

Conflicting Information.

It is curious reasoning to have John Curtin giving two different positions for the battle on the same day and the Germans giving several other different positions for the battle yet again. The *Wyrallah* also found the same wreckage reportedly in two different positions as well. Gill gave the same position for the battle twice in the same series of books (*HMAS Series*) but then gave a different position in a different (official) series of books (*History of the RAN in WW2*).

The Navy and the government have accepted the Germans version of the battle but we know now the Germans seriously misinformed everyone about at least a few things:

1. They said they never fired torpedoes (p64 260530Z DNOWA, Hardstaff)
2. They did not know the secret callsign.
3. They did not use the *LS3*
4. Denied they carried mines.
5. Had not replenished from supply ships since leaving Germany.
6. Gave different versions of the story of the battle.
7. Gave different positions for the battle site.
8. Did not meet other raiders.
9. Did not meet any U-boats.
10. During the interrogation it was stated by some crew members that they carried 21" torpedoes, but Detmers indicated they could not use the torpedoes loaded for submarines (which were 21") because they used a different size. This would also seem to be another lie. They also mislead the interrogators about other things as well and the Intelligence Officer in Fremantle at the time stated straight out that they were lying. Why does the Navy now believe they told the truth? Why, in fact would anyone believe they told the truth?

Search question.

Commander Hardstaff lists in his submission (Vol 1, page 68) the following signal:
"270805Z – Received NR51 from Pearce – To Catalinas (both) from Pearce –
Possibility three Dutch Catalinas and cruiser Tromp in vicinity – 0425Z/27"

While this appears straight forward, in fact, it is far from it. 0800Z is 1500 local time in the search area where the two Catalinas were operating and at that time they were operating no further north than 24° 12'S, while the Dutch were limited to search only as far south as 20°S so these two groups should have been at least 250 miles apart. Why would they have been warned of being anywhere each other?

Page 65 of the same submission gives the co-ordinates of the two groups of Catalinas and their search areas do not come close at any point. The only reason I can understand from reading the signal was that something was found and all the Catalinas and the *Tromp* headed for the same particular area to do a full concentrated search. This is normal search and rescue procedure. It does mean, however, that there must be signals missing from the search period of the 27th, not that that would surprise anyone.



Mistaken Identity ?

Just prior to December 1997 I wrote to the Fremantle Maritime Museum with some research I had completed on the loss of *HMAS Sydney* in 1941. In that research I outlined a theory on how the *Sydney* was lost which included the use of the *LS3* by the Germans disguised as a naval patrol craft and flying a white ensign. Since then I have come to the conclusion that the action must have taken place, not at 1600 in the afternoon but after dark. It would be impossible to mistake the *Kormoran* for the *Straat Malakka* in daylight, apart from the obvious discrepancies between the two of superstructure and hull shape, one was 900 tons larger than the other. These differences were not nearly so apparent at night if at all. As well as this, the *Straat Malakka* was never on the Australian Station at all during 1941 according to the ship movement cards from the navy.

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