



Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

USS PICKEREL (SS 177)

April 3, 1943 - 74 Men Lost

PICKEREL commanded by Lt. Cmdr. A. H. Aleton, Jr., the first submarine to be lost in the Central Pacific area, set out from Pearl Harbor on 18 March 1943. After topping off with fuel at Midway on 22 March, PICKEREL began her seventh war patrol off the eastern coast of northern Honshu. She was never heard from after her departure from Midway.

She was ordered to remain in her area until sunset 1 May 1943 and then to return to Midway. Standing orders required her to transmit by radio prior to entering a circle of radius 500 miles from Midway, and this report was expected by 6 May. When it was not received, a message ordering an immediate reply was repeatedly sent. No answer was received, and plane search along her expected course, revealed nothing. As a result, she was reported lost on 12 May 1943.



Antisubmarine attack data submitted by the Japanese at the end of the war list one attack which could conceivably have been on PICKEREL. This attack occurred on 3 April, 1943, off Shiranuka Lighthouse, on the northern tip of Honshu. This position is outside the area assigned to PICKEREL, but no other submarine was there. FLYING FISH was en route to the area between Honshu and Hokkaido and arrived there on 6 April, but PICKEREL might well have moved into the northern area for a few days until FLYING FISH's arrival if she found hunting poor in her own

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area. Indeed, unless the Japanese attacked a submarine which was the product of their own imaginations, they must certainly have attacked PICKEREL on 3 April, since no other boat of ours was near the area of the attack.

However, a special notation is made on the Japanese records to the effect that they are inaccurate for the month of April 1943. Thus there is every reason to speculate that, if PICKEREL did survive the attack of 3 April, she may have been attacked later in her own area and the attack may not have been reported. We know that there were Japanese mine plants along the coast of Honshu, but a study of the track chart for PICKEREL's sixth war patrol, conducted in the same area, shows that the Commanding officer was accustomed to stay outside the 60 fathom curve. Mines are normally ineffective in water that deep.

The probability as to the cause of PICKEREL's loss is that she was sunk by enemy depth charge attack. Operational casualties for mine explosions represent possibilities, but are not thought to be likely.

During the six patrols before her final one, PICKEREL sank five ships totaling 16,100 tons, and damaged 10, totaling 9,100 tons. On her first patrol she did no damage to the enemy. Her second, conducted between Manila and Surabaya, resulted in the sinking of two freighters. PICKEREL's third patrol was conducted along the Malay Barrier and again no successful attacks were made. In her fourth patrol, in the Philippines, six attacks were made, but none resulted in damage to the enemy. PICKEREL's fifth patrol was a passage from Australia to Pearl Harbor for refit, with a short patrol in the Marianas en route. She damaged a freighter on this run. On her sixth patrol this ship went to the Kuriles to patrol the Tokyo-Kiska traffic lanes. In sixteen attacks, she sank a freighter and two sampans, and did damage to another freighter and eight sampans.

Sailors Lost On USS PICKEREL (SS-177) 4-3-1943

Alston, A. H., Jr. LCDR
Apsay, D. CK2
Ayer, E. N. COM
Baurmeister, K. H. S1
Bays, L. D. EM1
Beauregard, J. "A" MOMM1
Beck, R. G. Y1
Bergman, J. J. BKR2
Blaylock, W. E. S1
Brownell, R. E. FC3
Browning, D. L. S1
Carroll, R. C. CMOMMA
Cline, C. A. TM1
Coffey, T. H. F1
Cynewski, P. T. MOMM2

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Davis, G. T. TM2
Dowe, H. S., III ENS
Eagan, R. E. TM3
Evans, W. E. S2
Evidon, D. S1
Feiock, T. G. TM3
Flanders, E. T. F1
Flowers, J. E. EM1
Frazier, M. B. PHM2
Gaetano, N. F1
Garner, A. L. EM3
Goodin, L. J. S2
Greisiger, W. R. F1
Harget, L. J., Jr. RM3
Harris, C. TM2
Helm, R. L. LT
Herda, T. M. QM2
Hery, F. P. MOMM2
Hilbert, H. R. SM1
Hirst, H. J. MM3
Hoge, W. T. ENS
Horvath, A. J. S1
Hunt, W. B. F1
Hutchens, F. R. EM3
Isley, R. L. S2
Johnson, J. R. GM3
Karaus, E MOMM1
Kimball, R. F. FC1
Lemke, W. J. SC2
Lindsay, J. C. EM3
Litchfield, R. E. SM1
Littledave, J. B. S2
Markle, C. O., Jr. MOMM2
Mattson, W. T. F2
Mc Cormack, P. H. EM3
Mc Mahon, J. CTMA
Meischke, F. L. CEMA
Mitchell, H. M. S2
Moore, H. W., Jr. LT
Morrison, G. C., Jr. RM3
Mowvioc, T. W. EM1
Olaguera, F. ST2
Osborn, B. G. SC3
Peifer, W. A. S1
Pierce, J. W. S2
Polk, D. S1

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Pore, J. W. EM1
Powell, C. A. CRMA
Rasmussen, S. J. MOMM1
Ray, S. B. LTJG
Russell, E. H. S2
Shaffer, W. C., Jr. LT
Sharp, T. F. LCDR
Shiffer, D. A. MOMM1
Stanton, R. W. MM3
Stevens, W. A. RM3
Stockton, E. C. MOMM1
Taylor, L. M., Jr. RM1
Van Cleve, M. G. TM2