

SILENT WAR

THE UNITED STATES' SUBMARINE CAMPAIGN AGAINST IMPERIAL JAPAN, 1941-1945

Optional Rules

By Stephen Jackson

The below rules are considered optional and unofficial. If they turn out to work well, they are likely to be official inclusions for Silent War and for Steel Wolves (in modified form).

[17.1] War Progress Procedure

Most histories downplay the effect of the American submarine campaign on the degraded ability of the Imperial forces to resist Allied advances. By 1945 imports of bauxite (for aluminum) fell 88%, iron ore 95%, wood pulp 90%, cotton and wool 91%, oil 92%, soda and cement 96%, lumber 98%, and rubber 99%. Below are some examples of impacts to the air force, navy and army:

- Aircraft engine testing fell from 8 hours and five flights per engine to 2 hours of ground testing on 10% of all engines, with an increased failure of engines in flight and combat.
- By the end of 1944 80% of every aircraft was made from aluminum pilings, resulting in significantly reduced quality and strength.
- Lack of aviation fuel resulted in significantly less time spent on pilot training.
- Japanese carrier pilots received inadequate training at sea in part because of the reluctance of carriers to leave port for training in submarine infested waters.
- Inability of tankers to bring fuel to naval units resulted in those units being stationed close to the fuel supply rather than at distant sites where they could be more effective in countering Allied moves.
- In 1944, lack of steel forced significant cutbacks in all naval and merchant construction programs.
- Delivery of supplies to island garrisons fell from 96% arrival in 1942 to 67% in 1944 and 51% in 1945.

This option prompts an early change to War Period 4 in response to the player doing better than historical in earlier periods of the war, enabling a quicker allied advance and reflecting the demise of the Japanese merchant marine. The War Progress Phase is modified as follows:

- A. The numbers in boxes on the War Period Transition Table for WP4 (June 44 thru Jan 45) are ignored.

B. When the ships sunk marker hits 860, and the tons sunk marker reaches 3,800 (3.8 million), the player notes the month, which becomes the first month on the War Period Transition Table for potential to change to War Period 4, and is considered to have the number '9' in it as does June of 1944. Subsequent months on the table have the corresponding subsequent numbers in them. The War Period Modification Table is used normally.

Example: In March of 1944 the player achieves 860 ships sunk for 3,900t. The basic war period transition number for February is '9', March is '8', April is '7', etc. The modifier for change in February is -3 as per the War Period Modification table.

[14.15B] Targeting an Escort

Most successful attacks on escorts occurred with the escort unaware of the submarine's presence until the hit (or until the torpedo track was sighted with little opportunity to react). In other words, active ASW was not occurring during the attack. The escort was steaming at slow speed with the convoy or task force, and perhaps changing station. Furthermore, escorts tended to be on the periphery and more exposed. This option allows a 10% or 20% improved chance of hitting one escort, permitting a historical number of escort sinkings. In general, the escort's high defense value must still be overcome, and the submarine will still need a good TDC solution.

This is a modification to the first attack round (not re-attack). A submarine can target one escort and that escort's ASW value is not counted as part of the defense of that unit. ASW level of other escorts ARE counted.

This option cannot be utilized if:

1. The submarine is SPOTTED.
2. A diligent escort has been revealed.
3. An aircraft has been revealed.
4. The following Combat Events occur:
 - a. Betty Bomber spots submarine.
 - b. Counterattack (escorts spot submarine and hold it down).
 - c. Counterattack - combat (escorts attack before sub can).
5. A member of a wolfpack has already attacked, alerting the escorts. Only the first member of a pack can take advantage of this benefit.
6. The option can also be utilized if the player fires at an unrevealed target that turns out to be an escort, so long as only one escort in total has its ASW value ignored.
7. If the escort is damaged or sunk, its ASW value is not used in the counter-attack round.