

THE SILENT SERVICE SERIES I EPISODE SUMMARIES - 1957

5601 - Jack (SS-259) When the USS Jack springs a leak while deep in Japanese waters, an heroic engineer risks his life to save the sub. Enemy depth charges have badly damaged a main induction line and to surface for repairs would be fatal. The sub lies helpless deep under water until the Chief Petty Officer puts his finger in the dike. "The Jack at Tokyo" tells the story of the Jack's first mission, commanded by skipper Thomas M. Dykers.

5602 - Trout (SS-202) To get desperately needed supplies to our forces on Corregidor, the USS Trout jettisons her lead ballast and takes on as much ammunition as she can carry. After a perilous journey through off-shore mine fields, she delivers her cargo; but, unless the weight is made up, she will be unable to dive. So the sailors of the submarine USS Trout substitute 20 tons of gold and silver for ballast in order to submerge.

5603 - Thresher (SS-200) Her crew hears scraping noises along the bow as the USS Thresher gets hooked on a line and almost captured. Relieved when the "thing" didn't explode, the USS Thresher prepares to dive deeper to avoid depth charge attack. But the sub won't go down -- in fact, gauges show that she is rising in the water. Full speed ahead and quick maneuvering are needed to escape the giant hook.

5604 - Sculpin (SS-191) Rather than fall into enemy hands with knowledge of vital military secrets, a submarine captain elects to go down with his sub. In the fall of 1943, the USS Sculpin was assigned to patrol the waters north of Truk Island to prevent the Japanese from reinforcing their position there. When the Sculpin attacks a convoy, the sub is badly damaged and forced to surface. All hands except Captain John P. Cromwell, USN, abandon ship hoping to be picked up by nearby Japanese ships. The commander goes quietly to his death, retaining his information to the end. Captain Cromwell was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

5605 - Spearfish (SS-190) Thirteen Army nurses and twelve Army officers are rescued from besieged Corregidor by the Navy submarine USS Spearfish. Under orders to take an important group of people off the island, the Spearfish slips past enemy patrol boats and both Japanese and American mine fields, and finally keeps its rendezvous, in darkness, with the small group of escaping Americans. How the young women weathered the exciting trip to Australia on the submarine is dramatized in the story.

5606 - Bergall (SS-320) With a five-foot hole in her starboard side, the USS Bergall tries to make it to port through a screen of Japanese patrol craft. After successfully torpedoing an enemy cruiser and destroyer, the submarine Bergall is hit by a gun from one of the sinking Japanese ships. Unable to submerge, she must make her way exposed to air and surface attack. How the Bergall slipped past three patrol boats is a harrowing tale.

5607 - Batfish (SS-310) With the Philippines almost entirely in American hands, the Japanese begin evacuating high ranking personnel by submarine. USS Batfish is dispatched to intercept and sets a record sinking three enemy subs in three days.

5608 - Tigrone (SS-419) U.S. Army fliers get a surprise taste of the life of a submariner when the USS Tigrone rescues 31 of them. After the bombing of Tokyo, the USS Tigrone, along with other subs, is stationed along the route that the B-29s fly back to Guam. The subs' mission is to rescue downed fliers.

The crew of the Tigrone wins the respect and awe of the airmen as the sub attempts a daring recovery with Japanese destroyers closing in.

5609 - Gato (SS-212) Maneuvering to evade attacking escorts guarding an enemy convoy, the skipper of the USS Gato is unable to go deeper for fear of setting off a 600-pound depth charge, which is rolling around on the deck. Cool nerves and fast thinking pay off in a surprise climax to this spine-chilling story based on an actual happening.

5610 - Pampanito (SS-383) American subs roaming the Western Pacific sight a Japanese convoy and attack -- unaware that the convoy carries a human cargo of Allied prisoners of war. The USS Pampanito, in the company of two other subs, does its work well and resumes its search for other game. Three days later she returns to the area where the men learn, with sinking hearts, what they have done.

5611 - Tirante (SS-420) A daring submarine commander chooses to fight on the surface rather than lose his prey in the shallow waters of the Yellow Sea. On her maiden combat patrol, the USS Tirante chases a Japanese patrol vessel along coastal waters and is led into harbor. There, the Tirante sinks three ships at anchor in addition to the patrol ship before she speeds out to sea and safety. Her skipper, LCDR George L. Street, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his role in this bold exploit.

5612 - Tang (SS-306) More than a score of flyers are rescued by a daring submarine patrol operating under heavy enemy gunfire. As U.S. planes hit the island of Truk, submarines are ordered close to the objective to save as many men as possible. USS Tang did its job and set a pattern to be followed by other submarines for the remainder of the war.

5613 - Wahoo (SS-238) This story tells the tragic end of the submarine, USS Wahoo. On her early war patrols, the Wahoo ran up an enviable record, sinking 16 ships and damaging two more. Then her luck ran out. Her torpedoes failed to go off, and she limped back to base. Refitted she put out again, eager for a killing. On an evening in early October 1943, the Wahoo entered the Sea of Japan -- never to return.

5614 - Dace (SS-247) Darter (SS-227) Two submarines engage some of Japan's heaviest fighting ships, challenging U.S. landings in the Philippines. The submarines, USS Dace and USS Darter, sink two Japanese cruisers. Then, in her eagerness to get a third cruiser, the Darter goes aground on a reef. The Dace tries to save her sister ship by dislodging her. Unable to do this, she takes the Darter's crew aboard just before a timed demolition charge destroys the Darter.

5615 - S-38 (SS-143) A broken propeller, an internal explosion and damaged instruments all plague the sub S-38 assigned to attack Japanese transports preparing for the invasion of the Philippines in December 1941. The S-38, already outmoded when World War II began, is surrounded in Lingayen Gulf by Japanese troop transports within easy torpedo range. But four defective "fish" miss their targets, and the enemy, now alerted to danger, strikes back. The S-38 and her weary crew limp home to safety in an exciting and surprising climax.

5616 - Seahorse (SS-304) Deaf, dumb, and blind, deep in enemy waters, the USS Seahorse is almost blown out of existence by Japanese depth charges. Returning to base with vital charts of enemy mine fields, the USS Seahorse is severely damaged, and her radio, radar and listening devices are knocked out. Helpless, she flounders at the bottom of the sea -- until the exciting true climax.

5617 - Salmon (SS-182) A sharpshooting sailor saves his submarine, USS Salmon, in true Daniel Boone fashion. Japanese depth charges damage the submarine diving gear and strip her of her gun sights. She

is forced to surface and fight it out. Gunner "Tennessee" Jordan mans his post on deck and, with a few well-paced shots, holds the enemy off long enough for the USS Salmon to withdraw.

5618 - Crevalle (SS-291) During a battle in the Pacific, a baby is born aboard the submarine USS Crevalle. He is the son of a Filipino woman being evacuated from the besieged islands. Somewhere in the Philippines today, a young man answers to the name of Elma Walker Crevalle Talcaban. How he received his name provides an absorbing story of wartime heroism aboard a U.S. submarine.

5619 - Crevalle (SS-291) During one of its war patrols, the submarine USS Crevalle is forced to the bottom by depth charges. Seriously damaged, it lies quietly on the ocean floor, hoping to avoid detection. During the nerve-wracking hours of waiting, one man's true personality is revealed to his shipmates. Instead of the cringing cowardice with which some of the crew members had tagged him, he displays a kind of self-sacrificing heroism which is the true mark of a U.S. submariner.

5620 - Sailfish (SS-192) Squalus (SS-192) Sculpin (SS-191) On her test run, the submarine USS Squalus dives -- and then sinks to the bottom of the Atlantic. She is raised, re-commissioned and renamed, but the bad-luck omen stays with her. The history of the Squalus, renamed Sailfish and nicknamed Squailfish, is traced from the day she slips out of control beneath the Atlantic to a night in December 1943, when she sinks the Japanese escort carrier Chuyo. Even then her bad luck pursues her; among the victims aboard the Chuyo are 20 prisoners of war, survivors of the Sailfish's sister submarine, USS Sculpin.

5621 - Grouper (SS-214) After two years of Pacific combat, the submarine USS Grouper is finally ordered home. But her orders show a slight detour -- via Australia. Helping pave the way to ultimate invasion of the Solomon Islands, the sub transports Aussie raiders and their native guides to a hidden cove at the edge of the jungle. Understanding their Australian allies' jargon and the 'pidgin' English of the natives is one obstacle for the weary crew but, before the mission is complete, the enemy provides another.

5622 - Seawolf (SS-197) In the early tense days of World War II, American submarines in the Pacific were returning with a mysterious record of "misses." Why the torpedoes failed to go off is related in this episode of Silent Service. When his ship's repeated attempts to sink Japanese shipping fail, a young seaman with an interest in photography produces conclusive evidence of faulty design.

5623 - Seadragon (SS-194) Undersea in Japanese waters, the submarine captain's orders to his crew are, "Lie down, don't move, breathe as little as possible." With all oxygen tanks exhausted after being submerged for more than 16 hours, one of the USS Seadragon's last four torpedoes jams. Death by explosion, suffocation, or enemy fire seems inevitable. Stoic heroism and precision team play by the crew turns fate.

5624 - Narwhal (SS-167) Built in 1930, the USS Narwhal was one of the oldest submarines in service. Her loyal crew was proud of her although she was bulkier and slower than her more modern sisters. A quirk in her diving mechanism had given the Narwhal the reputation of being haunted. Under attack by Japanese bombers while engaged in a rescue operation, her skipper defied her shortcomings and put the sub through some agonizing paces. It plunged straight for the bottom. How the Narwhal managed to escape disaster is told in this episode of "The Silent Service."

5625 - Perch (SSP-313) "Without torpedoes what good is she?" The crew of the submarine USS Perch was puzzled. She had been a fleet type sub, but overhauling had converted her into a troop carrier. The dubious submarine began training. Drills and dives soon convinced them the Perch was not a

dangerous freak. They determined to prove their ship's efficiency. After the outbreak of trouble in Korea, the Perch was ordered to Japan to transport Marine raiders into enemy waters. This episode of "Silent Service" reveals how the Perch proved a worthy unit of the Pacific Submarine force.

5626 - Barb (SS-220) Blowing up an enemy train hardly seems like an assignment for a submarine crew. But sailors aboard the USS Barb were accustomed to offbeat tasks and this video reveals how they engaged in "torpedoing" a train. At the end of her 12th war patrol, the USS Barb, which had a record of 15 sinkings, had launched all of her torpedoes and fired all her ammunition. All that remained were three 55-pound scuttling charges. Cmdr Eugene B. Fluckey, the skipper, decided to use one of these in a last nose-thumbing at the enemy. A beach party was organized and ordered to plant the explosives beneath the tracks of a coastwise railroad. Mission accomplished, the "Pirates of the China Sea" retired to their rubber boats to watch the demolition of the on-coming train. Fluckey was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

5627 - Cochino (SS-345) Tusk (SS-426) Two of the Navy's latest snorkel-type subs, the USS Cochino and the USS Tusk, are ordered to Arctic waters for cold weather operations. For days, the USS Cochino conducts submerged operations, her snorkel tube breathing oxygen for the diesel engines and men below. Suddenly, unexpectedly the hydrogen gauges register rising pressure. The sub is shaken by a loud explosion. The Cochino is jolted by blast after blast that tears at her midsections. Heavy smoke and flames envelop her. The crew works desperately to locate and clear the danger area. Power is lost. The explosions continue. The USS Tusk is signaled for help and stands ready to receive the men of the ill-fated Cochino.

5628 - Gar (SS-206) After the USS Seawolf was lost in an attempt to fulfill the same mission, the USS Gar puts out from Australia in the fall of 1944 to ferry supplies to guerillas in the Philippines. When she reached her destination, the Gar's crew was virtually within sight of heavily-armed Japanese troops, but they went right ahead with their unloading. When the Gar put out to sea again, her crew had the gratifying experience of having made an important contribution to the assignment of the men who remained on the islands to gather information for the U.S. invaders later on.

5629 - Flier (SS-250) Narrowly escaping disaster from a barrage of depth charges, the USS Flier emerges with honors from her maiden war patrol. Having tasted success, the Flier's crew promise to do even better as they head for Indochina on their second mission. But the sub strikes a mine and the skipper and some of his crew are swept off the bridge as the Flier goes to the bottom. Their bravery and tenacity brings them through what some might consider an impossible situation.

5630 - Starfish (Fictitious Submarine) Lt. Steve Rand never knew the difference between true and foolhardy courage until he learned the meaning of fear. In this episode, he learns that a wife can make a lot of difference in the way a man thinks. When his sub is attacked by Japanese bombers, a hatch cover sticks when the sub attempts to submerge. Unable to halt its dive, the sub is certain to sink from the tons of water pouring down the open hatch. Rand voluntarily goes topside alone, releases the cover and is swept away by the sea.

5631 - Sealion (SS-315) The Kongo, only Japanese battleship sunk by a submarine during World War II, was sent to the bottom of the China Sea by the submarine Sealion II. The USS Sealion II was assigned a dangerous patrol in enemy waters September 1944. After a number of mishaps aboard, including an explosion in her torpedo room, she arrived in the patrol area, damaged but eager for action. Despite a screen of destroyers protecting the heavier ships, the Sealion II's skipper decided to attack on the surface. Sealion II scored three hits on the lead battleship. She pursued the injured craft and, minutes later, it blew up.

5632 - Nautilus (SS-168) USS Nautilus is brought in for close observation duty along the Tarawa shoreline, between the guns of the American attack force and the Japanese shore batteries. The Nautilus is hit by a shell from an American destroyer. The shell fails to explode and must be removed. Two brothers from rival services show courage and new-found understanding when they are forced to work together to prevent the shell from exploding.

5633 - Harder (SS-257) Assigned to keep a close watch on the enemy's mobile fleet anchored at Tawi Tawi, the USS Harder sank five destroyers in six days, leading the Japanese admiral to believe his anchorage was surrounded by a whole fleet of submarines. When he moved his ships out to sea, 24 hours ahead of his operational plan, the U.S. Fifth Fleet struck and, in the battle of the Philippine Sea, the Japanese Navy was dealt one of the most crippling blows of the war. The USS Harder's captain, Samuel D. Dealey, was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for this action.

5634 - Seashark (Fictitious Submarine) A photographer's mate sent along on a war patrol to photograph submariners in action learns what it means to "belong" to the tiny, steel-encased world of the men who fight under the sea. Ernest Cooms is plainly frightened by his assignment aboard the Seashark. The sub's crew adds to this discomfiture by making him aware that simply being aboard a submarine does not make one a submariner. When the sub undergoes a five-hour attack, Cooms bears up well and continues with his duties. After that, he enjoys the privilege of "belonging."

5635 - Mines (9 Sub Wolf Pack) At the urging of Vice Admiral Charles A. Lockwood, civilian scientists developed an electronic device that enabled submarines to detect floating and submerged mines. With this apparatus, a wolf-pack of nine subs entered the Sea of Japan in June 1945 and wreaked havoc with enemy shipping, contributing materially to the end of the war.

5636 - Searaven (SS-196) On her second war patrol, USS Searaven becomes a sitting duck to save a group of 33 Australian soldiers and aviators trapped on Timor after fighting the Japanese in a retreat action for eighty days.

5637 - Tang (SS-306) The Japanese could "never lay a glove" on the USS Tang. She was sunk by her own torpedo. After sinking one entire convoy and inflicting tremendous damage on another, the USS Tang moved into position to fire her last torpedo before heading home from her fifth war patrol. The torpedo began an erratic course and ended by completing a circle and striking the USS Tang. Escape was impossible. She sank, leaving nine survivors and a record of 24 enemy ships sunk. It was the second highest number sent to the bottom by any American submarine during World War II. The Tang's skipper, Richard H. O'Kane, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

5638 - Perch (SS-176) In the entire history of underseas warfare, there is probably no more famous "hard luck" ship than the USS Perch. The story of this ship and the heroism of the crew that fought in vain to save her is related in this episode of "Silent Service."

5639 - Guardfish (SS-217) In the summer of 1942, the USS Guardfish made 77 enemy contacts in half that number of days, without the benefit of search radar. With incredible accuracy she made an outstanding record of 11 hits and eight sinkings. The Guardfish was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for the patrol in which she set the record for number of enemy ships destroyed on a single patrol.