

= German submarine U 37 (1938) =

German submarine U 37 was a Type IXA U boat of Nazi Germany 's Kriegsmarine during World War II . The submarine was laid down on 15 March 1937 at the DeSchiMAG AG Weser yard in Bremen , launched on 14 May 1938 , and commissioned on 4 August 1938 under the command of Kapitänleutnant Heinrich Schuch as part of the 6th U boat Flotilla .

Between August 1939 and March 1941 , U 37 conducted eleven combat patrols , sinking 53 merchant ships , for a total of 200 , 124 gross register tons (GRT) ; and two warships , the British Hastings class sloop HMS Penzance , and the French submarine Sfax (Q182) . U 37 was then withdrawn from front line service and assigned to training units until the end of the war . On 8 May 1945 the U boat was scuttled in Sonderburg Bay , off Flensburg . U 37 was the sixth most successful U boat in World War II .

= = Design = =

As one of the eight original German Type IX submarines , later designated IXA , U 37 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 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 , 500 nautical miles (19 , 400 km ; 12 , 100 mi) at 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . U 37 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 = =

= = = First patrol = = =

U 37 left Wilhelmshaven , with Kapitänleutnant Heinrich Schuch in command , on 19 August 1939 . The boat operated for nearly four weeks in the North Atlantic , returning to port on 15 September 1939 .

= = = Second patrol = = =

U 37 left Wilhelmshaven on 5 October 1939 to conduct operations in the North Atlantic now under the command of Korvettenkapitän Werner Hartmann . During this patrol she sank eight ships : four British , two Greek , one French and one Swedish , including the British steam freighter Yorkshire which was traveling with the Allied convoy HG 3 , sailing from Gibraltar to Liverpool , England . Hartmann returned his boat to port on 8 November after nearly five weeks at sea .

== = Third patrol == =

On 1 January 1940 U @-@ 37 was reassigned to the 2nd U @-@ boat Flotilla based at Wilhelmshaven . On 28 January 1940 the U @-@ boat departed for the North Atlantic , with Werner Hartmann in command . As on his previous patrol , Hartmann sank eight ships , this time three British , two Norwegian , one Danish , one French and one Greek . Of these ships , two were in convoy at the time . U @-@ 37 returned to Wilhelmshaven on 27 February .

== = Fourth patrol == =

U @-@ 37 departed Wilhelmshaven on 30 March for Werner Hartmann 's third consecutive patrol , this time around Norway . Again , Hartmann proved successful , sinking three ships ; the Norwegian Tosca , the Swedish Sveaborg and the British Stancliffe . After patrolling for over two weeks , the U @-@ boat returned to Wilhelmshaven on 18 April .

== = Fifth patrol == =

Under a new captain , Kapitänleutnant Victor Oehrns , U @-@ 37 departed from Wilhelmshaven on 15 May for a patrol around Portugal and Spain . U @-@ 37 had her most successful mission , hitting eleven ships , sinking ten of them . Three French ships were sunk , two Greek , two British , one Swedish , one Argentinian , one Finnish ; one British ship was damaged . After three and a half weeks at sea , U @-@ 37 returned to Wilhelmshaven on 9 June .

The neutral Argentinian ship was Uruguay , sailing from Rosario to Limerick with a cargo of maize . U @-@ 37 surfaced and stopped Uruguay and examined her papers , then sank her with scuttling charges . Her crew of 28 were left in their lifeboats . Fifteen died , 13 survived .

== = Sixth patrol == =

U @-@ 37 sailed from Wilhelmshaven on 1 August , again with Victor Oehrns in command . This week and a half long patrol in the Atlantic off the west coast of Ireland resulted in the sinking of a single British ship , Upwey Grange . U @-@ 37 returned to port on 12 August , but rather than head back to Wilhelmshaven , she made for Lorient in France , where the 2nd U @-@ boat Flotilla was now based .

== = Seventh patrol == =

For the first time , U @-@ 37 began a patrol from a location other than Germany , in Lorient on 17 August , with Victor Oehrns in command once more . It was to focus on operations off the south @-@ west coast of Ireland . Seven ships were sunk during this voyage ; five of which were British , one Norwegian , and one Greek . Of these ships , one was from convoy OA 220 , the British Brookwood , traveling from Britain to the United States , two were from convoy SC 1 , the British sloop HMS Penzance (L28) and Blarimore , sailing from Sydney , Nova Scotia , Canada , to the United Kingdom . After two weeks at sea , U @-@ 37 returned to Lorient on 30 August .

== = Eighth patrol == =

On 24 September , U @-@ 37 departed Lorient on Victor Oehrns 's fourth patrol , in which he would sail to the North Atlantic . During this month @-@ long operation U @-@ 37 sank six ships , four of which were in convoy at the time of attack , all of which were British . Five of these six ships were sailing under the British flag , while the sixth was from Egypt . The British ship Corrientes was sunk as part of OB @-@ 217 , sailing from Liverpool to North America . Heminge was sailing as part of OB @-@ 220 , also sailing from Liverpool to North America . British General was sunk while sailing as part of convoy OA 222 , sailing from Britain to North America . The fourth ship sunk was the

British Stangrant , sailing as part of convoy HX 77 from Halifax to the United Kingdom . The U @-@ boat returned to Lorient on 22 October .

= = = Ninth patrol = = =

After over a month in port , U @-@ 37 departed with a new captain , Oberleutnant zur See Asmus Nicolai Clausen on 28 November for operations around north @-@ west Africa and Spain . Seven ships were sunk during this patrol ; two French , two Swedish , two British and one Spanish . Of these seven ships , three were in convoy at the time of their sinking . The Swedish Gwalia and Daphne and the British Jeanne M were sailing as part of convoy OG 46 from Britain to Gibraltar . The French vessels , the oiler Rhône and the submarine Sfax belonged to Vichy France and were sunk in error . After five weeks on the high seas , U @-@ 37 returned to Lorient on 14 January 1941 .

= = = Tenth and eleventh patrols = = =

U @-@ 37 left Lorient on 30 January 1941 to patrol off the coast of Portugal . On 8 February she spotted Convoy HG @-@ 53 . The next day , U @-@ 37 sank two British ships , Courland and Estrellano . The third merchant vessel that U @-@ 37 sank on her tenth patrol was the British ship Brandenburg , on 10 February . The U @-@ boat then returned to Lorient on 18 February after spending 20 days at sea and sinking 4 @,@ 781 tons of shipping .

Leaving Lorient for the final time on 27 February 1941 , U @-@ 37 's last patrol took her to the waters south of Iceland . There she sank two vessels , the Greek cargo ship Mentor on 7 March , and the Icelandic trawler Pétursey on the 12th . After spending 24 days at sea , U @-@ 37 entered the port of Kiel on 22 March .

= = = Training boat = = =

On 1 May 1941 U @-@ 37 was reassigned to the 26th U @-@ boat Flotilla , based at Pillau (now Baltiysk , Russia) as a training U @-@ boat . She was transferred to the 22nd U @-@ boat Flotilla , based at Gotenhafen (now Gdynia , Poland) on 1 April 1942 , and finally to the 4th U @-@ boat Flotilla on 1 July 1944 , where she remained until the end of the war .

She was scuttled by her crew in May 1945 .

The British war propaganda film 49th Parallel (1941) uses the name U @-@ 37 for the German submarine whose crew comes ashore in Canada during WW2 . The craft is shown being blown up in Hudson Bay . The film was released shortly after the real U @-@ 37 went off active service .

= = Summary of raiding history = =