

All's fair in love and war, but there's always someone who hits below the belt. Hope this may assist somehow.

If Sydney could not make full sense of a merchant ship's signals, he couldn't just blow it out of the water – think of the international repercussions. The only way was to signal "Heave to, prepare to accept an officer to check your credentials."

As Sydney cruised up and came in line with the underwater (fixed) torpedo tube, it was fired and blew off her bow. At this particular time, the Nazi flag was raised and guns took over.

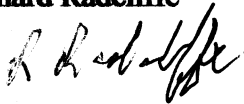
Detmers saw the result and tried to get out of the area as quickly as possible, but fire in the boiler room caught up with him and he did not want to go up with 140 off mines (each holding about 750 lbs of explosives) he had on board sly for delivery to Western Australian shipping such as troop convoys with the likes of the large ships of the time (one saviour: Sydney). Submarines use torpedoes without warning underwater, tubes do the same as far as Detmers was concerned.

In regards to the underwater photographs, torpedo tube number one is bent out of shape. This had to have happened after the torpedo had been fired. It looks as though a shell hit the ship above the waterline just astern of the tube's locked in firing position. The force of the explosion blowing them off the training lock, and the weight of the unfired torpedoes in the other tubes tending to turn the tubes towards the fore and aft position assisted also by the force of the ship hitting the sea bed.

As far as 'action stations,' nobody knows what goes on at the bridge as far as signals are concerned. But all Kormoran's crew seemed to know exactly what and when the skipper did it.

Yours truly,

Richard Radcliffe



Received by LEW VESPER  
on 25 Feb 08  
