

TASK FORCE 144

NATS ISSUE

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Summer - 2011



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NATS 2011

By Bob Hoernemann

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NATS was back in Minnesota this year at Veteran's Lake. The captains in attendance were hoping for a NATS that did not have hot and humid weather; well they got their wish. The weather was cool, cloudy and a little wet most of the week. We did get one nice day on Friday. It was the first NATS that I can remember where I had to put on a sweater and waders. The pond was so cold that some people went back to the hotel after they sank to warm up in the hot tub. NATS for the Port Polar Bear group started on Saturday with set up. There had been a lot of rain leading up to NATS and the pond was up about 6" from normal. Our host could not get the lawn mower close enough to the water to cut all of the grass so the PPB group had to do it. We spend most of the day cutting grass, setting up tents and tables and getting CO2 tanks ready. A few people stopped by

the pond to say hi, test ships and even give us a hand getting ready. A few PPB guys thought it would be interesting to make an island in the pond for some extra strategy. We used the old ropes and floats from the 2008 NATS to make a 20' island about 20' from shore.

Monday spawned the first Axis battle plan with Bob and Andy occupying Tim and Chris P while Jeff and Leif destroyed the rest of the Allied fleet. Right before the start of battle Dallas had to pull his ship due to electrical problems;

the Axis were now down a Baden. Jeff and Leif dove into the Allied fleet finding QE's and ID's at every turn. Brian L's ID was the first target, then Ty's QE, then Steve R's QE. Leif was stern gunned by Ron's NC and Peter's Arizona came back with some large holes. John Stangle also dove into the main allied fleet and blasted away while the Allies tried in vain to trap him. Johnny vectored the Baden towards his arch rival Admiral Palmer. Bob and

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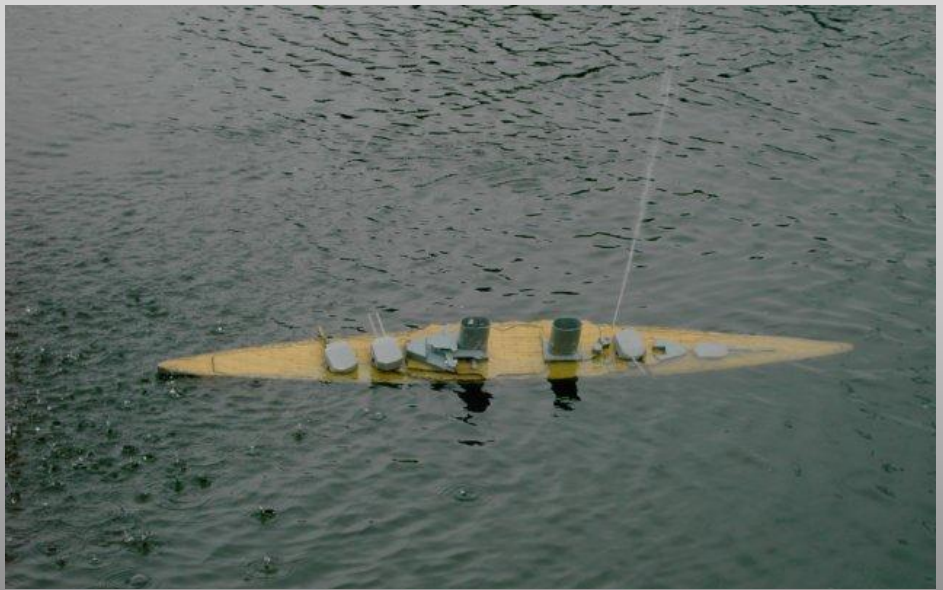
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Wednesday's NATS Report

By Lord Fisher

If you haven't been to NATS before you can't really appreciate the grueling and exhausting schedule we keep. You are up by 0630 and at the lake by 0800. You battle until the early afternoon and spend the rest of the day and night making repairs or preparing other ships for Campaign. If you are like the Phantom you might be up until 0300 starting and then putting out small electrical fires. Every year someone says to me, "This isn't a vacation" and they're right. It's more like a toy boat boot camp.

So usually at NATS we look forward to Wednesday as the day we get to sleep in a little and eat a leisurely brunch. If your boat is in working condition you wander over to the pond for one-on-ones and pick-up battles such as the traditional "Cruiser Battle" and the less traditional, but now common, "Clash of the Titans". If your boat is not working you make repairs or go to a hobby store for supplies. You might also spend the day installing lights for night battle.



Prior to NATS this year the Smurf lobby campaigned for an extra fleet battle on Wednesday morning. Apparently the Smurfs don't have enough to do all week. During our captain's meeting on Sunday we voted to add an extra Fleet Battle on Wednesday morning. The proposal passed easily. I believe it passed so easily because so few captains planned on attending Wednesday's night battle. They say the Minnesota State bird is the mosquito. As NATS 2008 demonstrated "State bird" is an understatement. More accurately, Minnesota's evening atmosphere consists of 20% oxygen, 30% nitrogen and 50% mosquitoes. Wednesday's fleet battle started off much as any other, only an hour later. For the first time that week the Allied

slow fleet consisting of two QEs and one Iron Duke worked as a team against the Axis slow fleet. Dueling sterns to sterns the Axis would try to slide in for a shot but would take abuse from haymakers on both sides. The crafty Axis tried luring us in with Andy Terpstra's tasty Dungflinger but it seemed like we gave better than we received. The first sortie ended with the Axis losing Andy's ship and the Allies losing Lord Ring Reynold's Valiant. The second sortie was different; chaos! The Allies were no longer fighting as a cohesive group and while the Axis lost no further ships that morning the Allies lost Maverick Lamb's Iron Duke, the Smurf Glorie and the author's Warspite. The final scores revealed that the

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Wednesday's NATS Report -Continued-

that the Axis were victorious with 20,590 to the Allies 12,285.

Following a delicious grilled lunch courtesy of Sportsman of the Year, Peter "What's my Nickname" Ellison, and crack ship salvager, Steve "Agua Lung" Dickow, we prepared for the "Clash of the Titans". This year the titans consisted of Admiral Viper Smith's SMS Emden, Ethan Cosgriff's SMS Scharnhorst and the author's HMS Fylgia. Undeterred by mounting seas the combined seven units battled furiously in

a two sortie free-for-all; or maybe it was more like bobbing around and pecking at each other. Regardless of your perspective fun was had by all. As Emden is 23 seconds, Fylgia found it difficult to line up decent shots. However the Emden is only armed with a bow cannon which made it equally difficult to line up shots on his two opponents. Ethan's Sharny performed nicely and its reliability contributed to his earning Rookie of the Year award later in the week. The Clash of the Titans ended with no sinks. Damage was as follows: Emden 2-1-0, Fylgia 2-0-1 and Sharny 7-1-1.

Next up was the traditional Cruiser Battle. The teams were Kim "Motor" Mendrzycki's Wichita, Peter "Sportsman of the Year" Ellison's Duca, Ethan's Sharny and the Smurf Glorie verses Zach's Bike, Bob's Montcalm, Hammer's Nashville and the author's Fylgia. There was some considerable damage done with the Sharny sinking in the first battle 1-2-3. In the second sortie the Duca sank with 66-9-3 along with the Nashville with 46-4-3. Just so you don't think we were picking on anybody the Glorie received 6-2-2 and the Fylgia 6-6-5 in damage. When evening rolled around it

Wednesday's NATS Report -Continued-

was still raining lightly so with the expectation that the mosquitoes would be scarce the author decided to attend and observe the crazy carnage known as Night Battle.

Participation was light as expected with only three Allies participating: Tim "4th Horseman of the Apocalypse" Beckett in his NC, Sportsman in his Arizona and Motor in his Wichita. The Axis fleet consisted of Admiral Viper, Emperor Lide, Houston

Fluegel, Lurch Adams, Von Fluegel, Auga Lung Dickow and Lief "That was the WORST movie EVER!"

Goodson. 14 units verses 33 units.

It being dark out the author did not observe much with the exception of some cool flashing lights, an amazing search light mounted on Yamato's bow which illuminated the lake across to the other side and the occasional Allied ship captured by said light. Whenever an Allied ship was caught in the light the Axis hordes swarmed towards it. Occasionally all six cannons mounted on the Yamato's bow would fire and



the escaping CO2 and bbs were illuminated to an awesome effect. Less frequently an Axis captain would shout, "That's me Jeff!" Needless to say with that many bbs flying around and so few Allied targets the Axis lost the battle 925 to 1,095. Allies ruled the night by a slim margin!



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Andy were on the left keeping Tim and Chris busy but no one over there was really shooting; they decided to head off to the right and play with the other ships. When the left Tim and Chris jumped on Steve D. and the Bismarck sank. After Leif made it off of 'five' Jeff was free to play with the Ron's and John's NCs. Then Jeff traded sidemounts with Steve R, Peter and Ty. Each one came up to Jeff and ate at the sidemount buffet. Gerald got into the action against Peter and

Steve R. Johnny got into the group of ID's and QE's spinning and shooting and started to look a little low. Tom dove in to try and finish him off but Andy and Bob chased him off. With more maneuverable ships they would have had him trapped. Ty came in to play with Brandon but didn't see Bob's Kongo. The bow sidemount ran out quickly but the stern sidemount made some beautiful holes in the Warspite. Gerald's Hiei sank with a burned out pump and the Allied cry of "It's Destiny!" was heard. You may wonder why the Allies yelled "It's Destiny!" after every sink.

Maybe they were trying to find a cheer to match "Banzai" on the Axis side but nothing can really match that. As the story goes Sunday night at dinner Johnny had Tom paged and told him destiny was calling. Tom thought that would make a great battle cry but it sounded more like the girl you don't want to bring home to mom. At the end of the sortie Kevin Bray lost his electrical system and went dead in the water on the right side of the pond. Brandon and DW tried but did not have enough bbs to terminate Bray.

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By Leaps and Bounds ...

By Mike Mangus

Volume II: Cannons

Before starting in on cannons let me add a couple of additional comments on LiFe cells. After a year of battling the 40ah LiFe cells in the Erin are getting fat. It isn't a defect of the cell chemistry but the nature of the plastic outer casing and the internal construction. As LiFe cells are charged the plates inside the cells start to separate from each other due to the electrostatic charge between them. The plastic casing has external reinforcement ribs to help mitigate the separation. Even so the cells will expand somewhat under normal use. Since I was trying to stick two 40ah cells into the tight space within Erin's hull I sanded the ribs off the casing to get just enough clearance to put the deck on. Without the casing ribs to reinforce the outer casing sides the cells are expanding so much that the Erin's deck has to be bowed to fasten in place. There is also some capacity loss when the plates start separating. The Erin's 40ah

cells are down to 31ah capacity. They still deliver full voltage and have far more capacity than any ship will ever use in a single day of battling. The cells can be reinforced to prevent expansion. The electric bike people and one of the LiFe retailers have begun strapping cells together with a reinforcement plate on each end to keep the cells flat. I may give this a try on the 40ah cells before they are transferred into a refitted Scharnhorst. In the meantime the Erin is packing a set of 20ah cells that fit better inside the hull. Back to the topic at hand:

Cannons!

At every battle the Erin gets comments on how fast its guns are. I would like to think that it is a natural ability to push the button really fast but even the fastest button smasher needs cannons that will keep up with that rate of fire. The cannons must cycle quickly with power to make the most holes in the shortest time possible. So here is the catch: it isn't the cannons themselves that makes the Erin's rate of fire so quick. It is the combination of multiple ideas implemented to get one thing done; increase air flow. Our cannon systems are limited to 150 psi. To gain more

power and speed I looked towards increasing air flow much like the paintball players did to paintball markers in the mid to late 90's. To begin with, the supply end of the cannon system needs a high flow regulator. The trusty Palmer regulators made for the Autococker™ paintball markers were pressed into service on my first ships. Recently the Strike Models regulators have taken the place of the Palmers. Both regulators flow huge amounts of air. To carry all of that air flow from the regulator to the rest of the system 1/8" inside diameter (ID) hose was plumbed to the solenoids and to the inlet of the cannon. The 1/8" ID hose has four times more passage area than the standard 1/16" ID hose used in most ships. Some captains recognized the need for more air flow years ago and used two 1/16" supply lines. Two lines worked well but what we need is maximum air flow to the cannons. The standard KIP solenoids seem to handle the increased air flow rates without any problems. That brings us to the cannons. The Erin's cannons aren't new technology. They are made from the same brass, copper

By Leaps and Bounds -Continued-

and stainless steel used for the past 30 years in cannon construction. The interrupters are designed by Rob Stalnaker and modified by myself. They are the standard pin style interrupter redesigned for easier construction and high air flow.

So what is special about them? The pins have a hole drilled through them.

Tada! The 'secret' to the cannons! Wait, this isn't new or original! It was done many

years ago! Historically the problem with drilled pins was the cannons tended to spurt. The first cannons I made upon entering the hobby were an attempt at high flow and they spurted all the time before I finally abandoned them and purchased a set of BCs.

But that was before we plumbed the inlet of the cannon for high airflow. To help eliminate the spurt problem the 1/16" ID line from the end cap to the magazine was retained to restrict airflow in this portion of the cannon and provide backpressure to the bottom of the pin. Combined the high air flow keeps the pin pushed up while the hole passes air

through the pin directly to the breach instead of having relying on the magazine to provide an air passage.

The end result is cannons that have plenty of air to operate as quickly as possible. By using a high flow regulator, 1/8" ID hoses and a drilled pin interrupter we obtain a cannon system that can cycle quickly, shoot harder and work reliably. There is a downside. Yes, there is a cost for all of the goodness. The high flow cannon system is less gas efficient. Based on the Erin and the Verite cannons over the past year it looks like we can reasonably expect 45 shots per ounce of CO2. So we may have to go looking for a larger CO2 bottle. But that is okay because we saved weight by going with LiFe cells right?

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Kevin thought he had fixed his electrical problems before the second sortie but they reappeared and he became lunch for several Axis captains although he somehow made it off of his 'five' with very high damage. In the fur ball Brian L took a few shots and started to pump hard. Steve R brought his QE in to play with Stangle,

Bob and Andy; he left with a high pump stream. Bob finally finished off the Arizona with some stern sidemounts. Then the triple NC team of John, Tim and Chris sank Andy. By now Jeff had two healthy pump streams going. Some of the Allies thought they may be able to put Jeff down. Jeff went on 'five' and the NCs started chasing him back and forth across the shoreline. On one of the trips the Nashville which had been loaned out to Steve Cox was nearly run over as Tim hit the cruiser in the stern. The ship tipped all the way over on its port side but managed to right itself and pump out. All of the chasing cost the Allies as Chris P drove himself under. Jeff sinks ships without any bbs while he's on 'five'.

After the battle it felt like a big Allied victory with five Axis sinks verses two Allied sinks. When all of the scores were totaled the Allies won by 2,720 points; not as bad as it felt. Looking at the scores there were a lot of Allied ships that had been shot up pretty bad but would not go down and lots of full pump streams at the end of sortie 2 that the Axis just needed to finish off to turn the tide of the battle.

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Some of the interesting scores were:

Tom Palmer We Vee	85	8	35
Kevin Bray QE	120	20	33
Steve Dickow Bismarck	109	9	19
Andy Terpstra Derflinger	119	5	7
Dirty Dave Kongo	51	16	26
Gerald Hiei	48	7	23

Tuesday Fleet Battle 1

Now down by several thousand points the Axis knew they needed a new plan. Jeff and Leif were directed to watch Tim and Chris P while Andy and Bob were charged with killing some Allied ships.

Later in the week Tim commented that this move was frustrating because anyplace he went to make trouble Jeff was right there. Tim could not hang out trying to get his sterns on target or he would have two opponents lining up sidemounts. The Axis also made a point to try and be more aggressive. They had more sidemounts and needed to get in and trade them with the Allies. It was "Stardust Tuesday" for the Axis, would that change their fate? This battle would see many more sinks on both sides as the strategy played out. The Allies lost Ron and Peter in the first sortie. The Axis lost both Fluegels; Dallas with 4-5-6 and

DW with 11-4-8. Right at the start of the second sortie Steve's Bismarck broke the third rule of Model Warship Combat and got too close to shore. Chris P took advantage of the mistake and laid out a nasty pattern of triples on the Bismarck's port side. The Bismarck was sunk a short while later. Kevin B's QE was lost with light damage. Brian's ID was sunk with some quality belows. Meanwhile the Axis lost Dirty and Gerald with light damage and Andy with fairly heavy damage. The Allies lost Ty's Warspite and a couple minutes later Kim's Marlboro in almost the exact same

location. After Kim got his ship out of the water Jeff and Bob were going off to chase an NC when the Kongo went down. Both of them thought Bob had forgotten to turn on his pump but after the salvage operation it was discovered that the pump had burned out. Jeff and Leif took off after Frank's NC. Brandon's Nagato suddenly sank in a large weed bed. When he brought it up it was covered with long green salad. Even though the Axis owned the water at the end of the battle it once again felt like a large Allied victory with eight Axis sinks against six Allied sinks.

As was the case with the first sortie the Allies absorbed a lot more damage narrowing the score to a 1,000 point victory by the Allies.

Interesting scores were:

Tom Palmer We Vee	66	11	28
Steve R QE	28	8	28
Brian L ID	27	10	35
Rick Whitsell SLC	16	3	1
Steve D Bismarck	157	13	21
Andy T Derflinger	69	9	21
Nathaniel G Glorie	15	8	10

Tuesday Afternoon

The Axis had to win the afternoon battle and win it in a big way to get back into NATS. Once again the Admiral wanted more aggression out of the fleet. The fleet answered in a big way.

The first sortie saw two ships from each fleet go down. The Axis lost Admiral Smith with very light damage and Gerald. The Allies lost Kim's Old Smokey and Peter's AZ. Ty's Warspite was almost lost but made it through sortie 1. The Warspite was pumping hard at the start of sortie 2 and sank within a couple of minutes. Tuesday night Ty would pull most of his sheeting off in favor of some fresher balsa as the skin was taking very large and ugly holes. Ty must like to sink way out in the middle of the pond; I've seen it happen several times. After losing the sub Monday Ty spent a lot of

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time looking for the Warspite. Peter, our cameraman, went in to help him find the ship and the rest of the sortie video was lost. The battles all blend together now so I'll report that the Axis crushed the Allies. That's true too as the Allies lost five ships verses the Axis loss of two ships. There was once again heavy damage sustained by the Allied fleet yielding a 7,665 point gain for the Axis. Interesting scores:

Tom Palmer We Vee	57	1445
Peter AZ	33	7 22
Steve R Valiant	49	9 22
Kevin Bray QE	10	1627
Steve D Bismarck	48	0 5
Kevin K Derflinger	94	1228
Dirty	66	2125

Wednesday Morning Fleet Battle

What? Did you just read 'Wednesday Morning Fleet Battle'? Shouldn't that read Thursday? Nope, we had an extra fleet battle on Wednesday. Maybe it was the cold weather, maybe it was the lack of anything else to do or maybe it was Stangle's last battle but the captains voted to have another battle on Wednesday. When people arrived for the battle they noticed something was missing. Our tents didn't fly

away but the island was gone. We thought we could see the floats way on the other side. After the battle Kevin B rowed over only to find a dead fish and some foam. A couple of weeks after NATS the site owner called and said he found the floats and anchors by one of the large power lines. My guess is that some Allied guy moved it; the Axis love channels and islands. The Allies found themselves down two battleships as Kevin B's QE was having electrical problems and Kim switched to his cruise due to pump problems with his slugger.

Like most of the battles the Axis started on the left and the Allies started on the right. At the call of battle the Axis let out their war cry "Savannah Storm", and both fleets stayed on their own side. Randy drove across the pond to play and then ran away. The NCs came all of the way around the fleet to make a second front. Randy plinked away at Bob's Kongo and Dallas made a move to engage the Allied slow ships. Several calls were made for the Allies to trap the Baden but Dallas got a few good shots in and safely retreated. Bob and Andy advanced into the Allied slow fleet to help Dallas just as he was moving out and

had to back out in a hurry themselves. After the initial standstill the fleets started to mix it up. Stangle attacked the Allied fleet with Dallas and Bob. Steve R must have missed Jeff coming in from the right and was caught between him and several other Axis ships taking a good serving of sidemounts. The Valiant sank and Steve found a ram hole he hadn't called. Lamb and Bob traded sidemounts; it looked deadly for both ships and they parted with good pump streams. Admiral Tom dove into the Axis fleet and took on three Kongos, a Derflinger, a Baden and a VDT. He collected many holes but was still on top of the water. Kevin K's Derflinger made a good pass on Peter's AZ and almost put the famous ship under. Andy was nursing the Derflinger near shore and Tim brought his NC in to try and finish him off. Dirty and Johnny drove Tim off and Tim swung around for another pass. Jeff was moving in begging someone to get in front of the NC to give Jeff a shot. Tim was able to maneuver his ship around the Axis line like he was driving through an obstacle course, weaving in and out. Tim took a few holes but it wasn't as bad as it could

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have been. A small Axis victory was keeping Tim off of Andy. Jeff, Leif and Gerald trapped Frank's NC and put some good damage on it and then spent the rest of the sortie chasing the NC back and forth across the pond.

The second sortie started out with Admiral Tom forgetting to turn his pump on. An Axis captain reminded him to turn it on, what a nice group of guys. While Tom was pumping out Andy and Bob came over to try and take advantage of the

heavy ship but they were just too far away to make it in time. Peter drove around the Axis fleet handing out triples and eating sidemounts. He dumped his sterns and called 'five' early in the battle to survive.

As most of the Axis fleet drove off to chase Peter a team formed by Tim and Chris came in to try and finish Andy off.

Andy got a few good sidemount shots into Tim and received some triples from Chris. Lamb and Jeff started trading sidemounts; it was bow (Jeff) and stern (Brian). This usually works out well for the stern sidemount guy but Jeff slipped a little further up the ID and got his haymaker on target

with damaging results. Brian's state of distress attracted the attention of Bob and Kevin K along with Jeff and he soon sank. Admiral Tom became the main focus of the Axis fleet. He took a lot of holes and still managed to move and shoot and stay afloat.

Somewhere off in the distance Ty's Warspite sank. Chris brought his NC in to play with Andy, he's still floating somehow, but Johnny was there to protect him with some haymaker work. All the moving to avoid Chris was more than the Derflinger could handle; she held on a little

longer but couldn't make it to the end. The Axis spent the rest of the sortie chasing NCs around. The Axis fleet won another large victory increasing their lead by 8,305 points.

Interesting scores were:

Chris P NC	33	1228
Frank NC	29	5 2
Ty Warspite	67	5 22
Tom We Vee	98	1127
Steve R Valiant	26	8 28
Brian ID	57	1125
Andy Derflinger	64	109

Thursday Fleet Battle

After the extra Wednesday battle the Axis pulled ahead with a 4,000 point lead.

Knowing that they faced a campaign battle in the afternoon the Axis need another big win in this fleet

battle. Early in the first sortie Steve D's Bismarck sank with no damage. A pump failed and Steve hid in the corner hoping no one would see him and he could make it off of 'five'.

Unfortunately he succumbed to leaky hull skin before the timer ran out. Steve R's QE also sank; once again Steve found a couple of ram holes he did not call that assisted in putting him under. Andy lost the Derflinger with very light damage once again. After it sank in campaign Thursday afternoon he finally figured out why the ship that had worked so well for Tyler the last

couple of years would not work for him. Andy was running the ship with NiMH batteries and had to add weight for the ship to sit correctly. He had too much weight in the ship and it was too far forward. The ship had very little reserve buoyancy and had water pooling in the bow. Near the end of the first sortie Frank's NC lost control on 'five' and was nearly sunk. Frank called 'man in the water' and swam for his ship to make it off 'five' but the cold water was too much for him. During the second sortie Frank's NC was still not working. Frank left to sit in the hotel hot tub and warm up after his brisk swim.

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His dad put the NC in the pond and let it sink while Leif tried to pick up some more points. Randy's cruiser went down in the same spot it had sank a couple of other times during the week. Johnny had his moment of glory in this sortie. Ty's Warspite got caught next to Lamb's ID and behind Jeff. I think Ty was looking at Jeff and didn't realize Johnny was coming in for haymaking. As Ty went forward and Johnny backed up they locked together as the haymaker unloaded.

Ty's fresh sheeting held up much better this time; he left with a full pump stream but stayed afloat. Bob and Jeff would take up the chase and put some more holes into Ty but the British slugger would not go down. The Axis ships hung out next to the shore. Johnny, Brandon, Gerald and Dallas all had good pump streams going but none of them were on 'five'. Several times Tim and Chris would swoop in, take a few shots and run back out only to circle around and repeat. Jeff and Kevin K were chasing Brian's ID around. Brian had a good pump stream going and as he turned away from Jeff the ID was pushed

under by Kevin. Tim reviewed the tape to see if it was a ram sink or not. Tim ruled in favor of a ram sink this time. Once again Kevin, Jeff and Gerald ended the sortie chasing NCs around the pond. It was another big victory for the Axis by 8,045. Interesting scores were:

Frank NC	39	12	59
Ty Warspite	62	8	43
Tom We Vee	90	15	23
Randy LeSmurf	1	2	7
Gerald Hiei	94	7	32

Friday

Friday morning was sunny and warmer; the best weather of the week. The Axis knew they had NATS wrapped up unless they did something really stupid.

Several captains wanted to sink Admiral Tom. He had taken a beating all week but had yet to sink. Kevin B's QE was out with electrical problems for this battle. Paul Erdman, a Minnesota local and a rookie, was here for his second battle of the week. He started off on the wrong foot by shooting Brian's ID. Frank came in to play with Johnny. Had Johnny's haymaker been working he may not have made it out of there. Lucky for Frank he just ate most of Johnny's sterns. Dirty was the first to dive in and play with Tom. Meanwhile Paul was shooting his teammates again.

Tom was quickly surrounded by Bob, Andy, DW, Johnny and Gerald. The Axis got in each other's way more than they got in Tom's way and the Admiral was able to trade shots and then back out. Dirty and Gerald kept the pressure on Tom as the action drifted to the right side of the pond. Paul got too close to Bob and took a beating; later in the battle he would encounter Jeff and sink. Steve D got caught next to shore and Frank was there to make him pay for breaking Rule 3. The Bismarck started to pump hard and was soon under water. Without one of his guns Johnny was now on 'five' with Tim chasing him around and around in circles. Tim tired of this game and left the spinning to Peter, Ron and Frank. The three ships kept Johnny from spinning and placed several shots into the slow ship. Kevin K came in to help and Johnny made it off of 'five'. For some reason Brandon's Nagato was parked next to shore and pumping. Gerald and Dirty were keeping most of the Allied ships away from their Admiral. Then Dirty pulled into shore a few feet away on 'five out of control'. There were enough Axis ships to protect the cripples without any of them

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sinking. The second sortie started with DW ramming Steve R just as battle started. Both ships came off of the water. Less than a minute into battle Brandon's Nagato went down. Kevin K found a friend in Ty and unloaded most of his haymakers on him. To get this shot Kevin came from the right, way out in the pond, and used his speed to weave through a couple of ships and jump on Ty's side. Then he had enough sense to back out before Tim's NC got into a

a good firing position. DW got his VDT's sidemount into Brian's ID as they both spun around Johnny and Steve R's QE. Steve came back in and put a couple of more holes in Johnny to secure his fate. Dirty took a beating and settled up next to shore for a slow sink. As the Kongo went down the super structure popped off. Zach exclaimed, "It exploded!" Kevin K got his Derflinger hung up on shore and several ships came in to play. Kevin made it out okay but some of the other ships didn't. As happens so many times when one ship gets hung up on the

shore others pay the price. Bob's Kongo was tripled and Ty's Warspite got hung up and ate haymakers from Andy and Jeff. Ron came in towards shore and was trapped by Andy. Jeff came along and dumped a couple of sidemounts into Ron's starboard side. Ron's pump stream lit off and he sank. Bob was on 'five' and being chased by a couple of NCs when the sink allowed him to pump out and rest his ship. After Ron found his ship the action slowly died out. The last sortie of NATS was over.



TASK FORCE 144

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"Some ships are designed to sink ... others require our assistance." - Nathan Zelk RM2