

About an hour later, torpedo squadrons from the ENTERPRISE and the YORKTOWN attacked the same carriers and also suffered heavy losses, but scored hits on two carriers.

These attacks were followed by dive bombers from the ENTERPRISE which destroyed two carriers, and by more bombers from the YORKTOWN which hit a third carrier, a battleship and a cruiser.

Two carriers had been set on fire and put completely out of action, a third was damaged and was sunk later by the submarine MUTILUS.

Planes from the only remaining undamaged Japanese carrier attacked the YORKTOWN and although this attack force was annihilated, it succeeded in making three bomb hits. Shortly afterward, enemy torpedo planes scored two hits on the YORKTOWN and orders were given to abandon ship.

About two hours later, ENTERPRISE planes attacked the undamaged Japanese carrier and immediately afterward a squadron from the HORNET found her blazing so furiously that they concentrated their attack on a nearby battleship and cruiser, hitting both ships.

It was apparent that we had won control of the air and it remained for aircraft from Midway to apply the finishing touches. By the end of the day Japanese forces were in full retirement.

On 5 and 6 June planes from the ENTERPRISE and HORNET found other Japanese forces, which they attacked, hits being scored on several cruisers and destroyers.

In an effort to save the YORKTOWN, which had been hit and taken in tow, the destroyer HULLAN went alongside on 6 June to put on board a salvage party. While she was alongside, both the YORKTOWN and HULLAN were torpedoed by an enemy submarine. The HULLAN sank within a few minutes and the following morning the YORKTOWN also sank.

The Battle of Midway was the first decisive defeat suffered by the Japanese Navy in 350 years. It put an end to the long period of Japanese offensive action and restored the balance of Naval power in the Pacific. The threat to Hawaii and the west coast was automatically removed and, except for operations in the Aleutians, where the Japanese had landed on Kiska and Attu, enemy operations were now confined to the South Pacific. Our carriers in themselves stood between the enemy and our own shore lines. Had the Navy failed, we might not have just left Tokyo Bay as visitors.

The folks back home, the world in general and Tokyo in particular, had a thunderous answer to their question, "Where is the American Navy?"

The landings in the Solomons started the Offensive - Defensive phase of the Pacific War.

On the morning of 7 August 1942, an amphibious force composed of six heavy cruisers, one light cruiser, destroyers and 23 transports, landed the Marines on Guadalcanal and Tulagi. The air support force consisted of three carriers, one new battleship, five heavy cruisers, one L. cruiser and a number of destroyers. A third task force, under Rear Admiral McCain, was composed of land-based planes of various types.

By the next afternoon, our Marines were in complete control of Tulagi and were progressing satisfactorily on Guadalcanal.

Following this successful operation, however, the enemy caught our forces by surprise and in the ensuing Battle of Savo Island on 9 August, we lost four cruisers (one of which was Australian).