

SS323/A16-3

U.S.S. CAIMAN (SS 323)

Care of Fleet Post Office,
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6 April 1945.

Serial (021)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
DECLASSIFIED

46-A

A16-3(8)

From: The Commanding Officer.
 To : The Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
 Via : (1) Commander Submarine Division TWO SIXTY TWO.
 (2) Commander Submarine Squadron TWENTY SIX.
 (3) Commander Submarines, Southwest Pacific.
 (4) Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: U.S.S. CAIMAN (SS 323)- Report of Second War Patrol.

Enclosures: (A) Subject report.
 (B) Track chart (ComSubSoWestPac only).

1. Enclosure (A), covering the second war patrol of this vessel conducted in the South China Sea in vicinity of Malay Peninsula, during the period 18 February 1945 to 6 April 1945; is forwarded herewith.

DECLASSIFIED-ART. 0445, OPNAVINST 5510.1C

BY OP-0989C DATE 5/25/72

W. L. Fey, Jr.

W. L. FEY, Jr.

DECLASSIFIED

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(A) PROLOGUE

U.S.S. CAIMAN

WAR PATROL NO. TWO

This vessel arrived in Fremantle, Australia, on 22 January 1945. The normal refit was accomplished by Submarine Division 262. The officers and crew returned from recuperation leave on 6 February 1945, and Lieutenant Commander W. L. FEY, Jr., U.S. Navy, relieved Commander F. C. LUCAS, Jr., U.S. Navy, as Commanding Officer, and Lieutenant Commander W. A. McGUINNESS, U.S. Navy, relieved Lieutenant Commander L. B. McDONALD, U.S. Navy, as Executive Officer, and Lieutenant (jg) W. H. O'NEAL, U.S. Naval Reserve, reported aboard for duty.

The training period included 7 to 16 February 1945, three nights of which were spent at sea. Sound tests, electronic tests, and deep dive were accomplished during this period. Two days were spent conducting special exercises. The five inch gun was fired twice at a towed target. The various types of approaches were practiced, finishing up by firing three exercise torpedoes. Commander C. C. BURLINGAME, U.S. Navy, was aboard from 15 to 16 February as Training Officer.

Final loading day was 17 February, and date of departure for second war patrol was 18 February 1945.

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(B) NARRATIVE

U.S.S. CAIMAN

WAR PATROL NO. TWO

List of officers and chief petty officers attached:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK/RATE</u>	<u>NO. PATROLS</u>
FEY, William L., Jr.	Lieut. Comdr.	2
McGUINNESS, W. A.	Lieut. Comdr.	2
BENNETT, W. F.	Lieut.	10
EMERY, J. H., Jr.	Lieut.	2
ROECKLEIN, R. G.	Lieut. (jg)	2
LAKE, E. W.	Lieut. (jg)	12
O'NEAL, W. H.	Lieut. (jg)	1
PETERSON, J. V.	Lieut. (jg)	2
LUSZCEWSKI, Walter Michael	CTM(SS)	5
WATERS, Richard Eugene	CRM(AA)(SS)	7
JONES, John Emanuel	CMoMM(SS)	5
KOPACKA, William Frank	CMoMM(AA)(SS)	5
WHITE, Bennie Russell	CEM(AA)(SS)	9
BACKMAN, Henry Lee	CPhM(AA)(SS)	5

Feb. 18

- 1300 Underway for patrol area in accordance with C.I.G. OpOrder 22-45, in company with U.S.S. COBIA. Ensign HOPKINS, radar expert, on board to check SJ radar.
- 1400 Fired 5" deck gun at towed target.
- 1700 Commenced coordinated exercise with COBIA, HMAS INVERELL as target.
- 2300 Exercise completed. Transferred Ensign HOPKINS to INVERELL via small boat.

Feb. 19

- 0000 Enroute patrol area in company with U.S.S. COBIA.
- 0550 Exchanged calls with southbound HMS SPARK. Conducted various drills, some in conjunction with COBIA.

Feb. 21

- 0000 Enroute patrol area in company with U.S.S. COBIA. Conducted various drills, some in conjunction with COBIA.
- 1715 Exchanged calls with HMS TANTALUS.
- 1826 Exchanged calls and spoke HMS TRADEWIND. Reports all quiet in Lombok Strait.

Feb. 22

- 0000 Enroute patrol area in company with U.S.S. COBIA.
- 0730 COBIA turned back to proceed to Exmouth Gulf; proceeded independently.

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(B) NARRATIVE (Cont'd)

Feb. 23

0000 Enroute patrol area.
1325 Made training dive.
1354 Surfaced.
1355 Simulated SD contact - Dived. Main induction jammed partially open due to personnel failure, induction lines flooded as a result.
1359 Surfaced and drained induction lines.
2213 Commenced transit of Lombok Strait.
2342 Sighted small craft, possibly escort vessel, off Bali, range 7600 yards. (S.C. #1)

Feb. 24

0000 Transitting Lombok Strait.
0130 Cleared Lombok Strait.
1240 Sighted aircraft. (A.C. #1) Dived.
1316 Surfaced.

Feb. 25

0000 Enroute patrol area, in Java Sea.
0820 Sighted aircraft. (A.C. #2) Dived.
0826 Plane dropped first of four depth bombs.
1133 Surfaced.
1222 Sighted aircraft. (A.C. #3) Dived.
1350 Surfaced.
2115 Set course for vicinity of 109°E; 5°S, at four engine speed.

Feb. 26

0000 Proceeding to vicinity of 109°E; 5°S.
0727 Submerged.
1412 Surfaced because of reduced visibility.
1530 Abandoned idea of making a contact. Set course for East Discovery Shoal Light to transit Karimata Strait. In doubt as to navigational position because of overcast since last night.
1603 Received message from CTF 71 to take lifeguard station off Singapore on early morning of 28 February.
2109 Having failed to pick up East Discovery Shoal Light, turned around hoping to obtain moonlight star fix. Complete overcast continued.
2310 Notified CTF 71 that I could not reach lifeguard station on time.

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(B) NARRATIVE (Cont'd)

U.S.S. CAIMAN

WAR PATROL NO. TWO

Feb. 27

0000 Underway south of approaches to Karimata Strait.
1039 SD contact. (A.C. #4) Dived.
1212 Surfaced.
1413 Obtained a sun line. Set course estimated to be toward East Discovery Shoal Light.
1706 Sighted East Discovery Shoal Light, finding myself about 35 miles from estimated position. Decided to try to transit Karimata Strait in one night at high speed.
1800 Received message from CTF 71 to make every effort to reach lifeguard station.
2051 Exchanged calls with U.S.S. MINGO via SJ radar.
2133 Sent message to CTF 71 giving earliest possible time of arrival on lifeguard station as 1900, 28 February. Reversed course while transmitting.

28 Feb.

0000 Underway in Karimata Strait.
1632 Sighted what appeared to be a ship, hull down. Discovered to be a small sailing craft. (S.C. #2)
2042 Received message from CTF 71 to take lifeguard station off Singapore during daylight on 2 March. Directed to patrol in vicinity of Anamba Islands in the meanwhile. Set course for Anamba Islands.

Mar. 1

0000 Patrolling in vicinity of Anamba Islands.
0650 Made trim dive.
1005 Sighted aircraft. (A.C. #5)
1948 Sighted lighted ship. Thought it to be the AWA MARU although it carried hospital ship lights. Puzzled because it was apparently leaving Singapore instead of arriving there as the AWA MARU was scheduled. Kept clear. (S.C. #3)

Mar. 2

0000 Patrolling in vicinity of Anamba Islands.
0236 SJ contact at 30,000 yards and sighted white light on the radar bearing. This turned out to be the southbound AWA MARU (the white light was a large white cross), so kept clear. Decided that last night's ship was a hospital ship. (S.C. #4)
0700 On lifeguard station.

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(B) NARRATIVE (Cont'd)

U.S.S. CAIMAN

WAR PATROL NO. TWO

0909 Sighted aircraft. (A.C. #6) Dived.
1001 Surfaced.
1025 Sighted aircraft. (A.C. #7) As OOD knew that air strike was scheduled for 1100 he did not dive. While this plane was being observed at a fairly long range, at
1033 SD contact was made at 3 miles. (A.C. #8) Before he went down the hatch, the OOD saw a float plane coming in. Dived.
1034 Plane dropped one loud depth bomb.
1119 Came to periscope depth and while in low power sighted float plane. (A.C. #9) Went deep to 110 feet.
1227 Came to periscope depth. Apparently all clear, but decided to have Executive Officer make a check sweep, and at
1248 he sighted a twin engine land plane. (A.C. #10) Went deep.
1433 Came to periscope depth.
1457 Sighted float plane. (A.C. #11) Went deep.
1542 Came to periscope depth and sighted float plane. (A.C. #12) Went deep.
1812 Surfaced. Listened on the lifeguard frequencies until 2300 but heard nothing concerning the air strike.
NOTE: We were involved with three different types of planes today; land plane, float monoplane, and float biplane.
2300 Having received no word of downed aviators proceeded for assigned patrol area.

Mar. 3

0000 Enroute patrol area, in South China Sea.
0226 SD contact - dived. Decided that contact was on Domar Island. Surfaced.
1013 Sighted aircraft. (A.C. #13)
1100 Sighted what OOD thought was a parachute in the sky. Although the object was never definitely identified, it appeared to be a meteorological balloon. Four hours later it was still visible high in the sky.
1924 Received message from CTF 71 to join up with U.S.S. PINTADO at dark on 4 March off Pulo Tenggol, and to patrol off the coast of Malay between 4°N and 6°N, with the CO PINTADO as OTC of coordinated attack group. Set course for Pulo Tenggol.

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U.S.S. CAIMAN

(B) NARRATIVE (Cont'd)

WAR PATROL NO. TWO

Mar. 4

0000 Enroute Pulo Tenggara.
0700 Made trim dive,
1059 SD contact. (A.C. #14) Dived.
1145 Surfaced.
2010 Exchanged recognition signals with U.S.S. PINTADO via
SJ radar.
2132 Closed PINTADO and received patrol instructions via line
throwing gun. The patrol area was divided into sub-areas,
each 30 miles wide. PINTADO and CAIMAN were to patrol
adjacent sub-areas, spending a day in each sub-area.

Mar. 5

0000 Patrolling in sub-area assigned by O.T.C.
0700 Made trim dive.
1018 SD contact 4 miles. (A.C. #15) Dived.
1053 Surfaced.

Mar. 6

0000 Enroute new sub-area just off Pulo Kapas.
0653 Dived for submerged patrol. Sighted a fleet of small native
fishing craft which were about almost all day.
1950 Surfaced and proceeded to new sub-area.

Mar. 7

0000 Patrolling in sub-area assigned by O.T.C.
0945 Ordered by O.T.C. to proceed at high speed to northern
limit of area (6°N). Went to four engine speed.
1357 Received message that PINTADO has sighted smoke. Sent
my position, course and speed to PINTADO, and as I
received no orders, continued as before.
1517 Received message giving position, course and speed of
PINTADO's contact; the composition of the contact was
garbled. The contact is about fifty miles to the east
of my position.
1601 Received message that PINTADO is diving for attack.
As intercepted messages indicate that the submarines of
the wolf pack in the next area to the north have taken
up positions ahead of the enemy decided that my only
opportunity for attack lay in the enemy's being diverted
to the west.
1603 Slowed to one engine.
1622 Sighted two aircraft at about 6 miles. (A.C. #16) Dived.

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(B) NARRATIVE (Cont'd) U.S.S. CAIMAN WAR PATROL NO. TWO

1651 Surfaced.

1825 Received message from PINTADO that contact was a hospital ship. Ordered by O.T.C. to return to assigned sub-area.

Mar. 8

0000 Enroute to assigned sub-area.

0705 Made trim dive.

2342 Received message from C.T.F. 71 to take life guard station at 104°-20'E; 4°N during daylight hours on 10 March for Singapore air strike.

Mar. 9

0000 Patrolling assigned sub-area.

0659 Made trim dive.

2030 Received message from C.T.F. 71 to the effect that coordinated attack group consisting of PINTADO and CAIMAN now dissolved.

Mar. 10

0000 Enroute to lifeguard station.

0109 Received message from C.T.F. 71 that Singapore air strike had been postponed, but to be on assigned lifeguard station for subsidiary air strike, then to patrol in that vicinity awaiting further word on originally planned strike.

0700 On lifeguard station.

0933 SD contact. (A.C. #17) Dived.

1029 Surfaced.

1235 Sighted aircraft. (A.C. #18) Dived.

1313 Surfaced.

2035 Set course for Tanjong Laboha which is about 50 miles from my lifeguard station.

2322 Received message from CTF 71 ordering me to send weather report sometime on the 11th.

Mar. 11

0000 Patrolling, heading for Tanjong Laboha. My plans are to dive at daylight about 5 miles from coast and patrol until noon, then move out to surface and send weather report. This is the only place in the area that I can find which has at least 100 feet of water at five miles from coast.

0700 Dived. Low clouds and haze prevent obtaining a fix by periscope.

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(B) NARRATIVE (Cont'd) U.S.S. CAIMAN WAR PATROL NO. TWO

0800 Took a sounding and found 15 fathoms where I expected at least 20. The surface current here had been about 1-1/2 knots to the south-southeast. Decided that either the charted soundings were too sketchy or there was a counter current and that this was not a very good spot. Set course away from coast.

1125 Surfaced.

1135 SD contact. (A.C. #19) Dived.

1308 Surfaced.

2002 Sent weather report to CTF 71.

2005 Set course for Pulo Tenggara. Planned to take some soundings off Tanjong Laboha while navigating by radar.

2345 Received message from CTF 71 to take lifeguard station during daylight on 12 March for Singapore air strike. Set course for lifeguard station.

Mar. 12

0000 Enroute lifeguard station.

0700 on lifeguard station.

1354 Aircraft sighted. (A.C. #20) Dived.

1430 Surfaced.

2000 Set course for vicinity of Pulo Tenggara.

Mar. 13

0000 Patrolling in vicinity of Pulo Tenggara.

1725 Received message from C.T.F. 71 to join PAMPANITO coordinated attack group at dark on 14 March.

Mar. 14

0000 Patrolling in vicinity of Pulo Tenggara.

0658 Made trim dive.

0854 Received message from PAMPANITO to rendezvous at 6°N-104°E at about 2100 tonight.

1445 Set course for rendezvous position.

2215 Closed PAMPANITO and received patrol instructions via line throwing gun. PAMPANITO, CAIMAN, MINGO, and SEALION to patrol between 5°N and 6°N off the coast of Malay.

2230 Proceeded to assigned patrol station.

Mar. 15

0000 Patrolling on assigned station.

Mar. 16

0000 Patrolling on assigned station.

0658 Made trim dive.

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(B) NARRATIVE (Cont'd) U.S.S. CAIMAN WAR PATROL NO. TWO

Mar. 17

0000 Shifted to new patrol station.
0655 Dived for all day submerged patrol.
1930 Surfaced.

Mar. 18

0000 Patrolling on assigned station.
0035 Received contact report from PAMPANITO. Possible destroyer making 20 knots; no action possible for this submarine.
0655 Dived for all day submerged patrol.
1303 Received message from O.T.C. via SD antenna to surface.
1320 Surfaced and received orders from O.T.C. to proceed east.
1552 Received new patrol station assignment from O.T.C., evidently because of this morning's contact.

Mar. 19

0000 Patrolling on assigned station.
1003 SD contact at 20 miles. (A.C. #21)
1223 Sighted PAMPANITO. Received message from PAMPANITO to close her.
1255 Lay to while PAMPANITO came alongside and delivered special patrol instructions.
1300 Proceeded to new patrol station to north of Pulo Tenggara.

Mar. 20

0000 Patrolling on assigned station.
0640 Dived for all day submerged patrol.
1955 Surfaced.

Mar. 21

0000 Patrolling on assigned station.
0655 Received message from O.T.C. to proceed to new patrol station in Gulf of Siam about 90 miles southwest of Cape Kamao.
0700 Set course for new patrol station at two engine speed.
0920 SD contact at 20 miles. (A.C. #22)
1447 Received message from O.T.C. to patrol in Gulf of Siam about 120 miles west of Cape Kamao along about 8°N Latitude. The MINGO will be patrolling along about 7°30'N Latitude.