

TASK FORCE 144

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MARCH 10-12, 2012 BROUHAHA ON THE BAYOU

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BUZZARD BLAST
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Just a hospital ship, pay no attention to me



The Logistics of War

By Jason Schafer

Campaign provides a good interruption to the tedium of a few top performing classes of ships dominating the water during NATS. It brings out the oddities like Jeff Lide's Yamato class with six bow guns, Brandon Smith's Emden class with one bow gun and a host of rarely seen convoy ships. Campaign also forces the concept of military logistics into the hobby. It is more glamorous and exciting to discuss tactics and strategy but the importance of logistics cannot be ignored. General Omar Bradley stated, "Amateurs talk strategy, professionals talk logistics."

Continued on page 652



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The Silver Screen

By Peter Ellison

In a slightly different twist on boating related bits, here is a collection of recommendations for those with Netflix streaming. Refer to this list for those evenings when you want to turn your brain into a bucket of Jell-O® watching edutainment. There are a lot more but these are ones that I have seen recently and enjoyed.

Full length movies:

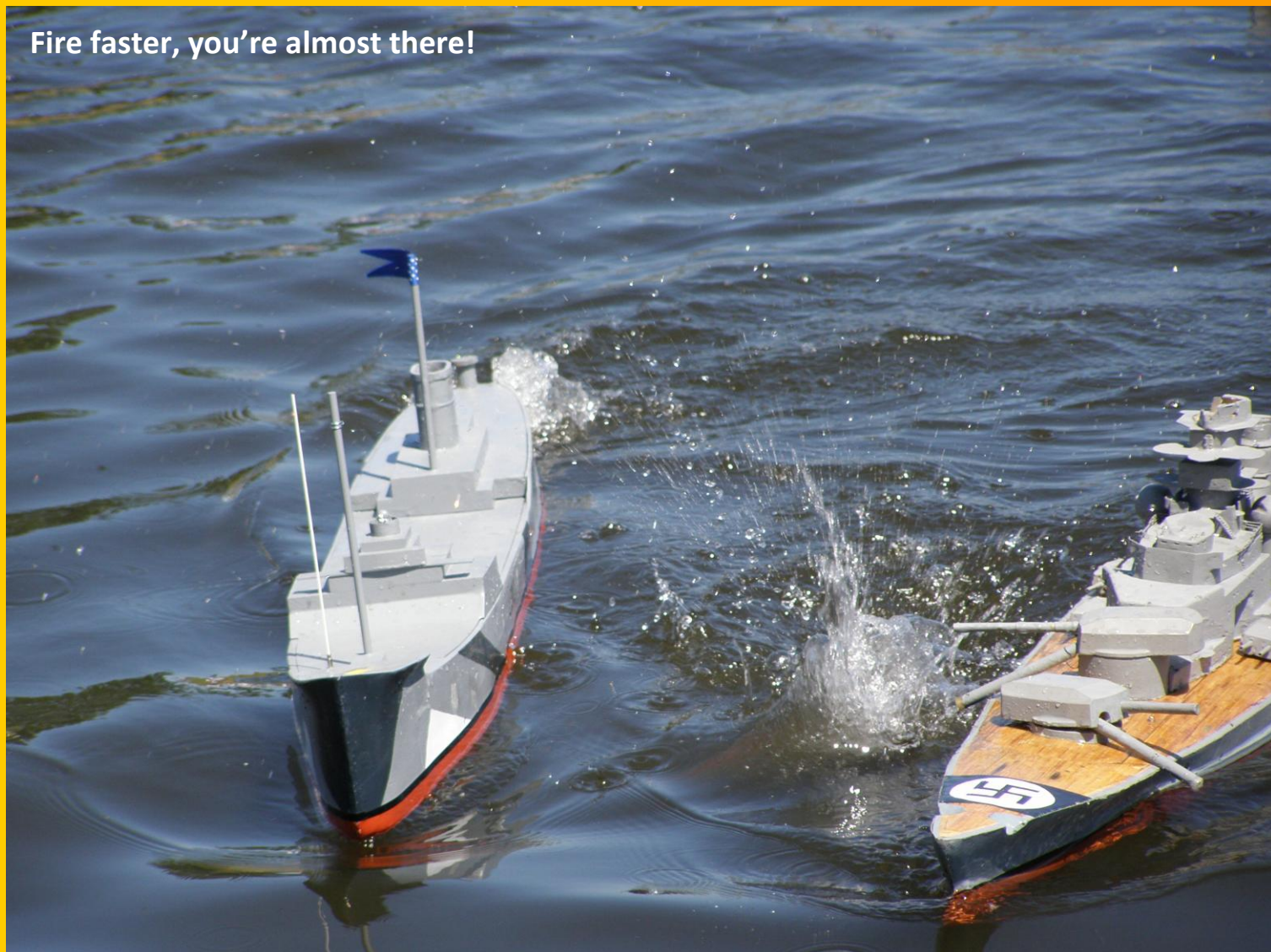
Under Ten Flags
“This World War II drama based on a true story charts the actions of Capt. Bernhard Rogge (Van Heflin) and the crew of the German vessel Atlantis as they navigate through enemy waters and stealthily sink Allied ships.” – Netflix
While not a true documentary the film is fun. It is from 1960 and shot in black and white. There is some good old historical footage with a good story. *Tora! Tora! Tora!*
This movie is fun to watch and doesn’t need much of an introduction. If you have not seen it watch it.

Hour long shows:

Battlefield Detectives: WWI: Jutland
The show is pretty good; some of the commentary is a bit annoying but there is lots of WWI ship footage sprinkled throughout the show much of which I had not seen elsewhere. I have not seen the rest of the series; they are not battleship related.
Deep Sea Detectives
There are a number of these that cover other topics; in our timeline the following are captivating:
Mystery U-Boat of WWI
A sub and a cargo ship
Forgotten Sub of WWII
A sunken 1941 US sub
U-Boats in the Gulf
WWII subs of the Gulf coast
These are hosted by the diver and contain some historical footage, wreck diving and first person accounts. One of the first programs that I have seen where the dive consisted of going to the bottom and then coming right back up

Continued on page 654

Fire faster, you're almost there!



NATS Numbers and Faster Firing Guns

By Bob Hoernemann

Numbers, numbers, I love numbers. They never lie. You can make them say anything you want. What do the NATS scores say this year? Here are some interesting facts. The Axis shot scored hits on 18.6% of their shots for the week. Their best battle was Monday morning when they hit 23%. This is also the battle Dallas missed; maybe

there is a connection. In this battle they also lost by 2,720 points. It is odd that the Axis hit such a high percentage yet still lost but this may have been foreshadowing of the comeback that would take place later in the week. The Axis never hit less than 16.9% during the week with most battles averaging around 19%. The Allies averaged 17.7% for the week. Their

best battle was 21.9% on Monday morning. Both fleets had their best battle at the same time. I thought the first battle was supposed to be a slower, feeling-out battle; not this year. After that things didn't go as well. Tuesday morning percentages dropped to 19.6% but they still won by 1,000 points. The next three battles the Allies shot 15% and were beat in each battle by 7,700 -8,000 points. In their

NATS Numbers

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Friday 4,000 point victory they brought the hit percentage back up to 19.6%. This was also a strange NATS for fleet victories. The Allies handily won both campaign battles and won three of six fleet battles but still lost NATS. In '02 and '06 we saw changes in the lead during the week but nothing like this. The high damage scores had a few strange numbers also. Tom Palmer took the most aboves with 438 even though the Axis had very few stern guns. He also took the most ons, 64, and the most belows, 170 yet he did not sink once during the week. Steve Dickow was next on the aboves leader board with 382, Andy Terpstra, 348, Bob Hoernemann, 341, and Gerald Roberts, 328. Ons stacked up in the following order: Jeff Lide, 58, Ty S., 55, Chris Pearce, 54, and Dirty Dave, 54, followed by Tom. The belows were dominated by Allied captains. After Tom there was Frank Whitsal, 164, Brian Lamb, 152, Ty, 143, and Steve Reynolds, 134. You have to drop to 8th place to find the first Axis; Gerald at 107 and Dirty with 100.

Ty had the most damaged ship with 14,755 points. His three second sortie sinks allowed him to pass Tom who stood at 14,480. Brian was next on the damaged list with 13,470. He also had three second sortie sinks. Andy had five sinks, leading all captains, while Dirty, Steve D. and Brandon Smith all had four sinks. We can't forget about Randy, he also sank four times and yes, he was piloting a little class 2 cruiser. Something odd was happening there. On the other side John Bruder played all week with a 12-1-3 score. All but two aboves were taken in the Friday battle. John made it to Friday and only had to patch two holes. Steve Cox was right there with John, 8-10-8 for the week. At least Tom took the Nashville out in the cruiser battle and got it hammered, 46-4-3, sink. The Allies won campaign so it's no shock that in Monday's battle the Axis launched seven convoy ships and all but one was sunk before reaching the forward base. Only DW's Kormoran made a successful round trip. The Axis score for that campaign's convoy ships was 0. Thursday was a little better; four ships made forward runs but none made a return

trip. The two Axis convoy ships that attempted were sunk.

Some captains have been using faster firing guns this year. This is nothing new; years ago the standard was a servo and poppet valve. Next solenoids with servos and switches were used which delivered faster firing rates. Now we have electronic switches and even faster firing rates. The limiting factor is now how fast the captain can manipulate the firing buttons on their controller but does the faster gun help? At times of course it does. When you get that brief window where you feel your gun is on target and you can dump a whole magazine in seconds. But what if you're wrong? What if you think you're on target but are too short or too long and all of those precious bbs miss? I've seen many people blowing holes in water. Either they get excited and can't stop or they are looking at a bad angle. Having fast guns is nice but having a good idea of where your guns are hitting is still the key to making holes and sinking the other guy.

Logistics of War

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The logistical requirements of our game are pretty simple; launch a convoy ship at least once every twenty minutes, always have a warship on the water and score as many points as possible. The details quickly make things complicated. The Allies had these details sorted out in advance and the effort paid off. The Allies lost four convoy ships on Monday but made seven successful forward runs and three successful return runs while the Axis lost six convoy ships and only made one successful forward run and one successful return run. On Thursday the Allies only lost three convoy ships while they completed five forward runs and two return runs. The Axis lost four convoy ships and completed four forward runs and zero return runs.

Several events really stood out during Campaign this year.

Ty S. brought a submarine, the N41 which was used as an Allied convoy ship. Bob Hoernemann then proceeded to sink it the first time it went out at a seemingly impossible distance from shore.

The Axis managed to sink an LST!



The N41



Way, way out there - the N41 barely visible off the bow of Bob's Kongo

The confusion and chaos that is generated during Campaign puts into perspective the massive effort it takes to supply entire armies overseas

during wars and conflicts. Logistics is no simple matter, not even when the scale is 1/144.





LST as sunk as its going to get



Kormoran about to go under



SMS Emden performing shore bombardment



The Silver Screen

-Continued-

because the visibility was too poor.

Battle360: The Complete Series

“Re-creating some of the hardest-fought sea battles of World War II through stunning computer-generated animation, this History Channel program centers on the brave men of the legendary aircraft carrier the U.S.S. Enterprise” – Netflix

This show contains some historical footage with lots of good computer graphics and first person interviews.

Treasure Quest

“The Discovery Channel goes behind the scenes with the intrepid members of Odyssey Marine Exploration as they scour the ocean floors around the world for sunken treasure and important historical finds.” – Netflix

This is a show about a company that salvages wrecks; there are a number of dives on WWI and WWII ships and subs. I liked them, they are a kind of like a reality TV show but not too annoying. A surprising amount of naval history is mixed in with computer graphics and wreck footage. You can skip the

ones that don't look interesting but my guess is that you will end up watching them all.

There are a couple of National Geographic shows:

Search for the Battleship

Bismarck

The Lost Fleet of Guadalcanal
National Geographic: Search for PT109

I find Robert Ballard to be annoying although some of the footage is very interesting, especially the Guadalcanal one and the first person interviews are well done.

In the related indirectly category:

Dogfights

“Go on board with pilots from World War II, Vietnam and the Gulf War as they explain every maneuver and decision in painstaking detail, accompanied by riveting CGI re-enactments that immerse viewers in the battle.” – Netflix

Showdown: Air Combat

“U.S. Air Force Maj. Paul “Max” Moga (of the Air Combat Command's 1st Fighter Wing) plays host in this high-flying series that re-creates famous dogfights using authentically restored aircraft, demonstrating the prowess of military planes.” – Netflix

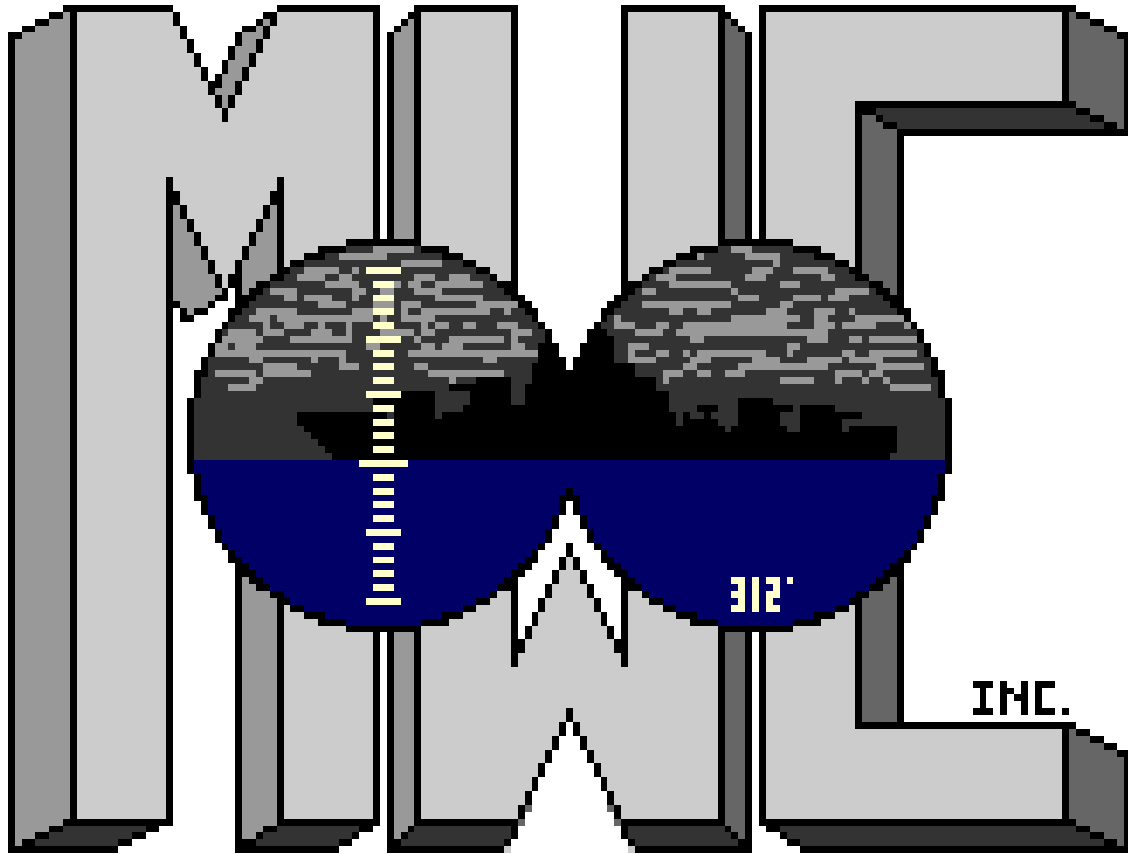
Both shows have a number of

WWII naval dogfights. They also do a side by side comparison of the two airplanes while briefly discussing the technical details of the planes. Some have interesting first person interviews. In one they put the airman into the German Me109 and comments if he knew how little they could see he would have been more aggressive.



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TASK FORCE 144

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“Aviation is fine as a sport. But as an instrument of war, it is worthless.” - General Ferdinand Foch