

## WORLD WAR II CHRONOLOGY

- 7/2/42 Initial strategy had been to conduct only defensive actions in the Pacific and focus primarily on defeating Germany. Adm. King believed limited offensive actions should be initiated and bases for future advances be secured. When Japan's defeat at Midway caused Tojo to initiate the construction of airfields in the SW Pacific, Adm. King was able to get approval for Operation Watchtower. The objective of this operation was to first seize Tulagi and Guadalcanal and then to assume responsibility for taking the rest of the Solomons and finally Rabaul.
- 7/5/42 Adm. King ordered Watchtower to start within a month as intelligence indicated the Japanese were beginning construction of an airfield on Guadalcanal. VAdm Ghormley had overall command of the operation while RAdm Fletcher commanded the Expeditionary Force as well as a carrier supporting force built around ENTERPRISE, SARATOGA and WASP. Watchtower was the first amphibious operation undertaken by US forces since 1898.
- 8/7/42 D-day. Landings were made in full daylight on Guadalcanal and Tulagi. There was little opposition on Guadalcanal and the airstrip was occupied by 1600. Most resistance was on Tulagi, which was not secured until the following morning.
- Japanese launched a serious counter-attack, a raid of some 43 Japanese bombers with fighter cover from Rabaul in 3 groups. They were successfully intercepted by wildcats from Fletcher's 3 carriers, then operating SW of Guadalcanal.
- 8/8/42 Nine Japanese torpedo-bombers bored into the transport area and one burning plane crashed into the transport GEORGE F. ELLIOTT, which had to be abandoned.
- 8/9/42 In reaction to the US landings, VADM Mikawa dispatched a few hundred troops from Rabaul embarked on a transport (MEIYO MARU) with a light escort. The transport was sunk by a US sub off of Cape St. George shortly before midnight on 8 August. Mikawa also collected a task group to attack the Expeditionary Force. Heavy cruisers CHOKAI, AOBÄ, KAKO, KINUGASA and FURUTAKA, light cruisers TENRYU and YUBARI and one destroyer, YUNAGI, made rendezvous in St. George Channel at 1900 on 7 August and started hell-bent for Guadalcanal. Mikawa's battle plan was risky--to enter Ironbottom Sound in the early hours of the 9th, strike the warships guarding the expeditionary force, shoot up the unloading transports and retire. This required the Japanese to steam in full daylight down the "Slot" between the central Solomon Islands before entering cover of darkness. Although detected late, the composition of the force was mis-identified and Adm Turner misjudged what the Japanese would do. Turner also permitted his fighting ships to be divided into 3 separate forces to guard 3 possible sea approaches by the Japanese. The force under RAdm Scott patrolled the transport area between Tulagi and Guadalcanal and never got into the battle. The 2 western approaches, on each side of Savo Island,

were guarded by 6 heavy cruisers and 4 destroyers under RAdm Crutchley, RN, who failed to confer with his cruiser captains before the battle or to issue a battle plan. The cruisers were divided into 2 groups: the southern under himself in HMAS AUSTRALIA, with CANBERRA, USS CHICAGO and 2 destroyers and the northern with USS VINCENNES, ASTORIA and QUINCY with 2 destroyers. Turner was so sure the enemy would not attack that night that he summoned Crutchley on board his flagship for a conference. In addition to all the other mistakes, Fletcher decided to retire his 3 carrier task force from its covering position, depriving the landing force of air cover the next day. He did so on the flimsy excuse of needing fuel and a 21% reduction in air strength but real reason was probably that he had already lost LEXINGTON and YORKTOWN and did not intend to lose another carrier. The summoning of Crutchley took AUSTRALIA out of the battle. What resulted was probably the worst defeat ever inflicted on the US Navy in a fair fight.

Mikawa's cruisers catapulted 3 planes at 2345 on 8 August. The planes were assumed by the Allied cruiser captains to be friendly and were permitted to fly overhead unmolested, sending information back to the Japanese task group. The task group sighted Savo Island at 0040 on 9 August and went to battle stations. The group slipped by a US picket ship and steamed directly into the harbor. On signal the Japanese planes dropped flares to silhouette the US southern group and the Japanese heavy cruisers opened up. In less than one minute, CANBERRA was taken apart and CHICAGO took off after a Japanese destroyer. Mikawa now put the pincers on the northern group of US cruisers. ASTORIA was the first to be taken under fire, went dead in the water and sank the next day. QUINCY sank at 0235, followed shortly thereafter by VINCENNES. Although Mikawa could have decimated the now unprotected transports, he feared the approaching daylight would result in an air attack from Fletcher's carriers and decided to make for Rabaul at top speed. The Battle of Savo Island was a resounding victory for the Japanese, who suffered negligible damage to their task group and the loss of 35 men while we lost 4 heavy cruisers, 1 destroyer and 1270 officers and men.

Surviving US naval vessels departed Guadalcanal without offloading the remaining supplies and weapons for the landing force.

- 8/15/42 Three fast destroyer-transport bring ammo, aviation gas and a "Cub" unit to service planes at Henderson Field on Guadalcanal, returning on 20 August with rations.
- 8/18/42 One thousand Japanese troops landed on Guadalcanal and wiped out two days later by US Marines.
- 8/24/42 The Battle of the Eastern Solomons; Yamamoto decided to use 3 carriers, 3 battleships, 9 cruisers, 13 destroyers, 36 subs and several auxiliary ships to cover a reinforcement of only 1500 men to the garrison in western Guadalcanal. While the reinforcement unit ran down the "Slot" for a night landing, a fleet carrier force under VAdm Kondo, spearheaded by SHOKAKU and ZUIKAKU, with 2 battleships and 3 heavy cruisers, advanced into waters NE of

of the Solomons to engage whatever ships Adm Ghormley ventured to deploy. The light carrier RYUJO, thrusting ahead, would play the dual role of flying off bombers to pound Henderson Field and baiting US carrier planes into attacking her, while formidable air groups from the 2 big Japanese carriers attacked Fletcher's carriers. Adm Ghormley ordered Fletcher's carrier force north to cover sea lanes into the Solomons. By daybreak on 23 August it was east of Malaita. Based on bad intelligence, Fletcher decided there would be no battle for several days so he sent WASP group to a fueling rendezvous. This was a bad move as Yamamoto had already ordered Kondo to press ahead and engage him. RYUJO was spotted about 280 miles NW of Fletcher's now 2-carrier force. He took the bait and launched an attack. Shortly thereafter the 2 big enemy carriers were spotted but Fletcher was unable to divert his strike. By 2000 on 24 August, RYUJO had been sunk, but by 1600 that same day, two attack groups from the 2 big enemy carriers were heading for Fletcher's force.

The ENTERPRISE and SARATOGA each operated in a tight circle about two miles in diameter, independent of each other. ENTERPRISE operated about 10 miles NW of SARATOGA. Later they combined. Fletcher was ready for the Japanese bombers with 51 Wildcats, mostly from ENTERPRISE, which intercepted the first enemy attack group about 10 miles out. Twenty-four enemy dive-bombers got through with ENTERPRISE taking 3 bombs and the NORTH CAROLINA attracting some attention. ENTERPRISE recovered her planes after the first attack group broke off but experienced delayed effects of 2 bombs which jammed her rudder. She recovered just before the second Japanese attack group should have come in, but it missed the carriers altogether. None of the enemy planes got through to SARATOGA although SARATOGA hit back at the enemy. Five TBF and two SBD aircraft were scrambled to counterattack without fighter cover on a mission for which ten times as many planes would be assigned later on during the war. They attacked and badly damaged the seaplane carrier CHITOSE. Japanese battleships and cruisers started to pursue the US carriers but broke off before midnight. Destroyers from the Japanese reinforcement force bombarded US marine positions on Guadalcanal and marine aircraft from Henderson Field struck back the next morning. That same day a B-17 actually sank a destroyer.

The termination of the Battle of the Eastern Solomons saw the development of a curious tactical situation in which a virtual exchange of sea mastery occurred every 12 hours. During daylight, the US ruled the seas but at night the dreaded "Tokyo Express" dashed in to discharge men and equipment and to bombard the US marines.

- 9/5/42 Destroyer-transport LITTLE and GREGORY attempt to interfere with Tokyo Express. Both are sunk.
- 9/14/42 7th Marine Regiment departed Espiritu Santo for Guadalcanal on board 6 transports, accompanied by carriers WASP and HORNET.
- 9/15/42 WASP torpedoed and sank; destroyer O'BRIEN torpedoed and sank; NORTH CAROLINA took one torpedo.
- 9/18/42 7th Marine Regiment landed at Guadalcanal.

- 10/9/42 Reinforced regiment of the Americal Division dispatched to Guadalcanal in 2 big transports and 8 destroyers, commanded by Adm Turner. Adm Ghormley sent cruiser group to run interference for transports, commanded by RAdm Scott in SAN FRANCISCO.
- 10/11/42 Strong Tokyo Express run expected (2 seaplane carriers and 6 destroyers commanded by RAdm Joshima) with RAdm Goto bringing down the "Slot" a bombardment group of 3 heavy cruisers and 2 destroyers. RAdm Scott located RAdm Goto's group and surprised him at 2346 on 11 October, SW of Savo Island and north of Cape Esperance, Guadalcanal, from which the battle is named. SAN FRANCISCO, SALT LAKE CITY, BOISE and HELENA all took Goto under fire. Japanese lost FURUTAKA and suffered heavy damage to AOBA; lost destroyer FUBUKI. US lost DUNCAN and heavy damage to FARENHOLT and BOISE. RAdm Joshima had, meanwhile, dropped off troops and cargo and was steaming out of the Sound when spotted by air. Planes from Henderson Field sunk 2 destroyers.
- 10/13/42 Americal Division landed on Guadalcanal. Japanese bombardment mission built around battleships KONGO and HARUNA under Adm Kurita did extensive damage on Guadalcanal. Kurita retired at 0230 on 14 October after PT boat attacks made him nervous, although the boats recorded no hits.
- 10/14/42 Adm Mikawa personally entered "Sleepless Lagoon" in cruiser CHOKAI with KINUGASA to deliver bombardment on Guadalcanal.
- 10/15/42 At daybreak enemy transports lying-to off Tassafaronga, unloading troops and supplies. Japanese taken under air attack and suffered heavy losses before deciding to retire.
- 10/18/42 Adm Nimitz, recognizing that the critical situation required a more aggressive commander, had VAdm Halsey relieve Adm Ghormley. The announcement that Halsey was now ComSoPac was received on board ships of that force with cheers. INDIANA and task group, released from Atlantic Fleet, headed for the S. Pacific.
- Japanese give capture of Henderson Field top priority and decide to devote 3d week of October to softening up US marines in preparation for "Y-day" (OCT 22), when they would capture it, followed by annihilation of US naval forces in the Solomon area. Tough defense by US marines caused Japanese to postpone Y-day and gave Adm Kinkaid time to bring up ENTERPRISE, which would take a decisive part in the sea action.
- 10/26/42 The Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands: Yamamoto directed the show from Truk. He had 4 carriers, 5 battleships 14 cruisers and 44 destroyers to throw in; he knew WASP had been sunk and SARATOGA was undergoing repair but did not know ENTERPRISE was back with SOUTH DAKOTA in her screen, under Kinkaid.
- Yamamoto did not know where the US carriers were. At noon on 25 Oct, 2 Japanese carriers were spotted by air and Kinkaid launched a strike from ENTERPRISE, which located nothing as the Japanese reversed course, awaiting for news of victory ashore. In the

early hours of 26 Oct, Kinkaid began to get plane contacts on enemy carriers 200 miles away. From Adm Halsey came the word to attack. Two planes from ENTERPRISE located and disabled carrier ZUIHO. Japanese search plane located HORNET and Adm Kondo ordered immediate strikes. HORNET did the same and both attack groups passed each other enroute to their targets. About 27 Japanese planes attacked HORNET, almost finishing her. HORNET's planes hit the carrier SHOKAKU, putting her out of action for 9 months. Adm Kondo ordered air strikes from ZUIKAKU and JUNYO against ENTERPRISE. Three bombs hit ENTERPRISE but no lethal damage done. HORNET was sunk while cruiser NORTHAMPTON attempted to tow.

- 11/2/42 Japanese brought in 65 destroyer loads and 2 cruiser loads of troops to western Guadalcanal between 2 Nov and 10 Nov so that the Japanese outnumbered the Americans for the first time. Minesweeper SOUTHARD sank one Japanese sub.
- 11/12/42 thru 11/15/42 The Naval Battle of Guadalcanal: US reinforcements were due to arrive on 11-12 Nov in the form of 3 combat-loaded freighters escorted by RAdm Scott on cruiser ATLANTA with 4 destroyers and 4 more transport types escorted by RAdm Callaghan on cruiser SAN FRANCISCO with 3 more cruisers and 5 destroyers. As ENTERPRISE was still being repaired, Adm Halsey sent battleships WASHINGTON and SOUTH DAKOTA and 4 destroyers under RAdm Lee to assist. RAdm Scott's group unloaded successfully on 11 Nov but while RAdm Callaghan's group was about half unloaded, word came that fighter-escorted enemy bombers were flying down the "Slot". This started the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. All but 2 enemy planes were destroyed while the transports suffered slight damage.

Reports indicated Tokyo Express that night would include 2 battleships, 4 cruisers and 10 destroyers. The only option was for RAdm Callaghan's 2 heavy and 3 light cruisers and 8 destroyers to block this run. As night fell on 12 Nov, the Tokyo Express consisting of 2 battleships screened by light cruiser and 14 destroyers under command of VAdm Abe made their run. Their mission was to knock out Henderson Field and bombard the marines. The slugfest began at 1050 on 13 Nov. Cruiser ATLANTA was quickly taken out of action and RAdm Scott, still on board her, was killed. Destroyers CUSHING and LAFHEY were sunk as was destroyer BARTON. Destroyer MONSSEN was reduced to a burning hulk. SAN FRANCISCO received several hits, one of which killed RAdm Callaghan. Cruiser PORTLAND took a torpedo hit that caused her to steam in circles while another torpedo put cruiser JUNEAU out of action. (At 1100 on 13 Nov JUNEAU was sunk by enemy sub, taking down 700 men, including the 5 Sullivan brothers.) Japanese lost 2 destroyers and suffered heavy damage to 1 battleship, which was later sunk by air attack. RAdm Callaghan had accomplished his mission by denying VAdm Abe the completion of his.

On the night of 13 Nov-morning of 14 Nov, RAdm Tanaka made a run consisting of 11 destroyers escorting 11 troop-laden transports and covered by Adm Kondo heading a group of heavy cruisers, destroyers and one battleship. US land and sea (from approaching ENTERPRISE) based planes sank 6 transports with all supplies. Four transports landed their troops by running aground. Adm Kinkaid

detached WASHINGTON and SOUTH DAKOTA and 4 destroyers from ENTERPRISE's screen to thrust into Ironbottom Sound and clean up. Coming to meet this US force (under RAdm Lee) was Adm Kondo with his group and RAdm Tanaka with more destroyers bent on delivering the heavy bombardment on Henderson Field that Abe had been denied. The battle began at 2317 on 14 Nov. There was a destroyer duel which resulted in PRESTON and WALKE being sunk and 2 others being put out of action, forcing RAdm Lee to press on with only 2 battleships. SOUTH DAKOTA suddenly lost power and became a sitting duck. WASHINGTON quickly put enemy battleship KIRISHIMA out of action and returned to assist SOUTH DAKOTA. Adm Kondo withdrew at 0100 on 15 Nov, ending the battle which began on 12 Nov.

11/30/42 It was decided that a special cruiser-destroyer group be formed, given a month of training, especially night fighting, and then thrown up the Slot to break up the Tokyo Express. This new striking force consisted of heavy cruisers MINNEAPOLIS, PENSACOLA, NEW ORLEANS and NORTHAMPTON, light cruiser HONOLULU and 4-6 destroyers under command of RAdm Wright. At 2225 on 30 Nov, a Japanese reinforcement force of 8 destroyers commanded by RAdm Tanaka encountered RAdm Wright's force before arriving off Tassafaronga.

The Battle of Tassafaronga: Despite inferior force, Japanese lost only 1 destroyer while inflicting heavy damage on MINNEAPOLIS, NEW ORLEANS and PENSACOLA and sinking NORTHAMPTON.

12/3/42 Successful reinforcement runs were made by Japanese, hampered but thru not defeated by PT boats from Tulagi. But for the rest of Decem-  
12/12/42 ber the Japanese resorted only to reinforcement by submarine.

1/23/43: Aerial recon reported many enemy transports, freighters and destroyers at Rabaul and Buin and carriers and battleships milling around Ontong Java, north of Guadalcanal. These were preparations for Japan's evacuation of Guadalcanal but Adm Halsey assumed it was a major attempt at reinforcement. He sent 4 transports of reinforcements with heavy escort (WICHITA, CHICAGO, LOUISVILLE, 3 light cruisers, 8 destroyers and 2 SANGAMON class escort carriers) under RAdm Giffen. Enemy land-based air crippled and later sank CHICAGO at the Battle of Rennell Island, which was the last of 7 naval battles of the Guadalcanal campaign and which terminated on 30 Jan.

2/4/43 US reinforcements arrive on Guadalcanal but Japanese evacuation had begun on night of 1 Feb and was completed on 6 Feb.

3/26/43 VAdm Hosogaya's force of 2 heavy cruisers, 2 light cruisers and 4 destroyers was escorting transports reinforcing Attu when it was intercepted by US force half its size under RAdm McMorris. The result was the Battle of the Komandorski Islands. The battle lasted for 3 1/2 hours as RAdm McMorris attempted to get at the enemy transports with RICHMOND and SALT LAKE CITY initially and then sought simply to retire. When SALT LAKE CITY went dead in water and appeared doomed, VAdm Hosogaya broke off contact. The enemy transports turned back.

- 2/21/43 US forces lifted from New Caledonia and landed unopposed on Russell Islands, 30 miles west of Cape Esperance.
- 3/1/43 Strong enemy reinforcement convoy departed Rabaul (8 transports with 7000 troops and 8 destroyers) bound for Lae. US air attacks destroyed 7 transports and 2 destroyers. This was the Battle of the Bismarck Sea.
- 5/11/43 PENNSYLVANIA, NEVADA, IDAHO and RALEIGH under RAdm McMorris support landings on Attu. Japanese fought desperately, culminating in a thousand-man screaming suicide charge on 29 May.
- 6/30/43 Gen. MacArthur chose this day to start accomplishing the 2 objectives set forth in JCS directive of 29 March which were; 1) To establish airfields on the Trobriand Islands; and 2) to seize Japanese positions on Huon Gulf and along Vitiiaz Strait, and Cape Gloucester on New Britain, in order to breach the Bismarck barrier at vital points. Nassau Bay was occupied the same day.
- 7/4/43 Amphibious forces (10 transports, 12 destroyer transports, 9 LSTs, 11 LCIs) under RAdm Turner screened by 8 destroyers and supported by battleships, cruisers and escort carriers under RAdm Ainsworth, RAdm Merrill and RAdm Davis conducted major landing on Rendova Island across Blanche Channel from Munda, New Georgia.

Naval part of the campaign for Munda started when RAdm Ainsworth's light cruiser force encountered RAdm Akiyama's force of 10 destroyers in the "Slot." (The night before, RAdm Ainsworth had lost the destroyer STRONG to a mine while bombarding Vila and Bairoko.) In the ensuing Battle of Kula Gulf, one enemy destroyer was sunk and another forced aground but US cruiser HELENA was sunk.

- 7/12/43 RAdm Ainsworth performed his 15th combat mission up the Slot, resulting in Battle of Kolombangara in almost the same manner as the Battle of Kula Gulf. US light cruisers HONOLULU and ST. LOUIS with HMNZS LEANDER and 2 destroyer squadrons of 5 ships each faced off against RAdm Izaki's support group comprised of JINTSU, 5 destroyers and 4 destroyer-transports. JINTSU was sunk with all hands shortly after engagement began at 0108 on 13 July while the Japanese put LEANDER out of action. RAdm Ainsworth sent 1 destroyer squadron after the retiring Japanese destroyers with 2 US cruisers and 3 destroyers following. Five enemy destroyers turned around and caught the latter group by surprise. Destroyer GWIN was sunk while torpedo hit both HONOLULU and ST. LOUIS doing little damage. (US still did not recognize the threat posed by Japanese "long lance" torpedoes.) The Japanese continued to lose men, ships and planes first to reinforce Munda and Vila and then to evacuate them

Late July, 1943 A big operation to take Kiska was laid on for late July but the Japanese fooled us by evacuating their 5000-man garrison under cover of fog.

- 7/23/43 thru 7/27/43 Japanese efforts to put reinforcements into the New Georgia campaign via armed barges broken up by PT boats.

- 8/1/43 JFK's PT-109 sunk while trying to block Blackett Strait south of Kolombangara to a Japanese destroyer express.
- 8/5/43 Munda captured by Allies. Naval campaign up the Slot continued. For first time destroyers were permitted to make independent torpedo attacks rather than keeping them back in the rear with the cruisers as per instructions from RAdm Wilkinson, new Com III Phib.
- 8/6/43 Six US destroyers (DUNLAP, CRAVEN, MAURY, LANG, STERETT, and STACK) encountered 4 Japanese destroyers in Vella Gulf. Three enemy destroyers were sunk.
- "Leapfrogging" strategy replaces "Island-hopping" strategy. Thus it was decided to shell Vila, severing supply lines, and seize lightly held Vella Lavella.
- 8/15/43 US troops land at Barakoma Bay in Vella Lavella. Japanese reinforcement attempts beaten back. Enemy garrison of 600 cornered on NW shore. Japanese attempt to evacuate them resulted in the naval Battle of Vella Lavella.
- 10/6/43 RAdm Ijuin with 9 destroyers and 12 small craft attempt to rescue troops on Vella Lavella. Six US destroyers sent to intercept. O'BANNON and SELFRIDGE were put out of action while CHEVALIER was lost (SELFIDGE later had to be scuttled). The Japanese lost the YUGUMO but managed to evacuate their troops. This battle concluded the Central Solomons campaign, second phase of Operation Watchtower, having cost the USN 6 warships and Japan 17.
- Oct-Nov 1943 The Bougainville Battles occurred. Gilbert Islands operation is mounted at this time.
- 11/19/43 Tarawa
- Jan-Feb 1944 Kwajalein (Operation Flintlock). Truk was bombed and Eniwetok was taken in February.
- While Adm Spruance's 5th Fleet and Adm Turner's V Phib Force were crashing through the Central Pacific to Eniwetok, Adm Kinkaid's 7th Fleet and Adm Barbey's VII Phib were making equally spectacular leaps along New Guinea.
- 4/22/44 D-day for landing at Hollandia. By 3 May, the Japanese airfields at Lake Sentani were in US hands. MacArthur planned a series of assaults, all pointing toward Mindanao with a 15 Nov target date. Four operations--Wakde, Biak, Noemfoor and Sansapor--carried him and his forces to the NW point of New Guinea's Vogelkop, 550 miles west of Hollandia, in a little more than 3 months.
- 5/19/44 Wakde captured by US forces.
- 5/27/44 Occupation of Biak began but Japanese denied us the 2 airfields there for 1 month due to skillful defense in depth. Adm Toyoda (Yamamoto's replacement), recognizing the fall of Biak would provide the US with ability to launch bomber attacks, made 3 attempts to reinforce Biak with troops from Mindanao, by a relief force commanded by RAdm Sakonju. He was turned back once by a false



report of an aircraft carrier and on 8 June he was chased off by Adm Crutchley's cruiser-destroyer force. For his 3d attempt, Adm Toyoda assembled powerful striking force, built around superbattle ships YAMATO and MUSASHI. Three days before the force was to head for Biak, it was pulled north into the Phillipine Sea since Adm Spruance's 5th Fleet was about to land in the Marianas.

7/2/44 US landing made on Noemfoor.

7/30/44 Landing made at Sansapor by force commanded by Adm Fechteler.

Meanwhile, Operation Forager (the capture of Saipan, Tinian and Guam) was in progress, requiring some 535 combatant ships and auxiliaries carrying 127,571 troops.

6/13/44 Battleships began bombardment of Saipan.

6/15/44 US forces land on Saipan. The plan called for Saipan to be secured in 2 days but it took 3 weeks.

6/16/44 Japanese launch ground counter-attack on Saipan and withdrew under blanket of gunfire from LOUISVILLE, PHELPS and MONSSEN. Adm Spruance received word that enemy carrier force was heading in his direction from San Bernardino Strait and that a second enemy force was steaming north off Surigao Strait. Japan's Operation A-GO (a plan to destroy the US 5th Fleet in one decisive action) had been initiated, spearheaded by VAdm Ozawa. Between 15-18 June the two opposing forces were warily feeling for each other. (The Japanese had 5 fleet carries, 4 light carriers, 5 battleships, 11 cruisers, 2 light cruisers, and 28 destroyers; US had 7 fleet carriers, 8 light carriers, 7 battleships, 8 heavy and 13 light cruisers, and 69 destroyers.)

6/19/44 The Battle of the Philippine Sea: First phase of the battle was a series of dogfights, starting about 0830 on 19 June over and near Guam. At 0959 the first of 4 enemy attack aircraft appeared on radar headed for US naval forces and thus began "The Great Marianas Turkey Shoot" in which Japan ultimately lost 346 planes as opposed to 30 for the US. Additionally, 2 enemy carriers (TAIHO and SHOKAKU) were sunk by US subs. Now the hunter became the hunted as US carrier groups sought out Ozawa's position. Ozawa was located at 1540 on 20 June and Adm Mitscher decided to launch an all-out strike, even though recovery would have to be made after dark. The strike sank the carrier HIYO and 2 oilers. Many US planes had to ditch upon return. Adm Spruance gave chase to the Japanese but called it off at 1920 on 21 June and headed towards Saipan, rescuing 59 pilots from the water enroute.

7/8/44 Daily naval and air bombardment of Guam began.

7/21/44 US forces land on Guam and secure it.

7/24/44 US forces land on Tinian and secure it within 7 days.

9/15/44 At Quebec Conference, after receiving word that Halsey had carried out carrier raids on the Philippines against enemy airfields and within sight of shore, it was decided that Leyte would be the next

target to be taken by 20 Oct.

Units of Adm Barbey's VII Phib land on Morotai and airfield is built by 4 Oct.

VAdm Wilkinson's III Phib landed on Peleliu after naval bombardment which started on 12 September. An intricately connected cave system prolonged the securing of Peleliu until 25 Nov. Angaur, a 2 mile long island south of Peleliu, was captured by 23 Oct.

- 9/23/44 Adm Wilkinson landed units of 81st Div on Ulithi Atoll, which was promptly developed as a fleet base.
- 10/12/44 TF 38 under Halsey and Mitscher (consisting of ENTERPRISE and 8 ESSEX class carriers, 8 INDEPENDENCE class light carriers, with an ample screen of ~~nav~~ battleships, heavy and light cruisers and destroyers) began a 3 day effort to knock out enemy air strength on Formosa and to deny it to the Japanese as a staging base toward Leyte. Air attacks resulted in over 500 enemy planes being destroyed as well as many freighters, small craft, ammo dumps, etc. US cruiser HOUSTON was crippled.
- 10/17/44 Cdr. Loud's minesweeping and hydrographic group arrive off Leyte Gulf and begin sweeping approaches to Dinagat, Calicoan, Suluan and Homonhon. *20/21/44*
- 10/18/44 All islands commanding the entrances to Leyte Gulf were secured by US Rangers. RAdm Oldendorf began bombarding the landing beaches from within the Gulf.
- 10/20/44 RAdm Wilkinson's Southern Force steaming toward its transport area off Dulag and RAdm Barbey's Northern Force toward San Pedro Bay. Dulag and Tacloban were taken the next day. Only amphibious ships remained in Leyte Gulf as all fire support battleships, cruisers and destroyers were advancing up Surigao Strait to meet the enemy.
- 10/23/44 The Battle For Leyte Gulf--Opening Actions: This battle was comprised of 4 naval actions: 1) In the Sibuyan Sea on 10/24; 2) In Surigao Strait on 10/24-25; 3) Battle off Samar on 25 Oct; and 4) Battle off Cape Engano on 25-26 Oct. A total of 282 ships were involved on both sides. With the invasion at Leyte, Japan executed its SHO-1 Plan which provided for the following: VAdm Ozawa's Northern Force, built around carriers ZUIKAKU, ZUIHO, CHITOSE and CHIYODA, would decoy Halsey's 3rd Fleet up north and out of the way; then Adm Kurita's Center Force, which included super-battleships MUSASHI and YAMATO with 9 heavy cruisers, would debouch from San Bernardino Strait at the same time as the Nishimura-Shima Southern Force debouched from Surigao Strait to put a pincer on the amphibious ships in Leyte Gulf, destroy them and then annihilate Halsey.
- First contact was in early hours of 23 Oct as Kurita's Center Force entered Palawan Passage. Two US subs sank 2 and disabled 1 enemy cruisers.

10/24/44 By noon 3 of the Halsey-Mitscher fast carrier groups were deployed on a broad front awaiting Kurita. Land-based enemy planes sunk PRINCETON and damaged BIRMINGHAM before Mitscher's planes could hit Kurita's ships. US planes sank MUSASHI and disabled cruiser MYOKO, delaying the SHO-1 timetable and making it no longer possible for Kurita to rendezvous with Nishimura and Shima inside Leyte Gulf at daybreak.

The Battle of Surigao Strait: The Southern Force was sighted before noon and VAdm Kinkaid correctly estimated that it would try to penetrate Leyte Gulf via Surigao Strait that night. RAdm Oldendorf met them with 6 battleships, 4 heavy and 4 light cruisers with 4 destroyer divisions where Surigao Strait debouches into Leyte Gulf. In addition, 39 PT boats patrolled the area. At 2236 a PT boat picked up Nishimura's part of the Southern Force and attacked, only to retreat without inflicting any damage. This pattern was followed by other PT boats as Nishimura continued. Nishimura next encountered US destroyer torpedo attacks which resulted in the sinking of 3 enemy destroyers and hits on 2 enemy battleships. Finally, Nishimura ran into the main body of Oldendorf's forces which opened fire. WEST VIRGINIA, TENNESSEE and CALIFORNIA inflicted most of the damage to the Japanese. When it was over at 0409 on 25 Oct, YAMASHIRO (battleship) was sunk and all that was left of Nishimura's van was the heavily damaged cruiser MOGAMI and the destroyer SHIGURE. Adm Shima's column now rounded the southern point of Panaon Island to enter Suirgao Strait, suffered a PT-torpedo hit on a light cruiser (ABUKUMA), ordered a torpedo attack on LOUISVILLE (no hits resulted), and retired to await developments. The pursuit phase of the battle continued at 0432 when Adm Oldendorf started south through the Strait. LOUISVILLE, PORTLAND and DENVER caught up with MOGAMI and pounded her but she remained afloat. US air attacks polished off MOGAMI and ABUKUMA, leaving destroyer SHIGURE as the sole survivor of Nishimura's van.

10/25/44 The Battle off Samar: Adm Halsey estimated that based on his carrier pilots' exaggerated reports of their sinkings in the Battle of the Sibuyan Sea, Kurita's Center Force was no longer a force to be reckoned with and therefore did not even warn Adm Kinkaid to watch out for it. Thus the 3rd Fleet took the bait and went after Ozawa's Northern Force. As a result, Kurita's force was able to emerge unseen into the Philippine Sea at 0030 on 25 Oct and steam south unseen off the Samar shore, until intercepted accidentally by RAdm Clifton Sprague's escort carriers (6), 3 destroyers and 4 destroyer escorts. RAdm Sprague's group thus had to fight Kurita's 4 battleships, 6 heavy cruisers and numerous destroyers. RAdm Sprague hoped to be able to fight a delaying action until additional help could arrive. US destroyers were ordered to counterattack the enemy's heavy ships. They courageously kept the enemy's big ships out of the fray for a significant period of time. Destroyers JOHNSTON, HEERMANN and SAMUEL B. ROBERTS were sunk. Kurita's 4 remaining heavy cruisers finally managed to pull ahead and take the escort carriers, which had been trying to outrun Kurita, under fire. CHIKUMA began to pound the GAMBIER BAY, which began to lag behind, and was finally sunk. But as the air and destroyer attacks and now the fun fire from the other escort

carriers caused Kurita to lose 3 cruisers, he broke off contact, heading for San Bernardino Strait.

Escort carriers SANTEE, SUWANNEE, KITKUN BAY, FANSHAW BAY, WHITE PLAINS and KALININ BAY were hit by kamikazes with minor damage although ST. LO was sunk.

The Battle off Cape Engano: Ozawa's Northern Force (comprised of 4 carriers, 2 "hermaphrodites" HYUGA and ISE--battleships with short flight deck, 3 light cruisers, 9 destroyers and a tanker unit) was sighted at 1540 on 24 Oct. Three US carrier groups rendezvoused around midnite. At 0220 on 25 Oct, they sighted the 2 groups into which Ozawa had divided his Northern Force--one under RAdm Matsuda with 2 hermaphrodites, a light cruiser and 4 destroyers and the rest under Ozawa himself. US air strikes were launched at first light and sunk carrier CHITOSE and 1 destroyer. The next strike sunk the carrier CHIYODA with the assistance of gunfire from Adm DuBose's cruisers. Subsequent air strikes claimed the carriers ZUIKAKU and ZUIHO. Recently created TF 34, which included most of Halsey's gunfire ships and was under command of Adm Lee, was sent to intercept Kurita before he got back out through the Strait but arrived 3 hours too late. Cruisers SANTE FE, MOBILE, WICHITA, NEW ORLEANS and 9 destroyers were detached from TF 34 to continue on with the carriers. This cruiser group, under RAdm DuBose, was ordered to pursue Ozawa's limping units. They ended up sinking CHINODA and destroyer HATSUZUKI. But the rest of Ozawa's force made it back to the Ryukyus on 27 Oct.

Japanese managed to get about 45,000 troops and 10,000 tons of supplies on west coast of Leyte in the next few weeks.

- 10/29/44 TG 38.2 and 38.4 struck enemy airfield around Manila resulting in kamikazes crashing into carriers INTREPID, FRANKLIN and BELLEAU WOOD, injuring them so badly they had to retire to Ulithi.
- 11/1/44 TF 38 rendezvous at Ulithi. Air situation over Leyte deteriorates.
- 11/5/44 TF 38 returns to Leyte and reasserts air superiority. LEXINGTON is hit by kamikaze but only minor damage incurred.
- 12/1/44 Sixth Army controlled most of Leyte except the San Isidro Peninsula and a small area around Ormoc. The Japanese were down to 35,000 without any ability to reinforce them. To help finish the campaign a series of destroyer sweeps into Ormoc Bay and Camotes Sea and minesweeps in the Canigao Channels between Bohol and Leyte were conducted. Destroyer COOPER sank after sinking destroyer KUWA.
- 12/7/44 Shore-to-shore amphib landing made on Ormoc Bay, commanded by Adm Struble, in which destroyers MAHAN and WARD were sunk by kamikazes.
- 12/11/44 Destroyer REID lost to kamikaze attack and CALDWELL damaged.
- 12/25/44 Capture of Palompon ends Leyte campaign.
- 12/13/44 Kamikaze attack made on Visayan Attack Force, headed by RAdm Struble to take troops from Leyte Gulf to Mindoro, near Negros.

crashing into cruiser NASHVILLE and destroyer HARADEN.

12/15/44 US troops land on Mindoro without incident.

12/19/44 Carrier UNRYU sunk by US sub in the East China Sea.

12/26/44 RAdm Kimura commanded bombardment force (including cruiser ASHIGARA, light cruiser OYODO and 6 destroyers) enroute to break up Mindoro follow-on landings and was turned back by combined PT-air attacks. Destroyer KIYOSHIMO was sunk.

1/1/45 Luzon Attack Force rendezvous at Leyte Gulf (commanded by VAdm Kinkaid on the WASATCH), pass through Surigao Strait and into the Sulu Sea.

1/4/45 Kamikaze attack sinks escort carrier OMMANEY BAY and damages LOUISVILLE and HMAS AUSTRALIA as well as escort carrier MANILA BAY and destroyer escort STAFFORD.

Plan for Lingayen landings called for 3 day interval between arrival of Oldendorf with the fire support ships and that of the amphibious forces, to allow plenty of time for minesweeping and shore bombardment.

1/6/45 NEW MEXICO hit by plane while bombarding landing area. Destroyer WALKE was also hit. Kamikaze hits were recorded on minesweeper SOUTHARD, destroyers BARTON and ALLEN M. SUMNER, CALIFORNIA, COLUMBIA, HMAS AUSTRALIA, and LOUISVILLE while minesweeper LONG was sunk.

1/8/45 Minecrafts HOVEY and PALMER and HMAS AUSTRALIA hit by kamikazes.

1/9/45 Landings made on San Fabian and Lingayen virtually unopposed. Japanese suicide boats operating out of Port Sual attempted to sneak out and sink Allied shipping (sinking 2 LCIs and damaging 4 LSTs) but were severely shot up by destroyers PHILIP and LEUTZE.

1/10/45 Convoys begin to depart. Kamikaze hit on DE BELKNAP in Lingayen Gulf and 4 Liberty ships in a returning convoy, as well as on escort carrier SALAMAUA.

Luzon campaign from here on was an Army show but 7th Fleet still had plenty to do. With Halsey's help, Adm Kinkaid set out to secure the Mindoro-Lingayen sea lane upon which the success of the campaign rested. Halsey made memorable incursion into S. China Sea with almost the entire 3rd Fleet on 10-20 Jan. No enemy warships were found but TF 38 planes sank 44 merchantmen and hit enemy planes on Formosa. LANGLEY, TICONDEROGA and a destroyer all took kamikaze hits.

1/29/45 USN lands XI Corps on beaches 45 miles from San Fernando to help the advance against Manila.

1/30/45 Adm Fechteler's group of VII Phib landed the 11th Airborne Division at Nasugbu, Batangas Province to assist advance on Manila from the SW.

- 2/3/45 US troops enter Manila although Japanese were not cleared out until one month later.
- 2/15/45 Shore-to-shore amphibious operation from Subic Bay, under Adm Struble, conducted to take Mariveles.
- 2/16/45 Paratroopers land on Corregidor supported by 2 ships from DesDiv 46 (one was the CONVERSE). Corregidor fell on 26 Feb.
- 2/28/45 Starting this date ten southern Philippines and Borneo operations were conducted thru 1 July as follows:
- 2/28/45 8th Phib Group at Palawan with naval attack group under RAdm Fechteler, covering group under RAdm Riggs. Secured on 22 April.
- 3/10/45 6th Phib Group at Zamboanga with naval attack group under RAdm Royal, covering group under RAdm Doe; secured on 15 August.
- 3/18/45 9th Phib Group at Panay and W. Negros with naval attack group under RAdm Struble, covering group under RAdm Riggs. Secured on 4 June.
- 3/26/45 TG 78.2 at Cebu under RAdm Sprague (naval attack group) and RAdm Berkey. Secured on 18 April.
- 4/11/45 TU 78.3.3 at Bohol under RAdm Deutermann (naval attack group). Secured on 20 April.
- 4/16/45 TU 78.3.3 at SE Negros under RAdm Deutermann. Secured on 12 June.
- 4/17/45 8th Phib Group at Mindanao under RAdm Noble (naval attack group) and RAdm Riggs (covering group). Secured on 15 Aug.
- 5/1/45 TG 78.1 at Tarakan under RAdm Royal (naval attack group) and RAdm Berkey (covering group). Secured on 30 May.
- 6/10/45 TG 78.1 at Brunei Bay under RAdm Royal and RAdm Berkey. Secured on 1 July.
- 7/1/45 8th Phib Group at Balikpapan under RAdm Noble and RAdm Riggs. Secured on 22 July.
- 2/19/45 D-day for Iwo Jima. SANTE FE and NEVADA provided fire support, along with 10 destroyers.
- 2/21/45 SARATOGA hit by kamikaze 35 miles NW of Iwo Jima as was BISMARCK SEA which was sunk. Kamikaze attack on LUNGA POINT, escort carrier and KEOKUK did minor damage.
- 2/23/45 Mount Suribachi taken by US marines. Iwo Jima secured 16 Mar 45.
- 3/9/45 B-29 raids made on Japan.
- 3/18/45 Carrier based planes made raids on Japan but kamikazes made hits on WASP, YORKTOWN and FRANKLIN.

- 3/27/45 Landings made on Kerama Retto, cluster of islands 15 miles west of Okinawa, which were secured shortly thereafter.
- 4/1/45 D-day for Okinawa after 5 days of naval bombardment and air bombing. Kamikazes attacked a "Demonstration Group" under RAdm Wright which was making a fake landing at the southern end of Okinawa, hitting an LST and transport HINSDALE. At the actual landing beach, TENNESSEE and BIRMINGHAM were attacked. That evening kamikazes hit ALPINE and ACHERNAR.
- 4/6/45 Special Surface Attack Force headed by VAdm Ito, consisting of battleship YAMATO, light cruiser KAHAGI and 8 destroyers, in concert with a massed kamikaze attack were to destroy any ships left after kamikaze attack.
- 4/7/45 YAKAGI put out of action, 1 destroyer sunk, and YAMATO received several hits in initial carrier based attack. After the last attack, YAMATO, YAHAGI and 4 destroyers were sunk. HANCOCK took one kamikaze hit.
- 4/11/45 Massive kamikaze attack hit MISSOURI once, ENTERPRISE twice, and destroyer KIDD once, all with minor damage.
- Kamikaze attacks were laid on between 6 April and 22 June. Transport DICKERSON was hit and later scuttled while transports TELFAIR, GOODHUE and HENRICO were hit as well.
- Adm Turners's screening plan for protecting the forces in and around Okinawa provided for 2 anti-sub destroyer screens, an inner and outer, a destroyer screen to cover possible approaches of surface raids, a "flycatcher screen" to catch suicide motor boats and, most important, the radar picket screen. The radar picket posts were the posts of greatest danger.
- Destroyers LEUTZE and NEWCOMBE hit by kamikazes and later were scrapped. On 6 April, BUSH and CALHOUN were lost to kamikazes and CASSIN YOUNG took a hit. Destroyer EMMONS and an LST were sunk and 6 other destroyers were crashed.
- 4/12/45 ABELE was first US ship sunk by baka bomb. Following ships were hit by kamikazes: PURDY, ZELLARS and TENNESSEE
- 4/16/45 LAFFEY and 4 other destroyers hit by kamikazes. PRINGLE was sunk. INTREPID was hit.
- 4/27/45 Kamikaze attack made. Transport, 2 destroyers and hospital ship COMFORT were hit.
- 5/3/45 Fifth major kamikaze attack made. LUCE was sunk, MORRISON was hit and abandoned, INGRAHAM hit.
- 5/10/45 Sixth major attack made. BUNKER HILL and HADLEY hit.
- 5/23/45 Seventh major attack made. Destroyer transports BATES and BARRY sunk and knocked out 5 more ships.

- 5/27/45 Eighth major attack made. BRAINE and ANTHONY knocked out and DREXLER sunk.
- 6/21/45 All resistance on Okinawa ended. This operation proved to be the most costly naval campaign of the war.
- 7/1/45 TF 38 sortied from Leyte Gulf to operate close to Japan, remaining until Japan surrendered.
- 7/10/45 First strikes against Tokyo occurred.
- 7/15/45 RAdm Shafroth commanded bombardment unit (SOUTH DAKOTA, INDIANA and MASSACHUSETTS, 2 heavy cruisers and 9 destroyers) which hit Japanese iron works within the home islands at Kamaishi.
- 7/16/45 RAdm Badger's bombardment unit (IOWA, MISSOURI and WISCONSIN, 2 light cruisers, and 8 destroyers) hit Nihon Steel Company and Wanishi Ironworks at Muroran, Hokkaido.
- 7/24/45 Destroyer UNDERHILL sunk by enemy sub.
- 7/29/45 INDIANAPOLIS sunk by enemy sub.
- 8/14/45 Japan capitulates.
- 9/2/45 Japan signs formal surrender.