

torpedoes punched HIPPER. On move eight, PRINZ EUGEN fired four torpedoes toward WASHINGTON while Z-26 sent four more in their wake. During move nine, HIPPER and Z-27 got into the torpedo firing act. One torpedo of Z-26's first salvo caught CLEVELAND which then obligingly steamed straight into one of the second group on move ten. Then WASHINGTON found PRINZ EUGEN's range again which ended her career.

Meanwhile, Z-26 and Z-27 were slowly accumulating damage from CLEVELAND and the American cans, PORTER taking time out to dispatch the ailing Z-24 on move thirteen. Also on this move HIPPER fired four torpedoes at WASHINGTON which replied with a 16 inch-hit. At the end of move fifteen, when all the torpedoes had either run out or missed, the game was declared a victory for the Americans who not only got both their large ships over the necessary line but also inflicted considerably more damage than they received. The box scores:

American:	1 torpedo hit	8,575	German:	2 torpedo hits	22,761
	10 - 16 inch hits	105,500		All gunfire	7,095
	All other guns	10,915			<u>29,856</u>
		124,990			
Team average:		0.188			0.117

Commentary: This game was set up to give a torpedo-carrying force a large slow target. In order to avoid a complete massacre, the target was limited in its ability to shot back. For once, the game went as the referee had expected: a converging torpedo attack on one side and a screened run on the other. The screening operation was eminently successful; no more need be said of it.

The problem of the Germans' was how to split their force. Several arrangements could have been used with little to choose between them. If undamaged, they could have delivered an overwhelming torpedo attack on move six to hit on move ten. Actually on move six they had (in effect) lost two destroyers and HIPPER was lagging behind having lost seven knots early-on. However, the Germans still had 36 of their original 56 torpedoes with 28 on relatively healthy ships. At this point it must be granted that the chief referee goofed and that the German Admiral had rather more than his share of inexperience captains. Still, the fact remains that the attack was not pressed home. None of the German ships was in a position to launch torpedoes on move six nor, with the exception of the crippled HIPPER, did they get much closer thereafter. The destroyers, when they did fire, used their torpedoes on the still nimble and relatively unimportant light ships. Only HIPPER ever get torpedoes near WASHINGTON which dodged them easily.

Two-inch-per-move torpedo spreads seemed to be standard all night. This of course meant that they were eight inches apart at the ends of their runs. In the case of CLEVELAND (5.82" long), this probably saved her. One more fish, as from a one-inch spread, would have done her in. Most torpedoes were fired from too far out and sank before reaching a target.

Both ships which got hit by torpedoes were commanded by veterans of every torpedo assault yet delivered in Chicago Naval Wargamer arenas. All three torpedo spreads had been approaching visibly for three moves. Traditionally, a captain is responsible for the safety of his ship. Both torpedoed captains, then, could and should have kept their

eyes open and either taken evasive action or informed their admirals of the danger and requested instructions.

Gunnery was somewhat better than in previous cruiser/destroyer actions . . . four captains exceeded .200. RADFORD was high for the night with .262 while PRINZ EUGEN was high for the Germans with .224. As usual, one ship insisted on firing its secondary battery. It got off sixteen rounds on four salvos and hit NOTHING.

THE SMALL BATTLE OF ALUK GULF

Battle report from San Francisco: A cruiser/destroyer action (1:1200 style) has taken place between U.S. and Japanese naval forces in the Solomon Island Area. Once again, the Americans have tried to derail the "Tokyo Express." The results of this engagement are contained below in the first action summary that the LOG has received from the San Francisco Naval Wargamers. Our thanks to them for sharing it with us.

Aluk Gulf is situated between two islands in the Solomons Archipelago; Avodner Island to the northeast and Igalut Island to the southeast. Igalut is a mountainous island with disease infested jungles and an inhospitable coast, made up entirely of perpendicular cliffs. The island is also inhabited by cannibals. Neither Japanese nor the Allies see any strategic value in occupying Igalut Island.

Avodner Island on the other hand, provides ideal terrain and natural resources for guarding and controlling passage through Ognel Channel into Aluk Gulf. The southeast corner of the island is flat with a protected sandy beach. The coconut plantation, Vila-Standstill is situated on this corner of the island. The plantation is occupied by a Japanese garrison along with recently landed construction workers, approximately of battalion strength. The presence of a construction team indicates plans for an airfield. An airfield on Avodner would be most inconsiderate of Allied plans for rolling back the forces of Dai Nippon. The back door to Dai Nippon is Aluk Gulf through Ognel Channel.

On 29 August 1967, weather conditions at Henderson Field (the only field available to the Allied air forces within striking distance of Avodner) were such that no aircraft was able to take off or land. The Japanese High Command at Rabaul being aware of this condition at Henderson Field organized a "Tokyo Express" unit to supply and reinforce their outpost at Vila-Standstill. Using all available bottoms (the main striking force having been deployed to Truk for a belated Cherry Blossom Festival), he put together a modest cruiser-destroyer division and favored its commander with the privilege and honor of adding to the glories of the Japanese Navy and humiliating the Allied Navies . . . or join honorable ancestors via "H.K."

The Allied Area Commander at Nani-nani-noo, having guessed his counter part's intentions, dispatched HIS only available bottoms! The famous "Meager Beavers," Desdiv 31. The main striking force had been ordered to Sydney, Australia for a much needed rest and recreation tour. On Desdiv 31 rested the responsibility of keeping the Japanese morale as low as it could go or forfeit all ice cream rations for two weeks. At 2045 hours on 29 August 1967, the waters of Ognel Channel were as