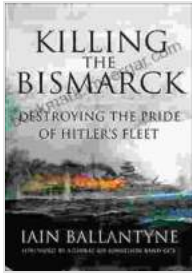


# Destroying the Pride of Hitler's Fleet: The Epic Torpedo Attack on the Bismarck



In the annals of naval warfare, few events stand out as dramatically and decisively as the sinking of the German battleship Bismarck by British torpedo aircraft in May 1941. The Bismarck, the largest and most powerful warship in the world at the time, was the pride of the German Kriegsmarine and a symbol of Hitler's ambitions to dominate the seas. Its destruction by a relatively small group of antiquated aircraft was a major setback for Germany and a turning point in the Battle of the Atlantic.

**Killing the Bismarck: Destroying the Pride of Hitler's Fleet** by Iain Ballantyne



★ ★ ★ ★ ☆	4.5 out of 5
Language	: English
File size	: 5326 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 513 pages
Lending	: Enabled



## The Bismarck's Raid

The Bismarck was commissioned in August 1940 and immediately became the flagship of the German fleet. In May 1941, it set out on a raiding mission into the North Atlantic, accompanied by the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen. The British Royal Navy, determined to stop the Bismarck from wreaking havoc on Allied shipping, dispatched a large force of warships to intercept it.

On May 24, the Bismarck and Prinz Eugen encountered the British battlecruiser HMS Hood and the battleship HMS Prince of Wales. In a fierce gun battle, the Bismarck sank the Hood, the pride of the Royal Navy, with a single salvo. However, the Prince of Wales was able to damage the Bismarck, forcing it to turn away and limp towards the port of Brest in France.

## The Torpedo Attack

The British were determined not to let the Bismarck escape and sent a force of Fairey Swordfish torpedo bombers to attack it. The Swordfish was

an outdated and slow-moving aircraft, but it was also small and maneuverable, making it difficult for anti-aircraft guns to hit.

On May 26, a group of nine Swordfish from the aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal attacked the Bismarck. The attack was a complete surprise, and the Bismarck's anti-aircraft guns were unable to stop the torpedo bombers from getting close. Two torpedoes struck the Bismarck, one in the stern and one in the rudder. The damage was catastrophic. The Bismarck lost steering and began to circle helplessly.

### **The Sinking**

The British battleships HMS Rodney and HMS King George V closed in on the Bismarck and opened fire. The Bismarck was already doomed, but the British ships continued to pound it with shells until it sank beneath the waves at 10:39 am on May 27, 1941.

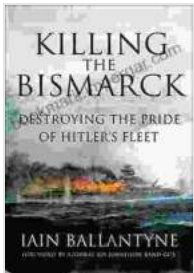
Of the Bismarck's crew of over 2,300 men, only 115 survived. The sinking of the Bismarck was a major victory for the Royal Navy and a turning point in the Battle of the Atlantic. It showed that even the most powerful warships could be defeated by smaller, more maneuverable aircraft.

### **The Legacy of the Bismarck**

The sinking of the Bismarck had a profound impact on the course of World War II. It showed that the Royal Navy was still a force to be reckoned with and that Germany's ambitions to dominate the seas were doomed to failure. The Bismarck also became a symbol of the folly of Hitler's military ambitions.

The wreck of the Bismarck lies on the seabed at a depth of about 4,700 meters. It has been visited by numerous expeditions, and its remains have been used to create a number of documentaries and films. The Bismarck remains a reminder of the horrors of war and the importance of peace.

The sinking of the Bismarck is one of the most famous and dramatic events in naval history. It is a story of courage, skill, and determination. It is also a story of tragedy and loss. The Bismarck was a magnificent ship, but its destruction was a necessary step towards defeating Nazi Germany and restoring peace to the world.



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**Fleet** by Iain Ballantyne

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