

SECRET:

H.M.S.Venomous,
18th August, 1942.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the report of proceedings of His Majesty's Ship Venomous under my command in operations "PEDESTAL" "BELLOWS" & "BARITONE". All times quoted are Zone minus two.

2. At 1900 on the 2nd August 1942, H.M.S.Venomous sailed under the orders of the Commanding Officer H.M.S.Wishart, and after refuelling at Moville, joined the Rear Admiral commanding 10th Cruiser Squadron with the convoy off Oversay at 0616/3.
3. At 0730/4 H.M.S.Venomous closed H.M.S.Kenya and embarked 60 tons of oil fuel by trough method.
4. At 1753/4 a firm Asdic contact was counterattacked with a pattern of 5 depth charges in position 51° 58' N 17° 28' W. The Asdic set was put out of action by the attack and contact was not regained. H.M.S.Zetland was unable to confirm the contact, which was considered to have been non-sub. Defect was due to faulty valve holder in the amplifier.
5. At 0800/5 the Asdic set failed due to a broken H.T.cable. This defect was made good and the set was in operation again by 1250/5. This H.T.cable again became defective at 1100/6 and a spare length was obtained from H.M.S.Ashanti.
6. Possibly as a result of this depth charge attack a density of 0.4 developed in the starboard condenser. This was reported to the Senior Officer Force F repeated Captain D 6th Flotilla in my 1901/6.
7. H.M.Ships Venomous, Malcolm, Amazon and Wolverine proceeded to the westward to screen H.M.S.Argus at 2300/9. Course was reversed at 0115/10 for Gibraltar. Thick fog was encountered at 0458/10 and H.M.Ships Venomous and Malcolm lost touch with H.M.S. Argus when course was altered without signal about 0600. Arrived Gibraltar 0805/10.
8. Repairs to the starboard condenser were made good and H.M.S. Venomous sailed in company with H.M.Ships Keppel (S.O. destroyers) Malcolm, Amazon, Wolverine and Wrestler for operation "Bellows" at 1600/10.
9. A practice firing of main armament was carried out to the eastward of Europa Point at 1700/10.
10. At 1410/11 H.M.Ships Laforey and Lookout were sighted with H.M.Tug Jaunty picking up survivors from H.M.S.Eagle. After closing the position the destroyers proceeded to join the convoy at 1507/11.
11. On joining Force F at 1730/11 in position 38° 15' N 03° 35' E on the 11th August 1942 H.M.S.Venomous was instructed to close H.M.S.Lookout and transfer survivors. In favourable weather conditions H.M.S.Lookout came alongside and survivors were transferred without difficulty. On completion of transfer H.M.S.Venomous screened H.M.S.Furious back to Gibraltar at 23 knots, arriving 1940/12.

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12. The survivors included 49 Officers, 487 ratings and one Pressman, a total of 537. Fortunately the number of wounded was small and consisted of 6 cot cases and 25 non-cot cases. The wounded were accommodated in the sick bay, T.S., and Forecastle Locker, and a limited number on the fore mess deck.

13. All survivors were scantily clad and the majority required cleaning from oil fuel. Although a certain amount of clothing had been obtained in H.M.S. Lookout, all available Loan Clothing and much voluntary clothing was provided. The Loan Clothing provided for about 25 %.

14. By about 2030 all had been clothed and fed and were settling down for the night. Despite the fact that all Venomous Ratings slept at their quarters it was only possible to provide cover on the Mess deck for about 200. It was fortunate that the weather was fine and wind from astern.

15. The difficulties of providing for so large a number of survivors were overcome by the whole hearted co-operation of my Officers and Ship's Company. In particular I commend Lieutenant M. Cashman Royal Navy, Executive Officer, for his marked ability in organisation on this occasion, and R. Fox, Chief Petty Officer, Torpedo Coxswain, D/J 92864, for his efficiency with regard to victualling. The general behaviour and bearing of the survivors was excellent,

16. At 0325/16 H.M.S. Venomous proceeded under the orders of the Commanding Officer H.M.S. Furious for operations "BARITONE", returning to Gibraltar at 1000/18; the operation was without incident.

17. A high density developed in the Port condenser during the afternoon of 17th August.



R. Falcon-Steward

R. W. FALCON-STEWARD.

COMMANDER.

The Senior Officer Force "F".

H.M.S. Nelson.