



pilots from the carriers *Enterprise* and *Yorktown* found the *Hiryu* around 5 in the afternoon, and after another wild battle engagement, scored four direct hits that ultimately sealed the fate of the last Japanese carrier.

Early on June 5, the burning *Hiryu* sank to the bottom of the ocean. About a dozen Japanese sailors were later found floating in a dinky lifeboat, surrounded by sharks. They were rescued by American sailors of a destroyer.

On the same morning, Admiral Yamamoto received the whole story about Midway, and calculating the complete weight of battle, cancelled the invasion of Midway and sailed back. The invasion of Midway was over.

Noon the fifth of June, most of the sailors of the wounded carrier had abandoned the *Yorktown*, leaving only a skeleton crew. She was hooked up to the minesweeper *Vireo* and was towed away in the opposite direction from where Yamamoto was heading, accompanied by the destroyers *Hammann*, *Benham* and *Balch*. Their perilous voyage was abruptly cut short next day before arriving at Hawaii.

The I-168, commanded by Commander Yahachi Tanabe, found the American convoy, torpedoed the *Hammann* and also the tilted *Yorktown* with two direct torpedo hits. That ended the 30,000 ton vessel. The *Hammann* sank and took most of her crew down with her. One day later, June 7, 6 p.m. the *Yorktown* turned over on her port side and sank in 300 fathoms of water.

Back on the fifth of June, on the Japanese side, to wrap up the battle, the cruisers *Mikuma* and *Mogami* collided while trying to evade torpedoes from a U.S. submarine, and were damaged.

The U.S. had lost 307 lives—including a pilot and his gunner from a dive-bomber attack. These Americans were fished out of the sea, interrogated, and then the Japanese, in some perverse anger, tied weights to their ankles and dropped them into the ocean alive to drown

Japan never recovered from the loss of its carriers and pilots, due to the heroic defense of tiny Midway.

Lead story of the *Chicago Tribune*, Dateline Sunday, June 7: "The strength of the Japanese forces with which the Navy is battling west of Midway Island, in what is believed to be the greatest naval battle of the war, was well known in American naval circles several days before the battle began..." All newspapers that subscribed to the *Chicago Tribune* news wire picked up the WOW story. The story listed the Japanese Order of Battle in detail. The story carried no by-line, was datelined Washington, and cavernously stated the USN "learned of the gathering of the powerful Japanese units soon after they put forth from their bases...." Its publication brought a horror to all U.S. codebreaking teams, for it was saying to the world we were reading the code of the Japanese. In disbelief, it even detailed which Japanese carriers would not be in on the attack of Midway and which cruisers were. The *Chicago Tribune* was in hot water.