



***Hardhead (SS-365)*** was launched by Manitowoc Shipbuilding Co., Manitowoc, Wis., 12 December 1943; sponsored by Mrs. E. F. McDonald; and commissioned 18 April 1944, Comdr. F. McMaster in command.

Following shakedown training in lake Michigan the submarine entered a floating dry dock at Loekport, Ill., and was towed to New Orleans, where she arrived 16 May 1944. *Hardhead* got underway from Algiers, La., 22 May, and arrived Balboa, Canal Zone, 5 days later. There she took part in additional training exercises before her arrival at Pearl Harbor 7 July 1944.

*Hardhead*, departed on her first war patrol 27 July and proceeded to her patrol area off the Philippines. Early 18 August she detected Japanese cruiser *Natori* east of San Bernardino Strait, and closed for a surface attack. The first well directed salvo stopped the cruiser dead in the water; a second sent her to the bottom. During the remainder of her first patrol *Hardhead* rendered lifeguard services during strikes by fleet aircraft on the Philippines and operated with a reconnaissance line during the Palaus operation. She arrived Fremantle, Australia, 26 September 1944.

*Hardhead's* second patrol began as she departed Fremantle 24 October and set course for the Philippines. While steaming on the surface through the Sulu Sea October she discovered a life raft adrift. In it was Commander (now Rear Admiral) Bakuti's, fighter squadron commander of *Enterprise*, who had been in the water for 6 days after being shot down during America's smashing victory in the Battle for Leyte Gulf. Operating in

a coordinated group with *Growler* and *Hake*, the submarine sighted a large cargo ship with escorts 8 November. After being driven off in one attack, *Hardhead* aggressively gained an ahead position and sank *Manei Maru*. It was during this attack that *Growler* was lost. *Hardhead* performed lifeguard duty off Suibic Bay in November and on the 25th came upon an escorted merchant ship. She sank a coast defense vessel, damaged the merchantman, and evaded a retaliatory depth charge attack. Soon afterward, the submarine returned to Fremantle, ending another skillful and effective patrol 5 December.

Putting to sea again 24 December. *Hardhead* began her third war patrol in the South China Sea. Operating with *Besugo* and *Blackfin*, *Hardhead* damaged several ships before sinking *Nanshin Maru* 2 February 1945. Following lifeguard duty for the B-29 strikes on Singapore she returned to Fremantle 15 February.

*Hardhead's* fourth war patrol included a special mine laying mission. She sailed 20 March 1945 and laid mines off French Indochina during the night of 2 April. The submarine then entered the Gulf of Siam, where after several attacks she sank cargo ship *Araosan Maru* 6 April. Following a visit to Subic Bay to reload 11-15 April she patrolled the South China Sea, but found few contacts. American submarines had by this time reduced Japanese merchant activity to a trickle. The island nation was doomed. *Hardhead* returned to Fremantle 16 May.

Sailing from Fremantle 18 June, *Hardhead* began her fifth war patrol, to be conducted in the Java Sea. She severely damaged a freighter with her deck guns 22 June, and next day sank four coastal defense craft during an attack on Ambat Roads with *Bullhead*. Illness of her Commanding Officer forced *Hardhead*, to end her fifth patrol 17 July at Onslow, Australia.

The submarine departed Onslow on her sixth and last patrol 18 July, and headed back into the Java Sea. She forced a merchant ship to beach 27 July but found few targets and returned to Subic Bay 10 August. Soon afterward the Pacific war, in which the submarine had played an aggressive and important part, ended. *Hardhead* sailed 31 August and arrived San Francisco via Pearl Harbor 22 September 1945. She decommissioned 10 May 1946 and entered the reserve fleet at Mare Island.

*Hardhead* was placed in commission in reserve 6 February 1952 and upon her arrival at New London for conversion was placed out of commission. Following her "guppy" conversion, including streamlining, installation of a snorkel breathing apparatus, and larger storage batteries, the submarine recommissioned 24 March 1953. She joined the Atlantic Fleet for training exercises and tactical drills in the years that followed, operating mainly in the Caribbean and off the East Coast of the United States. She sailed for the Mediterranean 7 September 1956 to strengthen the 6th Fleet during the Suez crisis.

In July 1958 *Hardhead*, joined Submarine Development Group 2, turning her attention from fleet operations to research and testing of equipment and tactical doctrine. She

operated off the East Coast and in the north Atlantic, and by 1961 had won four consecutive "E" awards for her performance. *Hardhead* continued through 1967 to perform this vital work in maintaining the technical superiority and readiness of the fleet.

*Hardhead*, received six battle stars for World War II service. All six of her combat patrols were successful.