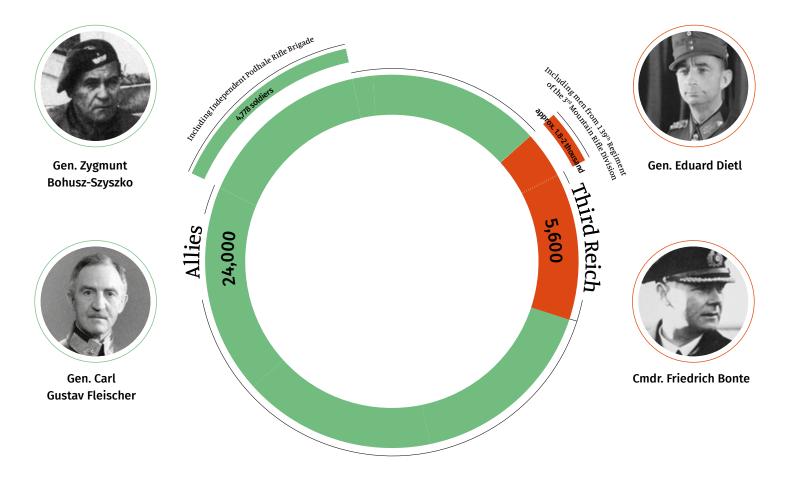


February 16th, 1940 The British capture the German ship "Altmark", which was carrying Allied prisoners of war. The incident occurred in Norwegian territorial waters, which accelerated Adolf Hitler's decision to attack Norway.

March 1st, 1940 Adolf Hitler orders an invasion of Norway. The operation is codenamed Weserübung.

April 9, 1940 **The German attack on Denmark** and Norway begins Denmark hardly resists. Norway defends itself. The heaviest fighting takes place in the Narvik area.

Estimated Forces of Combatants



Battle – course, turning points, weaponry

Sea Battles at Narvik

damaged

GERMAN

sun

ALLIED

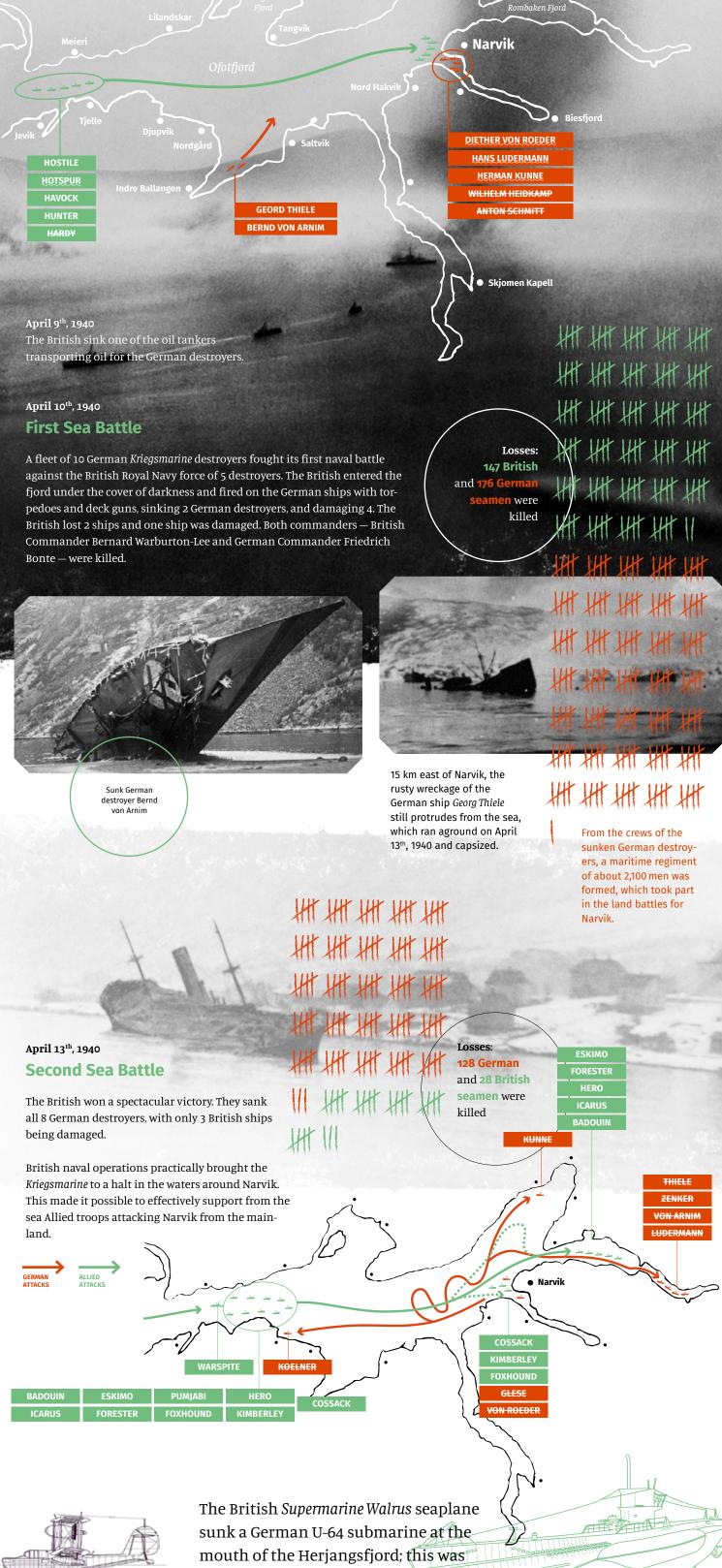
	British ships 1 battleship 16 destroyers
rces	
fo	
Sea	الله الله الله الله الله الله

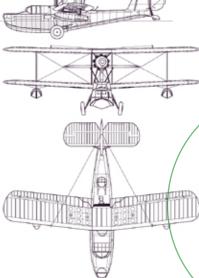
Norwegi	an ships	
2 battleships 2 submarines		
	^{††}	
. <u></u>	100	

German ships 16 destroyers 3 submarines

WOLFGAND ZENKER ERICH KOELLNER

ERICH GIESE





the first sinking of a German U-boat in World War II.

Supermarine Walrus Top speed: 217 km/h Range: 965 km Engine type: Bristol Pegasus Crew: 4. Manufacturer: Supermarine Designer: R.J. Mitchell Number built: 740

Polish Ships in the Battle of Narvik

On August 30th, 1939, 3 destroyers of the Polish Navy were evacuated to Britain under the "Beijing" plan. On September 1st, 1939 ORP "Błyskawica", ORP "Burza" and ORP "Grom" anchored in the port of Edinburgh. All of these ships took part in the naval operations in Narvik.

On April 8th, 1940, on the eve of the German attack on Norway, the submarine ORP "Orzel" sank the German freighter "Rio de Janeiro", carrying German soldiers to Norway.

The Polish destroyers ORP "Błyskawica", "Burza" and "Grom" took part in patrolling the fjords as well as shelling German positions around Narvik and in the north of Norway. During the mission, "Błyskawica" was damaged.

As a result of a German bombing raid on May 4th, 1940, "Grom" was sunk. Out of the crew of 213 sailors, 59 died as a result of being stuck inside the ship and by shooting of the survivors by German heavy machine guns. The wreck lies at a depth of 115 m. It was not found until 1986.

The Polish passenger ships MS "Chrobry", "Sobieski" and "Batory" were used as transporters. During the transport of Allied soldiers to Norway, on May 14th, 1940, the "Chrobry" was attacked by German bombers. After the raid, most of the crew were saved. The ship burned for hours afloat. It wasn't until May 15th that it was finished off by a torpedo dropped by the British and sunk.

> Poles constituted approx. 30% of all Allied forces in the ground

Gen. Bohusz-Szyszko

makes an oath of

allegiance

operations near Narvik.

The Independent Podhale Rifle Brigade

January 1940

The Independent Podhale Rifle Brigade was established. Originally, the brigade was to be part of the forces sent to help Finland, which was attacked by the USSR.

April 10th, 1940

The ceremony of awarding a banner to the new unit took place. The highest state authorities residing in exile in France were present.

April 15th, 1940

A special order from the Commander-in-Chief General W. Sikorski was read out, in which he included, among others, a quote reminding Polish soldiers about the goals of their fighting:

You go not to conquer, but to liberate.

April 21st, 1940

Østervik

Tangvil

Ofotfjord

Saltvik

1ST POLISH SBSP

4,778 soldiers from the Polish brigade, including 182 officers, set off from the French port of Brest. The three vessels reached Harstad off the coast of Norway on May 8th, soldiers manning positions in villages and towns in the Narvik area and commencing reconnaissance.

Polish soldiers have come to Norway to defend freedom and justice. They do not know the feeling of revenge because they are convinced that the perpetrators of inhuman crimes committed in Poland and elsewhere in Europe will soon be punished.

ARVI

Bjerkvik

Øyord

Narvik

Morken

HeinngenFiord

Ankenes

Skjomnes

4TH POLISH SBSP

Kongsbak

Glejsvik •

Rombacken

Stromsnes

– Gen. Zygmunt Bohusz-Szyszko

Kluvnes

Beisfjord

MAS 36 rifle Caliber 7,5 mm

Magazine 5 x

SIZE

Barrel Length 580 mm

Weapon weight 3,8 kg

Cartridges 7,5 x 54 mm MAS

Length 1020 mm

(unloaded)

MOUNTAIN INF

Hundalen Sildvik Polish troops were provided with

French equipment, purchased with repayable loans granted to Poland before the outbreak of WWII.

The basic armament of the Podhale soldiers were French MAS 367.5 mm rifles. The rifle, although relatively modern, was not very popular among the soldiers, who considered it too complicated and not very practical to use.

> In addition to armaments and mechanized equipment, the Poles were also given 196 mules to support transportation needs in the difficult mountainous terrain.

> > Norwegian soldier inspects a British rifle

Regular units of the Norwegian

army headed by General Carl Gustav Fleischer are also fighting

against Germany. Their equip-

ment included, among others,

heavy M / 29 machine guns.

The Land Battle of Narvik

Bjerkvik

Narvik

EIGN LEG. (FF

Ankenes

Nyborg

May 12th, 1940

The Allied attack on Bjerkvik begins as a prelude to the actual capture of Narvik. The 2nd SBSP Rifle Battalion also takes part in the fighting.

Bjornefiell

Hundalen

May 27th, 1940

FOREIGN LEG. (FR.)

In the evening, the decisive Allied attack on the German positions in Narvik begins. From a propaganda point of view, the capture of Narvik is very important. Success would mean defeat for the supposedly invincible Wehrmacht.

Kluvnes

Sildvik

Allied naval artillery supports the ground forces and shells the area between Orneset and Farsneset.

Polish troops try to occupy the Ankenes peninsula, which is separated from Narvik only by the waters of Beisfjorden. This position is strongly strengthened by the Germans – camouflaged, protected by minefields and, moreover, by well-positioned and operated machine guns and mortars. The failure of Polish radio communication does not allow for accurate fire support from the sea.

However, an attempt was made to take control of the strategically important hill 295, which would allow contact with Nyborg. The hill is captured, but the Poles are eventually forced to withdraw.

The Royal Norwegian Navy was re-established in

Great Britain. Norwegian ships took an active part in protecting convoys in the North Atlantic. At the end of World War II, the Norwe-

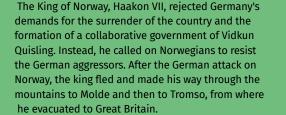
May 28th

The Allies occupy the surrounding areas on the road to the village of Beisfjord. Norwegian troops under the command of Gen. Carl Gustav Fleisher attack Narvik.

> Polish soldiers escort Germar POWs

May 29th The Polish brigade recovers Hill 295, forcing the German troops in Nyborg to evacuate. Poles take German prisoners of war.







gian Navy had 58 warships

A simultaneous attack by French troops from the Øyjorda Peninsula ensures the final victory of the Allies.

On the evening of May 29th, the first Norwegian troops enter Narvik.

May 31st, 1940

Polish and French troops fight together, the result of which is that Germans are pushed back almost to the Swedish border.

June 1st, 1940

The Norwegian government is informed of the decision to withdraw the Allied forces from Narvik to support the fighting in France, but this has little impact on the fate of the French campaign. France capitulates on June 22nd, 1940.

The success of the Polish Independent Podhale Rifle Brigade and the accompanying units had a propaganda dimension. It showed Polish soldiers had not laid down their arms and, despite the lies of Nazi propaganda, continued to fight on several fronts, in accordance with the slogan For our and your freedom.

Polish soldiers took a local dog,

a Norwegian Shepherd, on board the ship. To commemorate the fighting in Norway, they named it "Narvik".

June 7th, 1940 The Norwegian government and King Haakon VII are evacuated to Great Britain aboard the cruiser the HMS Devonshire.

In order to mislead the Germans, the retreating defenders of Narvik left man-

nequins behind at their battle stations

I take this opportunity to tell you General that from what I have seen and heard, the troops fighting under your command are among the best and most disciplined I have ever known.

- Col. Hans Finne, representative of the Norwegian High Command at the Allied Command

June 10th, 1940 As it has now become impossible to continue the fight against the Germans, the Norwegian army lays down its arms. The German occupation of the country begins.

> Polish units were evacuated from Norway on June 8th, 1940. These were the last allied units to leave.

Victory parade of the Wehrmacht

in Oslo

Mein Gott! Wieder diese Polen! (My God! Those Poles again!)

> - German soldier captured by a Pole

After the Battle – a Bitter Taste of Victory



The Battle of Narvik, despite the military victory of the Allies, did not reverse the fate of Norway, attacked by the Third Reich. Eventually the Germans took over the whole of Norway. Thus, they took over the supplies of iron ore from Sweden and strengthened defences on the coast, which enabled them to wage further, more effective war against Great Britain.

OSSES

outpute Biffe Briende

97 dead 28 missing 189 wounded

approx. 1,400 killed approx. 900 wounded approx. 950 missing and prisoners

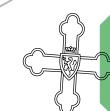
approx. 1,060 killed approx. 900 wounded approx. 960 missing and prisoners

So men fought men here, courage with courage, stubbornness with stubborness. And the Germans succumbed. And we discovered that even the best Germans can not only be defeated, but well defeated. (...) The echo of these fights has spread all over the world, and most importantly, it has reached our country. Each, even the smallest, victory of our Polish troops is a joy for them and a great motivation to persevere. Moreover, it is the best proof that we are fighting, we want to fight and we will fight.

– Gen. Zygmunt Bohusz-Szyszko



Losses of Polish seamen 71 killed about 40 wounded



12 Poles who participated in the Battle of Narvik, including General Zygmunt Bohusz-Szyszko, were awarded the Norwegian War Cross. General Sikorski was the 13th Pole, who was awarded the cross posthumously.

Commemorations

On the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw, there is an inscription NARVIK May 12 – June 6, 1940, commemorating the Podhale men who fought in Norway.

There is a monument in Narvik, the work of prof. Bohdan Chmielewski, dedicated to the memory of the Polish seamen from the ORP "Grom" ship, which sank in 1940. It was established in 1979 in the town in Groms Plass (Grom Square).

There is a music band in Norway called Groms Plass. Their music is in the style of Norwegian folk ballads. Thanks to them, at the beginning of the 21st century, the damaged monument to the sailors of the ORP "Grom" ship was restored. The band recorded a song about the monument and the history of the ship, entitled Kriegeren Grom (Warrior of Thunder).

> (...) Grom with Błyskawica, two sisters, They rushed to battle to free you (...)

- A fragment of a translation of the song Kriegeren Grom by Groms Plass



