

Allies Suffer Major Losses in Sea Battle

Defeat Comes Despite Defection of Musashi

by Tom Tanner, AP (Axis Press)

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The bells in Wilhelmshaven ring loudly tonight, both to celebrate a resounding victory against the Allied Fleet, and to mourn the loss of the SMS NASSAU. NASSAU was lost in the second engagement of a fierce sea battle that saw the surprise defection of the Japanese super-battleship MUSASHI commanded by ADM Carl Camurati-san.

Sources say that while at Fisher's Landing in the neutral port of Wrentham, ADM Camurati-san was exposed to the excellent cooking of Gina Fisher that may have contributed to his decision to defect. Officially, the Axis High Command said, "ADM Camurati-san has been blackmailed into this course of action and he will be welcomed back once his head has cleared."

As the two fleets converged there were 8 Allied dreadnoughts facing an Axis fleet of 5 battleships, three battlecruisers, the pocket battleship ADM SCHEER (KDR Barry Tighe) (5-0-0) and an armored cruiser, SMS SCHARNHORST (KAPT Kieran Kelly) (14-2-3).

Before today's battle Axis High Command issued a statement from VADM Tom Tanner aboard the flagship SMS HINDENBURG that "the ships of the High Seas Fleet will closely engage the Allied Fleet and the inevitable victory will be ours."

The Admiral's words proved prophetic. Soon after the first engagement started the HMS WARSPITE commanded by CAPT Marty Hayes was observed pulling out of the line of battle and promptly sank (1-0-0). Survivors state that the power system for the bilge pumps was inoperable. Soon after the Spanish ship ESPANA (CDR Kevin Plummer) (18-2-5) was seen adrift and quickly dispatched by SMS DERFFLINGER (KAPT Ken Kelly) (22-4-3) and HINDENBURG (59-5-22) of the 1st Scouting Squadron. Again power failure was the suspected cause. Allied accusations of sabotage were quickly refuted by high-ranking sources in the Axis High Command.

Axis vessels followed orders and pressed home their attacks. The 1st Battle Squadron, composed of SMS POSEN (KAPT Bill Garthaffner) (10-1-2) and SMS NASSAU (KDR Seal Tuttle) (0-0-0), and the 3rd BS, composed of SMS KRONPRINZ (KAPT Dave Tuttle) (7-1-1), SMS BADEN-1 (KAPT Matt Moury) (26-0-1) and SMS BADEN-2 (KAPT Chris Decker) (29-1-4), inflicted significant damage to several Allied vessels, including the Allied flagship USS NORTH CAROLINA (ADM Dave Vogtman) (46-14-5), and the battleships IJN MUSASHI (103-3-18) and USS ARIZONA (CAPT Don Fisher) (41-6-5). As Axis ships closed in on USS MARYLAND (CAPT Steve Pavlovsky) (29-7-26) her crew could be seen taking to their life rafts and she slowly sank beneath the waves. With three capital ships lost the Allies fell back to regroup. The score – Axis 9110, Allies 3890.

After retiring to refuel and repair damages, the battered Allies returned to again try to move north to link up with Canadian reinforcements and were again intercepted by our glorious fleet, now reinforced by the arrival of the Austrian-Hungarian battleship KuK VIRIBUS UNITIS (KAPT Brandon Graham) (1-2-3). Pressing hard their attack, the Allies overwhelmed the NASSAU (12-0-3) which sank when its bilge pump outlet separated from the discharge and stopped pumping water out of the boat. But this victory came with a cost - ARIZONA (121-9-9), NORTH CAROLINA (59-4-16) and MUSASHI (127-1-12) taking heavy damage, allowing the Axis to again claim victory with a score of 5995 to 5365.

Ahead by 5850 points, the Axis returned to port jubilant. They had won Monday's battles for the first time in memory, and done so with only one loss. The Allies were battle-weary but defiant. ADM Dave Vogtman's staff issued a statement that "we expect significant reinforcements to arrive tomorrow from Canada. Allied dominance of northern waters is assured."