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s were were killed. The damage to Bonefish was
decision was made to decommission her and dispose

589) 99 men lost

aboard Scorpion. The best available evidence
on 22 May 1968 at approximately 1844Z after an
Atlantic Ocean from Gibraltar to her home port at

Mark 48 Test Sends a DDE to DJL*

I thought that my experience on the USS Trigger (SS-564) and the development of the MK48 torpedo may be of interest to the readers of the American Submariner. I served on



the Trigger from 1970 to 1973 as leading ET. In late 1970 the Trigger was designated as the platform from which the final operational tests of the MK48 would take place. We were to operate out of the commercial port of Nanaimo BC, with support services at the Bangor Naval Station and the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station.

There were two companies competing for the ultimate supply contract. Our daily routine was to get underway around 0800 hours, go up the coast to the Canadian torpedo

General characteristics	
Class and type:	Tang-class submarine
Displacement:	1,615 tons (surf); 1,990 tons (sub)
Length:	269 ft
Beam:	27 ft
Draft:	17 ft
Speed:	18.3 knots (surf); 15.5 knots (sub)
Complement:	88 officers and men
Armament:	8 × 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes (6 forward, 2 aft)

station, load a couple test MK 48's, then head out into the Strait of Georgia with a torpedo retriever.

In the forward torpedo room were engineers from both companies, lots of test equipment and our Torpedomen -- the only guys that took a hands-on active part in the testing. We would submerge to periscope depth and wait for the engineers to do the pretests and then shoot. Some days we sat all day and never did shoot.

* Davy Jones's Locker

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Although the torpedo was set to run at a depth less than our operational depth, when there was a shot we would immediately go deep in case the torpedo did a 180 (degree turn), which happen a couple times early on. On the occasions that it did a 180 you could hear it passing overhead looking for the biggest chunk of metal around.

After a couple weeks the CO decided that he only needed two watch sections to handle the daily underway routine. The off going duty section got the day off and met the boat on its evening return. We had berthing and mess privileges at the Canadian Army barracks in Nanaimo. Some of the off guys would ride the torpedo retriever and fish while waiting for a shot.

Finally in April we loaded the first live war shot at the Bangor Naval Station. The target was the USS Whitehurst (DE-634,) which had been towed to a secure area off the coast. Needless to say we were all excited to actually fire a live torpedo, but at the same time everyone was a bit tense.

We submerged to periscope depth, fired and went deep and collectively held our breath. It didn't take long and there was muffled explosion and it was all over. The Whitehurst broke in half and sank in less than 30 seconds. Back at periscope



depth all that was left was a portion of the bow that was held up by trapped air.

On the following day we did two more shots on two cargo ships, same results. We were scheduled to do a final shot on a decommission sub, the USS Bugara (SS-331), but it sank in the Juan de Fuca Strait as it was being towed to the target area.

In the end the Trigger was credited with 30,170 tons sunk by the US Naval Torpedo Station, which was the world record for peacetime tonnage.

A side note, the USS Whitehurst was the US Destroyer that was used in the 1957 film “The Enemy Below” with Robert Mitchum and Curt Jurgens.

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