

Incidental anti-Piracy Ops, Gulf of Siam, Aug 1945

On 15 July 1945, USS *Bugara* (SS 331) departed Subic Bay for the diesel-electric boat's third war patrol. Under the command of CDR Arnold F. Schade, a veteran of ten war patrols and the second most experienced man in the boat (Chief Electrician's Mate N. H. Leggett had eleven patrols under his belt), *Bugara* sailed south to the Gulf of Siam.

Bugara's first enemy contact was an enemy convoy spotted by radar off Malaya the night of the 19th. Schade fired nine of her twelve torpedoes at two small tankers, a sea truck, a patrol boat and a trawler, all of which ran deep (despite a six-foot setting) and missed. This produced a certain amount of frustration. The CO then decided on a different approach; surface, inspect any junks or small craft and sink those operated by the enemy. Four days later, on the 24th, *Bugara's* crew boarded two junks, one loaded with airplane parts and the other with sugar and sewing machines, both bound for Singapore. The American crew took the ships' papers, brought the native crews off (the Japanese crew members invariably went over the side to avoid capture), and then sank the captured ships with gunfire. The native crews were put in their own lifeboats and towed close inshore. Over the next two weeks, *Bugara* contacted 62 junks and small craft and, following the above policy, sank 57 of them with gunfire.

One case proved particularly interesting. On 2 August, *Bugara* sailors boarded and sank three schooners and a coaster before breaking for lunch. Then, at 1320, the boat happened on a new 150 ton schooner anchored in deep water east of Singora. As the submarine closed, the Americans spotted six large canoes nearby; full of Malay pirates attacking a Chinese crew on a Japanese vessel carrying rice for Singapore. As put by the

war patrol report, “We took off the Chinese crew and their life boat. The pirates fled. We sank the Jap [sic] ship, then shot up all the pirates and their boats. Put the Chinese ashore – and they love us still, inasmuch as the pirates had already killed two of their crew.”

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