

Pathfinder

p. 11 NEWS MAGAZINE October 18, 1943

Battle of the Atlantic

German U-boats have returned in force, with new fire power, new battle tactics.

The story of the German submarine in this war reads like a Western thriller. And a new chapter has begun.

The bad man, whom Zane Grey might have called U-Boat Bill, was thrown out of the North Atlantic last summer by Sheriffs John Bull and Uncle Sam in a way that made every reader think and hope he was out for good and all. But he's back, wearing a big white hat—the new subs have larger conning towers, painted white this time instead of black—packing at least two new guns, and shooting it out in the open instead of from ambush.

Two Allied convoys, westbound, met the new U-boats in a ten-day running battle which took them almost to the coast of Canada, and cost them, according to survivors, at least ten vessels including three warships. One of the latter was the Canadian destroyer *St. Croix*, formerly the *U.S.S. Mc Cook*. Two U-boats were sunk.

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Battle of the Atlantic

There is evidence to support the belief that the subs now use a new type of torpedo for the first shot, one which follows a ship by some form of magnetic attraction and is detonated by the vibration of that ship's propellers. Thus crippled, the vessel is an easy mark for destruction by the standard type torpedo. Of still greater import was the discovery that this time the subs have elected to shoot it out with a convoy's escort planes and are amply equipped for the job with effective anti-aircraft batteries and much heavier deck armor. One of the raiders was observed to have ten anti-aircraft guns. Attacking Liberators were peppered with flak. One fluttered home with sieved wings, tail, and fuselage, a dead motor and wounded crew.

It was plain to see that to the Allied tactics which drove the U-boats from the seas last summer, sinking 90 subs in 90 days, something new must be added. And not only in the North Atlantic. Brazil has recently reported 11 sinkings in the South Atlantic.