

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

Subject: U.S.S. CAIMAN (SS323) - Report of First
Simulated War Patrol.

(C) WEATHER

From PEARL HARBOR to YOKOSUKA, both wind and sea were from the west and the weather was generally overcast. A severe three day storm was encountered on 1 December in approximate position 34N, 159E. Winds were up to 50 knots and seas in condition 7. On 6 December a waterspout passed within 500 yards of the ship causing a momentary fall in the barometer of 29 points and an increase in wind velocity of about 20 knots.

A severe cold front, persisting for three days was experienced 9-12 December while enroute Okinawa from Yokosuka. This front had moved easterly from the China coast and was accompanied by 45 knot winds, very high seas, frequent hail storms, and one snowstorm.

In the MARIANAS and CAROLINES, during December and January, the weather was generally good with gentle to moderate winds from east to northeast, and moderate seas.

During the passage from KWAJALEIN to PEARL, 4 to 10 February, excellent weather prevailed, including two days with a flat calm sea and no breeze.

(D) TIDAL INFORMATION

The characteristic northeasterly set of 1.5 knots was encountered in waters adjacent to NANSEI SHOTO.

At OKINO DAITO JIMA, a variable south southwesterly current was experienced. The drift was over 2 knots to westward of the island, decreasing to less than 0.5 knots along the eastern and northern sides.

From KUSAE to KWAJALEIN the set was south southeasterly with a drift of 3 knots, decreasing to a negligible amount at KWAJALEIN.

(E) NAVIGATIONAL AIDS

1. MIDWAY

It was reported (26 Nov. 1946) that all channel buoys had been recently repaired, painted and checked for proper location.

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(E) NAVIGATIONAL AIDS (Cont'd)

1. MIDWAY (Cont'd)

Considerable filling in along the breakwater side of the Submarine Haven was also reported, and the limits of good water had not then been definitely established.

2. JAPAN (SAGAMI WADA-YOKOSUKA)

In approaching the entrance to SAGAMI WADA, O SHIMA provides an excellent radar target, and is a good one to use for a landmark.

The courses indicated on EO Chart 1291 are recommended for proceeding to YOKOSUKA. The only precaution is to properly identify the three Forts north of KAITON SAN.

Anchorage Chart JN should be available for entry to YOKOSUKA Naval Base. A pilot may be obtained by requesting the signal tower.

There is no difficulty in navigating this area, landmarks are sufficient and well defined.

3. BUCHTER BAY, OKINAWA

A radar approach to this area is extremely difficult due to the lack of prominent landmarks and poor definition of the land areas.

H.O. Field Chart No. 2031 contained in Sailing Directions for Pacific Bases Part II (H.O. Pub. No. 179 Vol II) is excellent for this area and more than sufficient for approaching and navigating within the bay.

Entrance buoy No. 1 was unlighted (18 Dec. 1946) and was successively plotted in a position about 800 yards bearing 060 degrees (T) from its charted position.

Buoys 2 and 3 were missing as of the above date, and as the next buoy, No. 4, marks a shoal spot, this area should be approached with caution until buoys are definitely identified.

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(E) NAVIGATIONAL AIDS (Cont'd)

3. EUCHIA BAY, OKINAWA (Cont'd)

The E.L.C.F. tower (not kept manned) on TSUKEN SEIMA and the 17 foot rock, UGAI IWA to the southward of the entrance are the best charted landmarks for obtaining cuts from seaward. A stranded ship on the reef near UGAI IWA in position 26-11-05N, 127-56-02E makes an excellent landmark, and there is also a sunken wreck on the northern end of the reef that can be used.

The good water limits to the eastward of Pier Baker at MATCHEI MARU (White Beach) are marked with a series of small spherical buoys. Good water extends well up to the head of the dock.

4. SAIPAN

The channel entering TANAPAG Harbor is very narrow but well marked with buoys and a range. The range, bearing 088 degrees (T), is clearly distinguishable and should always be used.

Berths are available at pontoon docks, and of these Able 8 is the most preferable. The prevailing northeasterly wind increases the advantages of this berth.

5. TRUK, Caroline Islands

South Pass is the only entrance authorized at present (28 Jan. 1947), and the courses designated on Hydropac 427-D should be followed in proceeding to anchorage off MOEN Island. There is no difficulty in navigating this route.

Buoy No. 2 (FIR) located approximately 2 miles south of UAIK Island was missing on the above date.

6. KUSAIE, Caroline Islands

H.O. Chart No. 5420 is sufficient for entry to IELE Harbor. The two ranges/beacons are difficult to distinguish at a distance unless very close to the bearing of the range, as they are easily confused with similar beacons

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(E) NAVIGATIONAL AIDS (Cont'd)

6. HUSAIE, Caroline Islands (Cont'd)

that mark the edges of the reef at the entrance. All beacons are in a poor state of repair and in bad need of painting. The bearing of the range was observed to be 275.5 degrees (T) instead of 277degrees (T).

Although the entrance is very narrow, it is well marked and can be entered with no difficulty. The reefs on each side are plainly visible.

The two masts charted off FUKIRU Point are missing, having been broken off by previous visiting ships. The natives reported that both of these wrecks (ships of about 300 tons) had been pulled to the southward towards the reef by an L.C.I., but this information should not be relied on.

7. KWAJALEIN

CEA pass should be used by all vessels with drafts in excess of 14 feet. This pass is easy to navigate and land marks are sufficient, although red Entrance Buoy No. 2 was missing on 4 Feb. 1947. (Field Chart No. 40) The edges of the reef are plainly visible.

8. GENERAL

In approaching and navigating around reefs, the use of sound ranges is an invaluable aid.

Loran was used continuously in conjunction with celestial observations, but the scarcity of operating stations precluded its continued use as the sole means of navigation. In the area around 34N, 155E, only one station, 4H5, could be used. The west coast station, 2H2 came in very strong but could not be used. Station 4H4, the only other station received, was out of range.