

## Submarines at Pearl Harbor 7 December 1941

During the cowardly attack in the early morning hours of 7 December 1941, by the Empire of Japan, four U.S. Submarines were in port at Pearl Harbor, three at the Sub Base and one at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. The three boats moored at the Sub Base were:

- **USS Narwhal (SS-167)** was moored starboard side to at pier No. 4
- **USS Tautog (SS-199)** was moored port side to at pier No. 2
- **USS Dolphin (SS-169)** was moored port side to at pier No. 4
- **USS Cachalot (SS-170)** was moored port side to at Berth 1 in the Shipyard

These four boats had returned to port from two to four days previous to the attack, from patrols at Midway and Wake. Two of the submarines (**Narwhal** and **Tautog**), were given credit, along with a destroyer, for shooting down one enemy plane. The boats were undergoing a repair and refitting period with some of their machinery dismantled and some removed for ship work. The Japanese planes averted the Sub Base in exchange for the juicier targets, but their rueful mistake in not sinking these four boats cost them dearly. On that fateful Sunday morning, we had 16 modern fleet boats and six others of early-class vessels widely dispersed throughout the Pacific Fleet. Twenty-nine subs were in the Far East based in Manila.

**Narwhal**, was built by Portsmouth Naval Shipyard at Kittery, Maine. Her gunners on that nefarious morning assisted in the destruction of two Japanese torpedo planes. She was the last of the four boats to leave Pearl Harbor on 2 February 1942 to reconnoiter Wake Island and later in that first patrol, heavily damaged the *Maju Maru*, and six days later sunk the *Taki Maru* in the East China Sea. She earned 15 battle stars for her hard work supporting the war-effort with 15 war patrols, and at one time picked up 82 POW's; 41 accommodated in each torpedo room.

**Tautog**, a Tambor-class boat was built at Electric Boat. She had returned to Pearl Harbor on 5 December 1941, after simulated war-patrol ops in the Midway area, with her sister-ship *Thresher* (SS-200). She aided *Narwhal* and a destroyer shoot down a raiding Japanese torpedo bomber as it came over Merry Point. She left Pearl for her first war patrol 26 December 1941, and made 13 war patrols, and was one of the most successful boats credited with 26 Japanese sinkings for 72,606 tons, placing her first by number of ships and eleventh by tonnage earning her nickname "The Terrible T."

**Dolphin**, another of the V-boats built at Kittery, Maine, took the war to the enemy leaving Pearl Harbor on 24 December 1941 and reconnoitered the Marshall Islands in preparation for later air strikes. She received two battle stars for service during her three war patrols.

**Cachalot**, another of the V-boats built at Kittery, Maine, and lead-boat of her class, was the first boat to have a TDC (Arma Corporation's Mark 1) installed, which determined the gyroscope settings fed into the war-shots. One of her men was wounded in the surprise attack, but the ship remained undamaged at the Navy Yard. She steamed out of Pearl on 12 January 1942 and later received three battle stars for her three memorable war patrols.

After the surprise attack, divers from the escape training tank and the submarine rescue vessel, **Widgeon (ASR-1)**, rushed to assist in the rescue of men trapped in damaged ships.

Most of our deployed boats turned toward the waters of the Far East immediately, and fighting with defective torpedoes early on, and ultimately, improvements in the torpedoes, along with mine-detection equipment, radar, sonar and radio communications, accounted for a final tally of over 5 million tons of all Japanese shipping, and 215 naval vessels totaling over half-a-million tons sunk. We are creeded to remember our shipmates on Eternal Patrol with the Tolling of the Boats in remembrance of our honored 52 boats, which gobbled up about 20% of the Submarine Force, taking over 3,600 men of the nearly 18,000 officers and men fighting our boats during the war. Life-guard duty netted 511 downed aviators over the course of the war. Less than two percent of the Navy's total wartime personnel sunk over 55 percent of Japanese shipping, which includes all other sinkings by other allied forces, combined.