

The quays which formed the only alternative torpedo targets were mainly pile jetties, and it was problematical whether torpedoes fired at them would explode, but in all the cases observed, it appears that they did so.

16. The attack was carried out by all aircraft according to plan.

In only one case, where the pilot of an aircraft was grazed by a shell splinter at the time of releasing his torpedo, was the accuracy of the attack affected.

17. One Albacore was shot down by enemy fighters after making his attack, and one Fulmar which is missing is thought to have met the same fate.

One other Fulmar engaged an M.E.109 without definite result, and was in turn attacked by another M.E.109 which was driven off by means of a "Tommy" gun from the back seat.

Return to Ship.

18. On making their getaway out of the Fjord, several aircraft machine-gunned a small vessel near the entrance, gun positions, huts, etc.

19. Returning aircraft were landed on from 1615 to 1658. The time taken in landing on twenty-one aircraft, some of them in damaged condition, in forty-three minutes without any mishap was the result of good backing up by pilots and of good drill by the handling parties on deck and in the hangars.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

20. (a) *Attacking Force:*—

Twelve torpedo bombers.
Six bombers.
Six fighters.

(b) *Results obtained:*—

(i) *Torpedo.*—Two certain hits on New Quay (Number 2 Jetty). Two probable hits on other quays. Further possible hits on quays. Two small craft probably destroyed.

(ii) *Bomb.*—Damage to oil installation. At least one tank destroyed. Minor damage to ship repair yard. Fires started.

(c) *Casualties:*—

(i) *Aircraft.*—Three missing. Four damaged.

(ii) *Personnel.*—Three pilots missing. Two observers missing. Two air gunners missing.

General.

21. For the last nine months, FURIOUS has been employed as a Transport Carrier, and it was a tonic to all concerned to learn that once more she was to be used operationally.

22. A full scale rehearsal, as carried out by VICTORIOUS had to be abandoned as far as FURIOUS was concerned. No flying, except for action purposes, could be carried out on passage, owing to the necessity of conserving fuel.

23. On the day, the work of the Flight Deck Party and Squadron personnel, coupled with the close backing up by pilots when landing on, was excellent, and this alone enabled a most exacting programme, which allowed no latitude, to be adhered to in every detail.

24. The Squadrons carried out their plan without a hitch; their navigation was accurate and their timing was exact. Their air discipline was of a very high standard.

(Signed) A. G. TALBOT,
Captain, R.N.
Commanding Officer.

APPENDIX II.

H.M.S. VICTORIOUS.

30th July, 1941.

The following brief report of the part taken by aircraft from H.M.S. VICTORIOUS in Operation "E.F." is submitted.

2. A striking force consisting of 12 Albacores of No. 827 Squadron and 8 Albacores of No. 828 Squadron was flown off in one range at 1400 on 30th July. All aircraft were armed with torpedoes fitted with duplex pistols set to non-contact at 14 feet. At 1430 a fighter escort of 9 Fulmars of No. 809 Squadron, and a fighter patrol of 3 Fulmars of 809 Squadron was flown off, the former having been ordered to overtake the striking force en route for the objective and the latter to patrol over the Fleet.

3. The fighter escort on making a landfall proceeded at a height of 4,000 feet to a position between Renoy and Prestoy Islands where heavy anti-aircraft fire was encountered. It was therefore decided to circle this area in the hope of drawing the fire from the striking force.

4. Approximately ten minutes later at least three M.E.109s and six M.E.110s were seen approaching from the direction of Vadso and Kirkenes aerodromes.

5. During the ensuing combats two M.E.110s and one M.E.109 were shot down for certain and confirmed, and a further M.E.110 was possibly shot down. Two of this Squadron are missing, but the pilot of one was seen to escape by parachute.

6. 827 Squadron, on making a landfall at Rabachi peninsula, formed sub-flights astern, proceeded at low altitude down Jarfjord, climbed the intervening hills, and then attacked shipping in Bokfjord.

7. Five aircraft fired at the BREMSE and two hits were reported. The remaining aircraft fired at shipping anchored N.E. and N.W. of Prestoy. Torpedoes were observed running correctly towards two targets but owing to heavy fighter opposition encountered at this time it was impossible to observe the results. During the retirement heavy fighter opposition continued and one JU.87 was shot down for certain by a front gun, and a probable M.E.109 with a rear gun. Six Albacores were lost. The air gunner for whom the probable M.E.109 is claimed, died in the aircraft and was buried at sea after the aircraft had returned to the ship.

8. 828 Squadron which approached Rabachi peninsula about half a mile astern of the leading squadron, formed sub-flights in line astern and led away through the hills to attack shipping at the northern end of Bokfjord.