

this how many of the three charges laid off the port bow actually went off, although subsequent examination of the sea-bed failed to discover any of the charges, or even fragments.

It seems likely, therefore, that all four charges detonated completely and that only the action to move the bows of the ship bodily to starboard on her cables saved her from far worse damage and even, perhaps, from destruction.

Before dealing with the damage resulting from the attack it remains to be recorded that at 0843 a third X-craft was sighted some 500 yards outside the nets. TIRPITZ opened fire and claims to have hit and sunk this X-craft. Depth charges were also dropped in the position in which the craft disappeared. This was X.5 (Lieutenant H. Henty-Creer, R.N.V.R.) which had last been seen off Soroy on 21st September by X.7.

Nothing is known of her movements, nor was any member of her crew saved.

X.7 was salvaged, minus her bows, by 1st October, 1943, but there is nothing to substantiate a statement, made to Lieutenant Place by German interrogators, that the bodies of the two missing members of his crew had been recovered and buried with full military honours.

Damage to TIRPITZ

According to the first Damage Report—

Port propulsion installation out of action, one generator room flooding and damage to the lower platform deck in Section VIII (Engine Room) and T.S.

In the whole ship nearly all the lighting and electrical equipment as well as the W/T rooms and hydrophone station were put out of action, as well as two aircraft outside the hangar.

By 0833 there were 300 tons of water in the ship, which had increased to 500 tons by 0942.

At 0900, 50 minutes after explosion, pumping out of the middle and port turbine rooms was being successfully accomplished, and the hydrophone office was again in order, but there were oil fuel leaks and No. 2 Generator Room and Dynamo Control Room were still flooded with oil and water.

At 1045 the following report was made on the condition of the TIRPITZ:

"(1) *Schiffssicherung* (Ship's safety measures)

Approx. 800 cubic m. water in ship. Probable hits on port side in Section VIII. Flooding under control. Ship out of danger.

(2) *Propulsion installation*

So far, all three main engines out of action. Damage to condenser in port power installation. One boiler lit.

(3) *Electrical installation*

Generator room 2 flooded and dynamo control installation 2.50 cm. water, electricity out of action.

Forward turbo-generators are brought into operation.

(4) *Gunnery*

Turret A and C raised by blast, so far out of action.

A/A control positions out of action. Considerable breakdown of range-finding gear including revolving hoods (Drehhauben), aft position and foretop.

(5) *Communications Section*

Communication with W/T room C established. Breakdown of several transmitters, receivers, radar sets and echo-ranging equipment.

(6) *Steering*

Rudder compartment 2 flooded. Port rudder installation out of action, cannot be examined yet.

In all sections breakdown (probably only temporary) of apparatus and electrical equipment through lack of current, as well as damage to casings and bedplate propellers.

1 killed, about 40 wounded, among them the First Lieutenant, slightly injured (concussion)."

Final effect of the attack.

According to an entry in the War Diary of the German Naval Staff for September, 1943, it was decided that the repair of TIRPITZ should be carried out in a northern port, and this decision was sanctioned by Hitler and the Commander-in-Chief, German Navy. It was, however, considered that the ship might never regain complete operational efficiency.

Repair ships, equipment and a large staff of dockyard workmen were transferred to Alten Fiord, and the services of a 100 ton crane were requested. The crane never arrived, however, being damaged by weather on passage, and only reaching the Namsos area.

Much time, personnel and work were expended on improving the defences of Kaafjord, and LUTZOW was moved south to Germany. As this ship was overdue for refit in any case, it cannot be claimed that this weakening of the Northern Fleet was altogether due to the X-craft attack.

On 22nd November, 2 months after the attack, again according to the War Diary, MARINEGRUPPENKOMMANDO NORD reported to the German Naval War Staff that "as a result of the successful midget submarine attack on heavy units of the Battle Group, the battle cruiser TIRPITZ had been put out of action for months", and the truth of this is borne out by the fact that not until April, 1944, did the ship move out from her anchorage, only to be further damaged and finally destroyed, by air attack, from which she had been virtually immune in Kaafjord.

(Signed) G. E. CREASY.

Rear Admiral.

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