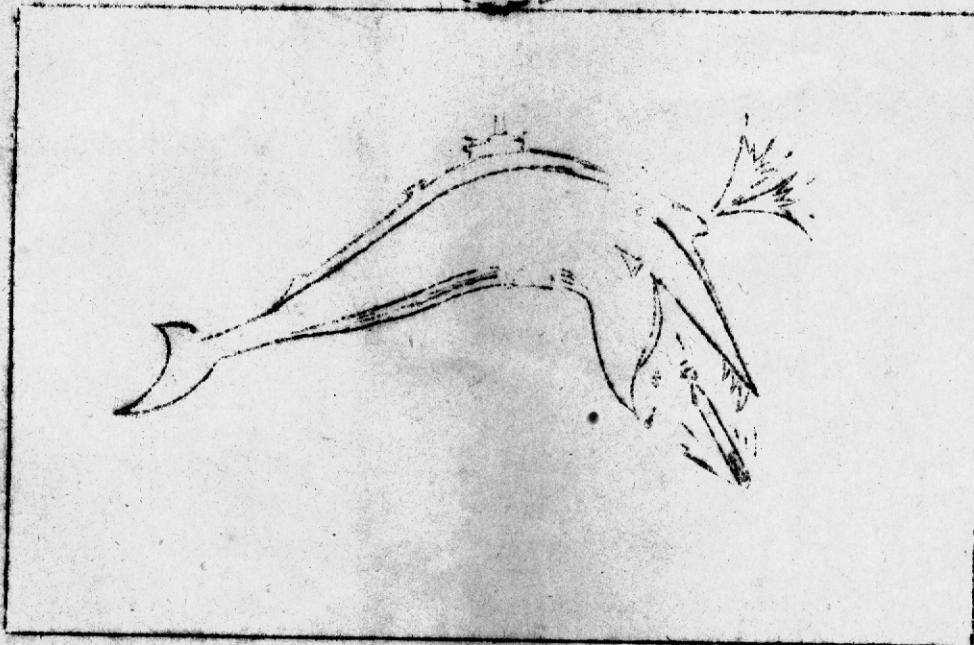


NAVY DAY  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
OCTOBER 27 1945

U.S.S. RAZORBACK SS-394



## FOREWARD

The officers and crew of the KAZORBACK welcome you aboard. We are proud to be a part of a beautifully balanced fleet, each branch of which did well the phase assigned it. We are anxious to have you know that we feel no one branch of the service beat the Japanese. On the other hand we want to call attention to the fact that the submarine is a very important weapon to have on hand when a country is not completely mobilized for war. In case of hostile acts by another power, it is the one and only type of ship which can proceed unsupported to the very shores of the enemy. The submarine cannot win a war alone, but a large submarine fleet can immediately carry the fight to the enemy in their own waters and "Hold off the dogs," so to speak, until the heavy power and logistics necessary to support that power can be assembled to execute the major and final phases of the war.

We wish to thank you for the fine ship you gave us. Without the taxes, the bonds, the labor and ingenuity of the civilians who stood behind us, the best naval personnel in the world could not have fought a successful war.

Views expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of the Navy Department.

## HISTORY OF THE U.S.S. RAZORBACK (SS394)

### Pre-Commissioning and Commissioning Data

Authorized under the wartime building program, the RAZORBACK is a good example of Portsmouth Navy Yard's excellent workmanship. Her keel was laid on 9 September 1943; she was launched 27 January 1944 and commissioned at Portsmouth, New Hampshire 3 April of the same year. Mrs. H. F. D. DAVIS, wife of Capt. H. F. D. DAVIS, USN (Ret.) was sponsor.

Commissioning Officers were:

The late Lt. Comdr. A. M. BONTIER, USN, Lost on the U.S.S. SEAWOLF  
Lieut. J. L. HAINES, USN  
Lieut. R. L. SMITH, USNR  
Lieut. R. S. THOMPSON, USNR  
Lt.(jg) J. H. KING, USN  
Lt.(jg) A. R. HERSH, USN  
Lt.(jg) L. B. CRANN, USNR  
Ensign L. T. ADAMS, USNR

### PRE-WAR PERIOD

An intensive training period and shakedown was conducted off Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Newport, Rhode Island. On 5 June 1944 Commander Roy S. BENSON, USN, a veteran submariner who had distinguished himself as skipper of the U.S.S. THICKET, relieved Lt. Comdr. BONTIER. Further training was accomplished at New London, Connecticut, Key West, Florida and Panama. On 19 July 1944, the RAZORBACK reported to the Commander Submarines Pacific Fleet and set course for Pearl Harbor where voyage repairs and the final training period were completed on 25 August.

## WAR NARRATIVE

The first patrol took place east of Luzon with this ship a member of an offensive group in support of the Palau landings. The JAP Fleet did not venture forth to oppose this offensive and the only enemy contact consisted of frequent encounters with anti-submarine planes. The last week of the patrol was conducted in the Luzon Straits where the major consideration was riding out a storm and keeping clear of JAPANESE aviators. A disappointed ship returned to Midway for rest and refit by Submarine Division 201 and the U.S.S. PROTEUS (AS19). On 21 October 1944 Lt. Comdr. C. DONALD BROWN, USN relieved Commander BENSON as Commanding Officer.

On 15 November the RAZORBACK left Midway and joined the U.S.S. TREPANG (SS412) and U.S.S. SEGUNDO (SS398) to form a coordinated attack group under the command of Comdr. Roy DAVENPORT, USN. After refueling alongside the U.S.S. FULTON (AS11) at Saipan the group headed for the Luzon Straits. First contact was made on two large vessels escorted by three gunboats and heavy air cover. An unsuccessful attack was made due to the inability of the submarine to close the enemy to good torpedo range. Many of the officers and crew had now heard their first depth charges, fortunately not close. At daybreak several days later, radar contact was made on several enemy ships. Dived to avoid detection. The target was approached and identified as a hunter-killer group consisting of a destroyer and two smaller anti-sub craft. The former was attacked, but results were not seen due to the advisability of rapid retirement. Torpedo hits and breaking up noises were heard as were the depth charges planted by the JAPS. Several nights later the TREPANG reported a convoy about 40 miles away from us. By the time the RAZORBACK arrived the TREPANG and SEGUNDO had sunk all but one ship, that having been stopped by the latter submarine. After skirting an escort at 2000 yards and having been challenged by two JAP escorts, the target was closed sufficiently for attack. Sudden appearance of the moon necessitated diving. On the way down, the timely reopening and closing of the hatch by GUIDRY, C. J., SMLc, USN, prevented the loss of a tardy lookout who had not heard the order to clear the bridge. RAZORBACK torpedoes set fire to the large transport previously stopped by the SEGUNDO and she was left burning furiously as the submarine surfaced and eluded the angry escorts. Returned to Saipan for more torpedoes and rejoined the U.S.S. SEGUNDO with Comdr. J. D. FULP, Jr., USN, as the new pack commander. The last day of patrol, contact was made on a four-ship convoy escorted by an old destroyer, a D. E., and a float plane. Torpedo hits were obtained on a medium tanker, followed shortly by great relief to all hands as the bow was seen to blow off the destroyer which was then closing the submarine. Though the plane flew up and down the torpedo wakes to mark the submarine's location, the latter

WAR NARRATIVE (cont.)

retired without damage from the remaining escort. That night the RAZORBACK surfaced and pursued the convoy. The moon again forced a submerged attack which was rewarded by a terrific explosion as one of the remaining three ships lighted up the sky. Hits on another small cargo ship were so violent that they knocked cork off the submarine conning tower bulkhead, but the JAP proved tough and equipped with sound gear and depth charges. The persecutor was eluded with difficulty.

On 5 January arrived at Guam for refit by the U.S.S. SPERRY (AS12) and Submarine Division 82. Commander Submarine Squadron TEN presented the officers and crew with combat insignias, the first for all but thirteen. After rest at Camp Dealy and training, the RAZORBACK, with the U.S.S. SEGUNDO (Comdr. J. D. FULP, Jr. as pack commander) and the U.S.S. SEACAT set out for the East China Sea for the third patrol.

Difficulty was encountered in finding targets. Two unsuccessful torpedo attacks were conducted on a transport and three-masted schooner respectively. With the patrol coming to a close and the score still zero, the RAZORBACK surfaced and in three separate gun actions, sunk four wooden ships which were too small for torpedoes. Three JAP prisoners were obtained. Of interest was the fact that a bad grease fire in the galley necessitated surfacing and the subsequent gun engagement with a schooner which was nearby.

Prisoners were deposited in Guam and the RAZORBACK finished her patrol on arrival Pearl Harbor 26 March 1945. Although the patrol had not been considered successful for award of the combat insignia, morale was high and a good rest at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel soon had the crew in even higher spirits. The Submarine Division 45 and Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor completed refit and training on 7 May at which time the submarine headed for Nanpo Shoto and Tokyo Bay area for lifeguard work. She refueled at Midway on 11 May enroute to patrol area.

Much of the fourth patrol was spent on the surface uncomfortably close to Tokyo, day and night. Topside personnel often saw the fires resulting from the air raids. Efforts were rewarded by rescue of a fighter pilot who bailed out of his plane 20 miles from Tokyo and clambered aboard the RAZORBACK seven minutes later. Subsequently four B-29 pilots were picked up after an extensive search had been conducted for them. The presence of enemy planes and proximity of enemy land (5 to 8 miles) made this rescue a ticklish operation, but lack of JAP intestinal fortitude for our two cover planes made the operation a success.

Returned to Midway on 27 June for refit by the U.S.S. AEGIR (AS23) and Submarine Division 242. Commander Submarine Squadron 24 presented the crew with their second combat insignia. On 18 July while proceeding to operating area Lt.(jg) PATTILLO, USNR

WAR NARRATIVE (continued)

and LANGFORD, D. D., MoMM3c, USNR, risked their lives by going over the side in heavy seas near a dangerous reef to save a Chief Gunner's Mate who had been washed overboard from the submarine preceding the RAZORBACK in the outer channel. The rescuers have been recommended for a Navy Marine Corps Medal for their unselfish act.

On 22 July the RAZORBACK departed Midway for patrol in the Okhotsk Sea. On 2 August a number of wooden cargo ships were discovered skirting a point for a certain harbor. They were too small for torpedoes, so surface gun action was necessary. Six ships were sunk and two damaged in what was to be the last encounter with the enemy for this submarine. OJDERKIRK, J. F., LM2c, USNR, and LAWSON, L. "C", EM3c, USNR were wounded slightly by return fire in this engagement, the only personnel casualties suffered from enemy action. The remainder of the patrol was spent performing lifeguard services off Paramushiro for Alaskan based planes.

On 31 August the RAZORBACK entered Tokyo Harbor in company with eleven other submarines where she took part in the formal surrender of JAPAN. On 3 September she departed, arriving at Pearl Harbor 11 September and San Diego 20 September. ComSubRon TEN presented the officers and crew with their third combat insignia for a successful 5th and last patrol.

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SUMMARY OF PATROL RESULTS

<u>Number of Patrol</u>	<u>Ships Sunk</u>	<u>Total Tonnage Sunk</u>	<u>Ships Damaged</u>	<u>Total Tonnage Damaged</u>	<u>Total Aviators Rescued</u>
1	0	0	0	0	0
2	1/2 Large Transport 1 Medium Tanker 1 Destroyer 1 Large Cargo	20,800	1 Destroyer 1 Medium Cargo	5,400	0
3	2 Sea Trucks 1 Schooner 1 Junk	350	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	0	5
5	6 Sea Trucks	1200*	2 Sea Trucks	400*	0
TOTAL		22,350 Tons		5,000 Tons	5

\* Unofficial Assessment

AWARDS TO SHIP'S PERSONNEL

1. Lt. Comdr. C. DONALD BROWN, USN  
Second Patrol - Navy Cross  
Third Patrol - Letter of Commendation with Ribbon
2. Lieut. R. L. SMITH, USNR  
Second Patrol - Silver Star
3. Lieut. A. R. HERSH, USN  
Second Patrol - Bronze Star
4. Lieut. R. S. THOMPSON, USNR  
Second Patrol - Bronze Star
5. Lieut. L. B. CRANN, USNR  
Second Patrol - Bronze Star
6. Lt. (jg) W. C. ANDERSON, USNR  
Second Patrol - Bronze Star
7. Boatswain Henry F. FORT, USN  
Second Patrol - Silver Star
8. Electrician Homer P. PETTY, USN  
Second Patrol - Bronze Star
9. KOHL, Carrol C., CPhM, USN  
Second Patrol - Letter of Commendation with Ribbon
10. MOON, Calvin (n), RTlc, USNR  
Second Patrol - Letter of Commendation with Ribbon
11. MEHALICK, Joseph J., MoMMLc, USN  
Second Patrol - Letter of Commendation with Ribbon
12. QUANTON, R. R., CRM, USN  
Second Patrol - Letter of Commendation with Ribbon
13. GORDON, James E., CMoMM, USN  
Second Patrol - Letter of Commendation with Ribbon
14. SMALL, Leonard M., FC2c, USNR  
Second Patrol - Letter of Commendation with Ribbon