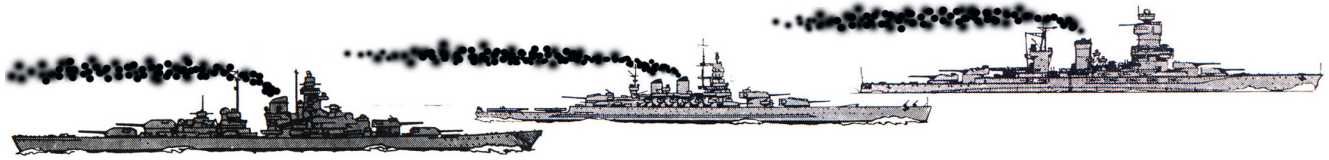


TASK FORCE 144



The Official Newsletter of Model Warship Combat, Inc.

www.mwci.org

Fall – 2008



CALENDAR OF MWC EVENTS

November 1, 2008

Admiral Graham Birthday Battle

Prado Lake, Chino, CA
Contact: Ty Supancic, 818-469-7838
hms_warspite@gmail.com
Sanctioned

Nov 15-16, 2008

South Texas Turkey Shoot

Bomber Field, Houston, TX
Contact: Doug Hunt
dhunt81@comcast.net
\$20 event fee charged by site owner, pay at pond. Sanctioned

Nov 22-23, 2008

Turkey Shoot

Port Authority Pond, Sanford, FL
Contact: Rick King 407-322-7750
rking157@cfl.rr.com
Sanctioned

December 6, 2008

SCRAP December Battle

Prado Lake, Chino, CA
Contact: Ty Supancic, 818-469-7838
hms_warspite@gmail.com
Sanctioned

July 19-24, 2009

Nats Colorado

North of Denver, CO
Contact: Randy Stiponovich
Motel: American motel, \$56 /night plus tax. Not taking reservations until this spring, will provide phone number later.
Sanctioned



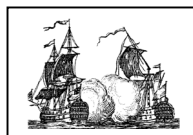
The Axis did an outstanding job of corralling the Allied fleet one by one.

Photo by Curly Barrett

NATS 2008

**To Monday's battles
and beyond!**

by the resident **EDIOT**



Well, Nats 2008 has come and gone. When Pete Demetri took the helm of TF144 for 2006, he told me he wanted to use the title bar of the magazine as an indicator of who won the last Nats. I decided that I liked that idea.

Nats 2008 started for me back at the PPB meeting in late 2007 when Bob and Ron pulled out a notebook and announced that Minnesota was hosting the coming Nats. "We've got to divvy up the jobs to do," said Bob. My heart sank because I worried that I'd get tagged with a lot of work. Bob proceeded to read the list of long lead prep items, three quarters of which he'd already assigned to himself, and the other quarter to Ron. Peter jumped up and volunteered for the only item Bob hadn't assigned, that of handling the hotel and banquet preparations. My sole job, assigned by Bob, was to supply my CO2 fill station. So now, feeling guilty, I actually volunteered to put together an info packet to send



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out to the captains that were coming.

Then things proceeded pretty much like a normal year. By that I mean I struggled to finish up my winter refit (and the info packet) in time for Nats.

The Saturday before Nats was the day to head out to the lake to set things up. I was very surprised by the number of out of town folks that showed up and helped set up tents and tables and signs. Bob directed most of the workers, while Ron grumbled that Bob stole all his sign stakes for campaign targets. It was breezy that day and the water was pretty choppy.

For Sunday's speed trials, the breeze, okay it was a stiff wind, continued, and played havoc with the speed trials. Some ships, especially the convoy ships, seemed to have real problems sailing into the wind. The PPB crew exchanged worried comments, wondering if the wind would spoil things for the rest of the week.

On Sunday, during a period when it appeared a quorum of battlers were present, Bob gathered the folks for the question of moving Tuesday's campaign battle to Monday. It passed.

Monday finally came (and hey, we're only to page two here), and the

wind and weather were much calmer. The storms were instead inside the battlers as they readied themselves for the all important first battle.

Monday Fleet Battle:

Both fleets were feeling feisty and confident. The Allies had 22 ships carrying 100.5 battle units to the Axis 21 ships carrying 93.5 units. Both fleets decided to launch and cluster down in the left corner of the pond before the start of battle. The Allied fleet caved and abandoned the area to the Axis, and it seemed like the Allies spent the rest of the week running from the Axis hordes. The first battle of the week can start slowly with the two fleets feeling each other out around a choke point, but this Nats pond was wide open with no choke point, so the sides jumped right to slugging, with Axis squadrons surging out and Allied squadrons surging in. There were a group of four Axis captains all conning von der Tanns that went looking for the lone Allied I-boat, but her captain was driving Kevin Bray's South Dakota in this battle. Rumor has it Fluegel's new VDT was fired on by her teammates as she looked the most like the Allied I-boat.

About halfway through the first



Kevin Bray's Massachusetts, captained by Andy Dahl in Monday's Fleet battle, takes a spanking from by Jeff Lide's Fusō.

Photo by Curly Barrett.

sortie Lars' Tiger got mossed and then was pounded by Beckett's Bismarck and two Nagatos. The Tiger survived her five but decided to sink (39-20-28) before she could reach shore. Not long afterwards rookie Mike Cucharella's St.Paul cruiser took a whipping that would've sunk a battleship (55-18-28), and went down. Bryan Bray's Des Moines cruiser went down with light damage due to pump problems. The Allies cornered and sank Peter Ellison's Scharnhorst (28-7-10).

The second sortie saw the Axis concentrate on picking out folks. Bob Hoernemann's new North Carolina attracted a lot of attention but she survived the battle at 46-7-49. John Bruder's NC sank with 43-13-20. Other sinks included Doug Hunt's West Virginia (64-0-3), Mike Magnus's Glorie (2-0-0) and Andy Terpstra's Baltimore got pushed into a campaign port by Tim Beckett's Bismarck, where she was torched and sunk by Beckett and two Nagatos. Her damage tally was 79-13-28. This made the Baltimore the ship with the highest damage for the battle, and she is only a heavy cruiser.

In addition, Tom Palmer's West Virginia got ram sunk by Lief Goodson's von der Tann. Tom wasn't too upset about being sunk, but did get torqued up over losing his glasses in the lake. Marc Morin made the save of the day when he pulled them up from the depths.

For the Axis there were no sinks in the second sortie, but there were some interesting scores to be found. Gerald Robert's Kirishima took 80 hits above, and no ons or belows. Dave Au's Nagato also took a lot of aboves to a smattering of other hits at 60-20-5. David Hayne's brand new Kongo didn't take a single hit. For the Axis rookies, Kevin Kaminski's Graf Spee came out the worst at 62-2-4, while Steve Dickow's Bismarck roamed the far reaches of the pond and came home with a 37-2-1 hit tally.



The Allies thought the Northern Climes called for the Northern Pike camouflage scheme for John Bruder's convoy ship.

Photo by Curly Barrett

My impression of the second sortie was that the bulk of the Axis ganged up and sank several Allied stragglers at the end of the sortie one by one. It seemed like there was one large mass just moving from target to target to target.

Score: Allied 10730, Axis 23385

Monday Campaign Battle

The Allied Campaign master planner, Bob Hoernemann had a long winning streak going in Campaign battles, and pulled out all the stops to keep it going. He had a large fleet of convoy ships to work with: 3 freighters, 3 LSTs, 2 CVLs (Princeton class), 1 CV (Bearn) and one sub. The Axis had a large number of convoy ships too, nine different freighters took part in the battle.

The first large Allied convoy ship out the door, captained by Doug Hunt, was promptly sunk, but played the role of a block ship as it bobbed with its stern on the bottom and its bow just afloat. An Axis freighter captained by David Haynes sailed over the sunken stern to reach port. The Allied convoy sink seemed to mollify the Axis bloodlust enough for another pair captained by Rick Whitsell and Lars to break free of the Allied port. They got some attention from the Axis later but completed their full runs. Mike Cucharella followed with the Bearn, which was sunk with massive holes on her

starboard side. The Allied little ships ran with little problem too, Maggie and Eric Grossaint's LSTs, Randy Stiponovich's LST, and Ty Supancic's submarine all made full round trips. This was the first complete convoy run for Ty's sub, which was limited to a forward run in 2007 due to friendly fire.

After the Allied freighters, the Allied CVLs captained by Ty Supancic and Lars made their run. The CVL's started out together, got separated when Ty's CVL was rammed and lost control. Lars' CVL tangled with Beckett and Moss patches, but had Don Cole for an escort and made port, where he was rejoined by Ty and his CVL.

While the Allied CVL's were running, Peter Ellison's Red Freighter tried a run forward with a Nagato escort, but was sunk. Another German freighter came in to the Axis forward base very low in the water, while her escort, Brian Finster's Nagato, chose to sink just outside the port. A third Axis convoy, a Jap freighter with red stacks captained by Mark Roe was chased extensively by a pair of NCs but made the forward port in good shape.

After checking out the CVL's at the forward port, Lars and Ty sailed them both back home, not having much problems until Beckett showed up just outside the Allied Home Port, but both made it in safely. Not long

after they cleared the water Andy Dahl forgot to turn on pump on Bob H's Bike and she sank just outside the Allied home port.

Later the Richeleau was escorting an LST, and fell afoul of Beckett and a Nagato, who both chose to pick on the larger less maneuverable target, and the Richeleau soon went under.

Late in the battle both sides had cruisers go dead in the water next to the shore. The Axis' Nathaniel Goodson's Hipper went dead in the water, but was surrounded by a large patch of moss, and so was only pestered by Allied cruisers that tried a few long distance stern shots. Mike Cucharella's St. Paul had no protective moss skirt, and was sunk by Beckett and two Nagatos.

Fluegel made a run forward late in the battle, driving a large white freighter, arriving at the port without any other ship even close. The Allied ships were off chasing Mark Roe's red stacked freighter again, now trying a homeward run. Ty Supancic's Warspite, the KGV, both Tigers, and Tim Krakowski's Augusta all tried for the ship, which was protected by Beckett's Bismarck. Most of them had to peel

off for 30 second touch fouls, and the red stack freighter made it back home, followed shortly afterwards by Fluegel's freighter.

The Axis convoy ships had 5 complete full runs (Fluegel twice, Mark Roe, David Ranier, David Haynes), two captains made forward only runs (Steve Dickow and Gerald Roberts), and two convoy ships were sunk on their forward runs (Peter Ellison and Lief Goodson).

The Allies brought home more convoy run and target shoot points, but lost the battle due to warship sinks. The Allies lost three big ships (Washington – Kevin Bray, Massachusetts – Brian Bray, and Richelieu – Mike Magnus). For cruisers, Andy Dahl lost Bob H's Bike, Chris Grossaint's Gloire, Mike Magnus' Gloire, and Mike Cucharella's St. Paul all went down.

For the Axis, they lost one large warship, Bryan Finster's Nagato. They also lost two cruisers, Chuck Speltz's Lutzow and Kevin Kaminski's Graf Spee.

Battling Bob Hoernmann's campaign winning streak was over.

Score: Allies 13,500 Axis 14,600.



Nats Tuesday

by the resident Ediot



Tuesday at Nats brought a day of fresh hopes and plans. The Axis had landed a

haymaker on the Allies on Monday, destroying their hopes for a stalemate. It was time for the Allies to have a strategic rethinking of plans. Squadrons were reformed, Monday's commanders were sacked while others were promoted to replace them. Attack was still the plan of the day, but then it almost always is in this hobby. You can't win, after all, if you don't fire your guns and hit hull. I don't remember if the Allied admiral told us to attack 'more carefully' this time, but I think we were all thinking that was what we should attempt to do.

As for the Axis, I can only guess that their plan was the same as Monday's: Keep pummeling them as they stumbled into them, and chase them down if they don't.

But enough blathering (Hey it was sunny all week except Thursday



The Axis Killer BB's toy with a team of NC's.

Photo by Curly Barrett

morning, and some of us got a little baked.)

The score sheet for Tuesday's morning battle shows a very even tally of ships, with the Allies bringing 22 ships and 98 units against the Axis 22 ships and 98.5 units. However, this doesn't tell the full story, as two Allied battleship captains sunk in the first sortie came back swinging in heavy cruisers in the second sortie (but only one made the scoresheet). In addition, the lone Axis French captain (also known as the CD), always looking for the chance to die honorably in a hopeless cause, decided the odds were better for doing so on the Allied team, so he jumped fleets.

The battle itself was a slaughter. The Axis took no prisoners in this battle, any sign of weakness was instantly pounced upon. Still, the score sheet shows less sinks than my shell-shocked, sun-baked brain remembers.

The Axis started out by targeting Bob Hoernemann's North Carolina, and after some hard work by Beckett, his two Nagato pals, Peter's Scharnhorst and the Jap cruisers, it went down (27-19-57). Andy Terpstra's Baltimore was pinned and sunk (47-13-6) once again. Tom Palmer's West Virginia (73-6-17) rammed Bryan Finster's Nagato, which took a leisurely time patching, and Tom found himself without a wingman or many friends when he finally made it back on the water. Bryan Finster and his wingman Paul Block were there, however, and put the West Virginia down.

The Axis didn't have it all their way. Leif Goodson's VDT went down with light damage (16-5-1) out on the far right of the pond where deep spots could be found, and Peter Ellison's Scharnhorst had a healthier sink score at 42-7-14.

For the second sortie, as mentioned before, Bob H. and Tom Palmer asked for permission

to bring out cruisers to resume battle, which was granted. I guess the Axis didn't mind having more targets, which paid off as Tom's Nashville ended up sinking (18-0-2).

The Allied Admiral, Pete Demetri, must've said something unpleasant to the Axis Admiral between sorties because his ship was the designated target for a large group of the Axis. Try as he could, he couldn't shake them off his KGV, and after a valiant battle (64-6-24) with the Fuso, Bismarck, Nagato and VDT, she slipped beneath the waves. Lars' Tiger was her wingman in this sortie and took enough collateral damage that Finster and Block's Nagatos and a few VDT's had no trouble finishing her off (57-11-36). Lars was learning however, as his sinks today and on Wednesday were right next to shore where only his feet got wet during recovery, a true sign of a veteran battler.

For the Axis, Shelby Coffey's SMS Sparkles (which, if I remember correctly, stands for "Super Powerful Axis Raider Killing Luckless Enemy Ships", became the hobby's first warship with a pink paint scheme to

enter battle. Sparkles, a Moltke in disguise, was to be the only Axis sink of the second sortie (7-0-2). Her father Paul, who also made his first Nats battle, went out and recovered the young lady's ship.

Another Axis ship that had gotten a lot of attention was Chuck Speltz's Lutzow. She was worked over by the Nashville, Augusta, Randy Stiponovich's Tiger, and an NC but survived with a hit total of 74-6-7.

After I carried my sunken hulk up to the workbench and returned to watch the remaining battle, I was most curious how my son Andy was doing. To my surprise I found him leading 9 Axis ships on a merry chase while trying to survive his five minutes. Beckett had started the chase, followed quickly by Lide's Fuso and Fluegel's VDT. Soon a Nagato, Chris Kessler's VDT joined the chase followed by Paul Coffey's Rivadavia. The Nagato and Kessler's VDT broke off to shell the Rivadavia until she identified herself as Axis. Later the two Jap cruisers and a third VDT joined the chase. "You got them right where you want



Andy Dahl's Inflexible survived this devastating hit from Jeff Lide's Fuso, and others like it during her wild five minute run in the second sortie

Photo by Curly Barrett

them Andy!” hollered out Bob Hoernemann. Now I tell you I can drive that I-boat under in about ten seconds after her first hit but for some reason that kid can drive that I-boat around for hours soaking up shots like a sponge. Now with half the Axis fleet on his tail, many with faster ships than his 26 second I-boat, he bobbed and weaved and wiggled and juked that ship through two big circles on the pond. That ship was bouncing off blocking ships and pausing for brief rests under their guns that wouldn’t bear, then taking off again scot free. Finally he took a run closer along the shoreline, and ducked behind a stump down in the right corner of the battling area, where large clumps of moss floated. There he waited for the last thirty seconds of his timer to tick off. The pursuing Axis horde paused at the fringe of the moss until Fluegel’s VDT barreled in next to the I-boat and started firing sidemounts. Beckett and Kessler then brought their ships into the muck too, with the Bismarck finally getting her sidemounts on the target. The I-boat’s pump was working steady and hard at the end, and it took home a score of 52-13-26 but it stayed afloat. I later asked him about how he ended up in that predicament. “Oh, I wasn’t paying attention to when the other members of my squadron called five,” he said.

After the I-boat escaped, the Axis horde found Ron Horbul’s NC (22-7-21) to chase, which ran for deep water and survived. Then Tyler Helland’s Minneapolis returned to the water after sitting out for a ram patch. The ship was soon corralled and sunk (25-2-12) by Beckett, and a Jap cruiser.

Score: Allies: 10880 Axis: 29145

Tuesday afternoon battle:

Usually when a fleet is getting whupped, it starts having mechanical problems and starts losing ships. The Allies came back to this battle



Andy taps the I-boat as the timer expires while three German ships watch the one that got away.

Photos by Curly Barrett

with 22 ships and 99 units to 21 Axis ships with 95 units.

When the battle started, things seemed different. The Allies started wondering if somebody had slipped something into the Axis watercooler during the noon meal, or if Axis crew had not shifted out of their noon-time siesta mode. Post-battle intelligence revealed that the Axis had shifted gears to cruise control, ordering their killer squadrons to pursue the more experienced units of the Allied fleet.

Battling Bob Hoernemann was the first to fall victim to their evil plan, as he was the only Allied sink in the first sortie, with a score of 39-7-55). Giving credence to the Allied theory that something was in the Axis watercan, two Jap battlecruisers, Dirty Dave’s Kongo (20-3-9) and Chris Au’s Haruna (18-1-4) succumbed to the waves with light damage.

As for me, I remember that Fluegel took a liking to ‘the ship with the pretty stacks’, by which he meant my Tiger, and pestered me for a good ten minutes. I’d take the faster Tiger on a short run and thought I’d be free of him and then he’d show up alongside the Tiger’s longer hull again, firing sidemounts until I went on another run. Before I knew it he’d be back alongside again when I slowed to attack someone else. Finally I tired of him and ran for deep water. Then he dropped the pursuit in interest of someone closer in.

When I pulled my ship off the water, I looked around for the kid. He was still on the water but sticking close to Ty Supancic’s Warspite. They were doing their best to keep the Axis pests off of Mike Magnus’s Richeleau. Then the Asiatic Squadron (Andy’s I-baot, Ty’s

Warspite, and the two West Virginias) all called five together, which Andy said was a much better system as 'it split up the pursuit.'

For the second sortie, the damage again came up lighter for the Allies and somewhat heavier for the Axis. The Allies lost two ships, Chris Pearce's Le Marschallais (7-0-0) and Randy Stiponovich's Tiger (20-6-6) to light damage, and one ship that was pounded before it went down, Mike Magnus' Richeleau (75-10-27), while the Axis lost the rookie Paul Coffey's Rividavia (32-1-7).

Damage wise, for the Allied big ships, the North Carolinas, Ron Horbul took some damage at 45-5-19, Don Cole at 41-0-9, Chris Grossaint at 42-4-15, and Kevin Bray at 34-6-5.

For the Axis big ships, the two Bismarcks took some heavy damage, Beckett at 37-3-27, and Dickow at 59-2-14. For the Nagatos, their damage varied from Bryan Finsters 26-3-11 to Dave Au's 31-0-2 to Paul Block's 8-0-3. The highest damage point tally for the Axis was for a ship that did not sink, Peter Ellison's Scharnhorst, which survived with 92-9-15.

I remember teaming up with Tom Palmer during this battle, I think it was an impromptu thing, we were both standing together with no other Allies around and decided to see what we could do as a team. We'd been teamed together in the morning's battle, but hadn't had the chance to do much when Tom had to pull off the water due to a ram call and I was coming off my five when he got back, after which he'd been sunk. So now we tried it again, trying to catch Axis ships that were engaged with other Allied ships and not paying attention. Finally we ended up tangling mainly with Finster and Block's Nagatos, with a VDT passing through every now and then. We both called five when our ammo got low, and came off easily.

Once again after I dropped my ship on the workbench I looked to



Bob Hoernemann's North Carolina was always finding the toughest spots to be during this Nats.
Photo by Curly Barrett

see what the kid was doing. Once again Andy was out playing tag with Beckett, Lide, a Nagato and a VDT. I'm not sure if they were seeking revenge for the morning's battle chase or if he was teasing them, but they were hard after the I-boat again. He was playing out in the middle of the pond, bumping and turning and wiggling between Axis guns until his five minutes ran out and he ran the I-boat straight into shore, surviving with a tally of 15-4-15.

Score: Allies: 14320 Axis: 19415.

After the battle was over, we stuck around and went out with the folks staying in the motel, Andy and I were driving in from home every day. We went out to some Italian buffet place not far off the main drag through Elk River. Curly also showed up with the best of the hundreds of hi-def photos he'd taken during the past two days. Many of the printed photos he

brought and showed off that night are used in this issue.

Andy hadn't been to a Nats since 2003 when it seemed to my foggy memory that he was only three feet tall (now he's taller than me), and it was fun to watch him start talking about 'the best five' and 'the worst five' with the other battlers. We ate too much and boasted and lied too much, a typical Nats evening meal you might say.



Mark likes to play by ear
Photo by Curly

Wednesday Cruiser Battle:

by Tim Krakowski with additions
by Bob Hoernemann



Wednesday at NATS is a time to rest and recover from two intense days of battle. By

this time, both captains and ships have been tested, and often need some time off. But the sun rises early in the northern latitudes, and so by 6 AM, I was up and ready to get to the pond. So much for rest! You can sleep when you're dead.

Cruiser Battle has become a growing NATS tradition. This year, we were racing a storm front. So as the threat of rain loomed, 21 (!) cruisers made their way out to join the battle. 7 Axis captains answered the call to battle – Jeff Lide in Sakawa, Bryan Finster's Mogami, Rick King's Admiral Scheer, Dave Ranier's Kumano, Marc Morin's Mogami, Chuck Speltz in Lutzow and Kevin Kaminski's Graf Spee. 14 Allied cruisers entered the fray: Bob Hoernemann's Montcalm, John Bruder's Duca D'Aosta, Tim Krakowski's Augusta, Peter Ellison's DD – USS Gearing, Mike Mangus' Glorie, Don Cole in the Miami, Erik Grossiant's Glorie, Mike Cucharella's St. Paul, Tyler Helland's Minneapolis, Tom Palmer's Nashville, Kevin Bray in Des Moines, Maggie Grossiant in Fiji, Andy Terpstra in his Baltimore, while Randy Stiponovich rode "The Bike." The Allies enjoyed a 2-1 advantage in ships. But the Axis never shrink from a fight, and soon war was called as dark clouds filled the sky and the wind began to blow.

Battle was joined and a general melee erupted immediately. Cruisers spun, bobbed, and weaved, looking for those elusive stern gun shots. Before long, rounds were flying and balsa was bursting. The traditional stern to stern dance didn't really develop – as the Axis were so outnumbered. Several Allies tried a

flanking movement to trap Dave's Kumano and Marc's Mogami. Bryan Finster and Jeff Lide initiated a banzai charge to thwart the attack. The Allies, lead by Battlin Bob, Andy and Tyler lined up on the Japanese cruisers and let fly with deadly salvos, while the German pocket battleship trifecta made their attack runs on the American cruisers.

Then – the unthinkable happened. Don Cole's Miami, fresh from speed trials, went dead in the water. Finster and Lide smelled blood and immediately closed in for the kill. The furball – if cruisers can have a furball – formed around Don. Don had called 5 out of control and the Augusta tried to block for the Miami – positioning a pumping ship in front of the Axis fleet – all of whom had closed by this point. The Axis didn't seem to mind shooting the Augusta instead of the Miami. But the damage was done and the Miami sank under the waves. At this point, most of the cruisers were out

of ammo and on five, so the sortie ended with the Axis in a commanding position.

The second sortie began and once again the fleets maneuvered to gain a firing solution on the dreaded enemy. This is when my worst 5 of NATS took place. I was able to sneak the Augusta around the fleets – and finally had Dave's (or was it Marc's) Mogami right behind my stern – and then, nothing. My guns decided to take the sortie off. I was sick to my stomach as I had to call 5 while the battle erupted around me. The Bike was sunk, it was probably vapor lock in the pump. As I was waiting out my 5, Maggie's Fiji slid beneath the waves. The final scores were Axis 4420 – Allies 3090. The outnumbered Axis with their expert tactics take cruiser battle from the Allies. Reliability and captain skill trump numbers any time.

After the Cruiser Battle Peter Ellison and Tyler Heland took their destroyers out for a one on one. Peter



Chuck Speltz does a quick water integrity test on his Lutzow.

Photo by Curly Barrett

had battled his DD, the USS Ellison, as his rookie ship. It had been sunk many times in local battles, never making it off a 2 minutes. Tyler's DD, the FN Mogador, was his second complete ship. It has never seen battle and has only been on the water for a couple sea trials. Both ships hit the water and "Battle" soon followed. Tyler tried to shoot at Peter and found his guns not firing. Peter was listing to starboard and could not move. It was like one of those old rookie battles where no one's stuff worked. Tyler soon found his gun back in working order and started hitting the listing Ellison. He got the range and started making holes while the onlookers yelled encouragement. Soon Tyler was out of ammo and started to prop wash the listing ship in hopes on putting her under. Maybe if he would have had more time or bigger props it would have worked but Peter's USS Ellison made it off its two minutes for the first time. Final score was 0-0-0 to 13-4-13. That's pretty good shooting for Tyler 30 hits out of 50 bbs.

Both ships reloaded and Peter patched for sortie number 2. Both ships worked at the beginning of this battle. The standard stern to stern battled followed. Both ships tried to make passes and fire off a few shots. Tyler had a lot more luck getting his gun on target, mostly due to Peter's lack of speed. Peter's gun had a delay in it's firing, making the few times he lined up a shot misses. Peter called 2 and floated near the stump on the right of the pond. More calls for prop washing came from the crowd. Peter lay dead in the water again as Tyler tried to get lined up. Soon the crowd started to chant "Sink, Sink, Sink". Peter's pump came to life as Tyler's prop washing was adding water to the hole filled hull. But before the ship could slip under the waves The Mighty American Destroyer was off its two minutes for only the second time ever. No scores were submitted for



Chuck's Lutzow had a few holes after all.

Photo by Curly Barrett

the second battle. All who witnessed it knew the Tyler had put a hurt on TMAD.

The Regional Challenge Battle was soundly won by Region 1, since no other region wanted to fight. Those ships at the pond broke up into two teams for the Smurf and Turf battle. The Flag team was: Rick Adm. Sheer, Mike St Paul, Chris VDT, Kevin Graf Spee, Don Miami, Ty Warspite, Tom West Virginia, Randy Tiger. The No Flag team had Dave Kumano, Bob Washington, Tyler Minneapolis/The Bike, Paul Moltke, Bryan Yavuz, Chuck Lutzow, Andy Baltimore, Kevin Massachusetts.

First sortie saw the two sides in a good hung and slug battle. The Big Mamie and Washington tried to single out the Wee Vee. The cruisers pecked at the edges of the battleships, once in a while getting caught in the action. No one was sunk and not a lot of damage was taken in the first sortie. Tyler lost a rudder servo and jumped on The Bike for the second sortie. All ships reloaded and hit the water for sortie number 2. This time the Washington and Big Mammie were able to get some more hits on the Wee Vee. Tom was pumping pretty hard as he ran. He appeared to get room for a rest when Tyler and The Bike were ram sunk. As Tyler went into the water the Wee Vee also went down. Tyler got The Bike back on the water and battle started again. Shortly after battle started again Mike's St Paul

slipped under the waves. Ty thought it was a pretty sink and watched the long cruiser slide under. The Washington was right there to fire off a long volley of sterns when Ty was not looking at his ship.

Now the chase turned to the Warspite as the Washington and Big Mammie took off after Ty. Washington blocked Warspite so the Big Mammie could deliver some stern guns shots. Then Tiger backed in and shot up Washington. Then the two ships turned and traded sidemounts. The colorful Moltke soon found the bottom of the pond and Paul went into get her. Tyler took The Bike into harms way trying to block the Warspite. For his trouble Warspite ran him over in his second ram sink in just a few minutes. As Tyler went in after the ship the Warspite also sank. After the ships were recovered Washington came into to attack the Tiger and VDT. All three ships were low on bbs and spent the last of them. Randy's Tiger went out of control into a large circle. The Washington played blocker for Chuck's Lutzow who still had a few stern shots left. All the ships were now out of bbs and battle was over.

Leif and Fluegel came down to the lake to do a one on one with their VDTs. It lasted for 1 minute and 50 seconds. They pulled side by side and slugged a few shots into each other. Leif started pumping really hard and quickly rolled over and sank. Fluegel had hit him with a few

good shots and had blown a couple large holes below the waterline.

Lars and Chris Au repeated their one on one from last year. Both ships pulled in for some sidemount work. Chris got the better of Lars but both ships were almost swamped by the waves when they got caught in some weeds by the shore. Chris was able to power through the weeds and get his stern sidemount on target. Chris was hurt enough that the waves were starting to cover the pump outlet. Lars had just sank and we were hoping Chris would do the same. The waves took him into shore and a large patch of weeds. This probably saved him and he was able to make it off of his 5.

Bob and Andy went out for a one on one after Lars and Chris. This was a sidemount only battle to even up the odds between the class 4 and class 6 ships. Both ships traded shots in the high seas. Bob's shooting was better and he has higher freeboard. The lower I-boat took on too much water from the holes and the waves and sank.

Wednesday Night Battle:

The Axis Rule the Night! The cry of the Axis fleet rang out once again. Little did they know how wrong they were. At the hotel, I started my night battle preparation in Bob and Ty's room – looking to bum a ride to Night Battle. I had some jeans on and had coated myself with 100% Deet – which happened to actually contain 98.16% Deet. So much for truth in advertising. As we left the room and headed for the car, I saw Battlin' Bob's fully hooded sweatshirt that he was planning to wear as mosquito defense. I went to my room to retrieve my rain gear with a hood. When in doubt – copy the locals.

This time, it was the Axis that held a huge advantage in numbers. The Allies managed to muster just 6 ships for battle. The Allied battlers consisted of Lars' Tiger, Andy's Inflexible, Battlin' Bob's Montcolm,



The surprise from this battle photo is that Chris Au's Haruna survived while Lars' Tiger slipped under about 30 seconds later. Photo by Andy Dahl

Tyler's Minneapolis, Mike Mangus' Glorie and Tim K's Augusta.

Meanwhile, the Axis came out in force: Tim Becket's Bismarck, Paul Block's Nagato, Fluegal's VDT, Shelby Coffey's Moltke, Paul Coffey's Rivadavia, Chuck Speltz's Lutzow, Peter Ellison's Scharnhorst, Lief Goodson's VDT, Chressler's VDT, Finster's Mogami, Kevin Kaminski's Graf Spee, and Jeff Lide's Sakawa.

As the ships were launched, the Axis seemed to fill the pond as the Allies looked for nice dark places to hide. The mosquitoes fed.

The Allied plan was going well – until the Rivadavia launched with approximately 10M candlepower. Somehow, Paul Coffey managed to tap into the powerlines overhead to power his lights. Night blindness ensued. The mosquitoes fed.

As war was called, the Axis converged on Lars' Tiger. Spotlights illuminated the target as the Axis big guns closed in from all sides. Lars fought valiantly as Andy circled around trying to support his father. The mosquitoes fed.

The Allied cruisers swept in and made a pass. Our plan was to run in, shoot fast and run for the shadows.

The plan was executed well until Battlin' Bob's Montcolm was ram sunk by the Glorie. As Bob was going down, he was able to bring the Montcolm to shore just before it went the bottom. Then the Glorie sank. Bob was saying he was happy to see his rammer sink – until he saw it was a fellow Allied ship! The mosquitoes fed.

Lars fought bravely while the Axis closed in for the kill. The Augusta and Minneapolis – BBs expended – managed to sneak into the shadows at low speed and ride out their 5. The mosquitoes fed.

As soon as all the Allies managed to make it off the lake, the combatants ran to their cars to escape the relentless attack from the aerial menace. Back at the hotel, mosquito bites were scratched and holes were counted. The Axis scored another crushing defeat as the Allies were apparently too busy dodging mosquitoes to shoot back. The final score: Axis 4205, Allies 125. That's not a typo. But even with this lopsided victory, the Axis conceded that it was the mosquitoes that ruled the night.



Thursday NATS 2008

by Bob Hoernemann



Most of the captains at NATS were able to get blood transfusions after night battle.

A few of them refused treatment and were a little more light headed on Thursday than normal. The morning started out with cloudy skies and light wind. We knew a rain storm was headed our way so we tried to hurry up and get the first sortie in before the rains came. Shortly after battle was called Fluegel's VDT went out of control and circled on the left side of the pond. He announced that he was out of control several times, Leif also let us know of his plight. But the Allies had other fish to fry and left him to circle. We also knew if we did go in there for Fluegel that we would be surrounded by Axis and sunk ourselves. The Allies main goal for the battle was to sink Steve's Bismarck. Most of the fleet spent a great deal of time chasing him around the pond. He collected a lot of holes but was still on top of the water when battle ended. The Axis were out to get Chris Grossaint. Finster pulled alongside Chris to exchange sidemounts for a run down a third of the shore. Finster's doubles gave twice as much as he was getting from Chris and both ships pulled away pumping pretty hard. Paul's Rividavia sank with no damage and also collected two ram penalties. After Paul got out of the water action continued. Paul's Nagato was chasing Don's NC and paid with a bow full of trips. Don also got a good trip stern pass into Peter's TMGBC. Andy Dahl was the next one to sink. He also had really light damage. Shortly after Andy got his I-boat Shelby's Pink Lady also hit bottom. Thankfully an Allied had shot her so it was not an unseaworthy sink. Dad went in to get the ship and came back out just in time to see Mike's St Paul go down, also with

light damage. Every ship that sank in the first sortie was very lightly damaged. Soon the lightning started to get closer and the CD called an end to the first sortie.

Everyone hid out under the tents getting ships ready or telling stories. The rain and cold temps had some people adding layers to keep warm. We spent about an hour waiting for the lightning to die down then resumed battle in warmer and dryer weather.

The second sortie saw the Allies chasing the Bismarck around again. The Axis put Chris G on the bottom, and then turned towards the slow Allied ships. Ty's Warspite and Tom's Wee Vee soon found themselves spinning and firing until both were at the bottom of the pond. Lars' Tiger was next; he took 34 belows but stayed afloat. Peter's TMGBC was the only Axis to take more than 10 belows in the battle, he had 19. Every one broke for lunch or

started patching and preparing for campaign.

Afternoon Campaign

Since the Allies were too far behind to catch up and I was already dragging with the addition of site host duties I did not put a lot of thought into this campaign. The last couple of days I was trying to get Ty to make a plan and run campaign for me. That having failed we went pretty much with the same plan as on Monday. We had Maggie and Eric set up with LSTs to run back and forth as many times as they could during our hour of fun. They were successful for 9 forward and return runs between them, helping Eric get the Life Line Award.

Much like our Monday plan we wanted to get the big ships on the water under heavy escort early. This failed as I found one of my transmitters with no power caused by a blown battery. Another one had no



The Allies were 'stumped' by the Axis all week. Here's Doug Hunt's West Virginia after playing with the Axis fleet.

Photo by Lars

power, possibly due to me forgetting to charge it, but I was sure it was plugged in all day Wednesday. Some quick battery flipping got us Ron's Freighter (Run by Mike M), John's Freighter (Run by Lars) and Tim K's Victory Ship (Run by Tim K) out on the water a few minutes into the battle. We should have had 2 NCs, a Sodak and a POW escorting them. As I was running with my CL over to the Axis base I saw them under attack by 4 Axis ships with no Allies in sight. The two freighters sank on the forward run and the Victory was too shot up to make a return run. Both sunken ships reported losing control and being pounded. Lars came back and switched the good batteries into the radio for one of the CVLs and started a run with it. It completed the forward run and also lost control and was sunk on the return run. This killed all of our big ships.

Bryan Bray snuck an LST run in-between his warship work to round out our convoy runs. Meanwhile the Axis were launching a freighter or two at a steady clip. Andy T and I found Peter's Red ship at the Axis forward base with a couple minutes left on his timer. We put enough holes into him, Andy on the pond side myself on the shore side, to get him to sink at the port with seconds left on the timer. I even got to prop wash it when my bbs ran out. Finster's freighter made a forward run and was sunk on the return trip. Fluegel's freighter also made the forward run and was hardly damaged on the return trip. DW took the freighter out at the port, the Allied port. The ports had shifted around from Monday and Fluegel had pulled his ship out of the wrong one for a declared sink. Leif had the Altmark out for a forward run but did not attempt a return. During this run Shelby was an escort and did a good job keeping Ron away from the freighter. Dave made a

complete run with the Muso and went out for another run. This run did not turn out as well for him. Andy Terpstra found him with the Baltimore's triples. Twenty or more salvos went into the starboard bow, the Muso was soon sunk. Dirty and Fluegel also made forward runs but did not make a return run with their freighter.

Not a lot of warship battling took place. There were too many convoy ships that needed to be attacked to spend time chasing after warships. Gerald did manage to ram sink Chris Pearce's Le Marscellaise.

About 40 minutes into the battle Peter's Scharny was caught in the moss and had lost propulsion. He had ducked into the weeds and was hiding behind a stump on the left side of the pond. I took the Washington into the weeds to try and sink him. You could see some smoke coming out of Peter's ship, one of his motors was burning up. I was also stuck in the weeds out of gun range. Randy came over with The Bike and pushed my bow a little closer so I could get some sidemounts shots at Peter. I drifted

away and Randy came back to push me over again. After I emptied that gun Peter turned off his pump and sank. Tim K's Augusta was also sunk.

After Tyler's good showing with his destroyer on Wednesday he put a waterline on it and had it speed tested so he could take it out in campaign. With a few minutes left in the battle he found himself stuck in some weeds and surrounded by Axis. They dumped the sidemounts they had left into him and he sank close to shore. The Allies had pulled out a small victory in this battle, winning by 800 points.

After the battle we started looking for sunken ships. John Bruder's Freighter and my CVL had sunk in the same area. John's ship went down in one of the 7 foot deep holes in the pond. Several captains came to help look for it. As always Marc found it where others had been looking. I had also been swimming around looking for the CVL when Lars pointed out that I was looking in the wrong line. The adjustment worked and I quickly walked to it.



The Allied CVL's backed down from the Axis big guns.

Photo by Curly Barrett

Platts Fridan

by the Resident Ediot



The two fleets were relaxed this morning. With the issue no longer in doubt, it was the time to select a target and put it down. The target selections may have been picked to satisfy a minor grudge, or due to someone being relatively ignored for the week.

The Axis fleet decided to find the NC belonging to Ron Horbul. Ron wasn't hiding, and when Leif and Mark Roe's VDTs and three Nagatos started the assault, Ron kept his NC in close to shore, down in the left corner of the battling area, where both his friends and his enemies could see things clearly. The Warspite, the KGV, Kevin Bray in the SoDak, and the I-boat all did their best to aid their popular teammate. Don Cole's NC drove by, but he didn't stay long because Tim Beckett's Bismarck was pursuing him. Ron kept his ship out on the water and with all the attention, it was easy to empty his guns. Then it was time to survive his five minutes. He brought his NC close in to shore as she was starting to pump hard. This was enough to get Beckett's attention for a time, and the Fuso came in to add some weight to the NC's hull two bbs at a time. Ron was able to pull the boat off the water while it was still afloat.

After he escaped, the Nagatos took after Tim Krakowski's Augusta, and when the Allied cruiser started to go down (31-2-14) Tim hollered "I hate you, you big meanies!" which got a big laugh.

One of the ships that the Allies targeted was the Bismarck of rookie Steve Dickow. Steve always ran for the further reaches of the pond

whenever he got attention, and that was where he spent most of this sortie.

After the demise of Tim's vaunted Allied cruiser, the Axis returned their attention to Don Cole's North Carolina. Don brought her in close to shore when she started looking rough, and she sank about fifteen feet out (62-11-31).

Other sinks in the sortie were Chuck Spletz's Lutzow (34-1-11) and Mike Cucharella's St. Paul (38-3-2). The St. Paul's superstructure started to float across the lake beyond the battling area buoy line, and Ron Horbul, the hard working MWC President and part of the host group, got out the site owner's row boat and rowed after the wayward ship parts.

Another ship that sank in the second sortie was Pete Demetri's KGV (106-7-15), but I have no idea where, when or how it happened, other than his hull somehow filled with water until it was overcome.

Mark Roe's VDT found Andy Dahl's I-boat, which was fighting a finicky rudder in addition to the Axis. Mark's VDT stuck to the ailing I-boat, which did her best but after a hard week her pump must've been getting tired as she went down with a tally of 16-6-14.

In looking over my photos of the battle I thought Tim K's Augusta had made a return after her sink in the first sortie, but it was Rick Whitsell's Salt Lake City that came in to do some battling by the shore on this day.



Ron Horbul's new ship out for a spin. Not only did it fail the drop test, but we suspect it has an illegal turning system.

Photo by Lars

Second Sortie: After Ron Horbul looked over his NC, he decided that running was not a good plan for the second sortie. So he tried to nuzzle up his ship to one of the stumps and the shore. One of the VDT's spoiled his plan by wiggling in between the stump and his NC. The NC went down early in the sortie with a huge score of 71-22-81.

Doug Hunt's West Virginia was the next to sink (67-3-2), getting pinned in by the same stump where Ron Horbul's NC had been sunk.

After this the Axis returned to one of their favorite games of chasing Bob Hoernemann's NC. Beckett, a Nagato, and the two Jap Battlecruisers gave her a working over, ganging up on Battlin' Bob's

NC which didn't have any help from his friends, as they were off chasing the rookie Bismarck.

Bob's new ship isn't as maneuverable as his old Warspite, but he did a lot of squirming while he took a lot of shots. In one of my photos his pump is shooting a solid stream what seems to be about twenty feet in the air. Chris Kessler brought his VDT in to help block, and was nearly rolled over by the NC as she tried to break free.

Bob's torture continued as the Japanese continued to hard press him, but we heard the cheer that Steve Dickow's Bismarck finally sank (143-10-17). There was a story I heard later that the Allies got some unexpected help from Finster's Nagato, who mistook the blue duct tape sealing the Bismarck's hull for that of the Richeleau's blue paint job, and he fired a lot of shots into her. "He didn't holler or chew me out or anything," said Finster. "He just returned my fire." After the Bismarck sank Bob kept hoping that Steve would jump right in the water to retrieve his ship, but Steve was taking his time. "Where's that 'man in the water call'?" Bob kept mumbling, then he cheered when it finally came. Beckett and the other Axis peeked at Bob's timer and began looking for a new target.

As Bob came off the water, a flight of about eight Canadian geese came flying in and landed on our side of the battle area buoys. They took a second look at our ships and quickly turned and swam away in the other direction.

The last chase of the battle was the remaining Axis fleet chasing the Richeleau. The big blue ship had been sunk a few times during the week, but she was doing well today. She gave the Axis ships a good chase and survived with a tally of 49-7-28. **Score Allies: 13305 Axis: 26375.**

Afternoon battles: Most folks packed up pretty quick after the last fleet battle. The Port Polar bear crew started pulling down tents because

pickup crews were due in a short time. But there were a few hard core types that wanted to continue with the free market bb exchange.

In the **1st Annual Much Discussed Battle**, Chris Kessler's VDT defeated Ty Supancic's Warspite 20-5-13 (975) to 46-8-15 (1410).

Then for the **No Free Lunch Battle**, Dave Au bought lunch for nearly everyone still at the pond, in exchange for a battle with Chris and Ty. The 26 second ships served up a tasty dessert, with the VDT (16-5-16 (1085)), and the Warspite (45-5-16 (1375)) defeating the Nagato (77-18-49 (3670)).

For the Nats Banquet, we didn't have the budget to ship in a real battleship like Houston does every year. But somewhere Ron and Peter came up with a military air museum and a brother-in-law caterer and voila! A tasty and eye-popping banquet extravaganza was had by all.

For the awards, the following were given huge amounts of applause and small financial stipends:

Sportsman Award:	Mark Morin
Rookie of the Year	Tyler Heland
High Points	Paul Block
Best of Class 1&2	Chris Pearce
Best of Class 3	Kevin Kaminski
Best of Class 4	Chris Au
Best of Class 5	Jeff Lide
Best of Class 6	Tim Becket
Best of Scale Warship	Rick King
Best of Scale Convoy	Tim Krakowski
Individual Combat	Chris Au
Life Line	Eric Grossaint
Best Dressed	Peter Ellison
Most Feared Axis	Chris Au
Most Feared Allied	Bob Hoernemann
Most Damaged	Bob Hoernemann

The ceremony was kind of rushed because Fluegel and Dirty had tickets to the Twins-Rangers game and we worked hard to get them out the door and to the dome for the first pitch.

Nats Score

Allies: 83625 Axis: 145200.



Presidents Column:

Fellow Battlers,

Friday Nats 2008 I am sorry we had to rush everything. We had to return some of the equipment by the afternoon. I really enjoyed the music Friday morning.

The Speed Reverse committee is still working on their rule for next year. I would ask that you support their efforts. Talk with fellow members about the Rules up for voting.

Some things that need to be said.

#1 Just because you find a loop hole or a gray area in the rules does NOT mean you should exploit them.

#2 My fun over your fun is = Self-centered.

#3 I won't play if we battle that way.= How do you know its not any fun until you try it.

#4 Every member has the right to ask questions and be treated like a equal.

#5 Do what you can to help out even if you just bring Munchies.

#6 I think its a great Idea if all the Axis fleet is painted pink.

#7 Remember to simply enjoy yourselves, have fun battling with friends.

As many of you know I hate being on the BOD. I am not a Human Resource kind of guy. But it was my turn to help. There are definitely some fun parts . The best is talking or e-mailing with members about all kinds of subjects.

In the coming years the MWC will need good people at the helm. Please support them or be one of them

Thank you
Ron Horbul

President MWC- less than 3 months to go HOOT-HOOT



Do you LOVE your ship?

Well have I got an offer for you.

My mother in law, (and father in law too) live with me. They are from Peru. My mother in law is an EXCELLENT oil painter. We have 30 or so pictures in our house that she has done. I like them, and not because she is who she is. I had her do a picture of the Scharnhorst and it is hanging beside the computer as I write you this.

Dana Graham has a oil painting of the Prince of Wales she did for him. It was my peace offering as we roomed together at NATS. He said, "Wade do you always have to bribe your roommate?" He really enjoyed the painting. Ask Dana for his opinion of the painting.

My MIL (mother in law) can take any picture of ships and put in any setting you want. Day, night, rough seas, battling, you in the picture, etc. Also she can do landscapes. You determine the size and width, with or without frame. Picture depends on size and frame.

Makes a great Christmas, or Birthday present!
You can e-mail me at: bismarck3@cox.net
Thanks! Wade Koehn



Painting by Wade's M-I-L: The Prince of Wales



Coffey fleet: Sparkles and the Argie Photo by Curly



Sportsman Award winner Marc Morin was in the water all week helping 'the lost ones'. Here he brings back Don Cole's North Carolina Photo by Lars



The "Four Horsemen" (as the Ediot's wife called this shot) bring home the Bearn

Photo by Curly Barrett

A ROOKIE AT NATS

by Tyler Helland

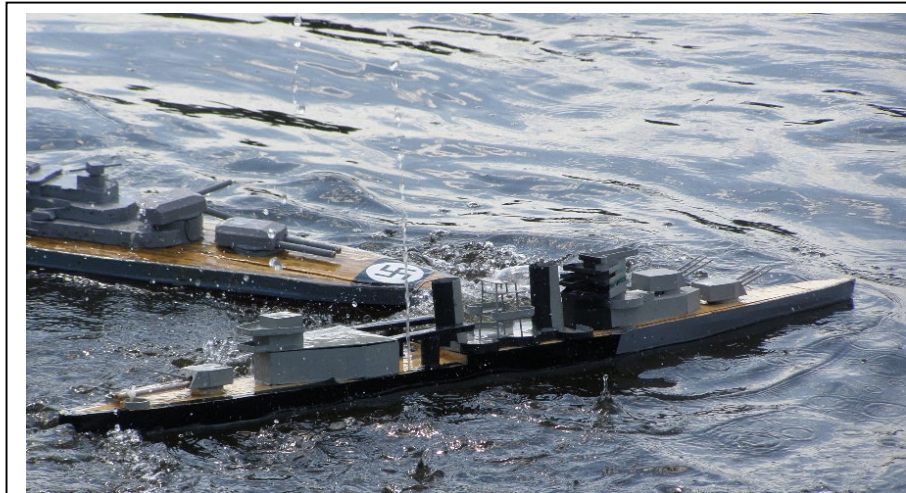


NATS was awesome. As a rookie getting ready for my first NATS, I didn't really know what to expect. I knew that we would

battle by day, fix and talk boats by night, and I from what I had heard, hang out with a really cool group of guys. All of these things ended up being true but let's start at the beginning.

NATS for me started late on Sunday afternoon. I was one of the last ones to show up to the pond to test speed, skin, and weight. When I finally got to the pond Bob asked why I was so late so I told him "I got stupid drunk last night." Bob got a big kick out of that. He got an even bigger kick out of the whole story of my bachelor party the night before which was highlighted by my brother tirelessly pursuing the neighbor girl while the 'spoken for' rest of us were living vicariously through him, egging him on all the while. Even though it was way too late, more like way to early, when I finally went to bed, I couldn't sleep. I couldn't stop thinking about NATS.

Up here in Minnesota, we battle at least once a month all summer, so I kept lying to myself, thinking that I wouldn't be entirely green as a battler. I started battling last August after the 2007 NATS and had been to a few battles, but the local battles typically involve no more than 10 to 15 ships if we are lucky. On Monday morning as everyone started showing up with their ships, I began to realize how many boats and how much chaos was going to be on the water, but it wasn't until the few seconds before battle was called that I really felt overwhelmed. The first battle was a blur. I tried to remember the planning, I tried to remember who my wingman was, I tried to remember our assignment, I



Tyler's Minneapolis finds Tim Beckett's Bismarck's shootin' end.

Photo by Curly Barrett

tried to remember ship identification but in retrospect, I honestly couldn't tell you a single thing that happened to me the entire first battle of NATS on Monday morning. I don't think I ever let myself get into big trouble and didn't take too much damage but I probably didn't get very good shots on anyone either.

Campaign was a different story. I hope I will never again feel like such a novice. The first time out, I finally got lined up for a shot but when I pulled the trigger a few times, the first one went off but for the next few nothing happened. I forgot to turn the air on and didn't know if I was allowed to pull it out and turn it on or not, so I called five very early. After I pulled the Minneapolis off and turned the air on, I went back out and had a fairly good sortie. As I came off my five I was about to pull my boat out of the Axis port but thankfully someone was there to catch my potential mistake just as I was reaching for my boat. Remembering the wisdom of Admiral Bob, I wanted to get back on the water as soon as possible and get as many sorties possible in campaign. This time out, I forgot to unpin my guns. Again, not knowing the exact rules in this situation I called five and got off the water. At local battles we just grab our boat and correct the forgetfulness but this was NATS and I didn't know if that

was allowed or not. As I was about to put the Minneapolis out again, I realized that my rudder wasn't working. It turns out that the hardware that was keeping my water tight rudder box true to its name had become over tightened and fried my rudder servo. At this point I was a little frustrated and just about ready to swear off campaign for good but as I watched the remainder of the hour play out, I forgot about my troubles and remembered how awesome this hobby is.

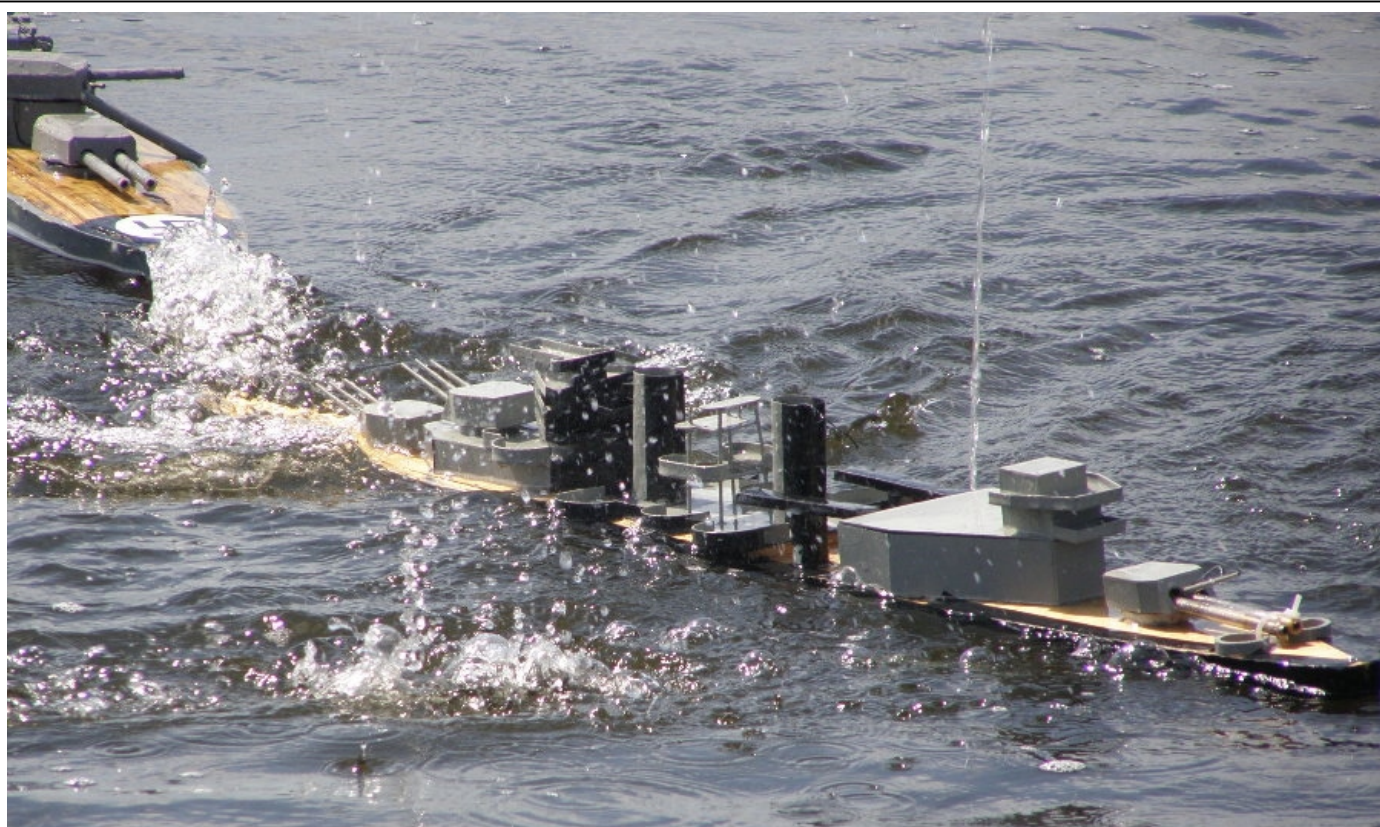
A little while later as I was working on my rudder and other minor boat repairs I realized that a lot of the awesomeness is because of the people. Of course I didn't have a spare low profile servo. Luckily Tim Beckett did and generously gave it to me saying, don't worry about it, just get your boat ready for tomorrow (and he was the Admiral of the enemy fleet). This wouldn't be the last time at NATS that I received similar help. Later Kevin Bray, Bob, Ty, and countless others were quick to do the same. In my short time in this hobby, I have realized that selfless acts of giving spare parts, helping with repairs, and sharing boat building and battling wisdom is the standard rather than the exception in this hobby. It really is true that people come for the boats but stay for the friends.

By Tuesday morning I was ready to go for a full day of battling. The first sortie of the day went very well. I didn't take much damage and I was starting to get more comfortable on the water. Later in the second sortie, as I was jockeying for position with Kevin K, we ended up bumping bow to bow at about a 45 degree angle. I was sure that we had both hit the front 2 inches of hard area of our boats and thought nothing of it but Kevin wanted to check out his ship for ram damage so I did too. I was fine but Kevin claimed ram damage so I had to wait out the 5 minute penalty. Unfortunately when I went back out I was one of the only Allied ships left on the water. Right before my penalty was up I asked Bob if I should just call 5 and get out of there. Before he said it I knew his answer. "Go shoot someone." I should have been smarter but since I am in training to be Axis next year, I decided to go out with glory. Besides our boats are built to sink and a potential cruiser sink wouldn't mean that much to the point total. I

sank with 9 seconds left on my five in the middle of a Japanese and German capitol ship sandwich. Luckily I was able to learn something in the process. I needed more juice in my cruiser. After a longer sortie on a bigger pond and after successfully running away for the first 2 minutes of my 5, my 5 amp hour batteries just couldn't take any more. There was a distinct moment when I noticed that I was no longer pulling away and as the 24 second battleships were closing on me I realized that I was toast. At least I can twist the story a little and say that it took the big hitters of the Axis fleet to sink me. It took two Bismarcks, a Nagato or two, a Kongo, and a few others (Though I'd give most of the credit to Tim Becket's haymaker) to put me down...what a tough little cruiser.

As the week went on, I had more and more fun. Wednesday was a blast. The cruiser battle was crazy. With 20 cruisers all zipping around for some reason in a very confined area, it felt like we were all battling

outside of the normal confines of cruiser tactics. There was also a pick up fleet battle. The highlight of this for me was being ram sunk twice in a single battle. At the very end of the first sortie my throttle servo fried and put the Minneapolis out of commission. I asked a few people on both sides if I could take out Bob's spare cruiser, the Bike, and no one objected. Early on in the second sortie, some of the battleships were after Tom Palmer's WeVee and I thought I'd help cut him off and get in front of him. He didn't hit me hard but he just kept pushing me until I went down, which I am told is technically a ram sink that I should have called right away to make him back off. Since it was an unseaworthy sink with no damage and no ram hole I asked if I could put it back out after I retrieved it and again, since it was a pick up battle, no one objected. A little while later I found myself doing a similar thing, trying to get out in front of Ty's Warspite and I got flat out T-boned which again was totally my fault. As



The end of a friendly argument

Photo by Curly Barrett

the Bike was sinking from the ram, I couldn't stop laughing knowing that I had been ram sunk twice in one sortie. If it were my boat and not the loaner it may have been a different story but I had seen the Bike take a lot more abuse than that. After the pick-up battle I got out my destroyer, the Mogador, for a one on one against Peter's Gearing. Both of us did a lot of trash talking and everyone watching was cheering us on like it was the main event, which was hilarious considering it was one stern gun vs. one stern gun. A little while into the first battle Peter's drive gear became jammed. He couldn't move and called 2, which was just enough time for me to get a good line on him and empty my gun. Because of his list I got a few belows in and won by a score of 13-4-13 to 0-0-0. I was fairly happy with hitting 60% but then again it was a stationary target for most of the battle so I wanted a fair fight to see what two functional destroyers could do, so we patched and went back out. This time both of our boats could drive but, I was at speed and Peter wasn't, so I could just chase him and drive in front of him. Also, Peter was having trouble with his gun firing when he wanted it to. I think he was over tweaked. This battle I was still able to get plenty of good shots off and avoided taking any. We lost the score sheet but I remember being fairly happy with my boat's performance. After the battle there was plenty of trash talk already for next year's highly anticipated destroyer battle. We think it would be fun to have an annual class 1 battle every year on Wednesday at NATS, so get your destroyers ready. Later that day, I made some quick

repairs to my radio box to get my Minneapolis ready to go for the night battle. Night battle was ridiculous. The fleets were Lars and Andy in the Tiger and I-boat along with four cruisers for the Allies against 12 Axis boats. According to Andy Dahl it was a "target rich environment." I heard a lot of shooting even after Lars went down but I don't know who they were shooting at...probably each other. The cruisers were hanging out on the edge and after we dumped our magazines we hid in a shadow away from the action. I would be willing to bet that with the exception of Lars, who went down valiantly, the Axis put more holes in their own boats than the Allies did. Overall, night battle was a lot of fun and kind of gives you an appreciation of how chaotic the real night battles must have been before the later stages of WWII when RADAR was more

developed.

As the week wore on, I eventually got a little more comfortable on the water. I started to take more chances and get in close to the battleships. I started making my main focus giving damage instead of avoiding it. I started to feel like I could start to contribute to boat conversations instead of just receiving information. And though I thought it wasn't possible, I started having even more fun. I hope that I will never be able to control the butterflies that I get right before battle is called. I don't think I will ever be able to get a good night's sleep the night before or after a battle. I know I will always get that little giddy feeling when I am lining up a shot on someone and can tell that it is going to be a good one. This hobby is awesome!



Tyler recovered from his First Nats sink and brought home the Rookie of the Year trophy.

Photo by Curly Barrett

NATS by the Numbers

by Bob Hoernemann



There were a lot of interesting numbers that showed up at NATS this year. Overall the

percentage of hits was close to the same as at a normal NATS, at 13.9%. But looking closer you can see the winning team shot at a much more accurate rate. The Axis shot 16.5% while the Allies were only at 1.4%. This seems odd as the Allies have a lot more stern guns and the Axis have more sidemounts. The Allies put 755 total guns (489 sterns and 277 sidemounts) on the water, the Axis 764 (403 sterns 361 sidemounts). This would lead us to believe the Allies should shoot for a higher percentage since sterns are easier to hit with than sidemounts. But this was not the case. If we assume sterns only make aboves and sidemounts only make ons and belows. The Axis shot at a normal rate of 20.6% with their sterns and the Allies hit only 14.2% of the time. The Axis really won NATS on their sidemount accuracy. They shot sidemounts at an unreal 11.9%, while the Allies shot only 6.3%. You can really see this in the total number of holes for each fleet. The Axis holes were 2655-213-445. The Allies were 3114-486-1128. Even though the Axis had fewer sterns they gave more aboves then the Allies. You can see a lot of Allies had scores with more belows then aboves. In fleet battles the Axis had 16 ships with more then 10 belows, the Allies had 30. There were 25 ships with more then 20 below, Tim Becket's 27 was the only Axis on the list. In a flashback to 04 NATS in Rolla Lars, Bob and Ron took a lot of damage. They had 486 belows, that's 7 of the top 10 below scores for the week. Ron had the top score with 81 below. Steve's Bismark took the aboves honors with scores of 143 and 134. Lars took 3 of the top 4 scores with 23, 20 and 19 on the waterline hits.



Kevin Kaminski's Graf Spee got this warm Nats greeting in Monday's first sortie.

Photo by Curly Barrett

You know Lars, the waterline does not need to be 1" wide.

In Friday's battle Ron's score was 71-22-81 and a class 6 sink. That's 6510 points! Let's say Ron was his own fleet. He had almost as many points as the two fleets collected in Thursday's campaign. He had more damage then ALL of the ships in night battle combined. Since 2002 no one has broken 6,000 points. Very few have even got over the 5,000 point mark. Ron has set a new standard for taking damage.

There were 52 sinks in the one on ones and fleet battles this year. Of these, 30 sinks were taken with light damage. Once again over half of the sinks were caused by a failure of the ship's systems or the captain's brain. Three captains were sunk 6 times during the week. Lars (4 Tiger, 2 convoys), Mike C (St Paul and a convoy) and Mike M (Richelieu, Glorie and a convoy). Mike M. had all three of his ships sunk in Monday's campaign. Lars didn't sink at all last year.

The "Chris Kessler No Score Award" goes to

Maggie Grossaint who collected a grand total of 2-3-1 for the week. A close runner up is Paul Block with 28-4-8 and that's with a Nagato!

We had 45 captains at NATS this year with 78 different ships. The captains were down a little from last year's 48, but there were more ships then any year since 2002. I'm pretty sure it's the most ships ever at a NATS. We also had all 45 ships on the water for Thursday's fleet battle. NATS 07 only had 44 ships on the water in any battle. This might be the most ships on the water for any NATS ever.

The Campaign victory by the Axis on Monday was the first time they had won a Campaign Battle since Tuesday 2004.



Axis sidemounts proved the decisive factor

Photo by Curly Barrett

Try The MWC Weight Loss Plan!

“I lost 55 pounds on the
MWC Weight Loss Plan!”
– Lars, Renowned Battler

No Pills, no fancy diets,
just good hard heavy
lifting-type exercise!

In 2005 the MWC Weight Loss Group started Lars as their initial test subject on their new weight loss plan. “They gave me a bigger and heavier model warship to carry around,” says Lars. “For the first two years I had it, I didn’t battle it or nothing. I just followed the plan and used the ship for bench presses, leg lifts, overhead lifts and all of those other fancy exercises that comes in the booklet.”

Phase 2 of the process involves going back into battle. “You’d be surprised at how much difference

2008
Tiger - 27.5 pounds
Lars - 180 pounds



those extra nine pounds of model ship makes,” says Lars. “And it’s even more productive when you sink. I lost 3 times the amount of weight during Nats 08 as I did down in Houston in 2007, when I didn’t sink at all. There’s a whole lotta water that can be carried around in that new Tiger hull. The ol’ Bellerophon was just a

drop in the bucket in comparison. I gotta thank the MWC WLG!”

Get started on your weight loss program today. Join Lars in dropping pounds every time your warship drops to the bottom to see Davy Jones! *

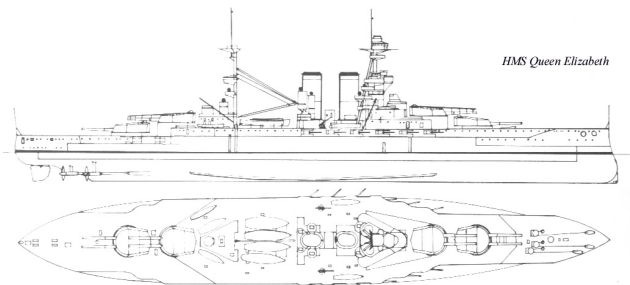
* Your results are likely to vary. Claims are totally unsubstantiated.



2004
Bellerophon - 18.5 pounds
Lars - 235 pounds

TASK FORCE 144

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The fundamental object in all military combinations is to gain local superiority by concentration -- Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, Naval Strategy, 1911