

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

On April 1, our Fast Carrier Task Force launched concentrated pre-landing strikes on OKINAWA JIMA providing support for the successful amphibious assault. Strikes on OKINAWA continued through April 6. The enemy made desperate but futile attempts to hamper our operations; in one day alone, at least 250 Jap planes attacking our force were shot down by our fighters and surface craft.

On April 7, a Jap surface force was intercepted. Our Task Force launched a tremendous attack, and when our planes returned, the 45,000 ton YAMATO, 2 cruisers, and 3 destroyers had been sunk, and 3 destroyers damaged.

From April 9-20, the "Mad MADDOX" continued in the support of the OKINAWA occupation, our carrier based planes lashing the enemy with almost continuous strikes.

On April 21, our destroyer squadron bombarded the island of MINAMI DAITO JIMA, destroying numerous enemy installations and starting large fires. April 24-27 found us back at our old stamping ground, OKINAWA.

On April 30, the MADDOX retired to a rear base, having completed a record stay at sea for us - 48 days. After a brief breathing spell, we were underway once more, headed for Japanese waters.

On May 14 and 15, our Task Force launched strikes against the homeland island of KYUSHU, and the "Double M" didn't take long getting into the thick of things. A few hours before dawn, one day, four Jap planes picked on us simultaneously to try their monkey business. One launched a torpedo which passed about 25 yards ahead of us and within one minute, another dropped a bomb which landed about 700 yards away. All planes were taken under fire; we shot down one and drove off the remainder. Needless to say, it was an "interesting" morning for us all, but we know of better ways of working up an appetite for breakfast.

On May 17, our Task Force returned to OKINAWA to provide further support and air strikes until the end of the month.

At the end of May, Admiral HALSEY and Vice Admiral MCCAIN relieved Admiral SPRUANCE and Vice Admiral MITSCHER as our Fleet and Task Force Commanders respectively, to give the latters a well earned rest. We feel certain that Admiral HALSEY has a heap of trouble planned for the Japs, and we are looking forward to the part the MADDOX will play in the operations to follow.

U.S.S. MADDOX (DD731) *
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WAR COMMUNIQUE NO. 3

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In March, the MADDOX put to sea in company with a Fast Carrier Force headed for Japanese waters. It was the mission of this force to seek out and destroy enemy opposition in the form of fleet units, air-raft, and aircraft installations, in preparation for the April 1st Marine-Army landings on Okinawa Gunto.

After departure from port, several days were spent in training en route to the scene of our operations. On 16 March we struck; our carrier planes lashed the island of Kyushu, and on the following day, more of the same treatment was given to the "home" islands of Shikoku and northern Honshu.

On the 23rd, 24th, and 25th of March, the attacks were shifted to Okinawa Gunto. Our aircraft, battleships, cruisers, and destroyers strafed, strafed, and bombarded enemy installations in the softening up operations in order that our landings might be successfully accomplished with a minimum of casualties. On the 27th and again on the 31st we participated in the final strikes in preparation for the amphibious assault.

Naturally we did not expect the enemy to take all this lying down - and he did not disappoint us. Hostile aircraft made determined attacks on our formation on the 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and 27th of March, but our operations were not hampered.

The work of our fighter planes was superb; they shot down the majority of the enemy planes before they closed our formation. Those Japs that were successful in eluding our fighters were met with a thunderous anti-aircraft barrage by the ships of our force. We had the pleasure of seeing a great many enemy aircraft plummet down in a trail of flame and smoke.

Two enemy pilots made the fatal error of coming within the range of the Mighty Maddox' guns and we are happy to report that they have departed to join their "Honorable Ancestors".

Many of you may wonder what the duties of a destroyer are while operating with a Fast Carrier Task Force. Our primary duty is to screen heavy units from submarine, surface craft, and aircraft attacks. Another very important function is a service one - made possible by our size and maneuverability - effecting transfers of personnel and material between the ships of the task force and from our famous Service Force, thereby enabling the combatant units to stay at sea for protracted periods, keeping the pressure on the Japs to hasten their certain defeat.

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