
 * U.S.S. MADDOX (DD731) *
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 * WAR COMMUNIQUE NO. 5 *
 * By Horace Nealy CY *

Although we know he doesn't have anything to do with it, it seems that everytime Admiral Halsey takes over the reins of the Fleet, "Old Man Weather" puts in his two-bit's worth. No sooner had he assumed command than we were caught in the throes of one of the worst typhoons in Pacific history. The destroyers, which took such a beating during last December's little blow had learned their lessons well and came through practically unscathed, but the big boys - the cruisers, the battleships, the carriers - were not so lucky. The U.S.S. PITTSBURGH lost her bow, many other "heavies" sustained serious damage, the carriers had their flight decks ripped and torn, lost planes, had numerous fires, and in all had a very bad time of it. Much of the credit for the tin cans' relatively small damage can be attributed to quick action by their commanding officers and the superior seamanship of their crews. As an example, our commanding officer seeing that the course we were on was endangering the ship and its personnel, promptly took independent action and selected a course that was as comfortable as could be expected under the circumstances. As a result, we sustained only very minor damage. Noteworthy of mention is the heroic act of one of our crew, Hulme, SF1c, who went topside during the height of the storm and stopped up a ventilator that was shipping water into the after steering room and endangering the ship.

But undaunted by the weather, operations were resumed as soon as the typhoon blew itself out and it was not an uncommon sight to see a carrier backing down full, launching planes from the stern of her flight deck. American ingenuity comes through again.

All through the months of June and July the Japanese Homeland was hit again and again by our air and surface forces. KYUSHU, HONSHU, HOKKAIDO, all felt the power of our fleet. Airfields, shipyards, industrial plants, railroad yards, communications, at TOKYO, KURE, KOBE, NAGASAKI, YOKAHOMA, et al -- all were heavily punished. The Jap Fleet, which no longer dared come out to oppose us, and which was in hiding, carefully camouflaged, was sought out and virtually destroyed. Our large units steamed up to her coastline and shelled her at will -- even to the point of timing the bombardment so that you folks could sit around your dinner tables and hear a blow-by-blow account of it over your radios.

In addition to her routine jobs of protecting the large units from air, surface, and underwater attacks, of which you are all familiar, the MADDOX got in her licks too. On June tenth, she again participated in a bombardment of MINAMI DAITO JIMA, a small Jap island, along with other destroyers and some of the newer battleships. It is unnecessary, I hope, to tell you that the destroyers, as usual, were several miles closer in than the battleships.

But the crowning indignity to the Nipponese pride came on July 22 when the MADDOX steamed into the outer portion of TOKYO BAY within "spittin" distance of shore batteries on three sides, airfields, minefields, and surface vessels, and sank two ships, probably sank another, and damaged a fourth, and withdrew without suffering any casualties, either material or personnel. (Note: Eight other destroyers were along to see how it should be done.)