

= SM U @-@ 69 =

SM U @-@ 69 was a Type U 66 submarine or U @-@ boat for the German Imperial Navy (German : Kaiserliche Marine) during the First World War . She had been laid down in February 1914 as U @-@ 10 the fourth boat of the U @-@ 7 class for the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy (German : Kaiserliche und Königliche Kriegsmarine or K.u.K. Kriegsmarine) but was sold to Germany , along with the others in her class , in November 1914 .

The submarine was ordered as U @-@ 10 from Germaniawerft of Kiel as the first of five boats of the U @-@ 7 class for the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy . After the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy became convinced that none of the submarines of the class could be delivered to the Adriatic via Gibraltar . As a consequence , the entire class , including U @-@ 10 , was sold to the German Imperial Navy in November 1914 . Under German control , the class became known as the U 66 type and the boats were renumbered ; U @-@ 10 became U @-@ 69 , and all were redesigned and reconstructed to German specifications . U @-@ 69 was launched in June 1915 and commissioned in September . As completed , she displaced 791 tonnes (779 long tons) , surfaced , and 933 tonnes (918 long tons) , submerged . The boat was 69 @. @ 50 metres (228 ft) long and was armed with five torpedo tubes and a deck gun .

As a part of the 4th Flotilla , U @-@ 69 sank 31 ships with a combined gross register tonnage of 102 @, @ 875 in five war patrols . U @-@ 69 left Emden on her sixth patrol on 9 July 1917 for operations off Ireland . On 11 July , U @-@ 69 reported her position off Norway but neither she nor any of her crew were ever heard from again . British records say that U @-@ 69 was sunk by destroyer HMS Patriot on 12 July , but a German postwar study cast doubt on this . U @-@ 69 's fate is officially unknown .

= = Design and construction = =

After the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy had competitively evaluated three foreign submarine designs , it selected the Germaniawerft 506d design , also known as the Type UD , for its new U @-@ 7 class of five submarines . The Navy ordered five boats on 1 February 1913 .

The U @-@ 7 class was seen by the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy as an improved version of its U @-@ 3 class , which was also a Germaniawerft design . As designed for the Austro @-@ Hungarian Navy , the boats were to displace 695 tonnes (684 long tons) on the surface and 885 tonnes (871 long tons) while submerged . The doubled @-@ hulled boats were to be 69 @. @ 50 metres (228 ft) long overall with a beam of 6 @. @ 30 metres (20 @. @ 7 ft) and a draft of 3 @. @ 79 metres (12 @. @ 4 ft) . The Austrian specifications called for two shafts with twin diesel engines (2 @, @ 300 metric horsepower (2 @, @ 269 bhp ; 1 @, @ 692 kW) total) for surface running at up to 17 knots (31 km / h ; 20 mph) , and twin electric motors (1 @, @ 240 PS (1 @, @ 223 shp ; 912 kW) total) for a maximum of 11 knots (20 km / h ; 13 mph) when submerged . The boats were designed with five 45 cm (17 @. @ 7 in) torpedo tubes ; four located in the bow , one in the stern . The boats ' armament was to also include a single 6 @. @ 6 cm (2 @. @ 6 in) deck gun .

U @-@ 10 was laid down on 7 February 1914 , and her construction was slated to be complete within 29 to 33 months .

Neither U @-@ 10 nor any of her sister boats were complete when World War I began in August 1914 . With the boats under construction at Kiel , the Austrians became convinced that it would be impossible to take delivery of the boats , which would need to be towed into the Mediterranean past Gibraltar , a British territory . As a result , U @-@ 10 and her four sisters were sold to the Imperial German Navy on 28 November 1914 .

U @-@ 10 was renumbered by the Germans as U @-@ 69 when her class was redesignated as the Type U 66 . The Imperial German Navy had the submarines redesigned and reconstructed to German standards , which increased the surface displacement by 96 tonnes (94 long tons) and the submerged by 48 tonnes (47 long tons) . The torpedo load was increased by a third , from 9 to 12 , and the deck gun was upgraded from the 6 @. @ 6 cm (2 @. @ 6 in) gun originally specified to an 8 @. @ 8 cm (3 @. @ 5 in) one .

= = Service career = =

U @-@ 69 was launched on 24 June 1915 . On 4 September , SM U @-@ 69 was commissioned into the Imperial German Navy under the command of Kapitänleutnant Ernst Wilhelms . On 4 March 1916 , U @-@ 69 was assigned to the IV . U @-@ Halbflotille .

U @-@ 69 successfully completed five war patrols in which she sank 31 ships with a combined a total of 102 @,@ 875 gross register tons (GRT) . U @-@ 69 's most successful month for number of ships sunk was April 1916 , when she sank eight ships of 21 @,@ 051 tons in a span of six days . The month with the highest tonnage sunk was June 1917 when she sank five ships of 28 @,@ 808 tons in a nine @-@ day span ; nearly half of that total came from one ship , the 13 @,@ 441 @-@ ton British armed merchant cruiser Avenger sunk on 14 June . Avenger had been patrolling off the Shetland Islands and was returning to Scapa Flow , when she was struck by a single torpedo on the port side . The ship began listing heavily and non @-@ essential crew were evacuated while destroyers arrived and took her under tow . Despite strenuous efforts to save her , Avenger foundered ten hours after being hit when her internal bulkheads collapsed . One man was killed in the attack .

U @-@ 69 began her sixth and final patrol on 9 July when she departed from Emden , destined for operations off Ireland . U @-@ 69 's position report at 02 : 30 on 11 July reported that she was 35 nautical miles (65 km ; 40 mi) south of Lindesnes , Norway , and was the last known contact with U @-@ 69 . According to author Dwight Messimer , two British sources report that HMS Patriot sank U @-@ 69 at position 60 ° 25 ' N 1 ° 32 ' E on 12 July . An observer in a kite balloon deployed by Patriot spotted a surfaced U @-@ boat at 07 : 00 . The U @-@ boat submerged and Patriot hunted the submarine until noon , when it loosed two depth charges that brought thick brown oil to the surface . A postwar study by Germany cast doubt on whether or not the submarine attacked by Patriot was U @-@ 69 . Officially , her fate remains unknown .

= = Summary of raiding history = =