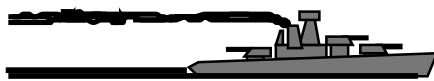
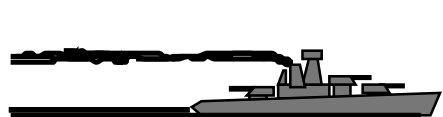


TASK FORCE 144



The Official Newsletter of Model Warship Combat, Inc.

www.mwci.org

Fall - 2004

CALENDAR OF MWC EVENTS

November 19-21, 2004

Cocoa Beach Turkey Shoot

Ramada Inn I-95 Cocoa Beach, Florida

Site Host: Rick King, 407-322-7750

Sanctioned, \$5, CO2 provided

May 28- 31, 2005

Fray at Bray's

Siloam Springs, AR

Contact: Kevin Bray, 479-871-5162

brayka@cox-internet.com

June 19-24, 2005

MWC National Championship

Ionia, Michigan

Site Host: Luis Gomez, Mark Roe, Chris & Dave Au. Sanctioned. Fee pending.

Motel: Pending

NOTE THE DATE is a MONTH earlier than normal!

BOD Doin's

The BOD has decided to hire Ron Horbul to make the trophy plaques for Nats 2005. This should result in a cost savings to the club in years to come as Ron will be able to re-use templates from year to year.



Finster's Nagato side-splashes the Queen Elizabeth.

Photo by Gerald Roberts



The sidemounts made quite a splash at this year's Nats

Photo by the Melton Crew

Nats 2004

The Best Nats so Far



It was somewhat surprising to see the slogan "The Best Nats So Far" scribbled on Chris Kessler's Ship box. It was also boldly emblazoned on the tee-shirts that got handed out on Sunday. Missouri is, after all, the "Show Me" state, so the slogan seemed to be a bit of chutzpa on the part of the Site Host and his helper.

By the end of Nats, it was apparent that the slogan was well-chosen. The battling was filled with action and plenty of sinks, and plenty of stories for the winter's dockyards.

After three years of Allied victories, there was a shake-up in the lineups. It isn't until Sunday at Nats, however, that the opposing Admirals get their 'final' lineups. This year the Axis Fleet had picked up several Allied defectors. There were also some long-time Axis captains that had brought Allied ships, so the Allies still had a potent line-up.

The Allies actually had more captains, 23 to 20. However, in the categories, the Allies had two 8 unit ships to none for the Axis. The Axis had 11 class 6 ship boats to 6 for the Allies. The Allies had 6 class 5 boats to 2 for the Axis. The Axis had 6 class 4 boats to 4 for the Allies. The Allies had 5 class three cruisers to the Axis single class two cruiser.

The weather was great all week. The sun was seen most days, and it got warm on Tuesday and Thursday,



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but there was plenty of shade to keep things from getting miserable.

The lake was large, with no islands but with a few shoreline 'features' to mix things up a bit.

The Battles:

Monday AM: As the result of a lottery draw, the Allied A Fleet faced off with the Axis B fleet. The Allied A fleet was composed of: Brian Lamb (Wisconsin), Chris Grossaint (North Carolina), Jim Coler (North Carolina), Kevin Bray (Massachusetts), Dave Au (Queen Elizabeth), Doug Hunt (West Virginia), Ted Brogden (Valiant), Patrick Clarke (Invincible), Larry Dahl (Bellerophon), Matthew Clarke (Houston), and Tom Brown

(Houston). The Axis B Fleet was Bryan Finster (Nagato), Mike Tanzillo (Nagato), Tom Melton (Nagato), John Bruder (Italia), Josh Bruder (Vittorio Veneto), Rob Stalnaker (Tirpitz), Jeff Lide (Kirishima), Jake Bruder (von der Tann), Randy Stiponivich (von der Tann), Luis Gomez (Kongo), Steve Reynolds (Moltke).

The sinks started quickly, the Moltke going down for the first sink, but it was due to a weight trimming problem coupled with a sudden acceleration between her and her opponent. "We both hit forward and she got sucked down and never came up," said Steve. The Tirpitz was forced to declare sunk due to radio



AAARRRGH!!! With the Valiant surrounded, but temporarily unable to score, the Pirate Smurf remains defiant.

Photo by the Melton Crew

problems. The Axis soon countered by sinking Tom Brown's Houston, soon followed by Patrick Clarke's Invincible, which went down due to pump problems. While the Wisconsin was being baptized, the Bellerophon went down due to power problems.

In the second sortie, the Wisconsin, having barely survived the first sortie, succumbed quickly in the second. More Allied carnage came as Doug Hunt returned from patching a ram to sink under the guns of a Nagato. The Massachusetts

finished off the wounded Nagato of Mike Tanzillo. Jake Bruder's VDT was pursued, and finished off by a friendly, fatherly shove. "Thanks Dad," said Jake in a ho-hum voice. Dave Au's QE was ram-sunk by an Italian VV, but even worse, his radio got dowsed which knocked the big ship out of the afternoon's battle as well. Josh Bruder's VV went down later. Of the ships that didn't sink, Randy's Stiponich's VDT, Chris Grossaint's NC, and Dave Au's QE had some high damage scores.

Allied A beat the Axis B Fleet by 18,635 to 15,700.

The Allied B Fleet faced off with the Axis A fleet in the morning. The Allies fielded Kevin Hovis (Missouri), Charley Stephens (North Carolina), Tony Stephens (Washington), Don Cole (Alabama), Rick King (Maryland), Bob Hoernemann (Warspite), Mike Melton (Arizona), Ron Horbul (Lion), Chris Kessler (Brooklyn), Pete Demetri (Des Moines), Steve Milholland (Minneapolis). The Axis A fleet had Tim Beckett (Bismarck),



Grossaint's North Carolina washes that smug smile off Mike Tanzillo's Nagato.

Photo by Gerald Roberts

Chris Pearce (Nagato), Steve Crane (Nagato), Gerald Roberts (Nagato), Lou Meszaros (Vittorio Veneto), D.W.Fluegel (Baden), Tim Krakowski (Fuso), Lief Goodson (von der Tann), Chris Au (Strasbourg), Dallas Fluegel (Karlsruhe).

As battle started, Lou's VV and her Polk radio went spastic. He called five out of control, and the Axis closed ranks to protect her, but not too close, as the VV's guns were firing at random. Swampy's borrowed Minneapolis distracted attention momentarily when she sank. The Warspite's thirst for battle proved her undoing, and she was the next to go under. Next, the Axis hounded the Lion, who gave a good run but eventually succumbed.

In the second sortie, there were several ships that were hurting. The Arizona was the first to go under. Finally, an Axis joined them, as the elder Fluegel's Baden had her pump stop working, and she didn't last her five minutes, despite sitting and waiting quietly. While the Axis

pursued a wounded Alabama, Lief's VDT sank close to shore. The Alabama was hotly pursued, and finally sank with just seconds left on her timer.

Axis A beat the Allied B fleet by a score of 17,620 to 10,575.

Fleet Battle 2:

The fleets switched opponents for the second battle of the day. Allied A faced off with the Axis A fleet first. Tom Brown's Houston went down quickly when some weight shifted and her deck seal proved not up to the task. The Axis fleet was patient and looked for opportunities to pick off isolated ships. The West Virginia got separated from her squadron and was sunk. Bellerophon was hounded for a time, and then sank in a freak ram when she was very water-heavy. Then the Axis made a concentrated effort to knock Chris Grossaint's NC out of the battle. Pearce's Nagato picked up a huge hole in her bow for her efforts, but did not go down. The NC, pursued by four or more big Axis ships, finally slowed and sank.

In the second sortie, the battling was slow and lazy. The Bellerophon, wounded in the first sortie, acted as bait until her pump quit working, and she sank quickly. After extended battling, the Allies withdrew one by one, and finally an isolated Invincible sank. When she went down, only the Massachusetts and a Valiant out temporarily for a ram remained. The Massachusetts played the part of a sponge until the Valiant returned. The Valiant was the one who sank, however.

Axis A beat the Allied A fleet by a score of 19,530 to 8,165.

The B fleets started out like heavyweight boxers, circling carefully but only jabbing slightly.

Finally the fighting went full bore, but it wasn't until Jake Bruder's VDT ran afoul of several triple sterns that a sink came. Mike Tanzillo's Nagato also found the bottom with the help of four or more Allies.

In the second sortie, Finster's

Nagato sank, much to Kevin Hovis's glee, as Finster was so engrossed in shooting that he forgot to turn on his pump. The twin Bruder VVs tag teamed the Warspite and put her under. The Minneapolis managed to find the bottom too. Moltke put up a

very determined defense but succumbed to overwhelming numbers of bbs hitting her hull.

Allied B beat the Axis B fleet by a score of 15,710 to 11,810.



Kids in the candy store. Fluegel, Tom Melton, Tanzillo, and Josh Bruder, captains of the Axis fleet

Photo by Mike Melton



Nats during early-battle Rush Hour.

Photo by the Melton Crew



Cat Tail Cove, where ships go to die. The cat tails were off to the left on this picture.

Photo by the Melton Crew

Tuesday: Fleet Battle 3:

Allied B took on Axis A fleet in the morning. One line-up change was Bob Hoernemann switched fleets in the morning due to technical problems. In addition, the Fluegels switched ships, which may have been why the Karlsruhe got in where it shouldn't have, and got its radio switch shot. The result was a dead in the water light cruiser. The elder Fluegel declared her sunk, partly to save her score, but mostly to save on patching. The Allied long ships, the Lion and Des Moines, spent some time playing with the Bismarck. Des Moines paid the price, and went down next to shore. The NCs spent time trying to protect a hurting Arizona, but the Axis Nagatos and the Bismarck played the shark role

well. The Lion finally went down, bringing the question, "Where's the Warspite?" The Allies once again gathered around the Arizona until she came off five, and then the battle broke up into single ship actions.

In the second sortie, the Allies tried to tempt the Axis into chasing the Arizona, but when they didn't bite, the Allies turned the tables and attacked. In a ram-filled slugfest, the Maryland was the first to slip under the waves in a freak sink. The two Stephen's NCs pursued and sank Pearce's Nagato. Steve Crane's Nagato played a 'tip and tease' game, pumping hard and looking very tippy, but she survived. At the end, a hard-pumping Alabama and a hard-pumping Bismarck tangled, and

the Alabama was the one that went down.

Axis A beat the Allied B fleet by a score of 19,575 to 10,050.

The Allied A fleet took on the Axis B fleet, and the Bellerophon made a quick exit, driving herself under in reverse with very minor damage. A plethora of rams threatened to stifle the battling, even the nimble Matt Clarke's Houston took damage, but those that were out on the water kept the carnage at a high level. Tom Melton's Nagato and the Pirate Smurf caught the Warspite and pummeled her extensively. Mike Tanzillo's Nagato got punished but then hung on for what seemed forever before finally sinking, her superstructure remaining defiantly above the waves. The

Warspite soon followed her to the bottom. The Massachusetts also was sunk before the sortie ended.

In the second sortie, the Tirpitz called a quick five, and then taunted the Allied Fleet while the Kirishima and Finster's Nagato stood guard. The Wisconsin and the Valiant got some shots into her but she survived. The Pirate Smurf and the Queen Elizabeth tangled for a time, and both later sank, but the QE seemed to be in the action far later than Randy's VDT. The Kirishima and Finster's Nagato run the Wisconsin to ground, the big ship sinking slowly. The Valiant ends up being the last Allied ship on the water, with a host of Axis to keep him company. He lead Finster, the Moltke, the VVs, the Kongo and the Kirishima on a merry chase, and survived.

Axis B beat the Allied A fleet by a score of 17,900 to 13,000.

Campaign #1:

It was Allied B vs Axis B for the first campaign of the day. The Allied plan was to rack up points on convoy runs, as they had plenty of ships. The Axis plan was to keep the one convoy ship they had that worked running when they had to, and try to keep the battle close. The battle started slowly, with action around the



Sunk but still surfing, Bob Hoernemann's CVL is still ready to launch it's airgroup if called upon.

Photo by the Melton crew

shore targets. The Axis got a convoy ship on the water first, but only Allied cruisers are there to attack. The convoy makes it to the forward base. The Axis convoy turns around quickly and starts for home, just as the Allied secret weapon, the 'Charley Special', comes into the forward port. The Yamashiro gets little attention until the Alabama and Maryland arrive late in its run, but the Axis ship makes a complete run. The Allies next launched the John

Brown, which managed to make a run to the forward base. The Axis convoy was running forward again, while the Axis ships were pursuing the Arizona. The Yamashiro Maru again got light attention from the Allies, and made it to the forward base. Just as quickly, she made a return run. Again she got some heavy attention late, but it wasn't in time and she made port. The CVL Princeton made motions of launching, but the Yamashiro beat

her to the water. This time, she ran afoul of the Stephen's NCs, who shreaded her sides along with sending bits of her loading booms flying high in the air. Finster's light cruiser became the first warship sink. Then a Titanic finally launched. The Axis come running like kids to a candy store to attack her, leaving little attention for the CVL. The Yamashiro came limping in and sank next to shore just short of the forward base. The Titanic has paid the price and sinks just short of



The few times the Yamashiro Maru didn't make it to port, she always made it to shore for an easy recovery.

Photo by Gerald Roberts

the forward base. An Allied LST makes it difficult by having steering problems, and a NC and the Alabama are needed to push her into port. The CVL tries a home run, and surfs in with the gunwales an inch below the waterline. The Olympic now tries a run. She ends up loitering outside the forward port waiting for her timer to expire, while limited Axis resistance is given. A different Axis convoy ship is tried, and is sunk by Charley's NC. The Olympic tried to make a run back home, but launched

Kevin Bray ran her almost continuously for the battle, only taking a brief break to run the Massachusetts for a short time. Fluegel made a run with the Yamashiro, which made it to the forward port despite a lot of attention and a visible list, but then it had plenty of escorts. The Allied CVL tried sailing next. A steady wind, the Strasbourg, an Axis CL, and a Nagato helped finish her off. She surfed to shore once again. At some point the Yamashiro snuck home

battle, the big ships' sink points basically canceled out several successful runs by the smaller ships. Meanwhile Ted's freighter sailed again and made it easily. With the timer counting down, the John Brown and Ted's freighter headed for home again, Ted's freighter having Patrick Clarke at the controls. Meanwhile the Yamashiro was running again, but the Valiant and Coler's NC helped put her down. Meanwhile the John Brown, an 'easy sinker', manages to struggle into



Allied dreams of big points in Campaign went to the bottom with the Titanics. Each sink erased the efforts of several successful runs. Massachusetts stands by to rescue survivors.

Photo by the Melton Crew

too late to complete the run before the battle's time limit expired. Allied B beat the Axis B fleet by a score of 5,900 to 5,750.

For the Allied A against the Axis A, the Allies crossed up the Axis by launching several convoys immediately. A Titanic, an LST and Ted's mid-sized freighter took off 30 seconds into battle, and ran for the far shores. The Axis on the water took some time to get there. The Titanic got all the attention. All three made it to the forward port. The Titanic was left on the beach after her pummeling. The LST turned around and headed back.

under Fluegel's command. Meanwhile the Bismarck stopped chasing the LST and decided to take out Grossaint's NC. Chris's ship had taken a beating protecting convoy ships, and so it wasn't a fair fight. Meanwhile the Allied admiral recognized that the Axis were busy, and Ted's freighter ran home, while the John Brown ran to the forward base with little attention. By then Chris's ship had gone down. Charley wanted to run the Olympic next, but she was in pieces, and then she had rudder troubles after she launched. Undriveable, she was easy meat for the Axis guns. In each

home port with the water lapping at her gunwales, but it counted as a successful complete run. Ted's freighter was suffering from glitches, but due to helpful escorts made it back to home. The best escort may have been the QE, which smothered the Bismarck with successful blocks for an extended period. Pearce's CL sank when the pump was forgotten, and the LST snuck into port just under the wire as the timer sounded. Meanwhile, the Allies had also lost the West Virginia and a Houston during the battle.

Axis A beat the Allied A fleet by a score of 7,475 to 7,000.

Wednesday Night Battle:

The lineup was 9 Allied captains versus 11 Axis. The Allied captains were: Bob Hoernemann, Charley Stephens, Chris Grossaint, Chris Kessler, Dave Au, Don Cole, Kevin Bray, Patrick Clarke, and Lars. All were driving their major warship except for Dave Au in the Iszuzu, and Patrick Clarke was running Matt's Houston. The Axis captains were: Bryan Finster (Agano), Chris Au, Chris Pearce (Glorie), Dallas Fluegel, D.W. Fluegel, Gerald Roberts, Jeff Lide, Lief Goodson, Luis Gomez, Tim Beckett, Tom Melton.

The battle started slowly, but the Bellerophon again started having power problems. Regaining control temporarily, she went to hide next to shore. When her five minutes were nearly up, the battle drifted into her area. Lief's VDT and the Kirishima fought for position on her, finally getting lined up just as her beeper sounded. The Kirishima was then punished by the Allies, and ended up

with the most damage for the night. Charley's NC blew a CO2 hose, and was out of the fight quickly too. Dallas Fluegel had his first sink, but thought that his light cruiser got run over as her damage was very light.

Allies beat the Axis fleet by a score of 3.905 to 2,790.

Thursday: Fleet Battle 4:

There were a few lineup changes this day. The fickle French battlecruiser, Chris Au's Strasbourg, switched to the Allied side. Kevin Bray's Massachusetts went to the Allied B fleet to cover a departed

Pete Demetri.

The Allied A took on the Axis A fleet this morning. The Axis big guns went to work on the Allied lineup, sinking the Bellerophon, and then went after the West Virginia. The Valiant tried to help out the WeeVee at one point, but then tried to peel off when the Bismarck turned in her direction. Patrick's I-boat was in the wrong place, and the Valiant was forced to eat Axis sidemounts. Now wounded, the Valiant was pounced on by



Battlin' Bob Hoerneman was elected Allied Admiral for 2005. Tim Beckett was named for the Axis.

Photo by the Melton Crew



Like Father, like son, the two Fluegels hide in the cat tails.

Photo by Gerald Roberts

the Baden and Lief's VDT. The Valiant lasts out her five but is then screened from reaching shore and sinks before being touched. Due to the controversy, the Axis agree to let Ted launch his ship in the second sortie. Jim Coler's NC is sunk late in the sortie, as does the West Virginia.

In the second sortie, the wolves were waiting for the Valiant, and unable to run, she was sunk fairly quickly. The Bismarck and two Nagatos run the Wisconsin down, and she sank with a huge hole in her side. Then Baden went out of control protecting the Karlsruhe in the cat tails. The Baden survived her five but the Karlsruhe sank. Then the Fuso sank, and her captain, Tim Krakowski howled in anguish. "Eight seconds! She had eight seconds left!" There is an extended chase of Grossaint's NC at the end of this battle, but the NC survives. Meanwhile, Patrick Clarke 'lost' his I-boat while chatting with his son Matt. He went to search for her on one side of the pond, only having to race back when others found her on the furthest point away on the other side of the pond. The ship had sailed on her own across the pond without being noticed, and was found running up against a rope buoy line.



The Luck of Battle: In a hit similar to the torpedo hit on the real Bismarck's rudder, Josh Bruder's hit on the Warspite's nameplate cut her pump output to a mere drizzle.

Photo by Gerald Roberts



EIGHT SECONDS! The Fuso goes down

Photo by the Melton Crew

Had she crossed it, she would have been ruled a sink.

Axis A beat the Allied A fleet by a score of 21,505 to 11,3250.

In the Allied B versus Axis B fleet battle, the battle started out slowly. Finally the large pack breaks up into smaller battles. The Kongo is pursued by several ships, but manages to escape. Mike Tanzillo's Nagato lasts a good long time, but finally sinks. The Tirpitz collects a large Allied entourage, but survives the sortie. Melton's Nagato blows a CO2 line, and withdraws early. Lion sinks after playing with the Bruders, and the Massachusetts survives a lengthy chase by several Axis.

In the second sortie, the Warspite took on the task of sinking the

Tirpitz as a personal vendetta. Initially he had help, which then disappeared. Finster's Nagato took a pounding and went to hide in the cat tails. Tirpitz is sunk out in the lake but runs to shore while half-submerged. Finster refuses to come out of the weeds, as the few times he tries he ends up ramming folks. The Massachusetts ends up sinking later from a ram that wasn't called. John Bruder sacrifices his ship to save that of his son. His sons stood by loyally to rescue survivors. Then Josh wounded the Warspite in an unusual way. A stern volley struck the Warspite's stern superstructure, bending a metal nameplate that was glued to the ship. The nameplate bent, swinging out to block the Warspite's healthy pump stream. Her pump output is cut to a measly drizzle. The Warspite calls five, and then struggles to stay afloat. The VV struggles to finish her off. It was a close one, Bob counting out the last few seconds and then leaping in to touch his ship as she was very close to sinking.

Officially, Allied B beat the Axis B fleet by a score of 15,165 to 14,885, but Lief's score was tallied incorrectly, and if placed correctly, the Axis win by a couple points.

Campaign Battle 2:

Smarting from not racking up the big points they'd expected in the first campaigns, the Allies tried to run their original strategy, but with a bit more care this time around. The first battle was Allied A versus the Axis B fleet.

The Axis pulled a quick one, running their convoy ship to the forward base while the Allies tried to organize their merchant fleet. Brian Lamb did make several early runs with the LST. Ted's freighter, after having done so well on Tuesday, lost propulsion about twenty yards out of the gate, and was an easy sink. She did cause some consternation, as she drifted towards deep water as she slowly sank. Ted grabbed her seconds before her final plunge, to



Careful planning brought the Titanics in safely on Thursday, but it wasn't enough to make up the point difference. Steve Crane's Nagato is in the foreground.

Photo by the Melton Crew

many cheers. The Axis tried a run back home with the Yamashiro, but she ran afoul of the Allied big guns. When it was obvious that she wouldn't make it, she was ordered to come to shore, defeating the Allied plan to keep her under water if she sank. The Allied secret weapon was the Charley Special, the little water bug was designed to be hard to hit and could run for a whole hour on her batteries. If the Axis ship had sunk, she was to stay on the water

long past her five minutes, preventing the recovery of the only functional Axis merchant. She never got the chance to play out her role. In another fluke incident, John Bruder snagged the Italia's props in one of the 'depth buoys' that had been placed to mark the deep water areas. She survived her five, but her captain couldn't fetch her unless he brought her to shore, so there she stayed. With twenty minutes left, the Allies start running merchants in

bunches. The CVL gets a damaging ram, and thus is awarded a full run. The Titanic completes a forward run. The Olympic follows with a completed run as well. A set screw is found to have fallen off Ted's freighter, and after replacing it, the ship is launched for another run. The result is the same, as control is lost and she sinks again, not far from the forward base but with no hope of reaching it. In the meantime, the Axis also sank Grossaint's NC, the QE, and the West Virginia. West Virginia was the only ship to sink in deep water, but she was recovered with no problems.

Allied A beat the Axis B fleet by a score of 7,650 to 6,700.

In the second campaign, the Allied B fleet kept Kevin Bray running the LST back and forth, back and forth. Once again the Allies ignored the Yamashiro during her first run, until it was too late. Meanwhile, Ron Horbul took the Charley Special for a run. The little ship had actually sunk in the previous battle when she'd picked up a single hit. Somehow, no one got around to patching the single hole, and so she 'sank' again. The little ship would've been very difficult to find had she really sunk, so she was designed to sink below the gunwales, but then remain afloat. After getting patched, she was taken out again for another run. The Axis tried a homeward run with the Yamashiro, but this time the Allies were ready, and the ship was sunk, but once again she made it to the shoreline for recovery. Not long after that, the Allies get a warship sink when the Tirpitz goes down. The Allies quickly lost Charley's NC in exchange. "Well, I'll go run convoys then," said Charley, unfazed by his dunking. Charley took the Titanic and ran it through heavy guns to the forward base. Charley went back and drove the Olympic through for a forward run to match her sister. Ron brought in the Charley Special, who began doing runs like the LST, back



Surfer John Bruder's Italia catches a 'wave.'

Photo by John Bruder

and forth. In the meantime, the last Axis run was also successful.

Allied B beat the Axis A fleet by a score of 5,300 to 2250.

Friday: Fleet Battle 5:

The Allies changed their lineup drastically on Friday, putting all of their 24 second ships on one fleet, and all the 26 and 28 second ships on the other. The Allied slow fleet started against the Axis B fleet.

The Allied slow ships did a good job in the early parts of the battle of keeping in a defensive cluster. The heavy hitters on both sides engaged in a hard-hitting, twisting and turning exchanges. Kirishima had a lengthy exchange with the QE. The QE later sinks. Warspite, loving every minute of this type of battling, gets too much love in return, and soon joins the QE. The sortie ends with the Alabama, Valiant and Invincible surviving against several Axis.

The Allies start out once again in their defensive circle. Later the Alabama and the Massachusetts broke out to chase the Tirpitz. The Alabama leaves for a ram check, leaving the Massachusetts with several mad Axis for company. When the Alabama returns she joins

the Massachusetts in a prolonged pummeling of the Kirishima that left combatants and spectators in amazement. The Kirishima remained afloat, however. John Bruder's Italia survives five out of control. Massachusetts does find the bottom, however. Valiant, busy 'protecting Lars', takes his place on the bottom. The Bellerophon calls five, drives around for five minutes almost solely powered by her pump stream, and escapes when Doug Hunt goes in to recover his West Virginia, which keeps the Bruder boys and Tom Melton from finishing off the Bell. West Virginia had gone down after falling in with the Kirishima and Finster's Nagato. Tom Melton took out his frustrations by sinking the Arizona. Tanzillo's Nagato responded by sinking in his usual manner, finding the bottom with the superstructure remaining above the waves. "They still have their fighting spirit, let it be said," comes the clear tones of Fluegel's voice, talking about the Allied battlers. Patrick Clarke's I-Boat teases the remaining Axis, but survives once again.

Officially, Axis B fleet beat the Allied slow fleet by a score of 17,095 to 11,985.

The Allied Fast ships took on the Axis A fleet. This was not a run and gun battle however, as early action stayed in close. Wisconsin and Missouri tried to tease the Axis into going out to deep water, but the Axis didn't bite. Then the Axis notice the Missouri is moving slowly, and move in. Fuso comes in on a ram check, but leaves her superstructure and twenty feet of float line behind. She returns to battle later without them. Pearce's Nagato makes sinking the Missouri her personal task, as Beckett is pursued by three NCs. Gerald Roberts and Steve Crane's Nagatos, and Lief's VDT come to the aid of their vice-admiral, making things tough for the NCs. Then Pearce's pump starts to whine loudly. She sinks later, but is also dinged with ram-sinking Kessler's Brooklyn. Meanwhile the Axis play a good defensive game for once, protecting each ship as it comes under a concentrated Allied attack.

In the second sortie, Fuso calls five after only a few minutes, and later finds some quiet waters to wait out her time. Grossaint's NC goes down after much hard fighting. After lengthy battling, the Bismarck goes dead in the water, moving only on her pump. This brings in the

remaining Allied battlers. Ammo is low, however, so there is much maneuvering to get certain guns into position. Steve Crane and Lief's VDT are there to run interference. A big "BONZAI" is raised when Charley's NC unexpectedly sinks. Wisconsin and Missouri both come in to use their remaining ammo.

Strasbourg wiggles between the Bismarck and the shore in order to empty a sidemount. Somehow the big ship survives the pounding and her five, and comes off the water. "Who's left!" calls Lief. There is more battling, and then the Karsruhe went dead in the water. With help from the Strasbourg this Axis (the old man today) goes down. In a turn-about,



Mike Tanzillo's Nagato zealously guards her parking spot.

Photo by John Bruder

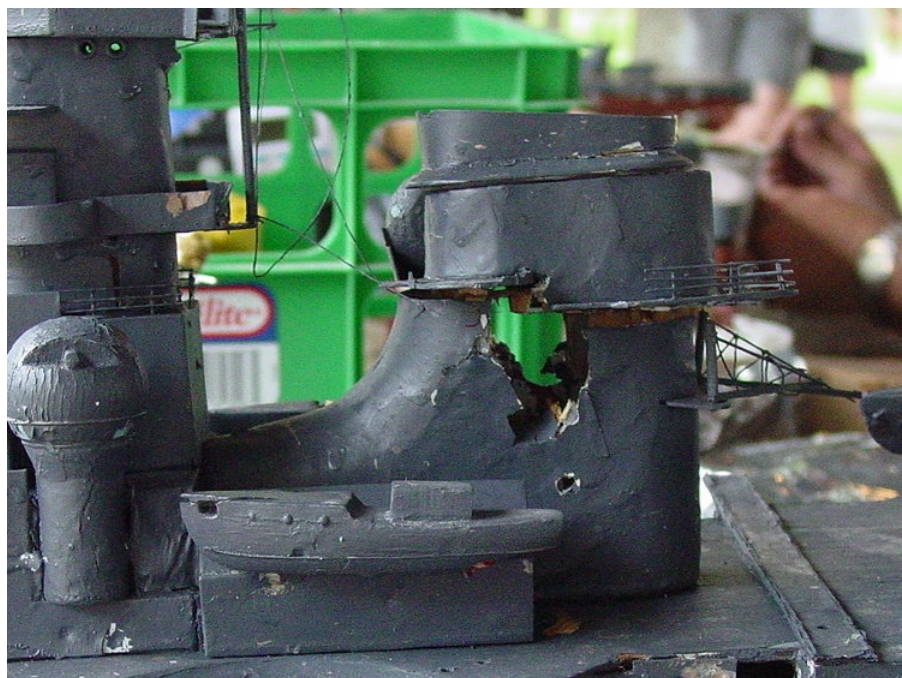
Gerald Roberts is the last Axis out, pursued by four or more Allies.

Officially, Axis A fleet beat the Allied fast fleet by a score of 16,315 to 13,885, but Bob's Warspite was scored with the wrong fleet, so the Axis only won by 765.

Both fleets claimed victory, but the Allies acknowledged that the Axis had more points. Final score was: Axis 190,790, Allies 157,600.

Awards:

Founder's Trophy:	Tim Beckett
Class 6 & 7:	Tom Melton
Class 5:	Rick King, Mike Melton
Class 4:	Chris Au
Class 3:	Chris Kessler
Class 1&2:	Dallas Fluegel
Most Feared Allied:	Tony Stephens
Most Feared Axis:	Tom Melton
Individual Combat:	Tom Melton
Best Scale Warship:	Luis Gomez
Best Scale Convoy:	Charley Stephens
Best Dressed:	Bob Hoernemann
Rookie of the Year:	Rob Stalnaker
Sportsman Trophy:	Larry Dahl
Mo' Mangled:	Bob Hoernemann



Holy Smokestacks, Batman, er... Bismarck!

Photo by the Melton Crew



Nat's Hit Percentage

by Bob Hoernemann

There was a lot of carnage this year at NATS. There were 92 sinks (Warships & convoys) with 29 on Monday alone. Of those 92 sinks 26 were in campaign, 29 were in the first sortie and 37 in the second sortie. All of the sinks were not caused by a large rise in the bb hit percentage. This year the bb hit percentage was 18.8% compared to 18.6% last year and 14.9% in 2002. I find the hit percentage by taking the units for the ships and subtracting 1 or 1/2 units for each ship's pump. I adjust for people who sank in the first sortie. Then I take that number as the Gun Units and multiplied it by 100 to get the total bbs that could be

2002 TOTALS WITH 75 BBs PER BATTLE PER GUN

GUNS UNITS	HOLES			BBs	HITS	%
975.5	8071	926	1885	73162.5	10882	14.9%

2003 TOTALS WITH 75 BBs PER BATTLE PER GUN

GUNS UNITS	HOLES			BBs	HITS	%
799.75	7957	1054	2165	59981.25	11176	18.6%

2004 TOTALS WITH 75 BBs PER BATTLE PER GUN

GUNS UNITS	HOLES			BBs	HITS	%
872.5	8562	1091	2635	65437.5	12288	18.8%

shot. Then I add up the number of holes and divided. I do not have the number of bbs left in captain's guns at the end of each sortie. So, I guessed that for every 100 bbs that could get shot only 75 did get shot.

The Allies shot 19.5% and the Axis shot 18.1%. The number of holes was almost even at 6,138 (3,967-575-1,596) in the Allies and 6,150 (4,595-516-1,039) holes in the Axis. The big difference in holes is the Axis with 628 more above and the Allies with 557 more belows. This goes with the gun arrangement on many Allied ships being triple

sterns. The best % shot for a fleet was 26.4% by the Axis A fleet vs Allied B fleet Tuesday morning. The Axis won that battle by 9,525. The worst % was the Axis B fleet Monday morning 9.6%. The Allies won that battle by 2,935. This was the only battle not at night were the % was below 10. The Allies shot 14.8% during night battle this year.

While there was only one more captain and a few more ship units at NATS this year there were 1,112 more holes. Half of these holes were belows, our rookie class of 2002 must be getting good using the sidemount.

The biggest difference in sinks this year was in class 5 where the Allies lost 19 ships (6 were at NATS) and the Axis lost 2 (Only 2 were at NATS). This means on average each allied class 5 ship sank 3+ times. It was a bad week to be class 5. Some other interesting numbers from the score sheets: The 29 sinks on Monday were almost as many as all week in 2002. The Axis

MAIN WARSHIPS

2002				2003				2004			
CLASS	NUMBER OF SHIPS			CLASS	NUMBER OF SHIPS			CLASS	NUMBER OF SHIPS		
	ALLIED	AXIS	TOTAL		ALLIED	AXIS	TOTAL		ALLIED	AXIS	TOTAL
2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	1
3	4	4	8	3	2	1	3	3	5	0	5
4	2	9	11	4	6	4	10	4	4	6	10
5	1	6	7	5	6	7	13	5	6	2	8
6	13	3	16	6	8	8	16	6	6	11	17
7	0	4	4	7	0	0	0	7	2	0	2
			48				42				43

WARSHIPS SINKS BY CLASS

2002				2003				2004			
CLASS	NUMBER OF SHIPS			CLASS	NUMBER OF SHIPS			CLASS	NUMBER OF SHIPS		
	ALLIED	AXIS	TOTAL		ALLIED	AXIS	TOTAL		ALLIED	AXIS	TOTAL
2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	2	0	7	7
3	2	1	3	3	4	2	6	3	8	0	8
4	0	11	11	4	6	4	10	4	9	6	15
5	1	5	6	5	6	12	18	5	19	2	21
6	11	4	15	6	4	15	19	6	12	13	25
7	0	2	2	7	0	0	0	7	3	0	3
			39				55				79

won only one more battle (8-7) than the Allies. But the average win for the Axis was 6,390 and the Allies just sneaked by with a margin of victory of 1,769 on average. The Axis won three battles by 9,500 to 11,100 points making the difference in the week. The Allies were actually ahead in battles until Friday when the Axis swept both fleets.

Chris Kessler's score for the whole week was 11-0-0, I think I got 11 aboves in the first two minutes of battle. When Chris buys a sheet of silk span it's a lifetime supply. Tom Brown's week score was 9-2-5, all but 1 above was in the first battle on Monday. Maybe Chris and Tom can share the sheet for the next decade. On the other end was Mike Melton with 426-65-117. Of course 124-18-44 came from his brother in a 1 on 1. The second year in a row that Tom beat Mike in the 1 on 1. Tim Beckett had the most aboves in one battle with 169. Jeff Lide had 144 as a distant second. Dave Au had 24 ons in one battle. Tim Beckett also had the most belows with 51 (The same battle as his 169 aboves). Pat Clarke had 49 for a close second. Tim also had the most holes in one battle with 239, and he did not sink. Good thing that was Friday, I wonder if Tim has patched those holes yet.

There were a lot of sinks this year and I was the center of several of them. I sank nine times during the week. Four times in fleet battles, three times in 1 on 1s, once with my campaign cruiser and once with a Titanic. Even worse than that my ships sank twelve times. Swampy Steve lost the Minneapolis twice and the CVL Princeton went down two times in campaign. That's 15,255 points my ships & I gave to the Axis Fleet.

Jake Bruder beat his dad (By 1,180) and his brother (By 385) in 1 on 1s this year. Now we know who the best Bruder battler is.



"Thanks Dad", Jake Bruder's VDT sinks after getting an assist from father John.

Photo by the Melton crew



The Warspite rarely needed her timer.

Photo by John Bruder



Luis Gomez's WWI Kongo took Best of Scale

Photo by Gerald Roberts

Trial by Fire: Rookie Battling 101

Nats Rookie of the Year report

by Robert Stalnaker

"Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!"

-[David G. Farragut](#), Battle of Mobile Bay, August 5, 1864



should've been BB's not torpedoes.

When I started into this hobby approximately a year ago, I thought to myself: Well, I knew Real Submarines inside and out and had built an RC submarine back in the late 80's, this combined with being a War History "buff"....This hobby ought to be a Blast!

I haven't been disappointed!

In my case, it

Before seeing my first battle, I'd already looked into several ships and had purchased a Scharnhorst Kit from Charley. Anxiously awaiting my kit, I went to "observe" my first battle at Wilmington, NC. Unknown to me at the time was the fact that this battle was kind of a "homecoming" of sorts for some of the guys, as this battle included members from both clubs. I showed up for this battle expecting just to observe and LEARN...this I was

about to do in Royal Fashion.....

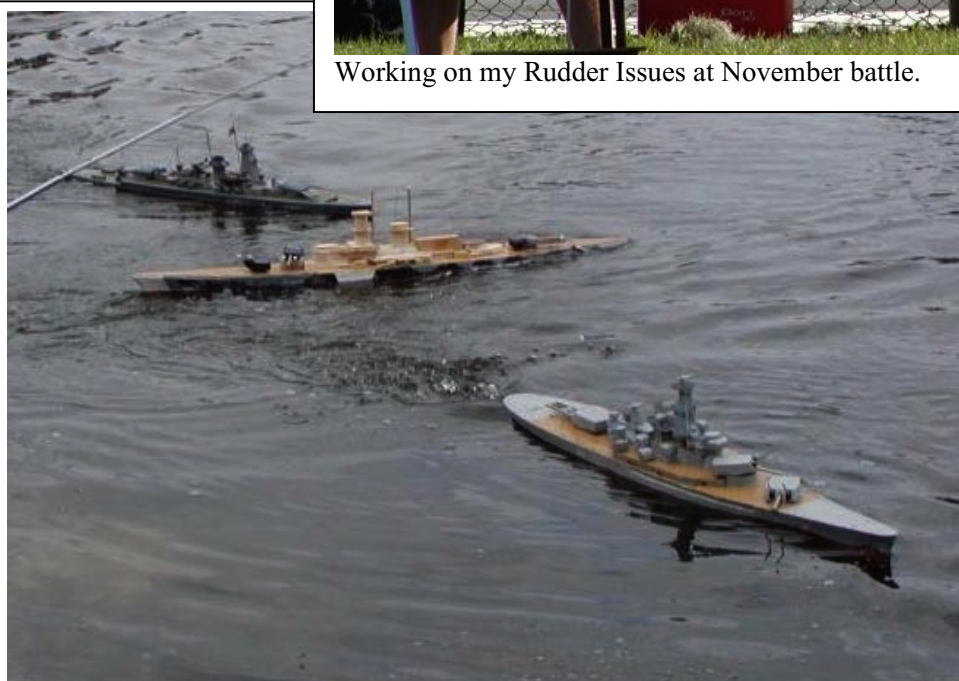
I was talking to Rick King at his table and looking over his Fine looking Scharnhorst when he asked me if I wanted to Drive his Admiral Scheer for the day....now I've never been known for being "timid", so to say I jumped at the chance was an understatement!

After about a 10-minute "Crash" course in the basic operation of the ship, we set about our first sorties of the day (Battlers present this day



Working on my Rudder Issues at November battle.

Photo provided by Robert Stalnaker



Lesson learned from Don Cole

Photo provided by Robert Stalnaker

included: Charley, Marty Hayes, Carl Camurati, Ronnie Hunt, Rick King, Tim K and others). Now being new to this and with a borrowed ship, I'd decided to play it safe the first battle and stay on the fringes out of harms way. By the afternoon, I felt the need to have fun, so with that I began to get into the mix...at one point, too much fun as I found myself in a side mount sandwich between Charley's NC and I believe Ronnie Hunt. Rick King, nice as ever, kindly urged me to get the Scheer out of there...ha ha. I concluded

the weekend's activities with a 1 on 1 cruiser battle with my good friend Peter Kunisch that was a blast.

My second battle experience a month later was a bust to put it mildly. I showed up Saturday morning in Savannah with a half built ship that was half working. The only thing I can say is it did move and turn under it's own power, aside from this I was fairly disappointed. Few things worked, most things didn't. At the end, I ended up "burning" my wiring and cursing myself all of the way home. The good thing that came out of this was the determination to get back at it, harder than before.

My third battle (3rd in 3 months time) was my first "decent" battle with my Gneisenau. A reversal of my previous month's battle as most things worked and few didn't. It was at this point though that I decided to build a bigger ship...the Tirpitz...and to top it off, I wanted to "scratch build" it. Most of Saturday was spent fighting a "rudder" issue and by the 2nd sortie of the afternoon



Lesson Number 2

Photo provided by Robert Stalnaker

the problem was resolved and the rest of the weekend went very well. Two VERY IMPORTANT LESSONS learned here.

1. A Gneisenau WILL NOT turn inside of Don Cole's Alabama.

2. Do not chase Charley's NC alone.

Both lessons learned at the expense of Trips being unloaded into my Gneisenau's Bow... OUCH!!!!!!!

When I returned from the November battle, I decided to start construction on the Tirpitz. I worked on the ship continuously over the short southern winter in hopes of

having it ready for the February Florida battle. One week before the Feb battle it was evident that I would not have all the parts to complete the Tirpitz, so I hastily reconstructed the Gneisenau and it was apparent by it's poor showing.. Even though I had a poor showing, I had a blast and met several other members from other areas.

After a couple of months of build time, the Tirpitz was finally ready for the Spring Regionals. While it had "new ship" issues, I was very pleased with it and returned for the event without being sunk.



Newly built Tirpitz on Speed Trials and shakedown cruise at Spring Regionals.

Photo provided by Robert Stalnaker

The only thing left at this point to round out my Rookie year was to attend NATS (subsequently, I had asked for Vacation for NATS back last October). Being new to this, I had triple checked the ship to make sure that it would past the tests. When Sunday came around and we started testing, I wasn't as nervous as I thought I'd be.

Other than a Transmitter glitch on Monday AM causing me to "declare" a sink, NATS went very well and the Tirpitz handled reasonably well. Now, it's time to improve on my battling techniques and work all of the kinks out of the ship.

I want to thanks the following people for all of the support and consulting during my Rookie Year:

My Wife, Melinda

Charley Stephens

Rick King

Don Cole

Peter Kunisch

Tony Stephens

Lou Meszaros

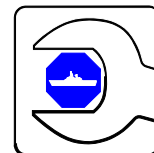
and my Wingman for NATS who assisted me greatly when I got to mixing it up,

Luis Gomez



Light Weight Warship Excursion Cart

By Mark Roe
06 MAY 04



The Cart.

The base is welded construction using 3/4" electrical conduit metal tubing. The vertical posts are 5/8" wood dowel rods. Total weight is 22 pounds. This is eleven pounds lighter than my previous cart. The wheels are 20" bicycle wheels. Both are front wheels. A rear wheel is one pound heavier. The white rectangular object is a Styrofoam box. I place my CO2 cylinders along with cold-pack cubes in here. The height of the vertical posts is just low enough so the whole thing slips into the rear of a minivan.

Photos by Mark Roe, MORE ON THE NEXT PAGE!



A VERY BAD Tactical Position for the Tirpitz...Shame on the Captain!!!!

Photo provided by Robert Stalnaker



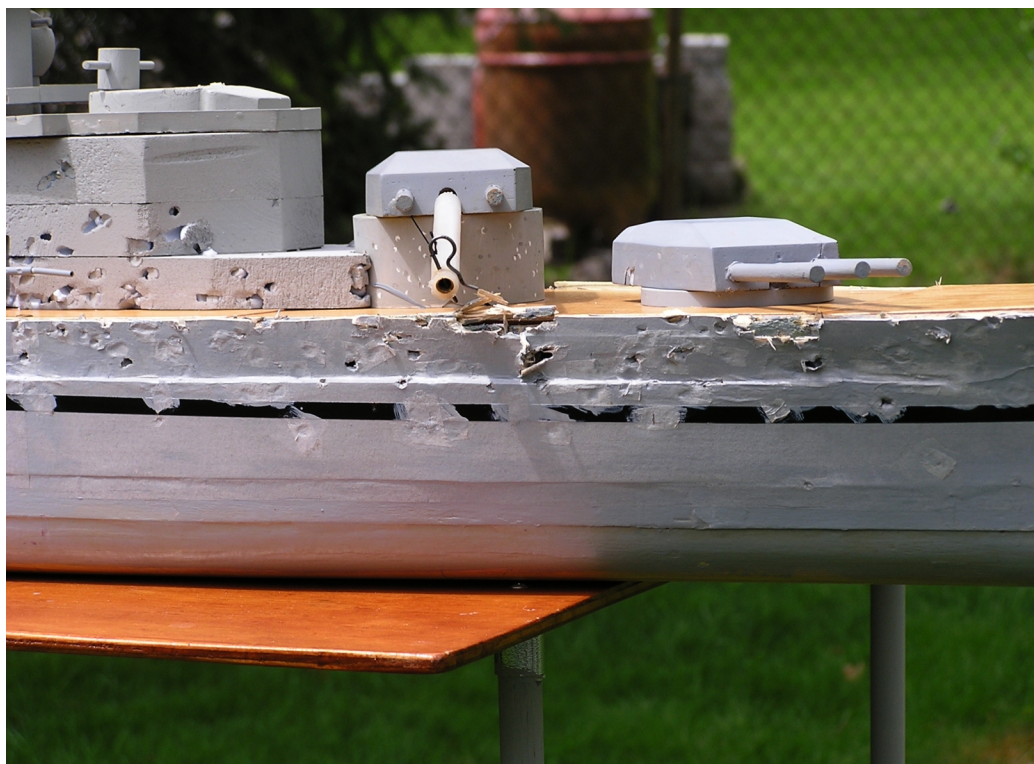
This cart is designed around the plastic and metal tool boxes. Here is the front showing the toolbox with all the tools, BB's, spare parts, and the radio transmitter. The curved metal object going off to the left at an angle is the towing handle. I stand on the left side of the cart; grasp the handle at the large curve with my left hand. The height of the handle is such that I bend down to grasp the handle, and then stand straight up. This lifts the front legs off the ground, and off I go.



This is the rear. This toolbox contains the warship batteries, CO2 cylinders, and miscellaneous stuff. This is the heavier box, and is positioned over the axle.



Strong enough for a 30 pound ship. Just the right height to work on the ship innards. The table top is just large enough to divert dripping water away from the toolboxes. The four table top posts are not quite rigid enough. The table top tends to sway a bit. Perhaps a diagonal cross brace on each side will help.



Battling in Michigan is a little tough. That's four battles of damage in the hull skin and superstructure. The last sortie peeled up my deck edge.



His Name was Woodie

by Robert Rucker

It was a Thursday morning and I was relieving the entry person for a break. Through the main entry doors came a man and a woman escorting an elderly gentleman between them. The elderly gentleman was wearing a blue ball cap with the aviation boatsman mate insignia. Frail looking, but with an eye on the horizon, he shuffled in looking left and right at the Elk on display in the entrance, and towards the rear where the large aquarium was with its waterfall.

I asked if he would like to use one of our wheelchairs to enjoy the store during his visit. 'No' in a firm but frail voice came the reply and I escorted him and his two grandchildren through the gate instead of letting them go through the turnstile. Curiosity getting the

better of me, asked which bird farm had he served on. Suddenly years washed away from his eyes and he stood a little more erect and said 'My first was the Langley.' The two grandchildren quickly related his story to me.

Born in the nation's center, also known as the Indian Territory before statehood, a young man grew up to witness a state being born. When WW1 came the lure of the sea seduced him from the now State of Oklahoma. There he would stay for many decades. There his love of not

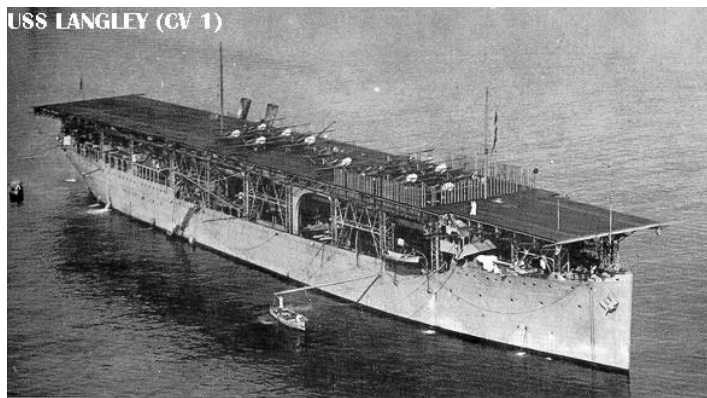
only the sea but of air planes would be his great adventure. Between the wars he would help in the learning curve that would become known as Naval Air. As a deckhandler he would work with all of the aircraft from the Jenneys through the Hellcats. His between war tours went from the Yorktown, Saratoga, Ranger, Lexington. He ended the war on the Saratoga. After the war it was time for him to retire and come home.

He now resides in Guthrie which he stills calls it the state capital.

They know he is at least 96 maybe older, but with no birth certificate no one knows.

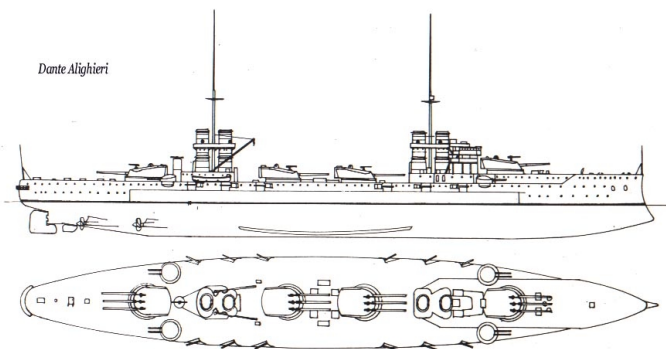
This has been one of the many precious jewels in our history I have had the pleasure to talk to and shake hands with.

Last name they never said. All they said his name was Woodie.



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"Whosoever desires constant success must change his conduct with the times."

- Machiavelli