



SUPPLEMENT

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FIRST AND SECOND BATTLES OF NARVIK ON 10th AND 13th APRIL 1940 RESPECTIVELY.

The following Despatch was submitted on the 25th April, 1940, to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty by Rear Admiral R. H. C. Hallifax, Rear Admiral (D), Home Fleet.

*Rear Admiral (D), Home Fleet,
H.M.S. Woolwich.*

25th April, 1940.

Be pleased to lay before the Board a narrative of the First Battle of Narvik, which has been prepared by the Commanding Officer, H.M.S. HOTSPUR, the senior surviving officer, and the report of the C.O. H.M.S. HAVOCK.

(Sgd.) R. H. C. HALLIFAX,
Rear Admiral.

H.M.S. HOTSPUR.

25th April, 1940.

SIR,

I have the honour to forward herewith reports from H.M. Ships HOTSPUR and HOSTILE on the destroyer raid on Narvik on 10th April, 1940. As senior surviving officer of this raid, I feel I should also attempt to give some co-ordinated account. In doing so, I am using information obtained from H.M. Ships HOTSPUR, HOSTILE and surviving officers from H.M.S. HARDY. No report has yet been received from H.M.S. HAVOCK and of course, nothing is available from H.M.S. HUNTER.

2. HARDY (Captain B. A. W. Warburton-Lee*), HUNTER (Lieutenant-Commander L. de Villiers), HOTSPUR (Commander H. F. H.

Layman) and HAVOCK (Lieutenant-Commander R. E. Courage), left Sullom Voe† at dawn on 7th April, in company with the Twentieth Destroyer Flotilla and joined RENOWN north of the Shetlands. The whole force proceeded in company towards Vest Fiord, destroyers being eventually detached to lay the minefield off Eggeloyisa at dawn, 8th April, 1940.

3. After guarding the minefield for a few hours reports of 2 enemy destroyers were received from GLOWWORM and ships of the Second Destroyer Flotilla joined RENOWN southwest of the Lofoten Islands before dark.

4. At daylight on 9th April, 1940, the RENOWN encountered SCHARNHORST and HIPPER. The Second Destroyer Flotilla, stationed astern of RENOWN carried out a divisional concentration on HIPPER but the range was probably too great. All destroyers were soon left behind in the heavy seas, but not before both HARDY and HUNTER had narrowly escaped being hit.

5. The Second Destroyer Flotilla was then detached to patrol east of the Lofoten Islands. After about two hours this patrol was broken off on receipt of orders to go to Narvik. Just before leaving her patrol position HOTSPUR made visual contact with REPULSE.

6. Available reports tended to show that Narvik was only lightly held so the flotilla was stopped off Tranoy at about 1600 to obtain information and HOSTILE (Commander J. P. Wright) joined. It was then learnt that the enemy held the place in force.

7. The following "Most Immediate" message was sent by Captain (D), Second Destroyer

* Admiralty footnote: Captain (D), 2nd Destroyer Flotilla.

† Admiralty footnote: Sullom Voe—a harbour in the Shetland Isle.