

= German submarine U 40 (1938) =

German submarine U 40 was a Type IXA U boat of Nazi Germany 's Kriegsmarine that operated during World War II .

U 40 was built in Bremen by DeSchiMAG AG Weser as yard number 945 . She was launched in November 1938 and commissioned in February 1939 .

U 40 conducted two war patrols during her career . Both of which were part of the 6th U boat Flotilla . During her short time in the war , she sank no ships .

U 40 was sunk on 13 October 1939 by a mine in the English Channel .

= = Construction = =

U 40 was ordered by the Kriegsmarine on 29 July 1936 (as part of Plan Z and in violation of the Treaty of Versailles) . Her keel was laid down on 1 July 1937 . U 40 was launched on 9 November 1938 and commissioned on 11 February 1939 under the command of Kapitänleutnant Werner von Schmidt .

= = Design = =

As one of the eight original German Type IX submarines , later designated IXA , U 40 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 ; 12,000 mi) at 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . U 40 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 = =

After being commissioned and deployed , U 40 was stationed in the German port city of Wilhelmshaven , which to be her home for the rest of her fairly short career .

= = = Patrols = = =

U 40 left Wilhelmshaven on 19 August 1939 , before World War II began , for her first patrol . For nearly four weeks she operated off the coast of Gibraltar , before returning home on 18 September that same year . U 40 would once again leave Wilhelmshaven , this time under the command of Kapitänleutnant Wolfgang Barten , on 10 October 1939 . During this patrol , she was to conduct joint operations off the coasts of Portugal and Spain .

=== Fate ===

On 13 October 1939 , U @-@ 40 was sunk by a British mine at 50 ° 41 ? 6 ? N 00 ° 15 ? 1 ? E. She was to operate as part of the first pack of U @-@ boats in World War II ; however , because she left port late , Barten decided to take a shortcut to the U @-@ boat 's designated meeting point , southwest of Ireland . This shortcut was through the English Channel , which was festooned with many British naval mines . Choosing to make the voyage nearly three and a half hours after high tide , the mines were not at their lowest point . The boat struck one of these devices and sank immediately to the sea floor . Nevertheless , nine crew members were able to exit through the aft escape hatch . Using escape equipment , they were able to reach the surface ; one of the nine died on his journey . Once there , five more died from exposure to the harsh elements of the English Channel . Nearly ten hours after the sinking , the remaining three men were rescued and taken prisoner by HMS Boreas .