

= Orjen @-@ class torpedo boat =

The Orjen @-@ class was a class of eight motor torpedo boats built for the Royal Yugoslav Navy (Jugoslavenska kraljevska ratna mornarica ; JKRM) . The boats were built by the Lürssen Shipyard based on the German S @-@ 2 motor torpedo boats . At the start of the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia , two boats managed to escape to Alexandria in Egypt where they continued serving with Allied forces . The remaining ones were captured by Italian forces and commissioned in the Regia Marina (Royal Navy) .

After the Italian Armistice in September 1943 , the boats were taken over by German forces and commissioned in the Kriegsmarine , until they were finally scuttled in October 1944 . The two boats that had escaped to the Allies in 1941 returned to Yugoslavia after the war . They were commissioned in the new Yugoslav Navy and remained in service until the early 1960s .

= = Background and description = =

During the early 1930s , the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was facing an economic recession brought on by the Great Depression , which was further complicated by internal political instability . In the mid @-@ 1930s the Yugoslav government sought to improve relations with the Kingdom of Italy , and create new economic opportunities by developing closer ties with Nazi Germany . Cooperation with Germany was soon reflected in the acquisition of new ships for the Royal Yugoslav Navy , which had previously been acquired in France and Great Britain . The first such deal came in 1936 when the Navy placed an order for eight motor torpedo boats that were to be built by the Lürssen Shipyard , based on the existing German design of the S @-@ 2 class motor torpedo boat . An additional order for two Type II submarines was planned , but never happened .

The boats measured 28 m (91 ft 10 in) in length overall , with a 4 @.@ 3 m (14 ft 1 in) beam and a draught of 1 @.@ 51 m (4 ft 11 in) . Fully loaded , they displaced 61 @.@ 7 tonnes (60 @.@ 7 long tons) . Main propulsion consisted of three Daimler @-@ Benz petrol engines rated at 3 @,@ 300 hp (2 @,@ 500 kW) , giving the boats a maximum speed of 31 kn (57 km / h ; 36 mph) . An auxiliary engine of unknown power was also installed . Crew size varied between 16 and 22 , depending on the source . Armament consisted of two 550 mm (22 in) torpedo tubes and a single 40 mm (1 @.@ 6 in) anti @-@ aircraft gun .

= = Boats = =

Source :

= = Service history = =

= = = Royal Yugoslav Navy service = = =

At the start of the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia , all eight Orjen @-@ class boats and the two small Uskok @-@ class boats were assigned to the 2nd Torpedo Division in ?ibenik . On 11 April , a naval force consisting of several Orjen @-@ class boats , among other ships , was expected to assist ground forces in attacking the Italian enclave of Zara which the Yugoslav High Command feared would be used as a bridgehead during the invasion . The attack , however , never materialized and the Yugoslav ships were instead attacked by Italian bombers forcing them to retreat to Kotor . By 17 April the complete collapse of Yugoslav defences was imminent , prompting the commander of the 3rd Torpedo Boat Division , Ivan Kern , to suggest that Durmitor , Kajmak?alan , Dinara , Triglav , Rudnik and Suvobor sail out of Boka Kotorska to evade capture by the Axis and continue their fight with Allied forces . Kern approached the commanding officers of Durmitor , Kajmak?alan , Rudnik and Suvobor with the idea , only to be rejected by all of them .

At the same time , unknown perpetrators sabotaged Triglav causing a fire , further deteriorating

crew morale already hampered by desertion while Milan Spasić and Sergej Mažera died blowing up the destroyer Zagreb to prevent it from falling into enemy hands . Following this , Kern decided to sail out with just two boats , Durmitor and Kajmakalan which he deemed had the most trustworthy crews , leaving Boka Kotorska on 17 April . Because both boats were in poor condition and overloaded with personnel , the maximum speed they could achieve was no more than 29 knots . Before passing through the Strait of Otranto , the boats successfully evaded two groups of Italian ships . They finally arrived at Navarino Bay on 19 April before continuing to Souda Bay where they arrived 22 April . In Souda Bay Durmitor and Kajmakalan were tasked with escorting a convoy to Alexandria protecting it from possible Stuka attacks . Once in Alexandria they reunited with the remaining JKRM forces that managed to escape , forming the JKRM in exile . The boats were first tasked with patrolling the outside of the harbor in anticipation of an attack by Axis coastal craft . In June they operated against Vichy French forces in Syria . In 1944 they were reported as being tasked with escorting convoys between Alexandria and Port Said . However , with time the serviceability of the boats became a problem because of the lack of spare parts needed for their German @-@ built engines .

= = = Axis service = = =

The remaining six boats were captured by Italian forces and commissioned in the Regia Marina (Royal Navy) , receiving designations MAS 3 ? 8 D , with " MAS " standing for Motoscafo Armato Silurante (English : Torpedo Armed Motorboat) and the prefix D denoting they were captured in Dalmatia . Their designations were once again changed in July 1942 , with the prefix " MAS " being replaced with " MS " and new numerals from 41 to 46 . During their Italian service the boat 's weapons were also changed . The original torpedo armament was replaced with two 21 @.@ 7 in (550 mm) torpedo tubes , while the original 40 mm (1 @.@ 6 in) gun was removed in favor of two 20 mm (0 @.@ 79 in) / 65 guns on MS 41 ? 44 or one 40 mm (1 @.@ 6 in) / 43 gun and one 15 mm (0 @.@ 59 in) / 38 machine gun on MS 45 ? 46 . The boats were also equipped to carry 12 to 20 depth charges .

Following the Italian Armistice in September 1943 , the majority of the boats were taken over by the Kriegsmarine . MS 41 was scuttled by its crew on 9 September at Monfalcone . Sources are inconsistent regarding the boat 's aftermath ; according to Italian sources it was raised and repaired by German forces before being sunk by a mine between Porto Corsini and Porto Garibaldi in October 1944 . German sources on the other hand , claim it was never commissioned by the Kriegsmarine . MS 45 was also scuttled by its crew just a few days later , on 18 September at Cattolica . The remaining four boats , MS 42 ? 44 and MS 46 were commissioned with the Kriegsmarine as S 2 ? 5 . All four were sunk in October 1944 at Salonika .

= = = Post @-@ war service = = =

After the end of the war , Durmitor and Kajmakalan , along with other JKRM ships and personnel in exile , returned to Zibenik in May 1945 . They were commissioned in the new Yugoslav Navy (Serbo @-@ Croatian : Jugoslavenska ratna mornarica ; JRM) as T? 5 and T? 6 , later being redesignated as T? 391 and T? 392 . Both were stricken in 1963 .