



SCENARIO 3: BATTLE OF DENMARK STRAIT

24 MAY 1941, Local time: 0550

This is the classic battle of the breakout into the Atlantic Ocean by the most powerful Kriegsmarine unit afloat; the *Bismarck* and her escort *Prinz Eugen*. The Royal Navy reacted by sending many units of the Home Fleet to sea in effort to stop the Germans. This scenario focuses on the first units to engage.

CONDITIONS

Daylight, visibility: 35 Kyds.

Weather Modifier: +2 for heavy seas

Wind: Light ESE

Initial Bearing: RN forces SE of KM forces

Initial Range: 25 Kyds

HISTORICAL RESULT: German Tactical Victory

The German force was sighted in the early evening hours the day before, by the nearby cruiser *Suffolk*. *Suffolk* and her sister ship, *Norfolk* shadowed the Germans throughout the night, until reinforced by *Hood* and *Prince of Wales*, at dawn. The British Admiralty had envisioned a "double team" effort on the part of the Royal Navy forces involved, two cruisers on *Prinz Eugen*, and two Battleships on *Bismarck*. However this order was not passed on the cruiser commander.

The battle of the initial forces was amazingly brief. An early salvo inflicted a critical hit on *Hood* that destroyed her with the loss of all but three of her crew. Multiple gun failures on *Prince of Wales*, plus the now uneven odds forced her to make smoke and retire to die on another day, as would *Bismarck*, although much sooner.

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES: The *Prince of Wales* was still outfitting when she sortied against the *Bismarck* and her 14" turrets gave considerable trouble during the battle. If the *PoW* rolls a malfunction (DR of 20) while firing her main armament, she will suffer a firing weapon disabled result on a subsequent roll of 6-19. A roll of 20 still inflicts a critical hit.

The *Hood* suffered one of naval history's most closely examined critical hits, explained by the Admiralty board of inquiry as follows: *The probable cause of the loss of HMS Hood was direct penetration of the protection by one or more 15 inch shells at a range of 16,500 yards [15 km], resulting in the explosion of one or more of the after magazines.* Subsequent investigation has focused on *Hood's* limited modernization before the war. The question remains: was this disastrous result caused by *Hood's* level of protection, or was it simply an awful accident of war?

If both players believe that *Hood's* loss was due to her level of protection, use the following optional rule:

If *Hood* receives a critical hit that penetrates her armor, roll twice on the Critical Hit Table. If either of these is a magazine hit, use that result. If neither or both are magazine hits, use the first result rolled. Double all magazine hit damage results.



Scenario 3: Battle of Denmark Strait



KRIEGSMARINE

Bismarck - Bismarck Class BB
Prinz Eugen - Hipper Class CA

Crew Quality: Trained
Damage Control: Normal
Radar: Type "A"
Sonar: NA
Cohesion: 14
Initial Heading: 220 SW
Initial Speed: 27 kts
Initial Formation: Line ahead

Objective: Breakout into the Atlantic Ocean convoy routes, and attack British shipping. Disengage from opposing forces with minor damage or less.

ROYAL NAVY

Hood - Hood Class BC
Prince of Wales - King George V Class BB

Crew Quality: *Hood* - Veteran,
Prince of Wales - Trained
Damage Control: Normal
Radar: Type "A"
Sonar: NA
Cohesion: 15
Initial Heading: 300 NW
Initial Speed: 27 kts
Initial Formation: Line ahead

Objective: Seek out *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* and destroy them before they reach vital Atlantic Ocean convoy routes. Cripple the *Bismarck*.

