

= German submarine U 44 ( 1939 ) =

German submarine U 44 was a Type IXA U 44 boat of Nazi Germany 's Kriegsmarine that operated during World War II . She was ordered in November 1936 and laid down in September 1938 in Bremen . She was launched in August 1939 and commissioned in November .

During her service in the Kriegsmarine , U 44 conducted only two war patrols and sank a total of eight enemy vessels for a loss of 30 000 885 GRT . On 13 March 1940 , she struck a mine that was located in field Number 7 off the north coast of the Netherlands . All 47 of her ' s crew members went down with the submarine .

= = Construction = =

U 44 was ordered by the Kriegsmarine on 21 November 1936 ( as part of Plan Z and in violation of the Treaty of Versailles ) . She was laid down on 15 September 1938 by AG Weser , in Bremen as yard number 949 . U 44 was launched on 5 August 1939 and commissioned on 4 November of that same year under the command of Kapitänleutnant Ludwig Mathes .

= = Design = =

As one of the eight original German Type IX submarines , later designated IXA , U 44 had a displacement of 1 032 tonnes ( 1 016 long tons ) when at the surface and 1 153 tonnes ( 1 135 long tons ) while submerged . The U 44 boat had a total length of 76 . 50 m ( 251 ft ) , a pressure hull length of 58 . 75 m ( 192 ft 9 in ) , a beam of 6 . 51 m ( 21 ft 4 in ) , a height of 9 . 40 m ( 30 ft 10 in ) , and a draught of 4 . 70 m ( 15 ft 5 in ) . The submarine was powered by two MAN M 9 V 40 / 46 supercharged four - stroke , nine - cylinder diesel engines producing a total of 4 400 metric horsepower ( 3 240 kW ; 4 340 shp ) for use while surfaced , two Siemens - Schuckert 2 GU 345 / 34 double - acting electric motors producing a total of 1 000 metric horsepower ( 740 kW ; 990 shp ) for use while submerged . She had two shafts and two 1 . 92 m ( 6 ft ) propellers . The boat was capable of operating at depths of up to 230 metres ( 750 ft ) .

The submarine had a maximum surface speed of 18 . 2 knots ( 33 . 7 km / h ; 20 . 9 mph ) and a maximum submerged speed of 7 . 7 knots ( 14 . 3 km / h ; 8 . 9 mph ) . When submerged , the boat could operate for 65 ? 78 nautical miles ( 120 ? 144 km ; 75 ? 90 mi ) at 4 knots ( 7 . 4 km / h ; 4 . 6 mph ) ; when surfaced , she could travel 10 000 nautical miles ( 19 000 km ; 12 000 mi ) at 10 knots ( 19 km / h ; 12 mph ) . U 44 was fitted with six 53 . 3 cm ( 21 in ) torpedo tubes ( four fitted at the bow and two at the stern ) , 22 torpedoes , one 10 . 5 cm ( 4 . 13 in ) SK C / 32 naval gun , 180 rounds , and a 3 . 7 cm ( 1 . 5 in ) as well as a 2 cm ( 0 . 79 in ) anti - aircraft gun . The boat had a complement of forty - eight .

= = Service history = =

U 44 had a very short operational life . During her service with the Kriegsmarine , she took part in only two combat patrols . After training exercises with the 6th U 44 boat Flotilla from 4 November to 31 December 1939 , U 44 was assigned as the front boat for the 2nd U 44 boat Flotilla on 1 January 1940 . She was to remain a part of this flotilla until her loss .

= = First patrol = =

The first of U 44 's two patrols began on 6 January 1940 when she left Wilhelmshaven for the North Sea , eventually circumnavigating the British Isles , travelling as far south as the Bay of Biscay and Portugal . It was in these two locations that U 44 sank her first ( and last ) merchant ships . Following these victories , she headed north again , travelling just north of the coast of Scotland

and back into the North Sea . She then returned to Wilhelmshaven , arriving there on 9 February 1940 . Over a period of thirty @-@ five days , U @-@ 44 sank eight merchant ships , for a total loss of 30 @,@ 885 GRT .

= = = Second patrol = = =

Unlike her first outing , U @-@ 44 's second patrol was a disaster , not even lasting through the first day . After spending more than a month in Wilhelmshaven , she began her second patrol on 13 March 1940 . A few hours after leaving port , U @-@ 44 entered minefield Number 7 , just off of the northern coast of the Netherlands . This particular minefield was laid by the British destroyers HMS Esk , Express , Icarus , Faulknor and Impulsive . Upon entering the minefield , U @-@ 44 struck one of the devices and sank at 54 ° 14 ' N 5 ° 07 ' E. All forty @-@ seven of her crew were lost .

= = Previously recorded fate = =

Sunk by HMS Fortune on 20 March 1940 .

= = Summary of raiding history = =

During her service , U @-@ 44 sank eight commercial ships for a loss of 30 @,@ 885 GRT . All of these ships were sunk during her first patrol .