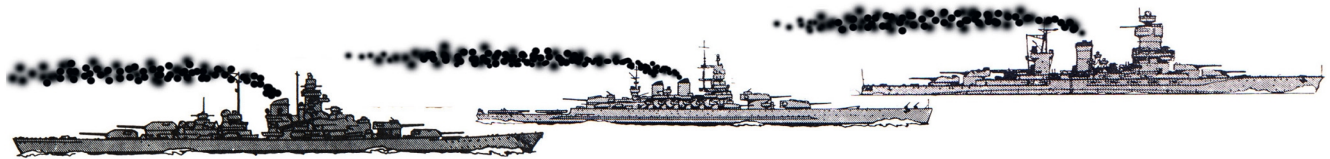


TASK FORCE 144



The Official Newsletter of Model Warship Combat, Inc.

www.mwci.org

Summer – 2009



The Scharnhorst Shield

Photo supplied by Bob Hoernemann

CALENDAR OF MWC EVENTS



July 19-24, 2009

Nats Colorado

North of Denver, CO

Contact: Randy Stiponovich
sinkazuki@ymail.com

Motel: Affordable Inns, 10300 S. I-70
Frontage Road, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033
866-940-9499. Call for rates.
Sanctioned

August 21-23, 2009

Ice Breaker

Lake Susan Park, Chanhassen, MN
Contact: Bob Hoernemann (See
BOD page) Sanctioned. Fee: \$10.
CO2 provided, Trophies!

Sept 5-7, 2009

Throw Down in MO Town

Ritter Springs Park, Springfield, MO
Contact: Kevin Kaminski
kevin@ernesttees.com Sanctioned.

2009 Tangler @

Engler

AKA OPERATION SCHARNY SHIELD

by Bob Hoernemann
and Tyler Helland



It's funny how the weatherman always gets it wrong the week before our battles. Early in the week the forecast was for 80's and sunny with little chance of rain. The day we left the forecast changed to 70's with a 50/50 chance of rain. It's not a regional if it does not rain, stupid rain. I always hope for a forecast of rain before a battle, that way it will be sunny.

Tyler stopped by my place as I was packing; I also discovered I had a leak in my stern accumulation tank. Packing stopped to fix the leak. We headed out in the morning and picked up Peter then drove down to Farmington. We had a little detour in Iowa and hit some really bad traffic in St Louis, it took two hours longer to get there than it should have. All the captains got into the hotel Friday night and went out to dinner. Saturday morning we all got out to the pond early so we could get 3 battles in during the day. It was decided to do one day of Axis versus Allies and then a day of Region 1 versus All Other Regions. The Allies would put out to sea with: USS Washington (Bob H), HMS Barham (John B), USS West Virginia (Tom P), HMS Tiger (Randy S), USS Salt Lake City (Rick W). The Axis were able to muster a fleet of: TMGBC (Peter E), DKM Scharnhorst (John S), SMS VDT (Mark R), SMS Derfflinger (Tyler H), SMS



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Derfflinger (Kevin K), DKM Lutzow (Jim K).

The first battle was the start of operation Scharny Shield. Peter and John planned to suck up all the Allied bbs while the Derfflingers and VDT sunk the Allies with side mounts. Part of the plan worked to perfection as the West Virginia was put down in the first sortie and Peter's TMGBC also hit the bottom. Jim's Lutzow had a new pump motor that was wired backwards and also sank in the first sortie. The sinkers patched and came back in for the second sortie and continued with Operation Scharny Shield. This phase of operation went much better as the West Virginia sank again, but this time with out the loss of a Scharny. Most of Tom's damage came from Mark, all weekend the two slow ships locked horns with Tom taking most of the sinks.

Scores were: Washington 23-4-13, Barham 50-1-12, We Vee 84-8-23 sink x2, Tiger 21-2-11, SLC 5-0-4 versus TMGBC 50-10-31 sink, Scharny 25-3-6, VDT 81-10-30, Derfflinger (T) 24-6-4, Derfflinger (K) 62-5-17, Lutzow 26-1-6 sink. An Allied victory 9,855-7,355.

Kevin Hovis came by to visit and we gave him The Sister of The Bike (AKA the SOB). We also had a young prospect come by the pond, Seth took out The Bike the rest of the weekend and is looking forward to

getting his own ship. We patched and started the second battle with the two cruisers added to the Allied fleet. Operation Scharny Shield was back for Phase 3. The lessons learned from Phase 1 and 2 were now applied with great success. Randy told Tyler he wanted to play sidemounts and Tyler was more than happy to play. Once again Mark tangled with Tom and sank him. The Washington and Tiger played with John's Scharny and sank it midway through the second sortie. Bob was going after Peter and found himself rolled and over and sunk with very light damage. I'm not really sure what happened but I know it was not the damage Peter handed out.

Scores were Washington 33-7-13 sink, Barham 18-1-5, We Vee 41-7-25 sink, Tiger 28-1-23, SLC 6-1-3, The Bike 12-1-3, SOB 14-0-2 versus TMGBC 62-7-22, Scharny 66-11-14 sink, VDT 22-4-4, Derfflinger (T) 20-0-7, Derfflinger (K) 28-0-4, Lutzow 26-5-6. An Axis victory 7,870-6,765.

We broke for lunch and patched before the rubber match battle #3. Since some of the captains did not have a third set of batteries they were allowed to use one set for the first sortie and another for the second without penalty. This way each battery would have 3 sorties on it. This battle ended up being 3 sorties so the batteries were stressed to the fullest.



Peter's Mighty German Battlecruiser passes grass as the Washington bears down.
Photo supplied by Bob Hoernemann

Operation Scharny Shield was at its peak. Both ships went down, Peter's with very heavy damage. Mark got the Daily Double sinking Tom twice, again. Tom totaled up 5 sinks in one day.

Scores were: Washington 59-6-31, Barham 47-4-11, We Vee 75-7-25 sink x2, Tiger 28-7-17, SLC 10-0-0, The Bike 33-9-4 versus TMGBC 98-14-51 sink, Scharny 68-4-12 sink, VDT 33-6-20, Derfflinger (T) 46-2-1, Derfflinger (K) 33-3-10, Lutzow 23-2-4 sink. An Allied victory 10,685-9,745.

After the battle we sat around and talked about casements and looked at the casement ships that

were at the battle. This discussion went on until John Bruder reminded us we needed to eat. We packed up and headed back to the hotel and out to the Warehouse BBQ and their all you can eat buffet.

Sunday was our Region 1 versus the World battle. Peter, Tyler and I always battle against each other and like to team up when we get out of town. Fleets were: Region 1 Washington, Wee Vee, SLC, TMGBC, Derfflinger (T) & Derfflinger (K) versus The World Lutzow, Barham, Tiger, Scharny, VDT and The Bike.

Operation Scharny Shield was now split in two. Tyler and I decided

to take down their shield first. We chased John's Scharny around the pond and put her down with some heavy damage. Then we started after the other John but had a hard time playing with his Barham. Man those little QE's are hard to sink, maybe I should get one. In between chasing the John's we stopped by the "Mark and Tom" show to toss a few shots at Mark.

In the second sortie we started to play with the Barham again but could not get a lot of quality shots into him. So we went back to the Mark and Tom show. This time things were going better for Tom. Mark was chasing his haymaker and taking



Tangler Carnage: Having reduced one member of the Scharny Shield to a cadaverous watchman, the Washington proceeds to circumvent the Derfflinger Duo's plans for revenge.

Photo supplied by Bob Hoernemann

some holes for his trouble. Tom sank again but Mark was in pretty bad shape. Seems TMGBC is not only a shield but always has some bite. Peter hit Mark's port bow with a few triple salvos and made two nasty holes in his bow. A little prop washing from the Washington and it was all over. Mark was able to pour out the water and float again but could not run a lot or take any prop wash without sinking. Region 1 Rules! was heard around the pond at the end of the battle.

Scores were Washington 62-6-10, Wee Vee 47-10-17 sink, SLC 2-0-0, TMGBC 49-3-18, Derfflinger(T) 58-3-2 & Derfflinger(K) 35-3-1 versus Lutzow 18-2-3, Barham 43-5-14, Tiger 13-9-10, Scharny 59-9-36 sink, VDT 48-8-25 sink The Bike 10-1-0. A Region 1 victory 9,460-6,555.

The first battle went very quickly and we started getting ready for the second battle. Several spectators stopped by and we handed out some flyers hoping to find a new prospect for Kevin to turn into a battler. The Region 1 fleet selected Randy as the next target, but he was an elusive target. We spent most of the battle chasing him around and taking more shots than we gave. He'd run far enough from shore where we'd give up and find someone else to play with until he came back. At one pass the Washington hit a casement and blew it up into the air, a very pretty shot of superstructure removal. The Mark and Tom show was back for another run that had both of the ships sinking. The VDT was again finished off with some well placed prop wash. Late in the second sortie we were surprised to see the Tiger settling and sink. She was not shot up that bad but had a couple quality holes at and below the waterline.

Scores were: Washington 47-5-13, Wee Vee 56-7-11 sink, SLC 0-0-0, TMGBC 35-6-8, Derfflinger(T) 15-0-2, Derfflinger(K) 71-15-13 versus Lutzow 31-0-1, Barham 25-2-12, Tiger 21-9-12 sink, Scharny 39-



West Virginia and the VDT battle to the death. VDT stayed on top.



Photos supplied by Bob Hoernemann

5-13, VDT 56-15-29 sink The Bike 1-0-2. Another Region 1 victory 7,555 to 6415.

The third battle would match up the same fleets, doing a lot of the same battling. No one sank in the first sortie but there were a couple getting close. Mark's VDT took a beating at the end of sortie one but made it off 5. Early in the second sortie Tyler and I were chasing the Scharny and he collided head on with the Tiger. You could try a hundred times and not get the two ships to slam into each other bow to bow. The hit was so hard it knocked Randy's pump out of commission and he sank. Tyler also burned out a pump motor and sank. This left Kevin and I to finish off the Scharny,

which we did towards the end of the sortie. The VDT was still holding on and had the last of the Region 1 sidemounts dumped into her to drive the little ship under one more time.

Scores were Washington 53-10-16, Wee Vee 36-4-6, SLC 9-1-2, TMGBC 11-3-9, Derfflinger(T) 18-0-2 sink and Derfflinger(K) 14-1-0 versus The World Lutzow 39-3-5, Barham 26-1-9, Tiger 16-2-0, Scharny 41-14-6 sink, VDT 60-17-54 sink, The Bike 7-0-1.

We packed up and headed back to the hotel and out to the Chinese Buffet for dinner. John told us all that he knows nothing about things that he can't tell us about. We learned there are no dead aliens at Area 51, just live ones that clean the

place at night. After dinner several captains came by the room to watch the battling video we had taken during the weekend. Turns out Seth's mom is pretty good with a video camera.

Randy and John B. came out to the pond Monday morning to watch the first sortie and say goodbye before their long trip home. John S changed his ship to the brand new Westfalen. The little pig boat stole the trips from the Scharny and a gear from Bob's box to get on the water, after a little delay to start the battle. With the two missing ships we split up the fleets so Mark and Tom could shoot at each other and Tyler and I could sink Kevin. We had several good runs with our guns early in the battle. Kevin lost control of his rudder and became harder to hit on his out of control five. We pumped a few more bbs into him and had him

close to sunk near the end of the sortie but he made it to fight another day. Kevin soldered a new connector on a spare servo and made it back in for the second sortie. Just as we headed down to the pond a police car pulled into the parking lot. We gave the officer some safety glasses and he watched the battle. All of us worried he was sent out from some complaint or would shut us down. Turns out he was just driving by and wanted to see what was going on. He was interested in the ships and took a flyer home. Maybe we've hooked another one.

Tyler and I started the pre-battle maneuvering waiting for Kevin to call battle. When he did the shots started flying. He soon found the bottom of the pond. Jim rammed his low and pointy Lutzow stern into TMGBC and got stuck in the balsa as Peter tried to bring the sinking BC

into shore. I started to chase after Tom with the last of my sidemounts. I got target lock and vapor lock at the same time and sank as I was shooting the Wee Vee. The battle wound down and we pulled the ships out of the water. The gear was packed up, the last good-byes were said and that was the end of the Operation Scharny Shield, a success measured by any means.

Scores were: Washington 34-2-14 sink, SLC 6-1-1, Derfflinger(T) 39-3-11, Westfalen 20-5-25, Lutzow 17-1-15 versus Derfflinger(K) 63-12-44 sink, TMGBC 54-5-23, VDT 20-3-6, The Bike 11-3-2, Wee Vee 59-5-5.

Best of Class awards went to: Class 6 Bob H., Class 5 John B., Class 4 Kevin K., Class 3 Rick W. Most Feared went to Mark R and Best of Scale went to Kevin K.



A basic model warship combat equation: Major damage = major smiles.

Photo supplied by Bob Hoernemann

THE POOR MAN'S HOMEPORT – The Intex Easy Set 12' x 30" Inflatable Pool

by John Stangel

Since getting into the hobby, I have always been frustrated by my inability to truly test my boats on the water without leaving my house. Lacking a swimming pool, private pond, or king-sized bathtub, my only option has been to spend hours packing up all my stuff and schlepping it across town to a friend's swimming pool to test it for as long as my batteries and sanity held out. Since building my own pond was out of the question, I began to investigate small inflatable pools that I could set up and tear down over the course of a weekend. I already had a small inflatable pool that was just long enough for my Scharny but it was too narrow to turn the boat or even safely test fire the guns. Snooping around on the Internet, I came across the Intex 12' inflatable pool that I thought just might do the trick.

The pool was purchased for a very affordable \$89.00 at the local Academy Sports and Outdoors. The pool comes as a single piece and requires no braces, panels or supports whatsoever. The secret of the pool is its novel design. Rather than inflating the whole thing, all you do is inflate a big ring at the top, which pulls up the sides of the pool as you add water. This means you can make the pool as shallow or as deep as you want, and you will never throw your back out trying to launch and retrieve your boat, as the water level will always be proportional to the height of the tube.

Installing the pool was a snap. Simply lay out the pool, flare out the inflatable ring and side walls, and start adding air. You do need to be somewhat careful in where you sit

the pool, because if the ground is not level it could cause the pool to list or spill. Once you have the inflatable ring full, all you do is add water. As the pool fills, the ring will begin to float on the water and will begin to pull up the sides of the pool. When you get started with the water, you will want to make sure to smooth out the bottom of the pool as any creases will pull it out of shape and will snag rudders and props if you are not careful. One thing to watch out for is that the valve to fill it with air is a non-standard size and is way too big for a tire pump. They obviously want you to buy their special hand pump to inflate the ring. I was able to use an airbrush pump to inflate the ring most of the way, and then simply rammed my thumb into the rubber valve along with the hose to form an airtight seal to inflate it



The box.

Photo by John Stangel

the rest of the way.

Tearing it down was just as easy. Simply pull the drain plug and go take a nap. Be warned that this pool holds a lot of water and will make quite a lake when you drain it. The drain plug does come with a garden hose adapter that can allow you to attach a hose and drain it into a ditch or storm drain if necessary. Once the pool is drained of water, simply deflate the inflatable ring and roll 'er



The Westfalen had plenty of room to play.

Photo by John Stangel

up. Once completely drained and deflated, I was able to roll up the pool into a bundle about the size of one of those collapsible canopies with very little effort.

Once the pool was filled I couldn't wait to get my boats on the water. The interior diameter of the pool was 10'2" which gave me a lot of water to work with. My Westfalen fit in the pool without any problems. I was able to turn complete 360's in the pool and was able to really play around with the controls and rudders to give her a workout. The Scharny unfortunately was still too big to do a complete 360, but could still turn and maneuver in the space available. As my Scharny turns like a brick, it is probably not a good indicator of how other ships would perform in the pool.

The really neat aspect of the pool is how well suited it is for test firing guns. Due to the copious amount of space to play with, you can discharge your guns and actually track the flight of the BBs underwater. As only the upper lip of the pool is inflated, you have no risk of puncturing a sidewall and letting all the air out. The worst that could happen to you is that you could put a pin-hole in the pool side. The upper inflatable ring however did not strike me as being overly sturdy, so I would not recommend firing any gun that could hit the upper tube, as the results could be disastrous.

If you actually wanted to swim in the pool, it comes complete with a filter and pump. The pump outlet is on the side of the pool, so if you shoot your guns, you do not have to worry about damaging the pump

with your BBs. It also comes with some chemicals to keep it clean if you really want to go crazy.

Overall I was fairly pleased with the pool. It worked great for a small ship like my Westfalen, but was somewhat less useful for a really big ship like the Scharny. The price at \$89 was reasonable for what you got, and there is even a larger size (15') that retailed for \$199 if you really wanted to go all out. The pool assembled and tore down very easily, and was well suited for weekend use, though it did take like 3 hours to fill it with water from the hose (it holds nearly 1500 gallons when full...). More information about the pool can be found at www.intexcorp.com/easyset.htm. Overall a good buy.



There was no chafing on the lengthier Scharnhorst, at least while it moved in one direction.

Photo by John Stangel

PPB OGR:

Port Polar Bear Old Curmudgeon Report

June 7, 2009

by Lars



It isn't like the old days here at Port Polar Bear. Back 8-10 years ago I was pretty hot stuff. If Lars and sons didn't show the battling numbers for the day were halved. Ron, Curly and Steve Smith would have to shoot at each other in a one against one against one battle.

These days when half the PPB gang misses a battle, there are still 8-10 ships on the water and colored duct tape flags are a requirement to keep the sides straight. As for Lars, every time I show up for battle these days I have to learn several new names, faces, and ships. For an old guy used to battling with the same fellows year after year, this is quite a shock, and for this I can only blame Bob. After the shock wears off each battle, usually somewhere during setup and the call to launch, I usually have a few moments where I 'drift off' back to the simplicity of the old days when I was a big fish. Then I think about how Bob loads up half of his garage into his minivan and carts it out to the lake to support each of our battles, and it comes to me that not being a big fish may not be so bad after all.

I managed to make it to the pond before the first sortie. Usually I don't make it, arriving while folks are just wrapping up the initial sortie. But today I suspect things were delayed by some additional pond prep tasks. We were fighting at Bob's Lake Susan site, and when I arrived Bob was wearing waders and walking through the water with a big

green 24" plastic rake. At first I was guessing that he was clearing moss, but later I saw three newly mown paths to the pond, and a gas trimmer plastered with fresh cut organic debris.

There's an asphalt path down to the area that we battle. In the old days we all set up beyond it, but lately folks have started setting up on the asphalt itself, especially on days that are moisture-filled or moisture-threatening. It had rained most of the day before and had been drizzling during the morning, so with 8 battlers there before me, the asphalt was fully populated. I took my wheeled cart (remember how we used to carry all our gear down to the lake before we discovered the advantages of that wonderful device, the wheel?) with my gear into the grass and plunked down in some prime green grass right next to the battle area. Maybe I'm just old school, or maybe I'm becoming anti-social, but I think the air was much fresher where I was planted, as opposed to that chemically-tainted asphalt. Being on the end of the line I could hear the other battlers chattering about this and that, but I

didn't have to partake and think of clever things to say.

Brandon and his brother Chandler were testing out their I-boat and no one else seemed ready so I took the time to put my Tiger in the water. Back in April she'd run with new props, and had run very slow. For some stupid reason I hadn't changed the gears back in April, but late the night before I'd taken a guess and put some larger ones on. She moved much better on the water now, and had acceptable starting and stopping acceleration.

Back on the bench, as we neared the time for the first sortie, Steve Dickow came around and stuck some gray duct tape on Tiger's third stack. "You're on the flag fleet," he said.

"That gray stuff is going to be hard to see," I said.

"Sorry, left my yellow tape at home," said Steve. After I launched, I drove Tiger around looking for other flagged ships. Tiger wasn't the only ship with a tough to spot flag. Andy T's new NC didn't have superstructure other than the three gun turrets, and the rear turret sported a large gray duct tape dimple. Other flagged ships were



Andy's new NC, super structure is still on order.

Photo supplied by Bob H.

Bob's NC, Brandon's I-boat (driven by his brother Chandler, they alternated sorties), the Bike (driven by a friend by the name of Andrew), and the Wichita (battled by the newly employed Kim from central Wisconsin). Kim's wife was there and ran the camera.

For the non-flagged fleet there was Peter's Mighty German Battlecruiser, Tyler's Derfflinger, Steve's Bismarck, Hudson's French heavy cruiser Tourville, and Tyler's friend Justin drove the SOB, which stands for "Sister of (the) Bike". "It's as close to Allied versus Axis as we can make it," said Bob to one of the Axis captains.

Bob was still in the waders, and helped launch most of the ships, and then had to go back to the bench to get his own NC. As we waited for the call to battle, Ron came down the path from the parking lot. He said he wasn't remotely close to being ready to toss the ship on the water. That used to be old school, showing up ready to go, although if one showed up minus CO2 that was acceptable if you didn't have a fill tank at home. Well, I guess I should put my own name at the head of the hypocrite list because I had elected to perform my initial fill of bbs and CO2 while at the lake myself.

Bob called out "Battle" and with muffled cheers ships accelerated and began maneuvering, the sharp crack of the first shots came quickly.

I spent around half of this sortie exchanging shots with the Bismarck. At one point Steve asked if the Tiger was a 24 second ship, as he wanted to compare speeds, presumably while he ran away from the Tiger. He'd also been making modifications to his propulsion system. "I'm 24 seconds, but I haven't timed my ship after changing props," I said. Bismarck was a second or two faster than Tiger, but as he wasn't hydroplaning I didn't complain. However, I wasn't about to chase his double sterns for an extended period either, so I peeled off to take on other



Andy's NC does a rooster tail-spin.

Photo supplied by Bob H.

targets whenever Steve hit the throttle to run away.

At one point I found the Tourville behind the Tiger's stern gun, and started firing. Hudson howled in anguish. "Hey, you're firing on me!"

I told him I was a member of the Flag Fleet, and he protested that it was very difficult to see the flag on the Tiger's stack. I had to agree, and let him escape out to open water.

I didn't see much of the action from the two flagged NC's, and Tyler's Derfflinger and Peter's TMGBC, they seemed to be elsewhere from wherever I took the Tiger. I do remember that Brandon's I-boat seemed to be zipping everywhere, pumping a healthy stream but always making firing passes on some enemy ship.

Between sorties I found an old prop shaft in my toolkit, and duct-taped it to the third stack on the Tiger, and mounted a duct tape flag up high. "Hudson should be able to see that," I told Kim.

"Too bad it's not scale," said Kim.

"Actually the real Tiger had a mast there," I said. "It just keeps getting knocked off and I got tired of gluing it back on."

As I went to get CO2, I passed Andy and Bob working on Andy's NC's rudder system. He was having difficulty turning as the rudder was locking up in extreme turns. Someone gave him some lubricant

for the plastic gears, and there was lots of servo discussion.

For the second sortie, Ron's NC was added to the no-Flag fleet. Tyler's pump was running fairly steady, which Bob loudly pointed out to the rest of the Flag fleet. When battle was called I noticed the I-boat took after the Derfflinger. I spent some time tangling with the Bismarck and Peter's Scharnhorst.

As I spun the Tiger out of a turn I found the ship's bow sidemount lined up with the Derfflinger. I turned the ship so the bow pushed against the Derfflinger's bow and tried to keep the ships maintaining a V shape. My thinking was that my bow gun was lined up on the Derfflinger while the Derfflinger's sidemount, which had a more severe down angle, was hopefully going under the Tiger's hull. Tyler seemed to think differently, and kept firing his guns as well. Other folks started yelling for me to pull away, even Ron, who was on the other fleet. I guess he also thinks I'm going senile. After about thirty seconds of solid carnage, I backed the Tiger off, thinking that my bow gun was probably empty. The Tiger settled a bit as she coasted to a stop, and took on a touch of a list to starboard. Tyler started yelling for the camera to get on the Tiger. She went down soon afterwards. Bob, still in the waders, went out and did the ship recovery.

After I got back from the bench, I found Steve asking Ron if his NC 'did 24 seconds.'. I think Ron told him he hadn't been timed since last Nats. Steve's desire for a side by side speed test during battle went unanswered.

When Ron's NC went on five, he asked me to time him. Instead I just pulled my timer off my radio and handed it to him. "Give it back before you go home," I said. I also have a timer on my watch, which is what I usually use for combat. For some reason I'd borrowed the timer off one of my extra radios, I guess karma had intervened in Ron's favor.

Towards the end of the battle, Tyler's Derfflinger finally began to show some hurt. The pesky I-boat continued its pursuit. The Derfflinger kept a steady keel, coming down to the gunwales and seeming to stay there forever, before finally succumbing and sinking.

Other sinks were Bob's NC. Usually it seems like Bob is everywhere, but for the day's battling it seemed like I only noticed his ship when it was running out of control while he was in the water recovering ships. I had no idea who sank him or how he went down.

For the non-flagged fleet, in addition to Tyler, Peter's Scharnhorst went down, I'm not sure why other than it picked up a few holes, and then Hudson's cruiser sank too.

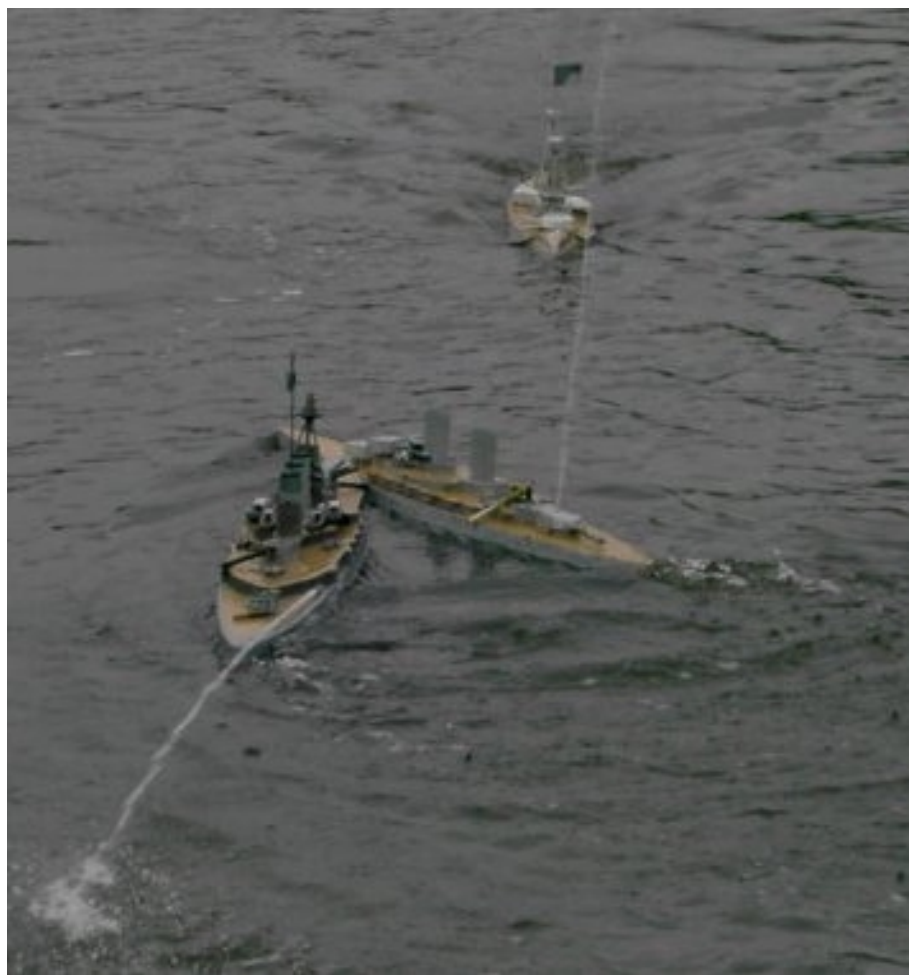
Flag Fleet damage: 7540

Bob's NC	sink	30-9-24	2925
Andy's NC		21-0-7	560
Lars' Tiger	sink	29-11-38	3265
Brandon's Iboat		39-0-9	840
Andrew's Bike		3-0-1	80
Kim's Wichita		2-0-0	20

No Flag Fleet damage: 5290

Peter's TMGBC	sink	28-3-21	2405
Tyler's Derf.	sink	29-5-21	2265
Hudson's Tourville	sink	15-1-2	875
Justin's SOB		15-1-0	175
Steve's Bismarck		84-2-4	1090
Ron's NC		38-0-7	730

As I counted the Tiger's damage, I expected to find a cluster or two



Tiger and Derfflinger in the 'Killer Vee' clinch. Note the positions of the sidemounts. Below is Tiger sinking. Photos supplied by Bob. H.



which I could point at and say, "That's Tyler's handiwork." At first my impression was, "It really wasn't that bad," as there were no large holes and no major drip panels. There was no trademark Tyler cluster, but instead the damage was distributed on both sides of the ship which made it look less than it actually was. When the total belows came up to 38 I almost whistled, but I was too tired at that point. I decided that I should ignore the bow sidemount in the second battle as it seemed to be the gun that got me into trouble in the first. I also decided that it seemed like my haymaker was on the wrong side, as it always seemed that I had good haymaker shots on the side opposite of where the haymaker pointed. Maybe I don't remember the good haymaker shots I did have, and am overcome by the irritation of the missed ones. Perhaps I need to make note of this through one more battle before I go to the effort to change things.

The weather was still holding, it was still damp and cloudy, but no rain, so we took a leisurely break period as we patched. I recall Brandon pulling out pliers and doing some mechanical work on his I-boat while Chandler looked on. Andy was fiddling with stuff on his NC again, I didn't ask if his rudder was behaving. I finished patching the Tiger and gassed and rearmed her, then sat back and relaxed and let my thoughts wander where they will. I noted that when folks dropped the end of the fill station adapter, it would swing down and hit the CO2 tank, and the resulting clang sounded like a school bell. The fact that this amused me made me question my own state of mind.

For the next sortie, Peter donned the waders and helped folks launch ships. I've never donned the waders myself, but Ron has. "You're always surprised by where you get wet when you wear waders," he said. "Sometimes it's a pinhole leak, sometimes you go too deep and get

an inflow, sometimes it's spots that get sweaty, especially your joints."

I didn't use the launch assistance, I've been doing a pre-launch test sequence for years, which was a necessity when I was fighting with the boys and caring for three ships. First I fire each gun a few times to adjust the tweak, and to ensure that a hose isn't pinched. Sometimes on the second or later sortie of the day I figure the tweak will be okay, an invariably I end up with a pinched hose and end up fighting with one less gun than I should. Next I test the props, forward and reverse, then the rudders, then the pump. Then it's time to launch. Bending over and launching is sometimes difficult as the inclination is to attempt to do it without getting the feet wet. If the shoes are old and grungy I may take it easy and step into the water with one foot, which always makes launching easier. I like getting close to the water and watching the ship bob a bit as it slides into the water. Many times there is an insane longing to jump on board the ship and stow away on board as it heads off into harm's way.

The launch sequence seems to be ingrained now, and anything that interrupts that sequence is looked upon with annoyance, though I try to hide this from others. On this day it meant getting muddy knees and one shoe eventually got wet, but as I wasn't wet up to the armpits I didn't mind at all.

For the second battle, when Bob gave the call to battle, Tyler followed with the call, "Everybody get Andy!" The Derfflinger lit off after Andy's NC, and the NC was soon running. The ship had a bit of a rooster tail when it raced forward, and several folks commented on it. "Cool!" was the usual response.

Out in the deeper water Ron's NC hung out with the cruisers. Ron's NC would come charging in at intervals, backing down with his triple stern guns pointed at some

unsuspecting ship, and then retreat after the victim limped off.

Uncharacteristically the Bismarck was in the narrows along with Peter's Scharnhorst. At one point the Scharnhorst, which was running from another ship, probably the I-boat, passed behind the Tiger's stern gun and I had the satisfaction of hearing eight to ten shots hit home. "Whoa, that wasn't very bright," groaned Peter.

The Tourville began to show some strain, racing around with metallic squeal from the drive motors. This mostly drew comments like "Whoa, that doesn't sound good," while fortunately for the young battler, bbs didn't follow very often.

Well, no ship was savaged to the point of sinking in the first sortie, all coming off the water safely. A quick check of Tiger's puncture marks showed a very low tally.

The interval between sorties took an extended time as the Nats participants planned their Nats arrangements. I could see a bit of irritation on the faces of some of the non-Natflies, especially as their ships were ready to hit the water but the discussion seemed to have no end.

I did get a chance to chat some with Brandon, who told me that the I-boat was truly a dual effort. "I've got no money but lots of time, so I work on the boat. Chandler's got the money but no time so he's the financier of this effort. The ship wouldn't be here without him." Brandon obviously knew the ship best, and happily worked on improving the ship's systems, it seemed to me he had pliers and screwdrivers out between every sortie. I didn't chat with his brother, who seemed to be the quieter of the two, but I saw no difference in the ship's actions while on the water. She always seemed to be on the attack.

At last the discussion broke up and ships began launching. I'd been launched only a few seconds when

Hudson began asking for help. His Tourville was out in deeper water and not responding to the radio. It got lower and lower, and then sank by the stern. We called for Bob, who was back in the waders, and he headed out to search for the stricken ship.

As he splashed out towards the open water, I nearly had him come save the sinking Tiger, which was also very low in the water. Hudson's drama had almost caused another pre-battle sink, but I recalled the low damage tally on the ship and waited for the pump, which had been hastily turned on, to counter-act the low-level water influx.

We'd been asking Hudson about the state of his pump, and he'd insisted that it had been on. After Bob finally located the French heavy cruiser, he lifted it up and said, "Your pump isn't running." Hudson fiddled with the controls, and a few seconds later a pump stream appeared. Bob tipped the ship to help remove some of the excess water, then gently placed it back in the water and gave it a little shove. The cruiser remained afloat, and as soon as Bob returned to shore and found his radio, battle was called.

It wasn't long into the sortie that I started to hear a different whine from the Tiger's drive motors. Soon others started to hear it too. "Man, someone's got a motor that's being tortured," said Peter.

Elsewhere, the pursuit of Andy's NC continued. I wish I could say more about it, but Andy kept Tyler out of everyone else's hair.

As for the Flag Fleet's pest, Bob, I'm not sure but I had the impression that Bob spent some time putting triple sterns into Steve's Bismarck. At one point I recall the Bismarck was hiding in the narrows, pumping hard, and Bob called for the Tiger to "go get Steve!" I started the Tiger in the Bismarck's direction but aborted the attempt as by that time the Tiger's whining motors were barely moving the ship in a forward type

motion. Actually I think she got her forward motion almost solely from the dribble of the pump stream at that point.

It didn't matter. Despite not having any active pursuit, the Bismarck slowly settled on an even keel until the water level came up to her gunwales. She hung there for several moments before suddenly settling.

Peter's Mighty German Battlecruiser had been hanging around in the narrows too, and started looking sickly. Peter brought his ship in close, hiding under the weeds on the shore, but it didn't help, and it wasn't long before the Scharnhorst rolled over and went down.

As Bob went in the water to do ship recovery, Peter told Bob, "You might as well bring in the Tiger too." I was so shocked that an opponent would remove a defenseless target from the water that I didn't point out that I hadn't called five yet. I didn't feel guilty at the time, but I do now, especially when I see that the Flag Fleet pulled out a narrow 300 point victory. Instead, I took my Tiger quietly and walked it to the bench. I'm sure the combat gods will punish me for this indiscretion at our next battle.

Off somewhere, Tyler and crew (would that be Ron and the cruisers?) put down Andy's NC. Later on the bench Andy was asking if 32 belows was an acceptable score for allowing an NC to sink. "I've survived with more belows, but 32 is okay for a new NC," said Bob.

Flag Fleet damage: 6335

Bob's NC	32-8-5	770
Andy's NC	sink 35-12-32	3450
Lars' Tiger	8-2-10	630
Brandon's I-boat	28-0-1	330
Andrew's Bike	17-1-8	595
Kim's Wichita	21-4-5	560

No Flag Fleet damage: 6650

Peter's TMGBC	sink 57-15-21	2995
Tyler's Derf.	24-3-6	615
Hudson's Tourville	8-2-8	530
Justin's SOB	13-4-1	880

Steve's Bismarck	sink 74-4-3	2190
Ron's NC	44-0-4	640

After the battle, I can remember Kim saying that Ron had taught him a few lessons, the Wichita should be more careful tangling with battleships with triple sterns.

There weren't any remaining grudges to satisfy, so we all started packing up to head home for the day. Some folks had a bit of a drive, Steve had a two hour drive back to Wisconsin, Tyler and Hudson had three hours to get back to Duluth, and Kim had more than four hours to get back to central Wisconsin.

I thought Ron had already left when suddenly he was tapping on my elbow. "Here," he said, and gave me back the borrowed timer. "That was a good time," he added, "I hope someone writes it up for you," he said, glancing in Tyler's and Bob's direction.

"Well, I was thinking of writing it up myself," I told him.

"Write about me," he said. "No one ever writes about me."

"If I'd known that," I said, "I should have interviewed you. So, has anyone come after you on the water, seeking revenge for one or more of your presidential rulings?"

He paused for a moment as he considered the question seriously, I watched as one eyebrow went up, then slowly sank as the other one slowly rose in response. Then his face broke into a big grin and he started to laugh. "Yeah, right," he said.

Just for kicks, here's the non-curmudgeon report from Bob, minus the scores:

6-7-09 Why would we ever schedule a battle on a sunny and warm day? Here we are in the middle of a drought, we only had 1/2" inch of rain in May and our first battle in June is on the weekend it rains. At least we picked Sunday, just cold and cloudy, no rain. Kim and Brandon were already at the pond setting up when I arrived. Tyler

and Hudson had made one trip to the pond with their gear and helped me take a load down. Tyler had called my cell asking me to bring some batteries and a barrel nut. But I don't have my cell on during the weekend so I did not get the message. I headed back home to collect some parts. I also grabbed a rack and weed eater so I could take care of the weeds in the pond and on the shore. When I got back to the pond I found most of the other guys set up. Then found out we needed spare safety glasses. Brandon and Chandler were ready and volunteered to go back to my place and bring more glasses. I spent some time killing grass while everyone else got their ships ready. After a lot of playing around with Hudson's guns we were ready to hit the water. Andy's NC was hitting the water for the first time. The rudder gears were not meshing well and he had a hard time getting the ship to run straight. Justin and Andrew were friends of Tyler's he is trying to hook into the battling hobby. Just as battle was called my ship slowed down, I thought I was mossed up but found one of my motors had died. I went on five out of control and thought for sure Tyler would come over and sink me. He stopped by a couple times but was having motor issues of his own. We felt like we were battling in slow motion. The first sortie ended and we went back to the bench to replace motors. Tyler was not sure if it was batteries or the motors so he left his old set in. I changed mine out and was ready to go again. Tyler and I spent some time working with Hudson's guns to get them working again. With all the messing around that happened before the battle the two mag hoses got crossed so neither gun was working right. Back out for the second sortie. Just as battle started I turned on my pump and it did not come on. I toggled a couple times and pulled into shore. One more burned out motor. I grabbed Andy's pump from the Baltimore,

replaced and got back on the water just as Peter was pulling out the Tiger. While I was gone Tyler got his haymaker into Lars and that was enough to send him to the bottom. Kim chased Hudson around and his cruiser went down. It might have also been a pump failure, before the next battle we replaced his pump with my spare. Chandler/Brandon (I'm not sure who drove in what sortie) was bouncing around between battleships putting sidemounts into them. Between their work and a few more from Andy and I both Tyler and TMGBC went down.

We counted and patched to get ready for the second battle. Someone ran to Taco Bell to get some lunch, thanks! Andy, Ron, Peter, Steve, Tyler and I made plans for our trip to NATS. Lars was included in the plans just in case he can make it. He already tabbed Andy on covering a day for TF144. We got ready to hit the water with the same fleets. Tyler was determined to sink Andy's new NC. Tiger came after the Bismarck with his sidemounts then the Washington came by and emptied his stern guns in the big ship. Both ships kept after the big German battleship. Washington went for a sidemount shot on the Derfflinger and ate a bunch of trips from TMGBC. But Washington paid him back with all of A turret. TMGBC parked it next to the shore for the rest of the sortie. I-Boat kept chasing after the Derfflinger helping keep him off of the NC. Andy pulled up to TMGBC and dumped the rest of his B turret into him. Peter called 5 and sank. Kind of like being back in his DD. Tyler finally got enough bbs into the NC and finished him off with a little prop wash. After I got Peter's ship out and Andy's I could not find the Washington. I feared she may have backed up and sank. But she just drifted down the shore. The Tourville had lost his rudder and was pushed in by the Derfflinger and I-boat. The Bike sank and soon after

the Bismarck was over come by the aboves Washington put in her earlier.

We called it a day and packed up all of our stuff to haul back up the hill. Tyler had brought down a picnic table and had to bring it back up. Those things are heavy.



PPB SCR:

Port Polar Bear Senile Curmudgeon Report June 28, 2009

by Lars



First off, I was right about the combat gods. More on this later

if I don't forget or run out of room.

The setting for this rip-roaring tale is Lake Susan Park, in Chanhassen. Bob H. was once again our host. Did I mention that I miss going up to Ron's pond and shop? Just imagine the slugfest we'd have there with 10+ ships on the water.

The day was bright and sunny, with no hint of moisture in the air, the humidity was very comfortable. It was far from perfect however, as it was very breezy, with strong gusts coming in at intervals. The temperature was warm. There were no waders at the pond on this day, but with the warm sun and breezy conditions, the wet clothes obtained during ship recovery dried very quickly. I was reminded of the Nats battling in Amarillo Texas in 1988, the only difference being that the temperatures were in the high 80s, not the low 100s.

As I rolled the ship gear down to lakeside, I found the assembled group launching in preparation for battle. Bob asked if they should wait for me, I told them to launch and said I'd join them when I was ready. I

wasn't sure how long I'd be, I'd gotten a late start (11:30pm) in the ship shop the night before, and had only had time to patch holes from the June 7 battle (always gotta look good, you know), and replace the dead squirrel drive motors, finishing at 2:00 am. The guns hadn't been filed or tested.

While I worked, others were rushing here and there with last minute tasks that delayed the start of battle. At one point as I went to fill the C02, I yelled at Bob, "This breeze is doing nothing for my hair."

"You're too late, Ryan's already complained about the wind ruining his hair," he said. Then he pointed at a black haired pony-tailed figure on the shoreline. "You did notice that our lost 2007 Rookie of the Year has reappeared?" he said. I had spotted a familiar looking VDT on the water as I had rolled in. It had changed, however. Instead of the Moo Cow paint scheme, it now looked like a misplaced Chicago Bear outcast. The below waterline was all black, the above water line was all white, and the superstructure was a mix of white and black, accented with broad burnt orange stripes on the smokestacks and gun turrets.

I had no problems with the guns, they all fired well as I quickly tweaked each of them. With the launch delays caused by others, Tiger joined the battle about thirty seconds after it started. If these guys were old school, the sortie would've been half over, but then again hypocrite that I am, if I was playing old school too, then it wouldn't have mattered.

The gusty winds were blowing parallel to our shoreline, left to right, effectively blowing stationary ships into the narrows on our right. The gusts were strong enough to make most ships list 10-15 degrees when the ship was broadside to the wind. The waves were choppy and making acceleration difficult at times as sometimes it took half a second before the props 'dug in' and made the ship take off.



The MooCow sports her salt and peppered look.

Photo supplied by Bob H.

I don't remember much about the first sortie, it took a bit just to figure out what the teams were. Somehow we'd ended up with the 6 unit battleships (two NCs and the Bismarck), plus the VDT, against most of the rest. I think a cruiser or two was also on the other side. These guys sported Yellow flags. I don't know how Andy's NC always gets on the flag fleet, since he doesn't have any superstructure to fly it from. On the non-flag fleet it was the battlecruisers Tiger, I-boat, Derfflinger, TMGBC, and a couple cruisers.

Not long into the sortie I gave up a damaging pass to the VDT. It was in the narrows, and VDT's sidemount went to town on the Tiger's starboard side for a few seconds. I took the Tiger out of the narrows looking for lengthier game. Several minutes later the Tiger got caught in a strong gust, after which she took on a sickly low in the water look. I turned the ship towards the far shore and let her coast as close as she could get, moving only on the push from her pump stream. She sank about six feet from shore.

I retrieved the ship from the far shore, which wasn't easy as it is filled with brush. While I was struggling to regain the bank, I heard a groan and a cheer, Peter's TMGBC had gone down.

On the walk back I could hear motors running all the way, which I assumed was the pump motor. When

I put her on the work bench I could see one prop turning slowly while the other was stopped. I pulled the power and the motor whine stopped. Popping the lid and pulling off the plastic covers of the Traxxas motor mounts, one motor had lost the metal drive gear. The other motor still had the gear attached, but a small thin wisp of smoke was coming from the interior. "Crap," was my initial thought, and it fit the situation so well I replayed it several more times as I shook my head in disbelief. Somewhere the combat gods were laughing, order had been restored for the sin I had committed in the early June battle.

"How can a brand new motor go bad in its first sortie," I moaned to Bob.

"I don't know," he said. "Got a spare?"

"I finished replacing both of these last night at 2 am." I said. "Didn't think I needed a spare when both of these ones were new. Guess I can compensate a bit by gearing up the remaining motor to run as fast it can."

"As long as you don't burn out that one too," said Tyler, who'd stopped to check on his teammate.

Bob called for the sinkers to patch belows and rejoin. I counted the Tiger's belows, the count was a lowly thirteen, and about eleven were in a small area, so it had to be the stinger from the MooCow. I was

annoyed with the sink with low damage.

Sortie two saw the VDT get pummeled and sunk, I thought I heard that Peter got several triples into Ryan's boat. Afterwards, a photo of the MooCow shows how thoroughly she was peppered. I didn't think the VDT's had enough surface area above the waterline for 57 hits.

The VDT and the Bismarck were the only sink casualties for the Yellow fleet. I don't know who sank the Bismarck. Three plain battlecruisers found the mud. Peter's TMGBC went down, I'm not sure if playing with Ryan was the cause, but I suspect so. Brandon and Chandler's I-boat got overwhelmed and was put down. Tiger, running on one supped-up prop, maneuvered and accelerated fairly well, and mixed it up okay. I think I made a couple of passes against Andy's NC. But she went down again, this time at the mouth of the narrows. I'd like to blame the gusty wind again, since she only had eighteen belows and seemed to be doing fine before she suddenly went sickly and sank quickly. Tyler ended up battling three battleships on his own at the end of this sortie. I thought he took it well, only once wondering vocally where his teammates went.

I'd almost dried from the previous recovery, so I had no qualms about wading in again, the ship had sunk in thigh-high water, and the surface disturbance showed that her pump was still running. When I brought her up on an even keel, she was covered in a quarter inch of muck, and I had to swish the ship around a bit to clean it off.

Back on the bench I had another of those 'oh Crap' moments. I realized that the other prop wasn't running when it should have been, and a quick inspection showed a rock wedged between the prop blades and the ship's bottom. While I silently screamed I pulled the rock out, and the prop started spinning fast. There



Brandon and Chandler's I-boat is triple teamed in the last sortie.

Photo supplied by Bob H.

was no annoying dying squirrel sound, so I started to breathe easier.

Yellow Flag scores:

Steve	Bismarck	31-0-24	sink
Ryan	VDT	57-5-15	sink
Kim	Wichita	4-0-1	
Bob	Washington	21-5-15	
Andy	NC	13-2-23	

Plain fleet scores:

Peter	TMGBC	38-9-12	2 sinks
Tyler	Derfflinger	55-5-5	
B&C	I-boat	70-1-18	sink
Dave	Baltimore	4-2-4	
Lars	Tiger	18-9-33	2 sinks

After patching, I wandered over to the C02 tank, in time to have Tyler just beat me there. I sat down on Bob's haul wagon while I waited, groaning as I lowered my carcass onto the wagon's metal grated bed, while Bob and Tyler chuckled over my expressions of pain. "How ya doin'?" asked Tyler, looking at me upside down as he bent over the C02 tank.

"I think I'm going to start cultivating the idea that I'm slowly going senile," I said.

Tyler, the med student, stood up and smiled. "I think I can help you with that," he said.

When we got back on the water for the second battle, we had a pause while Steve D. ran off to get a yellow flag for his Brooklyn. He had shifted to the Allied cruiser. While he was

gone, Tyler, Peter and I looked at each other and someone asked if there had been any other changes to the fleet setup, since we assumed the battlecruisers had been steam rolled by the battleships in the first battle. It dawned on us quickly that there had been no changes, but there were no complaints. We just started shooting when Bob called battle.

During this sortie I was surprised to hear shots hitting the bank in synchronization with my firing of my stern gun. The gun had shifted and was firing high. I tried shooting the stern gun from a distance to see if that helped. I tried a long stern shot on Bob's NC. I heard a 'tink' and saw something jump off his superstructure, hit his deck, and fall into the water. At first I thought it jumped like a mouse, then I realized it was a bear; Bob's Bear, the white rotating Polar Bear on the NC's superstructure. I'd looked at him earlier in the day and noticed he'd lost his jaw and one ear. After the sortie was over, Bob pulled him out and we found he'd been totally brained, the backside of his head was gone. Bob says he'll have to go back the Barbie head if he can't find a bear replacement.

As far as I can remember, the bear and Steve's Brooklyn were the only casualties in the first sortie.

Steve pulled out the Bismarck for the second sortie.

.For the second sortie, after about five minutes, the battlecruisers started going down. I think my Tiger was first, pinned between the NC and the Bismarck. As Andy kept his NC alongside my sinking ship, I kept her firing as she went under. Peter's TMGBC went soon afterwards, and Tyler's Derfflinger went next. Brandon's I-boat found himself on the water alone. I'm not sure what happened to Bob's Washington, as only the other Yellow flagged ships can be seen in the pictures of the pursuit of the I-boat. The I-boat shucked and jived and emptied his ammo, then shucked and jived some more. At one point Brandon said, "I've been off five now for about a minute, what do I do next?" He kept circling around the pursuing ships as they tried to fire their remaining shots. He didn't stop until they were empty.

At this point we pulled the boats off the water, and started asking who wanted to keep going. Andy was

interrupted by a phone call from his sister, I hadn't noticed but his Dad had been bending over his ship (the Baltimore) while on shore in the first sortie, and had taken a shot in the temple. There had been a small cut which was minor but Andy said it had 'bled like crazy'. He said his sister had chewed him out for letting him drive home 'like that'. I just hope it hadn't been my stern gun that had nailed him.

The following battle fell apart. Only Tyler and his Italian light cruiser, Bob with Tyler's Derfflinger, a spectator with the Bike, and Kim's

Wichita answered the call. The Wichita was lost before battle was called when his float system deployed and wrapped around his props. The Bike sank just as battle was called, the wind and waves being blamed. Although Bob was willing, "No way I'm shooting my own ship," said Tyler. The battle was over.

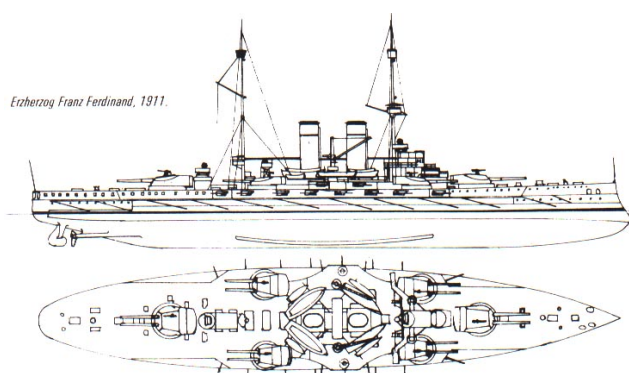


Kim works to clear the float line from the Wichita's props.

Photo by Lars

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The more you hurt the enemy, the less he will hurt you. – Admiral David G. Farragut