

## Summary of Action

The Commander of Destroyer Squadron 61, on the evening of July 20,, received the following Operation Order 2-45, from the Commander Third Fleet: “Departing TF 38 on 21 July, COMDESRON 61 with Squadron proceed direct latitude 33-10 North Longitude 141 East. Arrive that position 22 July 1800, thence high speed run for arrival East entrance Sagami Nada at Midnight on 22<sup>nd</sup> . Mission Anti-Shipping Sweep in Sagami Nada to North of Island of O Shima and exit through West entrance before dawn, arrive Latitude 34. Do not cross 100 Fathom Curve. Any enemy met will be destroyed. On way out, before arriving Latitude 34, bombard targets of opportunity found in enemy shore installations. This only if no contacts made.”

The following additional information was issued by Commander Task Force 38's Operation Order No. 3-45 July 20, 1945:

- (a) Japanese land-based air is concentrated principally in the Tokyo plain, in the Nagoya and Kobe areas, and in the Western Inland Sea Area
- (b) Remaining Japanese Naval Strength is located principally in the Kure area, with lesser concentrations in the Inland Sea, at Tokyo, and at Maizuru.
- (c) Enemy air search from Honshu, Shikoku, and North Honshu is expected.
- (d) The enemy is concentrating suicide airplanes throughout the home islands for use against BLUE shipping during the amphibious phase of the expected invasion, These aircraft will be available for use against Fleet units when favorable opportunities exist. Conventional

bombing and torpedo attacks by highly trained units are entirely possible.

- (e) Attack by enemy surface forces or carrier-based aircraft is highly improbable
- (f) Enemy submarines may still be encountered at any time.

DesRon 61 left Task Group 38.1 at 0600 July 21. At 1225 a group of bogies approached the formation from the Northwest and Eastward. Bogie to the Eastward closed to 22 miles and then retired to the Northwest. A severe typhoon was moving from the Nansei Shoto area east Northeast towards the Tokyo area. Plotting indicated the center would pass on the evening of the 21<sup>st</sup>, well ahead of the sweep.

During the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> seas were rough to very rough with heights from crest to trough anywhere from 8 to 15 feet, the wind was reaching 36 knots from 240 T, During the afternoon the barometer leveled off and the seas calmed, It was determined maximum speeds could be between 23 and 28 knots.

This visually transmitted message was sent by the Squadron Commander, to all ships: "Plan to pass point Sugar, the Eastern entrance to Sagami Nada, shortly before midnight at best safe speed in column order, to be at Latitude 34 prior to dawn, avoid detection, advise me if you think Squadron Leader is off in Navigation, tidal currents may be strong. If damage occurs every effort will be exerted to save personnel at all costs."

July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2305 when approaching the Eastern entrance of Sagami Nada, the DeHaven made radar contact with an unidentified target at 33,000 yards along the coast line. The target appeared to be 2 large and 2 small ships. At 2345 the Squadron closed to 11,000 yards, 2351 each ship fired 2 torpedoes, 2353 all ships

commenced firing with their main batteries. Return fire from enemy ships was observed, but was entirely ineffective. At 2355 a fire was seen to start on one ship which grew rapidly in intensity and burned throughout the engagement. Several minutes after opening fire, all but one target appeared dead in the water, The single moving target was small and moved very slowly, indicating damage. At 0004, sound operators on the Brush, heard what they interpreted to be nearby explosions in the water. Gun flashes on the shore, to the north of the targets, possibly on Nojima Saki, indicated fire from coast defense guns.. The Brush and Taussig reported splashes from counterbattery fire from the shore.

It was noted that upon detection of our force, the enemy opened fire with heavy machine guns and larger caliber AA guns (from three to five inch) and fired in all directions, apparently confused as to our exact location. Heavy machine guns were fired straight into the air as noted by tracers. Larger caliber guns were fired at high angles of elevation, in the direction of our force.

It is estimated that two ships were sunk, one probably sunk and one escort damaged. Both the Moore and Mansfield saw two targets disappear from the radar screen Collett reports "one small AK" disappeared from radar screens at 0010, and the Blue reports one target disappeared.

Quick survey of the situation indicated that insufficient time remained to return to planned track north of O Shima through western entrance and get south to latitude 34 N prior to dawn and therefore southeasterly course was continued in retirement. Passage was made between Mikura Shima and Hachijo Jima on southwesterly course to rendezvous in order to avoid friendly sub. At 0230 formed special cruising disposition EASY SEVEN ABLE and continued toward the rendezvous point. At 1720, rendezvoused with CTG 38.1 and rejoined the screen