

= SM U 6 (Austria - Hungary) =

SM U 6 or U VI was a U 5 class submarine or U boat built for and operated by the Austro - Hungarian Navy (German : Kaiserliche und Königliche Kriegsmarine or K.u.K. Kriegsmarine) before and during the First World War . The submarine was built as part of a plan to evaluate foreign submarine designs , and was the second of three boats of the class built by Whitehead & Co. of Fiume after a design by Irishman John Philip Holland .

U 6 was laid down in February 1908 and launched in June 1909 . The double hulled submarine was just over 105 feet (32 m) long and displaced between 240 and 273 tonnes (265 and 301 short tons) , depending on whether surfaced or submerged . U 6 's design had inadequate ventilation and exhaust from her twin gasoline engines often intoxicated the crew . The boat was commissioned into the Austro - Hungarian Navy in July 1910 , and served as a training boat ? sometimes making as many as ten cruises a month ? through the beginning of the First World War in 1914 .

The submarine had only one wartime success , which was sinking a French destroyer in March 1916 . Later that year , in May , U 6 became entangled in anti submarine netting deployed as part of the Otranto Barrage . Coming under fire from Royal Navy 's drifters running the nets , U 6 was abandoned and sunk . All of her crewmen were rescued and were held in captivity through the end of the war .

= = Design and construction = =

U 6 was built as part of a plan by the Austro - Hungarian Navy to competitively evaluate foreign submarine designs from Simon Lake , Germaniawerft , and John Philip Holland . The Austro - Hungarian Navy authorized the construction of U 6 (and sister ship , U 5) in 1906 by Whitehead & Co. of Fiume . The boat was designed by American John Philip Holland and licensed by Holland and his company , Electric Boat . U 6 was laid down on 21 February 1908 in the United States , partially assembled , and shipped to Whitehead 's for final assembly , a process which , author Edwin Sieche notes , " caused a lot of trouble " . She was launched at Fiume on 12 June 1909 .

U 6 's design featured a single hull with a tear drop shaped body that bore a strong resemblance to modern nuclear submarines . She was 105 feet 4 inches (32 @ 11 m) long by 13 feet 9 inches (4 @ 19 m) abeam and had a draft of 12 feet 10 inches (3 @ 91 m) . She displaced 240 tonnes (240 long tons) surfaced , and 273 tonnes (269 long tons) submerged . Her two 45 centimeter (17 @ 7 in) bow torpedo tubes featured unique , cloverleaf shaped design hatches that rotated on a central axis , and the boat was designed to carry up to four torpedoes . For surface running , U 6 was outfitted with 2 gasoline engines , but suffered from inadequate ventilation , which resulted in frequent intoxication of the crew ; her underwater propulsion was by two electric motors .

= = Service career = =

U 6 was commissioned into the Austro - Hungarian Navy on 1 July 1910 , with Linienschiffsleutnant Georg Ritter von Trapp in command . Over the next three years she served primarily as a training boat , making as many as ten training cruises per month . On 7 November 1911 , she hosted a Norwegian naval delegation that inspected her . On 26 June 1912 , U 6 was accidentally rammed by the submarine tender Pelikan while surfacing after a deep diving trial .

At the outbreak of World War I , U 6 was one of only four fully operational U boats in the Austro - Hungarian Navy fleet , and was stationed at Cattaro by late 1914 . U 6 's activities over the early part of the war are not reported , but the boat 's armament was augmented by a 3 @ 7 cm / 23 (1 @ 5 in) quick @ firing (QF) deck gun in December 1915 . Sister boat U 5 had her first radio receiver installed at the same time her deck gun was added , but it is not reported whether U 6 did , too . On 23 February 1916 , U 6 made an unsuccessful

attack on an Italian Indomito @-@ class destroyer , but she then managed to torpedo and sink the French destroyer Renaudin on 18 March off Durazzo . Renaudin went down with 47 of her 83 @-@ man complement .

On the night of 12 May , U @-@ 6 headed out to try to intercept shipping between Santa Maria di Leuca and Valona . Linienschiffsleutnant Hugo von Falkhausen , U @-@ 6 's commander since November 1915 , attempted to pass underneath two drifters that formed a part of the Otranto Barrage . While submerged , von Falkhausen heard an unexplained noise on the hull of the boat , which was likely the sound of U @-@ 6 fouling one of the anti @-@ submarine nets deployed from the drifter Calistoga . The drifter 's skipper was alerted to the submarine 's presence when one of the indicator buoys had fired . Calistoga launched signal flares that attracted the attention of two nearby drifters Dulcie Doris and Evening Star II . In the meantime , von Falkhausen surfaced U @-@ 6 to try to cut loose the buoy being dragged behind his boat . When the hatch was opened , the crew discovered the boat entangled in the net .

Though unable to submerge , von Falkhausen attempted to flee on the surface , but the port propeller shaft became fouled . Realizing that he was stuck , and with Dulcie Doris and Evening Star II beginning to shell his boat , U @-@ 6 's captain ordered code books and confidential material thrown overboard and the submarine scuttled . U @-@ 6 's three officers and seventeen crewmen were all rescued , but spent the remainder of the war as prisoners of the Italians . In her career , U @-@ 6 sank one ship totaling 756 GRT .