILL (SS366). On 26 March lifeguard duty was performed off CAMRANH BAY. Patrol was terminated due to damage from depth charging and bottoming.

2. One contact worthy of torpedo fire was made on 28 March. This contact consisted of a convoy of two AK'S and eight escorts. When the BLACKFIN had just about reached a position to attack, she was detected by a near escort and severely depth charged. The BLACKFIN was forced to the bottom in 156 feet of water. Extensive damage was sustained by the first pattern of seven close depth charges. Major damage was to sound heads, bow and stern planes, stop bolts, torpedo guide studs and hydrogen burner plugs. The BLACKFIN was able to repair some of the damage prior to departure from the area two days later.

3. Communication with search planes was the best noted to date. Search planes also strafed the DE's that were attacking the BLACKFIN, a very welcome assist.

4. The Material Condition of the BLACKFIN is only fair. It is expected that the refit will extend beyond the normal period. The morale of the BLACKFIN remains high as evidenced by the attitude of the morale of the Officers and crew. The state of cleanliness was excellent.

5. The Commanding Officer and crew are congratulated upon the completion of an arduous patrol. It is regretted that no damage was inflicted upon the enemy.

Jesse L. Hull
 JESSE L. HULL.

SS322/A16
Ser.03-45.

U. S. S. BLACKFIN (SS322)
Care of Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.

9 March 1945.

CONFIDENTIAL (Submarine Patrol Report)

From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. BLACKFIN.
To : Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : Official Channels.

Subject: U.S.S. BLACKFIN, Report of War Patrol
Number Three.

Enclosure: (A) Subject Report.
(B) Track Charts.(for ComSubs7thFlt)

1. Enclosure (A) covering the third war patrol of this vessel conducted in South China Sea during the period 6 March 1945 to 9 April 1945 is forwarded herewith.


Wm. L. KITCH