

## **Steam and Iron Campaign Game AAR**

The purpose of this AAR is to demonstrate the use of the Steam and Iron North Sea Campaign as a teaching aid to illustrate and explore aspects of World War I at Sea. I will be playing as Great Britain. Because I am using this AAR to illustrate various points about WWI at sea, discussion regarding these issues is welcome.

For those who are unfamiliar with it, the Steam and Iron Campaign Expansion is an operational-tactical level WW1 naval combat simulation that covers the entire naval war from 1914 to 1918. The player can select to play with weekly, bi-weekly or monthly turns. It includes ships ranging in size to from armed trawlers and submarines to dreadnoughts. The player acts as Jellicoe or Scheer and is responsible for making basing and organizational decisions, training and maintenance scheduling, mission planning and force allocation and tactical employment of the fleet. See <http://www.navalwarfare.net/steam&iron.html> for more details.

## **Tactics and Strategy**

### **Tactical Principles**

While tactics must serve strategy, there are certain key tactical principles that are universal, and should be incorporated in any naval operation. Before establishing the Royal Navy's strategy for the game, a brief review a couple of key concepts is in order.

Captain Wayne Hughes described the cornerstone of naval tactics as "Attack effectively first."<sup>1</sup> Successful naval battle is, at its core, an offensive endeavor. While there are examples of defender winning a land battle, in tactical naval warfare the successful attack achieves victory. As part of its effort to achieve this first effective attack, a naval force should have firepower superiority. At the turn of the century, strategists had established that in naval combat, relatively minor superiority in delivered firepower was decisive. Between 1905 and 1916, Admiral Bradley Fiske and Frederick W. Lanchester independently showed that assuming no difference between the offensive and defensive character of units on either side, numerical superiority in delivered firepower was equivalent to the square of the number of units firing.<sup>2</sup> All things being equal, a Force A that is twice as large as Force B, would have four times (4X) the firepower superiority.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wayne P. Hughes, *Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat* (Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 2000), 40.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> For a good discussion of the various mathematical models and their effect, see Joseph Czarnecki, "N-Squared Law," NavWeaps, last modified October 17, 2000, [http://www.navweaps.com/index\\_tech/tech-076.htm](http://www.navweaps.com/index_tech/tech-076.htm)

According to this “N squared” law, in any tactical situation, even minor differences in firepower superiority, whether created by superior training, weapon range gun tubes or ship units, will relatively quickly result in victory with lower friendly loss. The effect of this is that a commander will seek to maximize these factors in an engagement to both maximize the chances of success and minimize the losses to his own force. As will be seen in the discussion on strategy below, this “N squared” law will have an important effect on the operational strategy used by the Royal Navy historically and replicated by myself in the game.

A second principle that is important in establishing the game strategy is Nelson’s dictum that “A Ship’s a Fool to Fight a Fort.”<sup>4</sup> When he uttered it, Nelson was likely thinking of a typical entrenched or fortified artillery position. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the “brick and mortar” type fort was supplemented with minefields and torpedo-armed coastal defense craft. Despite the technological advances, Nelson’s observation remained valid, as a single blow can sink or render combat ineffective a ship, while usually multiple hits are required to silence a fortified position, which can usually quickly be repaired.

### Objectives and Strategy

Strategically, the Royal Navy (RN) has three objectives: 1) Keeping open the sea lines of communication (SLOC) between Great Britain and the world; 2) Maintaining the SLOCs between Great Britain and its army in France; and 3) Blockading Germany. Effectively, these objectives required only the maintenance of the status quo.

In this, Britain is greatly helped by her geographical position. The Royal Navy has a near decisive control over the entrances and exits to the North Sea. “The British Isles form a 700-mile long barrier lying off the coast of Western Europe...England enjoyed an excellent geographical position from which to attack many trade routes and to conduct naval actions against its main adversaries at sea.”<sup>5</sup> (Image 1). Using a distant blockade of the Channel, Skagerrak and the Shetland Island-Norwegian gap, Britain can close off Germany to the Atlantic trade routes while protecting her own SLOCs. As Wolfgang Wegener noted, from the start of World War I, England was ‘saturated’ with command of the sea.<sup>6</sup> Not having to conquer a strategic position to exercise sea control, the Royal Navy could engage

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<sup>4</sup> Hughes, 36.

<sup>5</sup> Vego, Milan N., and Andrew Humphrys. *Naval Strategy and Operations in Narrow Seas*; 17-19, 26. Frank Cass, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Wegener, Wolfgang. *The Naval Strategy of the World War*, 14-15. Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 1989.

in the strategic defense, seeking battle only when forced by German action that threatened this strategic position.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, the German navy, limited to its fortified ports at Emden and Wilhelmshaven must take the initiative and sortie to contest this British control. Protected by its fortified ports near the Heligoland Bight the German fleet has the operational-level initiative and can determine the when and where to fight the Royal Navy. However, the German Fleet must take the initiative and sail outside these fortifications to contest British control of the North Sea. Without offensive action by the High Seas Fleet, the British will retain mastery of the sea by default. While the small size of a North Sea means that Germany could carry out surprise strikes against enemy targets on the sea and in the coastal area with a high probability of success,<sup>8</sup> such raids would not affect British control of the sea.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Vego, Milan N., and Andrew Humphrys. *Naval Strategy and Operations in Narrow Seas*; 17-19, 26. Frank Cass, 2003.



## Strategy

Given Britain's three objectives outlined above, and having established that it only needed to remain on the strategic defensive to accomplish these missions, the question becomes should the Royal Navy remain on the defensive? If, hypothetically, it was possible to destroy the German navy, then it might be possible to conduct landings along Germany's Baltic coast, and either flank the German efforts on both the eastern and western fronts, or alternatively forcing Germany to divert manpower from these fronts and thereby allow the allies to counterattack. Additionally, the destruction of the German Fleet potentially would open the SLOCs to Russia, as well as tighten the blockade against Germany by closing its access to Sweden. Landings in the Baltic were in fact proposed by Admiral Fisher during

war planning in 1905-06.<sup>9</sup> This type of offensive action was in keeping with British naval tradition and was an important reason for the German belief that the Royal Navy would attack the German Fleet in the Heligoland Bight.

Unfortunately, for the allies, such alternative strategies are not available, at least at the beginning of the war. This is because relative to the Royal Navy, the High Seas Fleet was sufficiently powerful in August 1914 to prevent the RN from accomplishing its main task of securing Britain's SLOCs, while engaging in offensive actions in the Baltic. As seen in the table below, although the RN was superior to the German fleet in most categories of ships, the numbers were insufficient to maintain superiority in two separate theaters. The completion of the Kiel canal in 1914 allowed Germany to move its fleet safely and quickly between the North Sea to the Baltic, effectively giving the High Seas Fleet "interior lines," as well as the strategic initiative of being able to determine when and where to strike a Royal Navy divided between the North Sea and the Baltic. Because of "N Squared" law discussed above, any hypothetical British effort in the Baltic could have easily been opposed and destroyed by the German Fleet, who would then been freed to repeat the performance against the remaining RN forces in the North Sea. Such a string of events would have fatally compromised Britain's control of the seas.

	Royal Navy									Imperial German Navy								
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine
Active	20	5	6	9	13	68	7	1	8	13	4	8	3	13	57	4	5	1
Training																		
Repair																		
<b>Advantage</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>7</b>									
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>8</b>									

### Force Ratios

As described in the posting above, despite having a preponderance of forces, the Royal Navy has insufficient force to engage in offensive action in the Baltic. In fact, the British forces are barely capable of ensuring control over the North Sea. On 4 August 1914, the Royal Navy has a +7, or 1.5:1 advantage in Battleships. (See table above). However, losses, maintenance and training requirements will likely reduce this advantage further as the war progresses. In contrast, the German navy has the operational initiative, giving it the advantage of being able to determine when to leave its ports and seek battle. It can choose the time of any sortie to maximize the balance of forces in its favor.

<sup>9</sup> Friedman, Norman. *Fighting the Great War at Sea: Strategy, Tactics and Technology*, 30. 2014.

## Strategic Concept

This force ratio, combined with the British imperative to maintain control of the North Sea limited Jellicoe in the real world from aggressively exploiting British control of the sea. In the game, I am similarly limited. The requirement to maintain a superiority of battleships to maintain sea control, combined with the knowledge that the German Fleet will (or at least should) only sail when it believes it has a positive preponderance of force means that the Grand Fleet will usually sail as an entire unit. Also, like Jellicoe, I will adopt a distant blockade, refusing to risk capital ships near German bases. Additionally, losses, especially in capital ships, must be avoided unless greater loss can be inflicted on the German Fleet. To quote Admiral Nimitz's orders to Admiral Spruance prior to the battle of Midway:

**"In carrying out the task assigned ... you will be governed by the principle of calculated risk, which you shall interpret to mean the avoidance of exposure of your force to attack by superior enemy forces without good prospect of inflicting, as a result of such exposure, greater damage to the enemy."**

### 1. Strategy

- a. "With its exits from the North Sea barred to the south by the Dover barrage and to the north by the menacing presence of the Grand Fleet, the High Seas Fleet was unable to interfere with Britain's Atlantic trade, her cross-Channel traffic, or her colonial empire. Britain therefore already enjoyed most of the fruits of a victorious fleet action without having to fight one: the superior power of her fleet-in-being (in the Admiralty's words) "pervades all the waters of the world."<sup>10</sup>
2. A second important concept, both tactically and strategically, is scouting, defined by Hughes as "locating the enemy sufficiently to deliver effective firepower."<sup>11</sup> Scouts provide information about the enemy's position, movements, vulnerabilities, strengths and intentions.<sup>12</sup> Scouts may, but are not required to be ships. Rather, anything that gathers information, such as intelligence capabilities or air reconnaissance can be considered as a "scout."<sup>13</sup>
  - a.

## **4-18 August 1914**

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<sup>10</sup> Gordon, G. A. H. *The Rules of the Game Jutland and British Naval Command*, 23. Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Wayne P. Hughes, *Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat* (Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 2000), 175.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

## **SITUATION**

### **Strategic Overview**

Historically, the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was transported to France between 9-22 August 1914. For the purpose of this game, I am assuming that this transportation will occur in the next two-week (19 August) turn.

### **Political**

At the start of the game, I am offered the option of seizing the BB Agincourt, which was built under contract for the Ottoman Empire. Although it will cost 85,000 VP, having more Battleships is necessary to improve the force ratio.

### **Force Comparison**

As described in my earlier posting, on 4 August 1914, the Royal Navy has a +7, or 1.5:1 advantage in Battleships (see table below). Because of training and maintenance requirements, this is the minimum lead I need. The German navy has a strategic advantage of being able to determine when to leave its ports and seek battle, while the Royal Navy must always be ready to fight.

### **Objectives**

In the next two-week period, the British Expeditionary Force will need to be transported to France. As part of the covering operation, the Royal Navy will begin a minefield off the port of Emden this turn. The Royal Navy of 1914 generally disapproved of the use of mines, believing them to be ungentlemanly. I on the other hand, will employ them as liberally as I can.

Elements in the Admiralty also argue for an aggressive show of force off Heligoland Bight, to sink enemy shipping in the area. However, such an operation so close to the main German base would require the main fleet in support. This is not only contrary to my strategy, but also impossible in game terms as I have insufficient operations points for such an endeavor. In lieu of this operation, I send the Battlecruiser Fleet into the exit of the Skagerrak, as a demonstration. The battlecruisers have sufficient speed to avoid any action with heavy German fleet units, so having them do this operation is a low risk/low payoff operation. I also send a DD Flotilla to patrol of Scotland for German submarines.

A force of five (5) submarines is set off Heligoland Bight to provide warning of German Fleet movements and to hopefully sink or damage major fleet units.

### **Maintenance**

None

### **Training**

I ordered four CLs to training. While the old B's and the BCs also need training, I will need these vessels to screen the BEF's transport to France next turn. Accordingly, I can spare only these four light cruisers. After the transport of the BEF, more units will be detached for training.

### **Intelligence**

There is no information about the movements or intentions of the German fleet.

### **Operations**

The weather starts off in a dead calm with mist-good weather for leaving port and sailing past any German submarines. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battlecruiser squadrons departed their base and set course 073/16 knots to their patrol area off Jutland coast. The ETA is in 18 hours, just after midnight. Similarly, the HMS APOLLO and HMS INTREPID depart Harwich enroute to their mining area, with a planned arrival time of 0001.

### **Battle Log**

04 0550	Intelligence report 1 CA North of the Bight
04 0644	Submarine E1 reports 1 CL and 3 DDs 25nm West of the mine laying area, heading SW.
04 0645	Submarine E1 reports hitting a CL with a torpedo W of Helgoland
04 0645	Submarine E1 reports a CA West of Helgoland, heading West
04 1300	Intelligence reports 1 BB, 4 CL heading SSE off Emden. Based on that course, they are returning to port.
05 1700	Intelligence reports 4 CL and 1 DD heading West from Helgoland Bight
05 1743	E1 reports 2 CLs heading South . There appears to be heavy German patrols in the Helgoland Bight area.
05 0501	HMS APOLLO completes the minefield. Almost simultaneously, HMS INTREPID sights a larger vessel approximately 2000 yards away. Both ships disengage and head west.
05 1131	HMS NEW ZEALAND spots a submarine enroute to port. No torpedoes sighted.

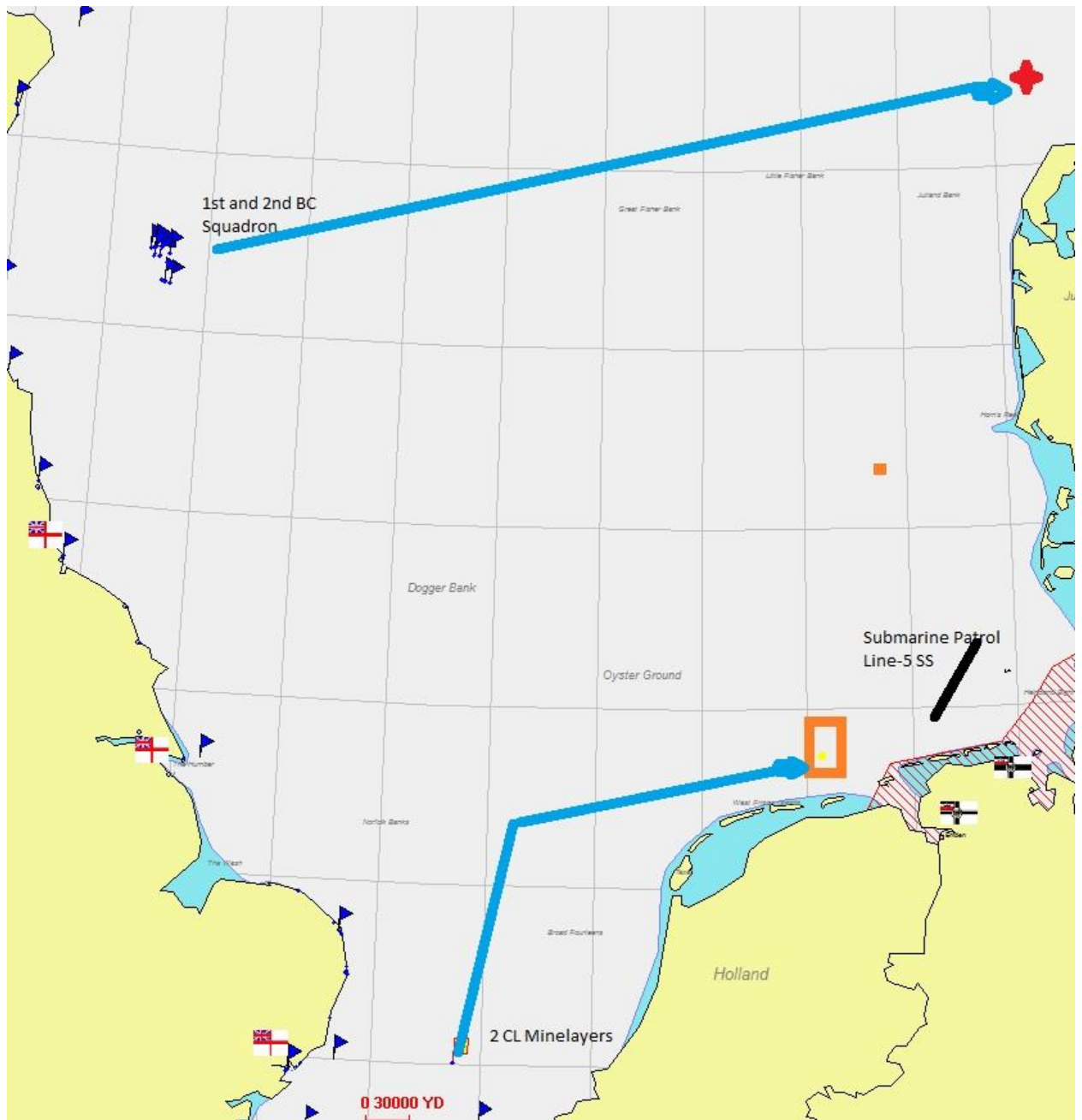
06 0001      All units in port

**After Action Notes and Analysis:**

Losses:

- Royal Navy
  - SS E1
  - SS E2
- Germany
  - CL ARCONA

Submarines E1 and E7 failed to return to port and are presumed to be sunk. Radio traffic confirms on German CL ARCONA was sunk by E1. The heavy loss (40% of the patrol force) of submarines, combined with the reports of heavy patrolling in the Bight strongly indicate that it will be unsustainable to operate submarines so close to the main German bases. The strong patrols in the Bight also reinforced my strategy of avoiding the area with major fleet units.





## 18 August-2 September 1914

### Strategic Overview

Historically, during this period the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was transported to France. During the period 9-22 August 1914, 92,000 British troops were shipped across the channel.<sup>14</sup> This turn, I will try to recreate the Royal Navy's screening action for this move.

### Objectives

Historically, during this period the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was transported to France. To reflect this in the game I am having the elements of the Grand Fleet deploy in a screening position off Dogger Banks. From here, they should be able to intercept any German sortie before it reaches the channel or interferes with shipping heading for France down the east coast of England. Unlike a blocking position east of Dover, this position also minimizes the chance of contact with light German craft, which is a concern given the light screening forces the Grand Fleet is forced to deploy with. With only 365 operation points, the Royal Navy is limited to activating a surface action group (SAG) consisting of only two squadrons of battleships, (the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>) as well as one squadron of scout cruisers and one flotilla of DD as escorts. To provide some early warning, 7 submarines are stationed outside the Bight. I've stationed them further outside to limit losses due to the German patrols. There is gap in the coverage along the Dutch coast. However, I believe this is too constricted of a gap for a major battle fleet transit to take place without warning. A submarine is deployed here as a precaution. To further interfere with any threat moving west down the Dutch coast, a second minefield will be laid north of the field planted earlier in August. Additionally, one flotilla of destroyers will patrol off Harwich to provide some protection for both the SAG and transports crossing the channel from German light forces and submarines.

### Available Forces

	Royal Navy									Imperial German Navy								
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine
Active	20	5	6	8	13	68	7	1	8	13	4	8	3	13	57	4	5	1
Training				1	1													
Repair						1								1				
Advantage	7	1	-2	5	0	11	3	-4	7									
Ratio	1.5	1.3	0.8	2.667	1	1.2	1.8	0.2	8									

<sup>14</sup> Massie, Robert K., and Robert K. Massie. *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*, 79. New York: Random House, 2003.

Although the RN has a 1.5:1 superiority in BBs in theater, the lack of Operation points means it can deploy only 15 BBs. This will give the RN equality if the entire German High Seas Fleet deploys, which is a risky proposition, but one that must be taken. Because of this, the Battleship Surface Action Group (BBSAG) will remain west of the Broad Fourteens, screening the BEF crossing until 25 August. Any German operation that is not directed at the crossing will be ignored, if possible.

Because of the constrained waters, I elect to leave the battlecruiser force behind. In the confined waters near the channel, speed will be of less use to mission accomplishment. Rather, with the possibility of engaging German battleships, armor and weight of broadside become more important.

### **Intelligence**

The German navy receives the BC DERFFLINGER as well as 1 CL and 2 DDs. 1 CL is reported in repairs for 2 weeks.

There is no information concerning planned German Fleet movements. There are several enemy/German courses of action (ECOAs). I evaluate the ECOA in descending probability as follows:

- 1) **Most Probable ECOA**-No sortie of the German High Seas Fleet
- 2) Harass the BEF's crossing with light forces, with possible BB/BC in support
- 3) Fleet Sortie to the North Sea without a channel attack
- 4) Channel Raid with only elements of the Fleet (BCs or fast BB)
- 5) **Most Dangerous ECOA**-High Seas Fleet Sortie towards the channel

The complete lack of intelligence on German movements provides weak evidence there will be no sortie. Historically, this is what happened. The Kaiser decreed that the German fleet would not be risked in offensive action.<sup>15</sup> Believing the war would be short, the German government wanted to use the fleet as leverage in post-war negotiations.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, there was little concern about the relatively small British army, which it was believed would be quickly swept away by the advancing German army in France.<sup>17</sup>

A fleet sortie towards the channel would be a high-risk endeavor for the Germans, as it places the German fleet, and its short, ranged escort craft both far away from their bases and close to British bases. Further, the constrained geography as the fleet approached the channel makes it ideal for submarine and light forces attacks and mining. Most critically, this constrained geography in the Channel and its approaches potentially places any

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<sup>15</sup> Tarrant, V. E. *Jutland: The German Perspective*, 21. London: Cassell, 2001.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

German ships in grave danger by British forces deploying to their east and cutting off any retreat to Germany. For these reasons, I do not expect any action.

### **Maintenance**

One DD is due for refit.

### **Training**

A CA and the CL ARETHUSA are detached for training.

### **Replacements/Detachments**

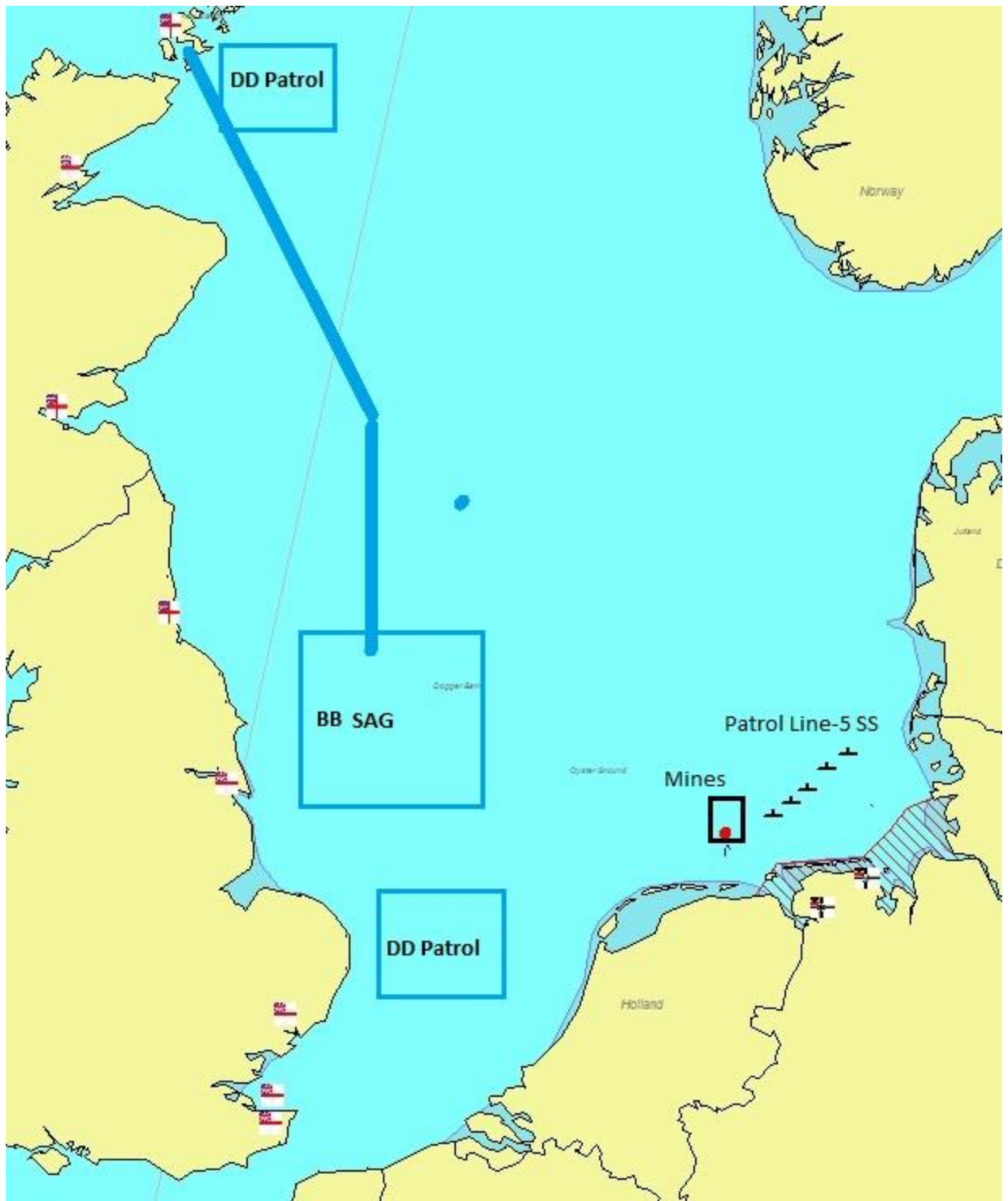
CL ARETHUSA joins the fleet

The BB ERIN is requisitioned from the shipyard, where it was being built for the Ottoman Empire.

### **Operations**

The Royal Navy will deploy the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battleship squadrons and a light escort and scouting force to an area on the western edge of Dogger Banks. Although I would like to deploy more, I am limited by the game, which only allows me to spend a limited number of operations points this turn. No Battlecruisers will be part of the force, as I believe given the game-limited size of my deployable forces this turn, the heavier offensive and defensive capabilities of the Battleships will be of more use in screening the crossing in the geographically constrained approaches to the Channel. The patrol box was determined by a desire to have some sea room to maneuver in as well as respond to a possible German sortie to the North Sea, while simultaneously minimizing the danger of submarine or light forces attacks on the SAG. This is especially important as I am forced to deploy with a limited escort: only one flotilla of destroyers, less than half of what I would like to have. This position also allows any German move towards the Channel to be cut off from returning to base.

The light forces near the Channel and Harwich are detailed to patrol the eastern approaches to the Channel to counter any German light forces. A patrol line of submarines is stationed outside the Bight, as well as one submarine off the Dutch coast to provide early warning of any German fleet unit movement outside the Bight.



### **Battlelog and spotting reports**

18 1255 Submarine E2 reports 1 CA and 4 CL 45 nm NNW Helgoland, heading south

18 1314 Submarine D4 reports 6 DD 30nm NNW Helgoland, heading south

18 1348 Submarine E2 reports 2 DD 30 nm NNW Helgoland, heading SSE

19 0438 Submarine E2 reports 1 CA, 3DD 30nm N of Helgoland, heading south

19 0500 At approximately 0500, a mist forms over the OPAREA, reducing visibility.

19 0930 The mist continues, reducing sighting range. Due to this reduction of sighting range, it is possible that the submarine scouting line will miss any German sortie. Accordingly, the BB SAG is directed to operate further south, in the vicinity of Norfolk Banks. The more constrained geography in this area will increase the chance of an interception in the event of a sortie to raid the channel.

19 1058 CL ACTIVE spots an unknown vessel at position 5407N00306E, range 5.49 nm., bearing SW from the BB SAG. Weather: Mist, wind: Moderate breeze, SSW. The RN fleet is in four columns, with the flagship HMS KING GEORGE V in the port column, heading 189 degrees. Speed is increased to 21 knots.

19 1058 CL ACTIVE spots 2 more unknown ships, apparently in formation. Vessels are traveling north

19 1103 CL ACTIVE ID's one vessel as a CL and opens fire

19 11:03 BB Orion opens fire at a BB. Range: 3.7 nm

19 11:04 BB Conqueror, Monarch, Ajax, King George V open fire

19 11:04 Unidentified capital ship opens fire at BB Conqueror

Notes: **This action is simultaneously what I feared and hoped for. It appears I've run into only a small unit of the High Seas Fleet, so there is an opportunity to defeat it in detail. Further, my initial contact places me in an advantageous position, slightly to the northeast of the German fleet. This raises the possibility of cutting them off from their home bases. I also have the wind gauge, with the SSW wind blowing the smoke away from my gunnery directors. However, because of the reduced visibility, the initial ranges are short: only 10,000 yards are so. Because of this, I will not be able to use the superior range of the British guns to stand off and pummel the German fleet. Instead, the RN will have to duke it out well within the range of the very lethal German guns. Worse, the close ranges mean my Battleships will likely come under torpedo attack. Even worse, the weather will likely require me to close even closer with the German force, as it appears to have at least one Battlecruiser. This means that the Germans likely have a 3-5 knot speed superiority over the British. Unless the German ships are quickly damaged and slowed, any worsening of visibility potentially will give the Germans the opportunity to escape. By closing the range, the**

**British force can more quickly reduce the German ships while mitigating against the possibility of worsening visibility. However, the excellent German gunnery assures that there will be a butcher's bill associated with closing to essentially point-blank range with the German fleet.**

**While theoretically I could decline action and preserve the British Battleships, the bad weather would allow the German squadron to escape either back to Germany or worse, to raid the Channel. Realistically, no British admiral of the day would have declined an action under these conditions. In 1914, a British Admiral was nearly court-martialed for failing to engage the vastly superior German Battle cruiser Goeben , despite the fact that had he engaged, it would have almost certainly resulted in the loss of several British cruisers and a thousand sailors.**

- 19 1105      Formation turns to course 200 degrees to maintain contact with the German force while blocking their route east back to their base.
- 191106      Two Capital ships are identified. The enemy fleet appears to be turning to the NW, likely to escape. Fleet is ordered to turn to 220 to shorten the range.
- 19 11:07      BB Ajax identifies CL as Karlsruhe-class  
191107      Between 1107 and 1124 the fleet loses contact with the enemy's heavy units but remains in contact with several cruisers and destroyers. Several hits are registered on both the CL KARLSRUHE and CL Magdeburg, as well as a destroyer.
- 191114      2/2 Battle Squadron (HMS ORION, MONARCH, CONQUEROR, THUNDERER) is detached and head wests to block the suspected German attempt to escape to the north. This course should place the German Battlecruisers south of this detachment, and west of the main British body. If successful, this should close the door on any German escape.
- 191122      German destroyers are seen to turn away from the main body. Fleet turns to course 270 to avoid possible torpedoes. While a turn away from the torpedoes would be the best course, it would risk allowing the German BCs to escape. Because of this, I order a turn towards the torpedoes. Although this increases the closure rate, it also minimizes the target angle, potentially allowing the British units to comb the torpedo wakes while maintaining contact with the German units.
- 19 1124      At 1124, contact is reestablished with the three German heavy units. The KGV and Ajax open fire.

19 11:27 BB King George V is avoiding torpedoes.  
 19 11:29 The first hit on the German BC is observed. Several other hits shortly follow.  
 191136 Range to the German Battlecruisers is approximately 3.6 nm

19 11:39 BB King George V's engine room is hit by a torpedo fired by Seydlitz  
 19 11:39 Between 11:39-49, ten hits are scored on the Moltke-class BC.  
 19 11:50 BB Superb is hit by a torpedo fired by V188.

19 11:50 BB Superb has been detached because of heavy flooding.

19 1203 The Mist lifts. Range: 1.57 nm from Orion to BC. 3.53nm from KGV to BC.  
 5.57 nm from Vanguard to BC.

19 12:18 The SMS Moltke is finally destroyed when a broadside from HMS  
 Marlborough causes a magazine explosion.

19 12:22 BB King George V is hit by a torpedo fired by Seydlitz  
 19 12:22 There is no longer any effective reply by the German BCs to the British  
 onslaught. Over the next 63 minutes, the von der Tann and Seydlitz absorb  
 numerous heavy caliber gun hits and six torpedo hits from the massed and  
 unanswered British guns.

12 1230 DD V188 sinks.  
 19 12:34 DD Martin is picking up survivors from DD V188  
 19 13:25 SMS Seydlitz sinks  
 19 13:25 Between 1335-1329, the von der Tann receives a final 13 heavy caliber hits  
 from the British fleet. It finally sinks at 1331  
 19 1331 SMS von der Tann sinks

### **Losses**

**German: 3 BC, 1 DD sunk**

**British: 5 BB damaged**

SMS Seydlitz

HMS King George V (Heavy Damage)

SMS Moltke

HMS Superb (Medium Damage)

SMS von der Tann

HMS Monarch, Orion, Ajax, Audacious (Light Damage)

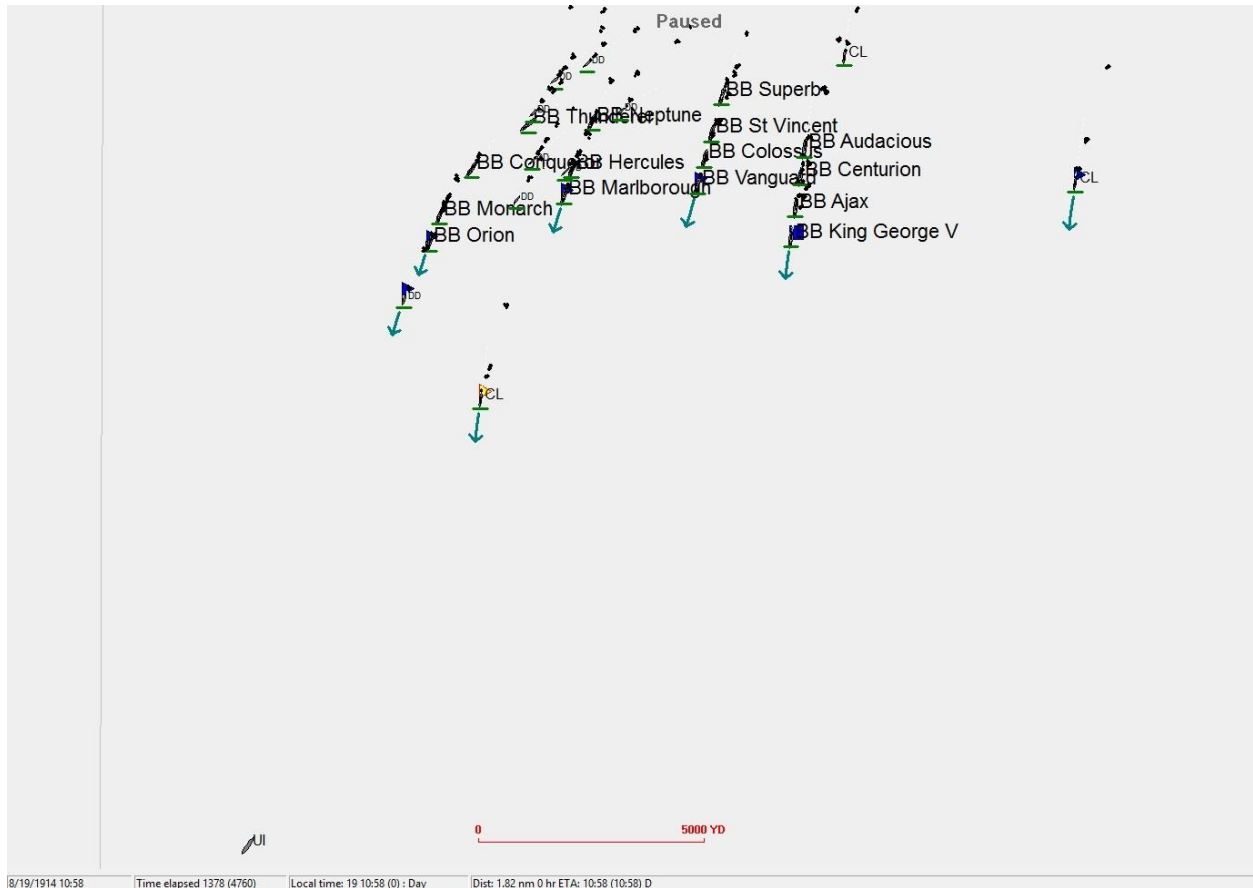
SMS V188

### **Aftermath**

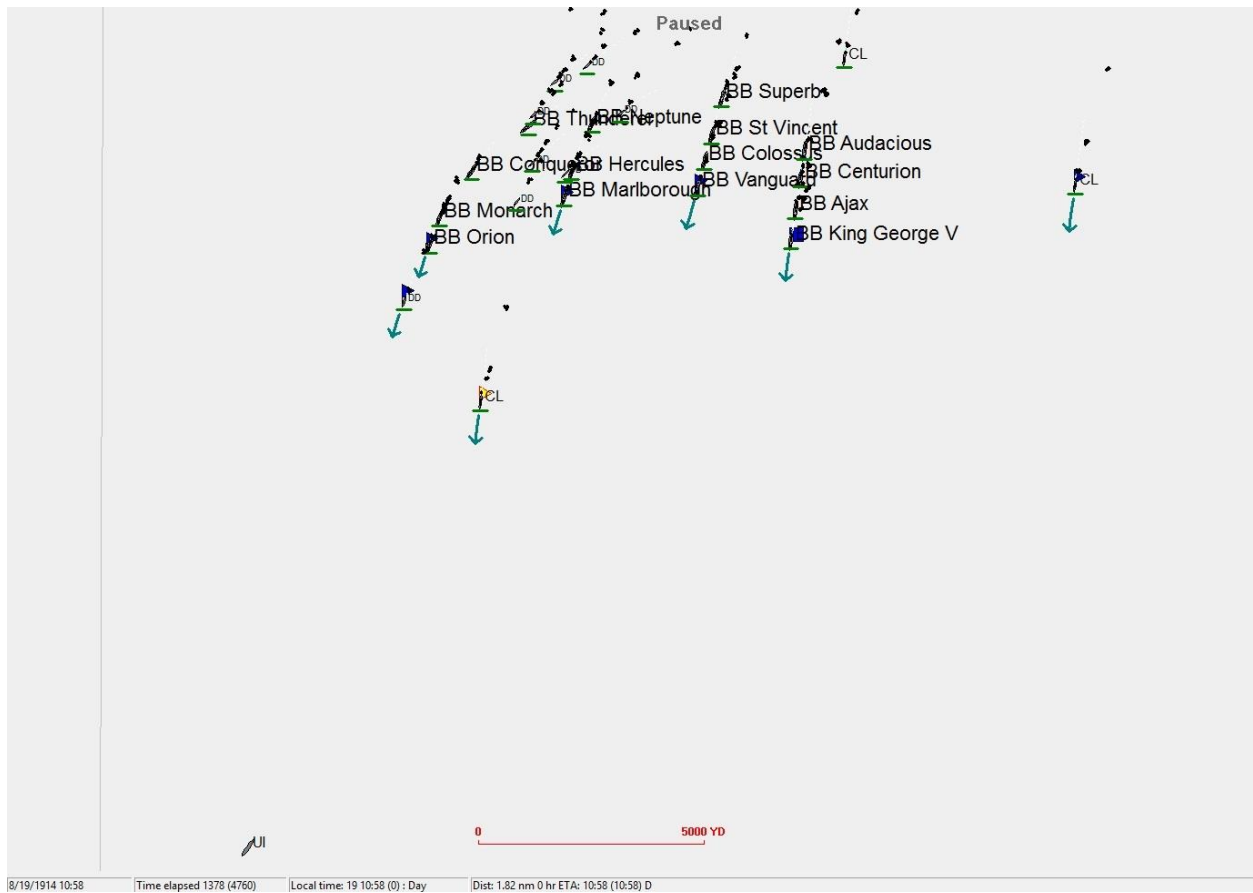
Although no British ships are sunk, the HMS King George V and Superb are badly damaged. Although able to make 12 knots, the KGV is in danger of foundering. The fleet is

directed to return to The Humber, fortuitously arriving just as a gale, that likely would have sunk the heavily damaged KGV begins.

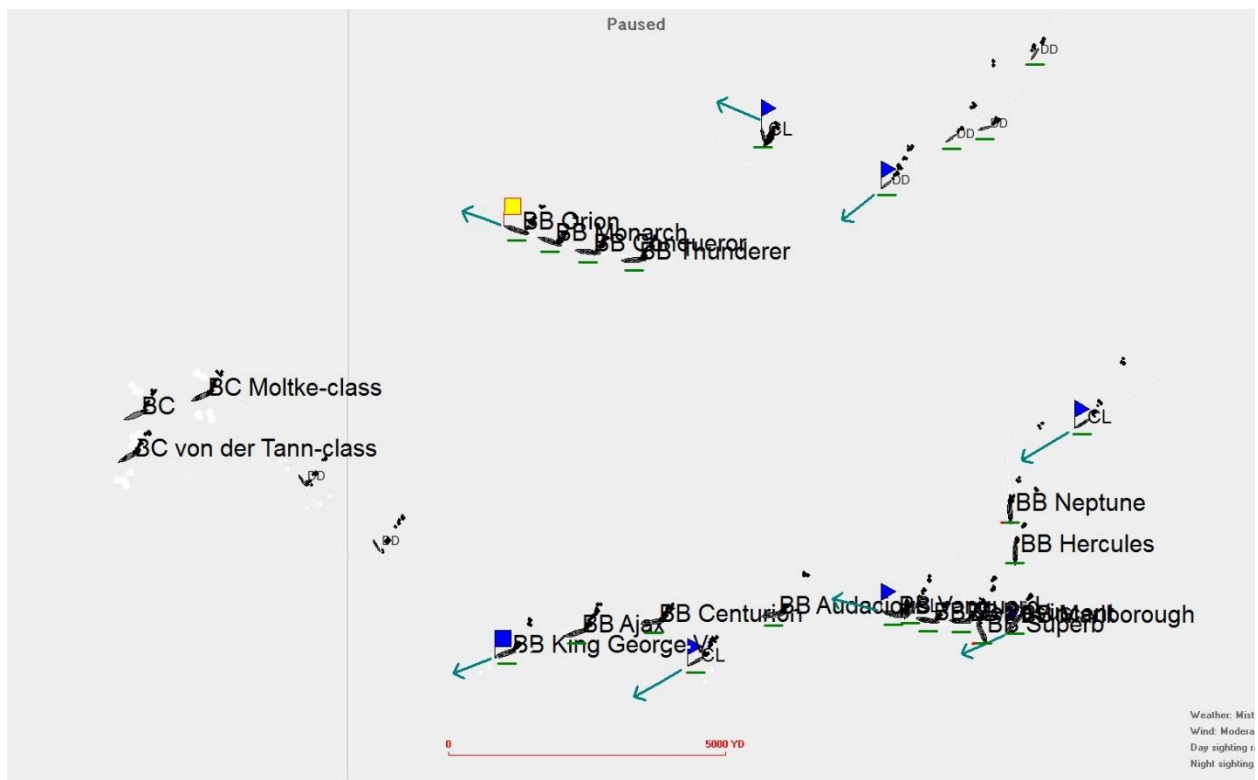
### **191058 August 1914-Initial Contact**



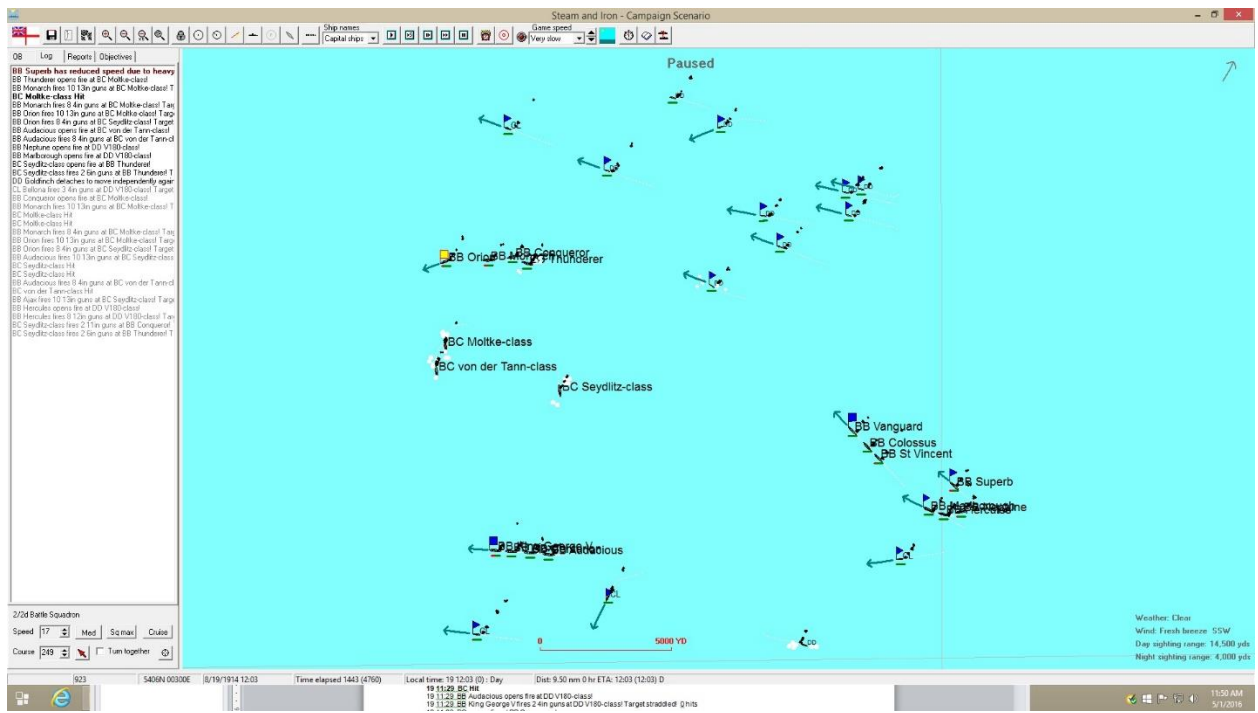
### **191131 August 1914-Situation**



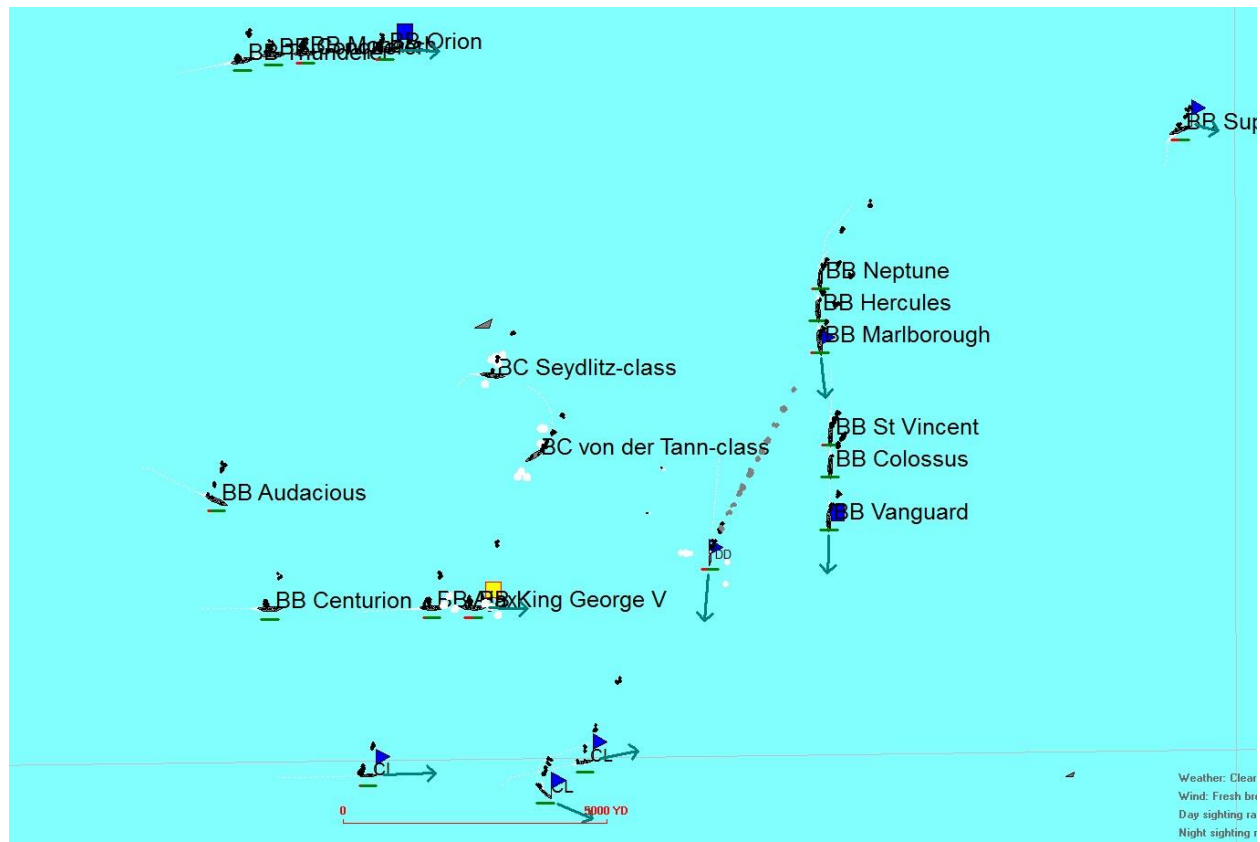
## 191203 August 1914-The Mist Lifts



## 191203 August 1914-The Mist Lifts



## 191219 August 1914-Destruction of the SMS MOLTKE



### Analysis:

This was an extremely fortuitous battle for the RN. Had the German fleet been spotted only 8 miles or so further east of the British position when spotted, it would have been impossible to prevent a German withdrawal to the east. Had the sighting ranges been longer, the four-knot speed advantage of the German battlecruisers would similarly have allowed them to withdraw to the east. Conversely, had the sighting ranges been shorter, the action very well may not have happened at all, or would have allowed a German escape to the northwest.

The basis for the Royal Navy's historical fear of German torpedoes is demonstrated in this scenario. In the scenario, HMS King George V was nearly sunk by two torpedo hits.

She was saved only by immediately diverting to the Humber, where she required six weeks in drydock. The HMS Superb took a single torpedo hit, which limited her speed to 13 knots, and put her out of action for 3 weeks.

The use of the 2/2 Battle squadron to cut off the German retreat to the north was probably ahistorical. Such a maneuver would have required close coordination and discussions of the fleet commander's intentions before the battle. In Nelson's Day, his "Band of Brothers" would likely have understood such the intent of such a maneuver and have been able to carry it out. However, as argued by Andrew Gordon, by 1914 such maneuvers were not practiced as part of Grand Fleet doctrine, which instead emphasized on massed maneuver of the Grand Fleet. While safe, and virtually assuring the Grand Fleet would survive any clash with the High Seas Fleet, such a massed fleet maneuver would have been incapable of cutting off and destroying the German Battlecruisers in detail.<sup>18,19</sup>

Overall, the British gunnery was average. The highest scoring battleship was HMS Ajax, hitting 4.91% of the time, followed by HMS Audacious, which hit 4.78% of the time. Together, the ships of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle Squadrons averaged only a 2.03% hit percentage with their large caliber shells. Given that the range was very short, rarely over 7,000 yards distance, and that the German ships were barely underway for the last hour of the engagement, this hit percentage of hits was low. The historical British hit percentage at Jutland was slightly higher, at 2.71%.<sup>20</sup>

This battle potentially opens some opportunities for the Royal Navy. With the loss of the entire German Battlecruiser force, any light cruiser scouts will be unsupported, and potentially vulnerable to British Battlecruisers. This, in turn, leads open the possibility of engaging in an anti-cruiser strategy, to partially blind the High Seas Fleet, and make it more vulnerable to being out maneuvered and destroyed in detail in the event of a fleet action.

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<sup>18</sup> Gordon, G. A. H. *The Rules of the Game Jutland and British Naval Command*, Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 2000.

<sup>19</sup> Friedman, Norman. *Fighting the Great War at Sea: Strategy, Tactics and Technology*, 359. 2014.

<sup>20</sup> Campbell, N. J. M. *Jutland: An Analysis of the Fighting*, 355. New York, N.Y.: Lyons Press, 1998.

## **01-14 September 1914**

### **Strategic Overview**

Historically, the Kaiser was very risk-adverse to losing capital ships. After the Battle of Helgoland Bight in August 1914, he ordered that the German fleet's capital ships not be endangered, ordering his battleship not to fight outside the Bight.<sup>21</sup> Based on this historical analogy, had the German fleet lost three of its Battlecruisers at this point in the war, the Kaiser would likely have prevented the German navy from ever again leaving the Bight. The likely result of such a decision would have been a strategic stalemate in the North Sea. In such an event, the Grand Fleet, unable to bring the High Seas Fleet to battle, would likely have remained static, guarding the North Sea for a fleet engagement that would never come. Another possible result of such a battle would be it could more quickly have resulted in unrestricted submarine and mine warfare, being adopted as the German navy looked for relevance in a war where it had neutered its battlefleet.

In terms of this game, the loss of the battlecruisers significantly affects a German capability. In addition to leaving its scouts unsupported, the loss of the Battlecruisers makes it more difficult for the German Fleet to raid the English coast or channel without being intercepted by the Grand Fleet. To further foreclose this possibility, or to take advantage of such a sortie, I start to consider the utility of stationing the Grand Fleet further south to Rosyth, where it could quickly intercept and cut off such a sortie by the High Seas fleet.

### **Objectives**

I'm still thinking about how to exploit the victory last turn (which for ease of reference, I will call the Battle of Cleaver Bank). As noted in the above post, this battle potentially opens some opportunities for the Royal Navy. With the loss of the virtually all the German Battlecruiser force, any light cruiser scouts will be unsupported, and potentially vulnerable to British Battlecruisers. Their loss would blind the High Seas Fleet and make it more vulnerable to being outmaneuvered and destroyed in the event of fleet action. Because of damage as the result of the Battle of Cleaver Bank, many of the Grand Fleet's battleships are in repair this turn. That leaves only the obsolete pre-dreadnaughts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle squadron, and the Battlecruiser Fleet fully ready for operations this turn.

As noted below, Intelligence also reports that the German navy "is planning an operation." While there are no details on the size, objectives, or timing of the operation, having the Battlecruiser Fleet at sea potentially gives the best chance of opposing a German sortie, while avoiding any superior forces.

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<sup>21</sup> Massie, Robert K., and Robert K. Massie. *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*, 120. New York: Random House, 2003.

Based these factors, I decide to try a limited operation to destroy German light forces, thereby shaping the battlefield for a future fleet action. Given the absence of a German battlecruiser force, by using battlecruisers, the RN has the option of declining action should superior German forces appear. To maximize the chance of an encounter, a battlecruiser sweep towards the Skagerrak and down the western coast of Jutland to just north of the Bight is planned with the objective of destroying any light forces encountered. However, the projected intended movement (PIM) of the sweep will place it sufficiently far off the Jutland coast to provide sea room, in case the force encounters a superior German fleet and needs to escape.

Historically, had such a sweep occurred after a major British victory, it might have created concerns in the German navy over a Royal Navy operation in the Baltic, as well as confirmed the German pre-1912 thinking about the likely site of a fleet action.<sup>22</sup>

### Available Forces

As shown on the attached spreadsheet, the Grand Fleet has 21 operational battleships. However, five of these are damaged, and one has just joined the fleet and needs additional training before becoming an effective unit. Intelligence reports that the High Seas Fleet has 15 operational BBs, effectively giving the German battleline parity with the Royal Navy for the next two weeks.

	Royal Navy									Imperial German Navy								
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine
Active	20	5	6	9	13	68	12	6	8	15	1	8	3	12	56	5	5	1
Reinforce	1					1												
Training			6		1	1			5									
Repair	5					2	10	3						2				
Operational	16	5	0	9	12	66	2	3	3	15	1	8	3	10	56	5	5	1
<b>Advantage</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>2</b>									
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>3</b>									

### Replacements/Detachments

- The following units join the fleet
  - BB Erin

<sup>22</sup> Friedman, Norman. *Fighting the Great War at Sea: Strategy, Tactics and Technology*, 34. 2014.

- DD Miranda

## **Maintenance and Repairs**

### **Units in Repair/Maintenance**

HMS Superb- 9 Weeks (Battle Damage)

HMS King George V-12 weeks (Battle Damage)

HMS Monarch-5 weeks (Battle Damage)

HMS Conqueror-2 weeks (Battle Damage)

HMS Orion, HMS Ajax-1 week (Battle Damage)

CL HMS GIBRALTAR is sent to maintenance

### **Units returning from/due for maintenance**

A CL and DD finish repairs.

BB HMS VANGUARD and a DD are due for repairs in 5 weeks.

## **Training**

The obsolete pre-dreadnaughts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle Squadron are sent to training, as they would only be a hindrance in the event of a fleet engagement. Likewise, the newly arrived CL HMS ARETHUSA and DD HMS MIRANDA are sent to training, as are five of the old minelaying CLs. Although the battleship HMS Erin is in desperate need of a stint of training, given the parity with the German fleet, it cannot be spared until later this month. Similarly, the battlecruisers HMS LION and HMS PRINCESS ROYAL will delay training until the fleet's damage from the August battle is repaired.

## **Intelligence**

Intelligence reports that the German navy "is planning an operation." The report contains no details: no who, what, where, or when of the German operation, limiting its utility for planning.

More interestingly, intelligence reports that the Germans have 15 dreadnaughts and 5 submarines available for operations. Nothing further is known about these additions to the German OOB. Although the Order of Battle (OOB) is updated with these additions, I am

mentally putting an asterisk by these two new BB's, as I am not sure they have really joined the fleet. Additionally, I evaluated two German CLs as damaged for this month. This is likely pessimistic, as the two CLs were reportedly hit multiple times by heavy shells during the Battle of Cleaver Bank. However, I will include them as being out of action for just one month.

Based on the forces and intelligence, I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

- 1. Most Probable ECOA**-No sortie of the German High Seas Fleet during the period.  
Possible pre-operational minelaying off East Coast of England
2. Harass channel/ East coast shipping with light forces
1. **Most Dangerous ECOA**-High Seas Fleet Sortie towards the channel or English East coast

## **Operations**

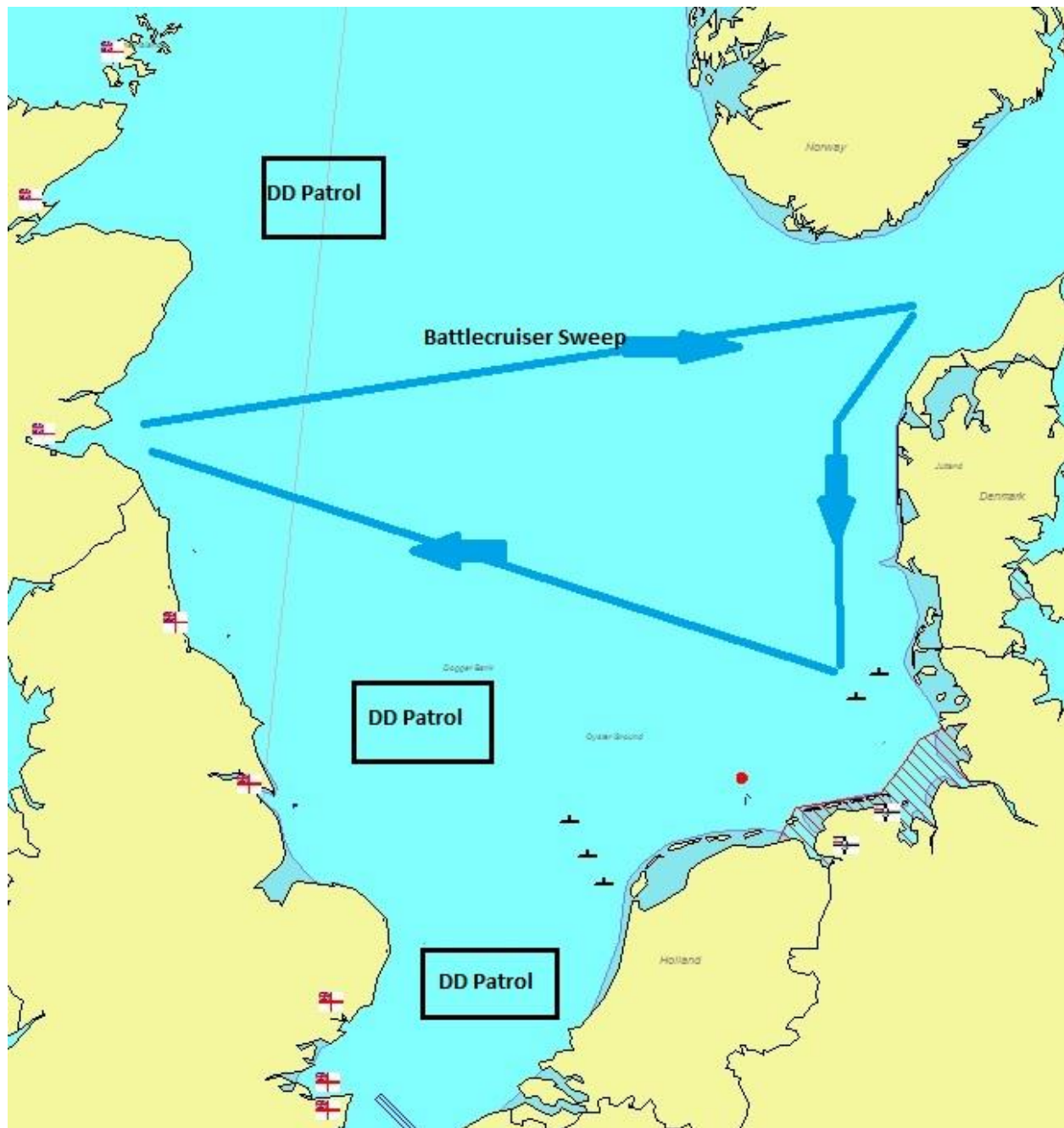
See attached image for OPLAN

The Battlecruiser Fleet will sortie from the Firth, proceed to the Skagerrak and down the western coast of Jutland to just north of the Bight is planned with the objective of destroying any light forces encountered.

Two CLs will add to the minefields off the Dutch coast

A flotilla of destroyers will patrol off the Channel, the East coast, and Scapa to prevent submarine and mining activity.

## **1 September 1914 OPLAN**



### **Battlelog and spotting reports**

01 1100      WX: Mist, Wind: Calm, Sighting range: 4000 yards.

011208      WX: Mist lifts. Wind: Calm. Sighting range: 11500 yards.

020133      HMS SIRIUS and HMS THETIS lay mines

021550      Sighting report by DD HMS MAY, operating invic 5502N00012W (35 nm off Hartlepool): 2 BB, 1 CA, 1 CL, 1 DD heading ESE.

021928      Sighting report by DD HMS MAY, operating invic 5452N00037W (22 nm off Hartlepool): 1 CA, 1 CL, Course NW.

**Notes:**      **These two sighting reports indicates that Intelligence was correct, and that the German operation was a sweep of the East Coast of England. Looking at possible interception points, show that 5400N 00523E is a possible intercept point. At 21 knots, the German force would be at this location in 10.2 hours, arriving at approximately 030540. If I can place the British force to the east of the German position, it would be both between the German fleet and their home port. Additionally, the rising sun would create glare, interfering with the German Gunnery.**

03430      The Battlecruisers arrive at the possible interception point, 5400N 00523E, and begin patrolling.

031200      Although the weather continues to be good, during cruising along a patrol line extending north 45 nm from 5400N 00523E no German units are spotted. The battlecruisers then conduct a sweep towards Helgoland, but only one German CL is spotted. It quickly runs back towards a known minefield before it can be stopped.

031600      To avoid a nighttime torpedo attack, the battlecruisers begin a withdrawal towards the Firth of Forth.

04 1307      BC Princess Royal is hit by a torpedo at entrance to Firth of Forth

04 1309      DD Phoenix strikes a mine at entrance to Firth of Forth

04 1333      DD Phoenix has sunk

041755      Submarine E11 is reported missing and presumed lost

### **02 September Attempt to Intercept**



## **15-29 September 1914**

### **Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn.

### **Concept of Operations**

The success of the German minelaying off Rosyth was an oversight on my part, as I had inadequate patrols in the area. Historically, the Germans mined off Royal Navy ports as part of their strategy.<sup>23</sup> However, two can play the mining game. Initially, the British mining effort off the Dutch coast was designed to help screen the passage of the BEF to France. This mission accomplished, it may be more profitable to mine areas where German naval units concentrate. The loss of several British submarines off the Jutland coast indicates that there is a heavy escort presence there. Accordingly, a mining effort in that area may help achieve the short-term goal of reducing the number of German light forces, particularly light cruisers. Such an operation would be dangerous for the ships conducting the mining. However, these hazards would be significantly reduced if supported with Battlecruisers and escorted with destroyers. Further, such an operation may act as bait, and allow for the destruction of any pursuing light forces by the battlecruisers. If successful, such an operation would help accomplish the strategy of reducing the German scouting forces to blind the German fleet and shape the battlespace for a clash of the main battle fleets. Historically, the first British mine laying off Jutland did not occur until January 1915, so I'm a bit ahead of the historical schedule in this operations.<sup>24</sup>

Adding to the potential of destroying an isolated portion of the German navy are Intelligence reports that the Germans are planning a German mining operation in the North Sea (see the intelligence section below). Presumably, this operation will be supported by at least light cruisers and possibly heavier fleet units. This increases the chance of an encounter, either with the German minelaying operation, or possibly with heavier elements of the German Fleet. However, because there is the possibility of German battleships being present, the British will similarly have to deploy a large portion of their battleship fleet in support.

### **Objectives**

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Destroy any Battleships or Battlecruisers that are supporting the German mining efforts

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<sup>23</sup> Friedman, Norman. *Fighting the Great War at Sea: Strategy, Tactics and Technology*, 338. 2014

<sup>24</sup> Friedman, Norman. *Fighting the Great War at Sea: Strategy, Tactics and Technology*, 341. 2014.

2. Destroy any light cruisers in supporting the mining operation or that interfere with the British mining operation
3. Prevent the German minelaying operation
4. Conduct mining operations off the coast of Jutland

### **Intelligence**

Intelligence reports the German fleet is planning a minelaying operation in the Central North Sea. Additionally, intelligence reports the Germans have nine submarines. Because there were no reports of a submarine sinking, as a precaution I will continue to show the German OOB as containing 10 submarines.

Based on the available forces and intelligence, I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

1. **Most Probable ECOA**-Mining operation in North Sea supported by light forces
2. Mining operation in North Sea supported by remaining Battlecruiser and light forces
3. Mining operation in North Sea supported by one squadron of battleships and light forces
4. **Most Dangerous ECOA**- Mining operation in North Sea supported by 2 or more squadrons of Battleships
5. No Large German Operation. Possible minor raiding and/or mining

### **Available Forces**

544 Operations Points are available this turn. Activating the entire Grand Fleet (except for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle Squadron) costs 484 points, while the Battlecruiser Fleet costs 121 operation points. I would like to have a minimum of 650 operations points in reserve, to be able to sail the entire Grand Fleet should it be necessary. Based on this, I can deploy at least 2 squadrons of Battleships, one squadron of Battlecruisers and associated escorts this turn, and still have around 250 points next turn., which will be sufficient to respond to German activities. With bad weather in the North Sea beginning in a turn or two, operations should slow down, and allow a buildup of the operational point reserve to meet the 650-point goal.

As shown on the attached spreadsheet, the Grand Fleet has 22 operational battleships, and maintains a very slight advantage over the German fleet in deployable ships.

	Royal Navy									Imperial German Navy								
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine
Active	21	5	6	9	13	68	11	6	8	15	1	8	3	12	56	5	5	1
Reinforce	1				2	1												
Training	2		3		2	2												
Repair	4	1			2	2	2	5						2				
Operational	16	4	3	9	11	65	9	1	8	15	1	8	3	10	56	5	5	1
<b>Advantage</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>7</b>									
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>8</b>									

### Replacements/Detachments

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - BB HMS AGINCOURT
  - CL HMS FEARLESS, AURORA
  - DD METEOR
- Detachments
  - None

### Maintenance and Repairs

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - BB HMS AJAX
  - DD HMS LAPWING
  - DD HMS GOLDFINCH
  - BC PRINCESS ROYAL
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - BB HMS CONQUEROR

### Training

Although it is possible that the High Seas Fleet will be in support of the minelaying operation, I believe it is unlikely. Although four BBs are in repair, I believe can spare the newly commissioned battleships HMS ERIN and AGINCOURT for training, as their low level of training makes them only marginally useful in the battleline. Even with their absence, the Grand Fleet still has a very slight superiority over the High Seas Fleet. However, the battlecruisers LION and NEW ZEALAND will have to wait, as the battlecruiser fleet is an important part of any role in countering the German mining activity. Additionally, for this

operation, I intend to have the Battlecruisers scout ahead of the battleships. In the event the entire High Seas Fleet sails, this scouting force should be sufficient to provide early warning and allow the Battleships to avoid contact, should the tactical situation so dictate.

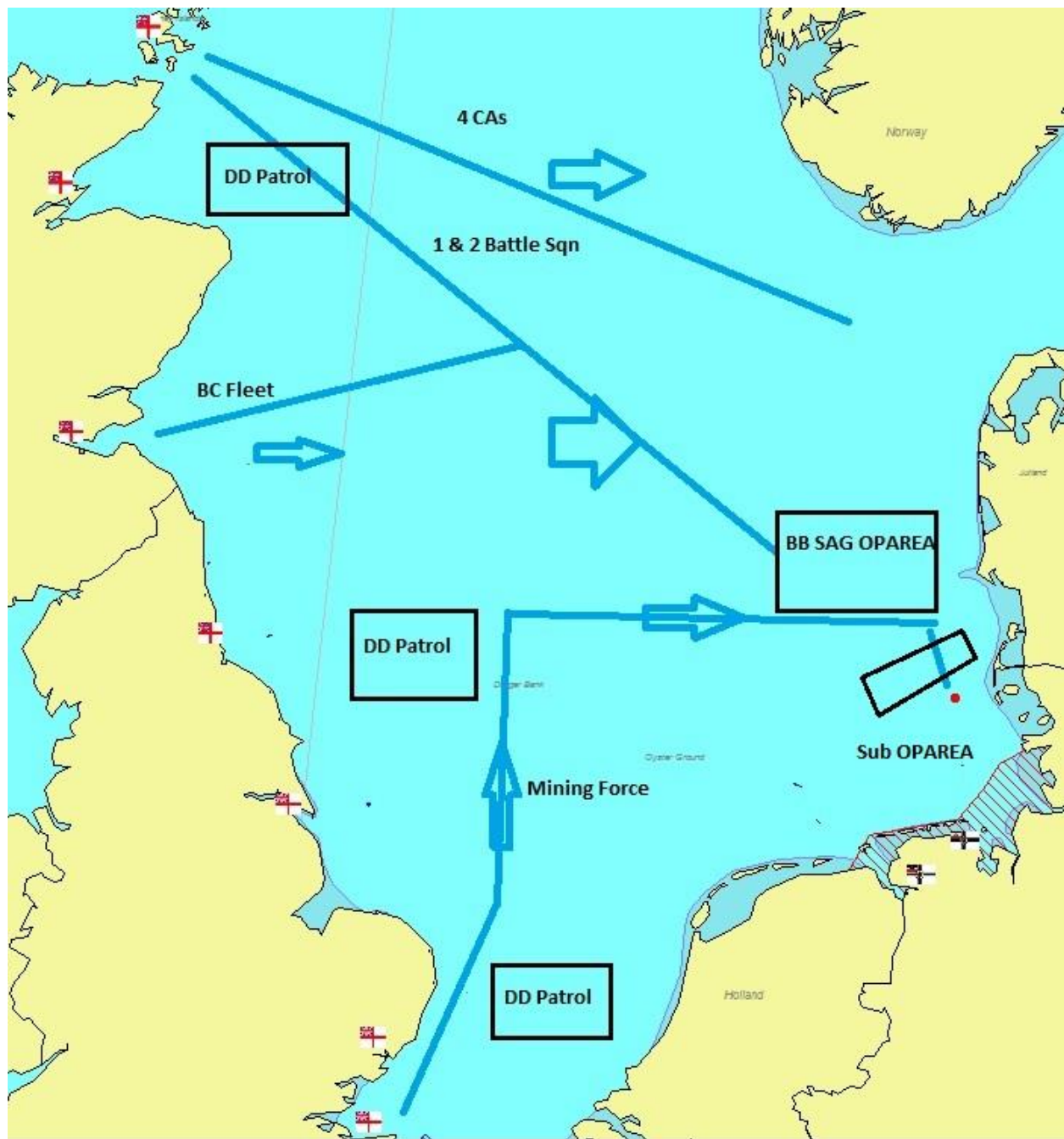
### **Administrative**

HMS COLOSSUS and HMS VANGUARD trade places in the 1/1 and 2/1 Battle squadrons. This gives each squadron ships that have identical maximum speeds, to prevent a single slower ship from limiting the speed of the entire squadron.

### **Operations**

See attached image for OPLAN. HMS APOLLO and INTREPID escorted by the 1/10 Destroyer Flotilla will conduct the minelaying operation off Jutland. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle Squadrons, and the Battlecruiser Fleet are sent to preempt the German mining operation in the central North Sea. Additionally, they will provide support for HMS APOLLO and INTREPID. A patrol line of 4 submarines is placed north of the mine area running NE-SW to provide early warning of any German sortie. Additionally, the game offered me a chance to pick up 1000 VP by sending three CAs with to patrol the entrance to the Skagerrak. Since I will have a large part of the fleet in the area and available to provide support if needed, I send the heavy cruisers on this mission.

### **15 September 1914 OPLAN**



### **Battlelog and spotting reports**

15 0500 WX: Calm, Clear

15 0500 SIGINT reports 2 CLs at 5504N00720E heading NNE

15 0532 Visibility 10,000yds

15 0529 E5 reports 6 DDs heading SE at 0545N00734E

15 0600 SIGINT reports 4 CLs off Helgoland at 5410N00807E heading N. Possibly leaving the Jade?

150740 WX: Visibility increases to 23,500 yards

151113 HMS APOLLO sights two unknown ship invic 5448N00440E

**Note: This is not news I wanted to hear. Instead of the Grand Fleet making contact, it looks like the small minelayer force made contact with some escorts. I suspect there is a larger German force behind them. The supporting battlecruisers are still 42 nm away. I'll try to sprint the minelaying force north and the battlecruisers south to provide support.**

151127 The German ships appear to be a destroyer and a light cruiser. The CL is tracking the minelaying force as it heads NNW.

**Note: The geometry of this engagement is potentially favorable for cutting off the German units from their home port if the battlecruisers and battleships can get in position in time. I estimate it will be approximately 90 minutes before the battlecruisers can engage. I'm hoping to begin the engagement when the battlecruisers reach 5500N00500E. The minelaying CLs will try to lure the German CLs further NW before the trap is sprung.**

151155 A third probable CL is spotted. One of the CLs is identified as a BREMEN class CL

151202 A CL is identified as a KONIGSBERG class CL. These only have a top speed of 23 knots, so if I can get between them and the Jade, they won't be able to escape. Sighting range is 22,000 yards, wind is calm. I have the minelaying force begin to lure the Germans to the NW, so the Battlecruisers can get between them and Helgoland.

151302 Two more ships are spotted SSW of the minelaying force. This number of CLs indicates that there is at least one battlecruiser in the vicinity, although none has yet been seen.

151337 A ship south of the minelayers is classified as a BB. Possibly it is a BC, but it appears to be pursuing the minelaying force too slowly.

151341 2 BBs are identified. One BB is a KAISER-class. If there are two BBs, presumably a squadron is here.

- 151351 A third BB is identified. The Battlecruisers now have a tiger by the tail...
- 15 13:55 BB König-class opens fire at CL Intrepid
- 15 13:55 BB opens fire at CL Apollo
- 151402 A fourth BB is identified. The battleships better get here fast....
- 15 14:02 The destroyers escorting the minelaying force begin to lay smoke. Note: the minelaying force is now in a fix. The top speed of the APOLLO and INTREPID is only 18 knots. The Battlecruisers are still at least 30 minutes away.
- 15 14:30** The Battlecruiser fleet has managed to work its way to the southeast of the German battle squadron. A British squadron is now between the Germans and their base. Moreover, the Germans are sandwiched between the Battlecruisers and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle Squadrons coming from the Northeast. The Battlecruisers open fire at 1430 at approximately 17,000 yards range. The first British hit is scored at 1441. My intent will be to herd the Germans towards the Battleships, while hopefully not getting too badly banged up. The superior range of the British 13.5-inch gun will hopefully keep the BCs out of effective German reply.
- 15 14:46 BC Lion Turret hit T \* Turret flash fire Ship blows up** Note: **This incident happened while the German Battleships were still around 16000 yards distance, so it was a plunging shot that likely penetrated the turret top. In my desire to close with the main force, I obviously got too close. In retrospect, the Battlecruisers should have stood 20,000 yards from the German battleships, while targeting the closer CLs at the rear of the German formation. From here, they could have still accomplished the mission of driving the Germans towards the approaching 1<sup>st</sup> Battle Squadron.**
- 151443 Although most of the action is between the Battlecruisers and German Battleships, the minelaying force continues to be the target of German pursuit. Both the HMS APOLLO and HMS INTREPID jettison their mines due to damage. Fortunately for them, the scouts of the lead British Battle squadron are just over the horizon.
- 151515 In an attempt to drive the Germans towards the 1<sup>st</sup> Battle Squadron (1 BS), I order a torpedo attack. While knowing that it is premature, and unlikely to succeed, my hope is that it will give time for the 1 BS to enter action. Ultimately, this does not end well. Three destroyers (HMS HORNET, ARCHER and FERRET) are lost in the next 45 minutes, and no hits are scored.

15 15:33 1<sup>st</sup> Battle Squadron enters action.

15 15:40 **Foolishly, I continue to keep the Battlecruisers in action, both to block the German fleet, and to have additional firepower while 1 and 2 BS deploy. Over the next 70 minutes, the HMS INVINCIBLE is badly punished, and ultimately sinks. The rest of the battlecruisers are similarly beaten up by German gunfire, but they ultimately survive.**

15 16:46 BC Invincible Turret hit T \* Turret destroyed

15 16:47 BC Invincible Engine room hit B \*

15 16:47 BC Invincible Turret hit T

15 16:48 BC Invincible Engine room hit B \*

15 16:48 BC Invincible Turret hit T \*

15 16:48 BC Invincible Hull hit BE \*

15 16:48 BC Invincible Hull hit BE \*

15 16:48 BB Collingwood Engine room hit B

15 16:52 BC Invincible Turret hit T

15 16:53 BC Invincible Turret hit T \* Turret destroyed

15 16:53 BC Invincible Superstructure hit \*

15 16:54 BC Invincible is avoiding torpedoes

15 16:55 BC Invincible Electric power restored

15 16:57 BC Invincible is hit by a torpedo

15 16:57 BC Invincible is sinking

15 17:09 DD Tigress is picking up survivors from DD S24

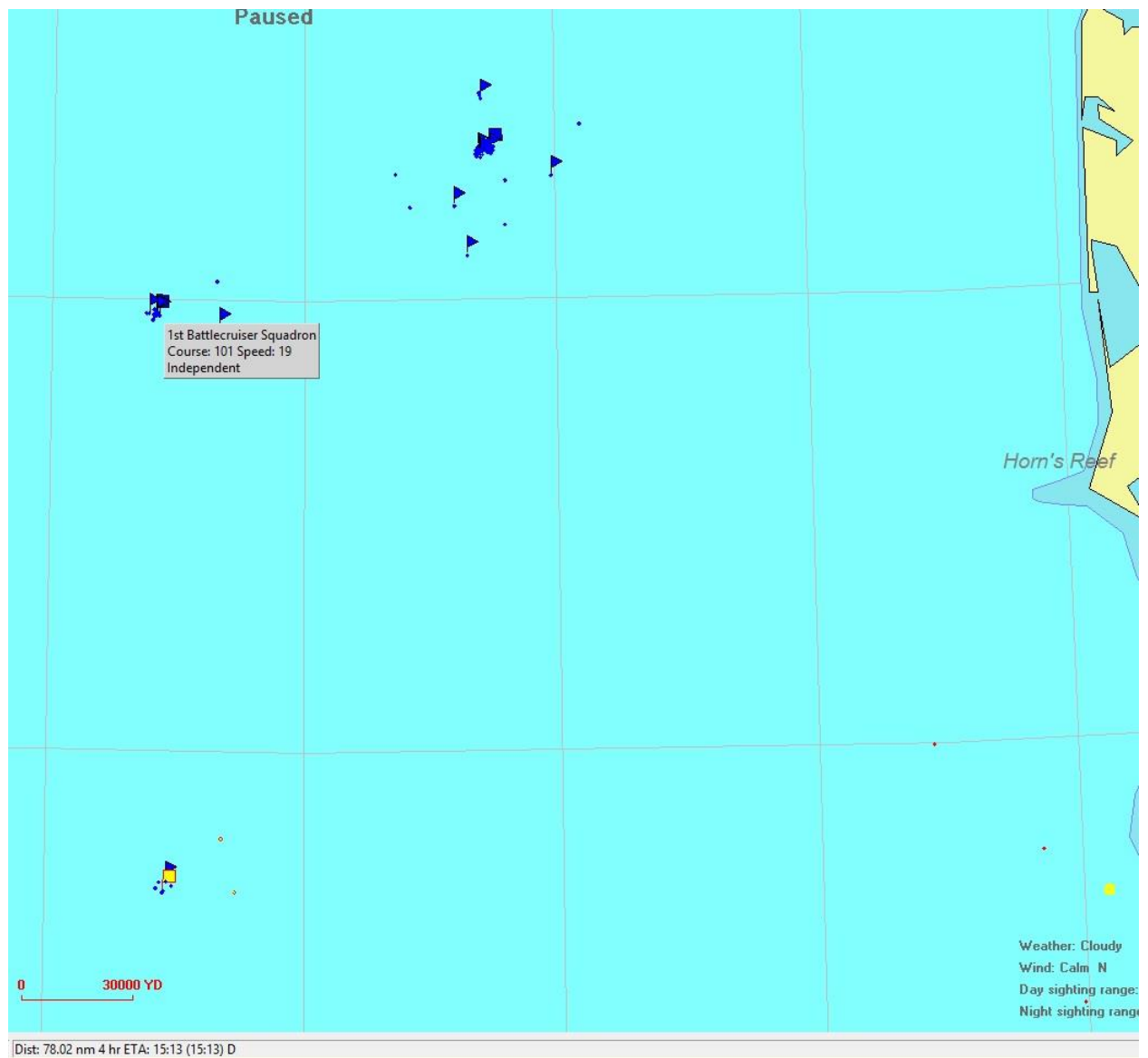
15 17:10 BC New Zealand is avoiding torpedoes

151711 **After protracted pounding by the German battleships, and the arrival of 1 and 2 BS, I detach the QUEEN MARY and NEW ZEALAND to head away from the battle and back to port. Enroute, they sink a damaged light cruiser that was separated from the main body. The Battlecruisers accomplished the mission of holding the German Battleships until the**

**arrival of the British battleships. As demonstrated at Jutland, the engagement shows that they really were not capable of standing up to a capital ship. Like the British admirals of the day, in this battle I misused the battlecruisers, using them in the battleline, as opposed to using them in an anti-scouting role.**

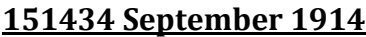
**15 17:20 Note: The arrival and deployment of both 1 and 2 BS signals the end of the German squadron. Already damaged by the Battlecruisers and 1 BS, the damaged units are prevented from retreating to base and bombarded. The last shots from the German battleships occur at 1746. From then until approximately 1900, the German battleships are shelled by 1 and 2 BS, until all are sunk. DD HMS HOPE, damaged earlier in the action also sinks during the night. Enroute back to Scapa Flow, the British run into a lone German light cruiser, but it escapes in the night.**

15 September Initial Contact



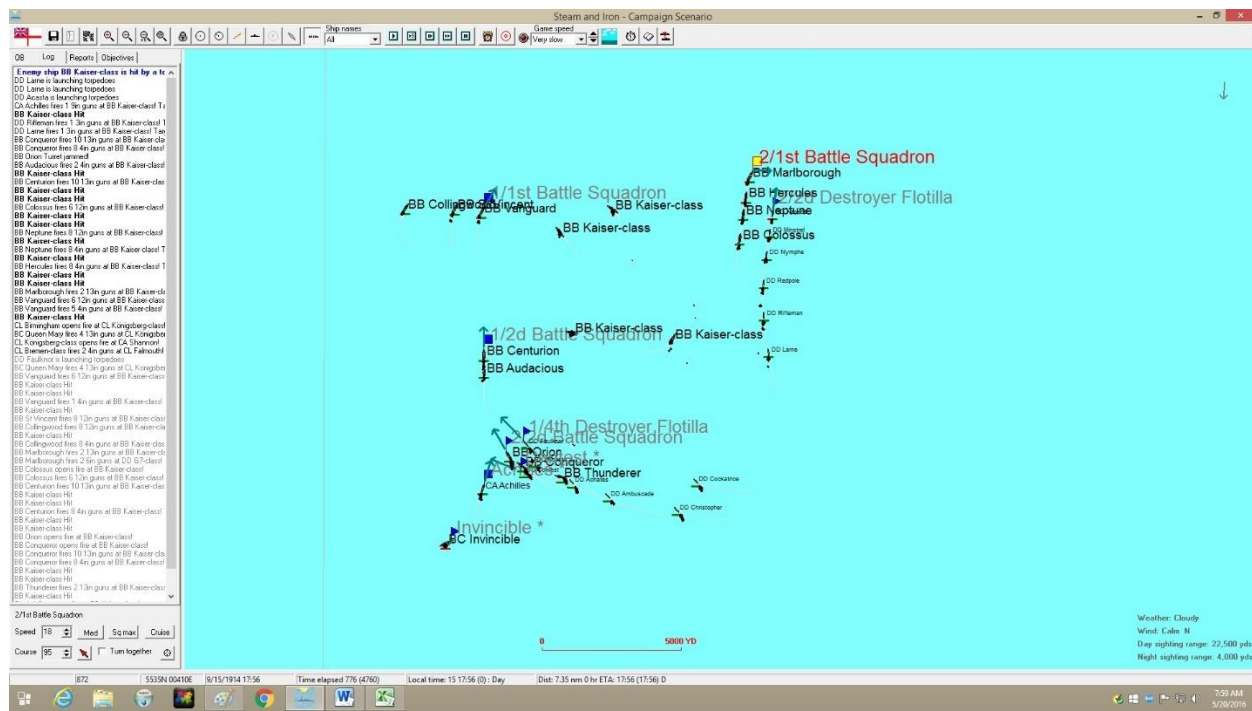
151254 Sep 1914





151434 September 1914





## Aftermath

Both the German and British failed in their mining mission. However, the action was a major British victory, with four German Battleships, three CLs, three DDs and one MS were sunk. However, two Royal Navy BCs and four DDs were also sunk, as well as 1 BC, 1 CL and 2 DDs suffering heavy damage and 4 BB, 1 BC 4 CL, and 15 DDs suffering medium or light damage. Although it is a major victory, the cost in Battlecruisers was high. It will be a month before I have an operational Battlecruiser fleet. Similarly, the damage to the light forces was significant, although they will be rapidly repaired. Only 2.33% of heavy caliber salvos hit. The leading British shooter was the BC Queen Mary, hitting 3.21% By comparison, the Germans hit 2.53% of the time, the leading shooter being the BB König Albert, which hit 4.08%. British torpedo shooting was terrible, with only 2 hits.

## **29 September-14 October 1914**

### **Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation has improved for the Royal Navy. Although many heavy units are in repair, once they return to the fleet, the 21:11 ratio of battleships makes it conceivable that the Royal Navy could force the Baltic. Historically, had history played out like this game is, the history of World War I could have been very different. Additional attrition of the German fleet, combined with an agreement with Russia for joint operations and basing support in Baltic ports would potentially have created the threat of allied amphibious operations on the Baltic flank of Germany, and necessitated the deployment of German forces away from the eastern or western fronts to guard against the potential landings. Additionally, the loss of trade with Sweden and the opening of a supply route to Russia may have prevented Russian collapse and shortened the war. However, if these naval events occurred, the Kaiser almost certainly would have prevented further action of his fleet and adopted a "fleet in being" strategy to oppose any British operations in the Baltic.

### **Concept of Operations**

This turn will be devoted to low-level mining operations. A total of 12 capital ships are in being repaired, limiting the British options this turn. Fortunately, there is no intelligence concerning planned German operations, and realistically, after suffering two defeats in six weeks, it would be unlikely that there would be any major German operations. Because of this, the only operation planned is mining operation off the Dutch coast, supported by heavy cruisers from the Grand Fleet. All units will avoid any contact with enemy forces and will withdraw unless disproportionate casualties can be inflicted on the enemy. The 4<sup>th</sup> Battle Squadron (HMS IRON DUKE, DREADNOUGHT, BELLEROPHON and TEMERAIRE) will be the reserve force if a reaction to a small German incursion is necessary. Additionally, local patrols by destroyers off Scotland, Harwich and the Channel will hopefully keep German minelayers at bay.

### **Objectives**

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Conduct mining off the Dutch Coast while avoiding losses of any cruisers
2. Sink any light Forces encountered while avoiding losses of any cruisers.

### **Intelligence**

There is no intelligence concerning German operations. I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

1. **Most Probable ECOA**-Patrols by light forces in coastal areas
2. Mining by light forces off British East coast/Channel
3. **Most Dangerous ECOA**- Patrol in North Sea or off Dutch Coast by remaining Battlecruiser
4. Patrol in North Sea by a Battleship squadron

### Available Forces

A total of 420 operational points are available. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

	Royal Navy									Imperial German Navy								
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine
Active	21	3	6	9	13	64	11	6	8	11	1	8	3	9	53	5	5	1
Reinforce		1			1													
Training	2	1	6	4	2	2												
Repair	9	3			1	16	4	3	2					2				
Operational	10	0	0	5	11	46	7	3	6	11	1	8	3	7	53	5	5	1
<b>Advantage</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>5</b>									
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1.667</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>6</b>									

### Replacements/Detachments

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - BC HMS INFLEXIBLE
  - CL HMS UNDAUNTED
- Detachments
  - None

### Maintenance and Repairs

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - 9 BB, 3 BC, 3 CL, 16 DDs
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - 2 CLs, 3 DDs complete repairs

### Training

Because of the planned low operational tempo, all units that need training will be scheduled. In late October, with the anticipated return of four Battleships, the operational tempo may increase, so this is a good opportunity to get the ships trained now.

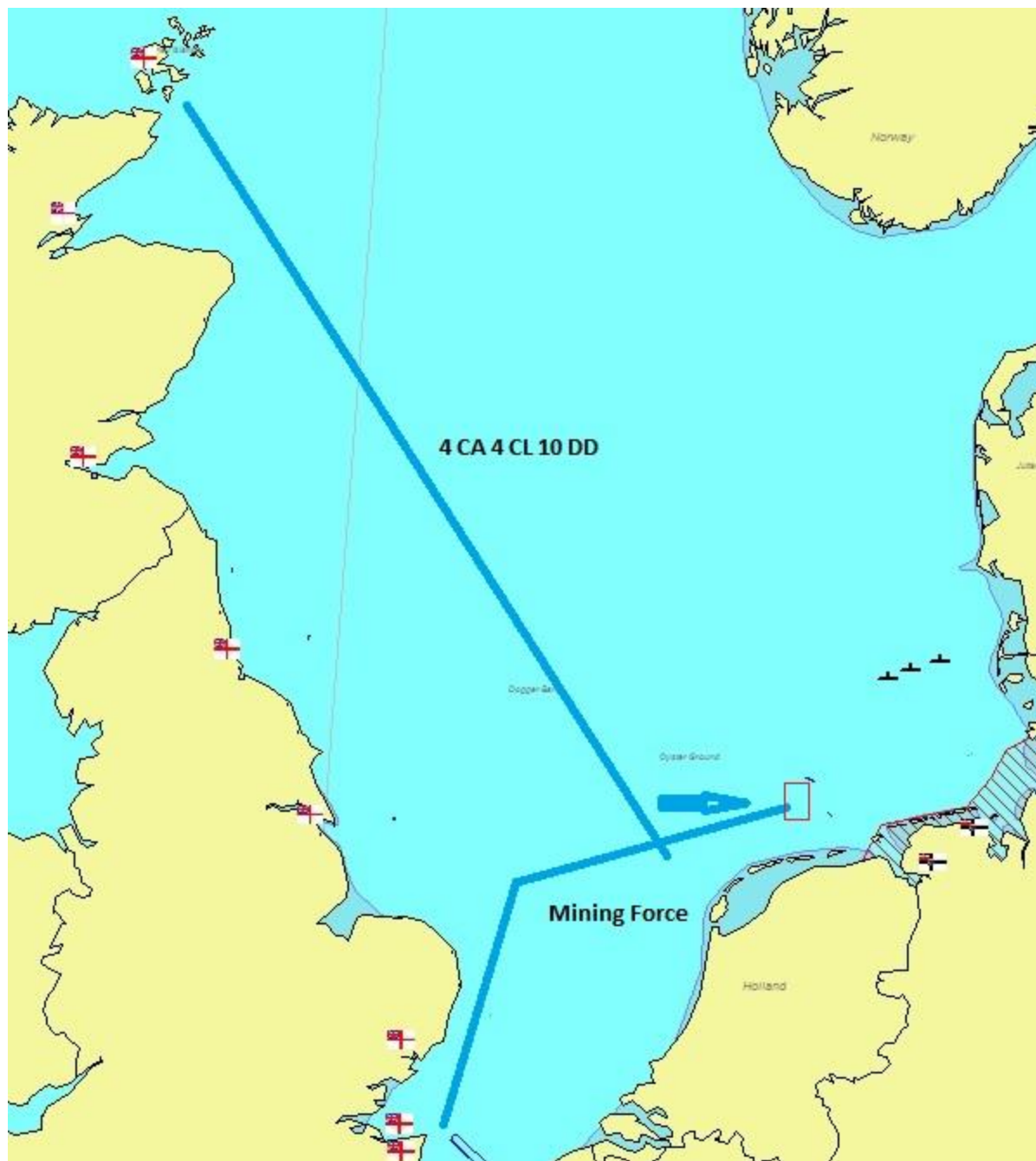
## **Administrative**

NSTR

## **Operations**

See attached image for OPLAN. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Cruiser squadron will provide support to CLs conducting mining operations off the Dutch coast. Three submarines will patrol off Jutland to warn of any German deployments from the Jade along the Dutch coast.

## **29 September OPLAN**



### **Battlelog and spotting reports**

29 0500      WX: PtCloudy, Gentle NW breeze.

290647      HMS SPARROWHAWK spots a submarine off the Firth of Forth

- 290631 Submarine D1 reports 2CA invic 5435N00701E heading SW
- 291611 The HMS HOGUE reports 2 DDs in the Broad Fourteens, invic 5235N00401E.  
**Note: This may be a raid of light forces into the Channel**
- 291643 HMS ABOUKIR reports 1 BB heading S invic the Broad Fourteens.
- Note: This report is a bit of a surprise. As it comes from a Royal Navy vessel, I assume it is approximately correct, in that apparently a German heavy unit is approaching the channel. Possibly it is only a cruiser. The game controls the ABOUKIR, and won't let me see the actual German ships, so the player can't confirm the spotting report**
- 291711 HMS ABOUKIR reports 1 BB, 1 BC, 1 DD heading west in the Broad Fourteens.
- Note: This report seems to confirm the 1643 report of heavy units raiding the Channel. Looking at the game log (which substitutes for the intercepted bits of radio traffic that in the real world a commander at sea might be able to get) shows that the ABOUKIR and HOGUE are in fact engaged in a battle with a German force of unknown size. The Royal Navy has no assets positioned to counter such a force. All the Battleships are in Scapa Flow, approximately 450 miles away. Ordering an Emergency Activation would require 3 hours for the ships to raise steam and depart. At the maximum speed of 20 knots, it would take an additional 22.5 hours to reach the scene, by which time the raiders would be long gone. Historically, Hugo von Pohl, the commander of the High Seas Fleet in 1915, limited capital ship operations in the North Sea to a day and a night, to minimize the chance of a torpedo attack by light forces on the German ship.<sup>25</sup> If the game follows this tactic, the German force will be gone in the next few hours. Accordingly, I don't order the activation. Interestingly, the German force is showing up off the British coast as night falls. I think this is ahistorical (although it makes for a good "what if" scenario). I believe the Germans were historically reluctant to deploy their heavy forces in this area at night of the heavy presence of British torpedo-armed vessels would potentially allow for a large night-time torpedo attack in the relatively constrained waters. Such an attack would be potentially catastrophic for the heavy units, especially so far away from their own bases.**

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<sup>25</sup> Friedman, Norman. *Fighting the Great War at Sea: Strategy, Tactics and Technology*, 155. 2014

**Note:** The presence of German warships off the approaches to the Channel is a bit of a surprise and indicates that what I evaluated as the “Most Dangerous” ECOA has been selected by the Germans.

**Note:** The British force at sea is inadequate to meet more than a single Battlecruiser, and very well may be inadequate for even that. The two minelaying CLs are slow, and poorly armed. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Cruiser Squadron is faster and better armed, but at 23 knots, the cruisers are still slower than a Battlecruiser. Transiting from Scapa Flow, they are still at least 8 hours away from the position of the German squadron. In the real world, I would avoid any contact with the German squadron. Historically, the Royal Navy probably would have required an engagement, even under these conditions. In the August 1914 pursuit of the battlecruiser SMS GOEBEN in the Mediterranean, Admiral Troubridge faced a Court of Inquiry for not engaging the GOEBEN with his four armored cruisers.<sup>26</sup> Although he was ultimately acquitted, his career and reputation were ruined. This professional disgrace may have influenced the decision of Troubridge’s friend, Admiral Cradock, to engage a superior German squadron in the disastrous Battle of Coronel, despite his knowledge that he faced almost certain defeat. As part of the purpose of this AAR is to teach about WWI naval operations. Accordingly, like Admiral Cradock, I’ll go against my better judgement and try to intercept the German force with my little fleet.

However, I will first lay the mines. My suspicion is that the German force will head back to harbor after its fight with the ABOUKIR and HOUGE. There is a remote possibility that I can damage some of the returning units with the minefield. Additionally, I suspect that the German squadron will head for port tonight. I estimate that the most likely interception point for the British cruisers happens to be the approximate location of the planned minefield. If timed right, this would allow the engagement to begin at night, largely neutralizing the German gunnery advantage and placing the escorting British destroyers at or near torpedo range. The cruisers and mining force are directed to proceed at best speed to get the minefield laid and engage the German squadron.

291712 HMS ABOUKIR reports 3 CAs heading ESE

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<sup>26</sup> Massie, Robert K., and Robert K. Massie. *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*, 51. New York: Random House, 2003.

300004 HMS SAPPHO and HMS ANDROMACHE begin laying mines

30015 The minefield is complete. HMS SAPPHO and HMS ANDROMACHE depart the area, while at the same time the heavy cruisers arrive in the area. Because there is no contact, the cruisers begin a sweep to the west to establish contact. There is no word for the past several hours from the ABOUKIR and HOGUE but fragmentary radio (in fact the game log) reports indicate both were hit multiple times during the engagement. An additional report indicates the HMS BACCHANTE was torpedoed.

300500 Daybreak. No contact occurred during the night. Information from ABOUKIR and HOGUE indicates that they were not sunk but are damaged. BACCHANTE was lost.

300731 HMS SWIFT spots a submarine off the Firth of Forth

301157 2 unknown vessels are spotted. The SAG alters course to W to close and get sea room and get closer to English coast. See attached image. WX: Cloudy, Wind: Lt Breeze, NW. Sighting Range: 23,500 yds

30 12:04 CL Boadicea identifies CA as Kolberg-class

30 12:08 CL Boadicea opens fire at CL Kolberg-class

30 12:09 CL Boadicea sights an unknown ship. It appears to be a capital ship.

30 12:11 Unidentified ship opens fire at CL HMS BOADICEA and is ID'd as a DERFFLINGER-class BC. Range: 17,600 yds from BOADICEA to the BC.

301214 Having identified a BC, I do an emergency activation of a squadron of light cruisers and destroyers from Harwich. It will take 3 hours for them to get steam up, but they may be useful.

301216 The destroyers are ordered to fake a torpedo attack to draw off the battlecruiser. After forming up and beginning their run, the DERFFLINGER alters course to open the range. The destroyers are recalled, to avoid loss.

30 1217 It is 5 hours before sunset. My plan is to harry the BC, remaining just out of range, then close for a nighttime torpedo attack.

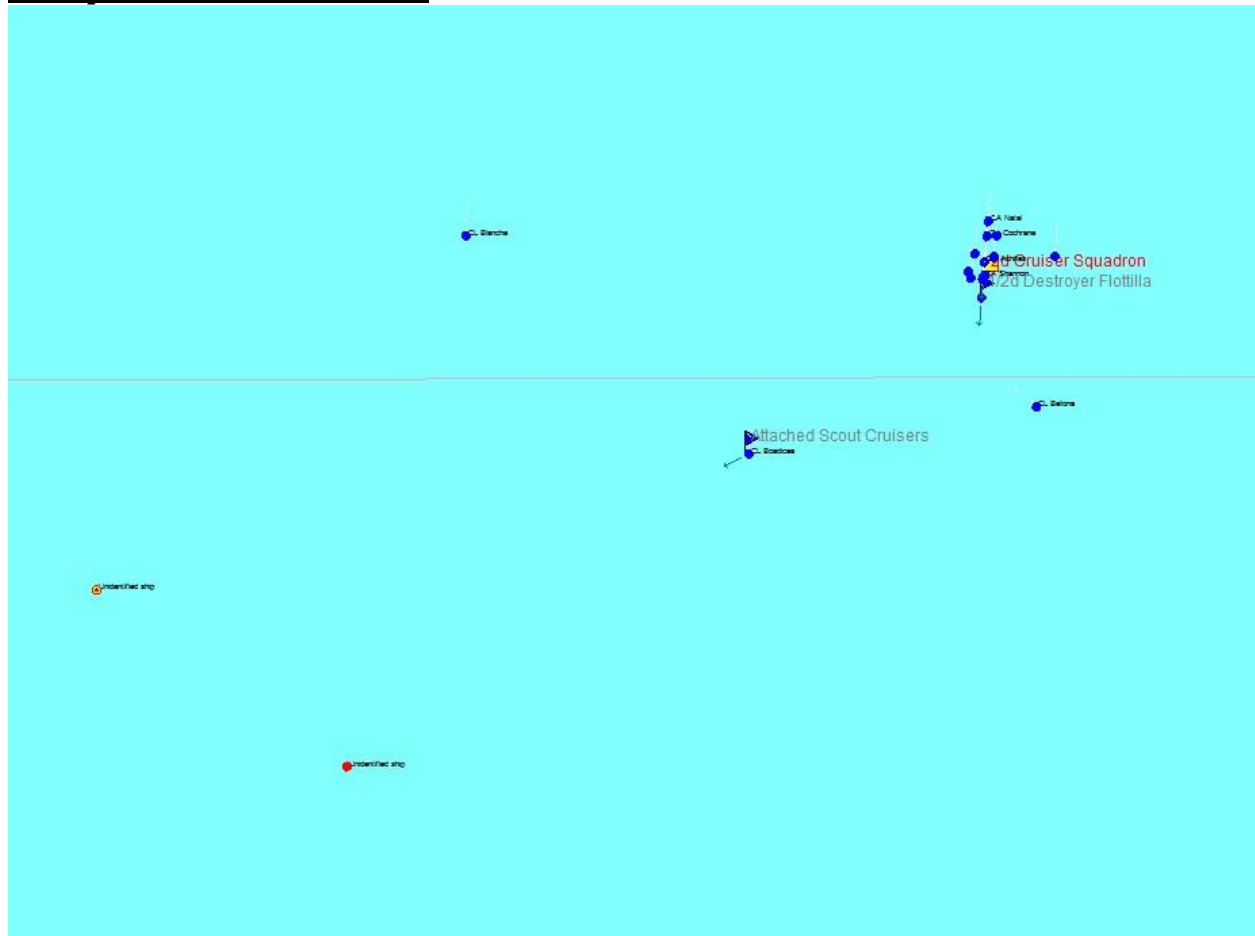
301230 It looks like the BC is going to chase the CAs. He has a 2-knot advantage, which means that he will be within effective gunnery range in one hour.

30 13:04 The DERFFLINGER -class BC opens fire at CA HMS NATAL and straddles her within 3 minutes. The range is approximately 17,000 yards. The cruisers begin to lay smoke and the SAG begins a series of turns to the North to draw the Germans away from their course. Additionally, I'm trying to maneuver the Germans so their most likely course home will run them into the minefield.

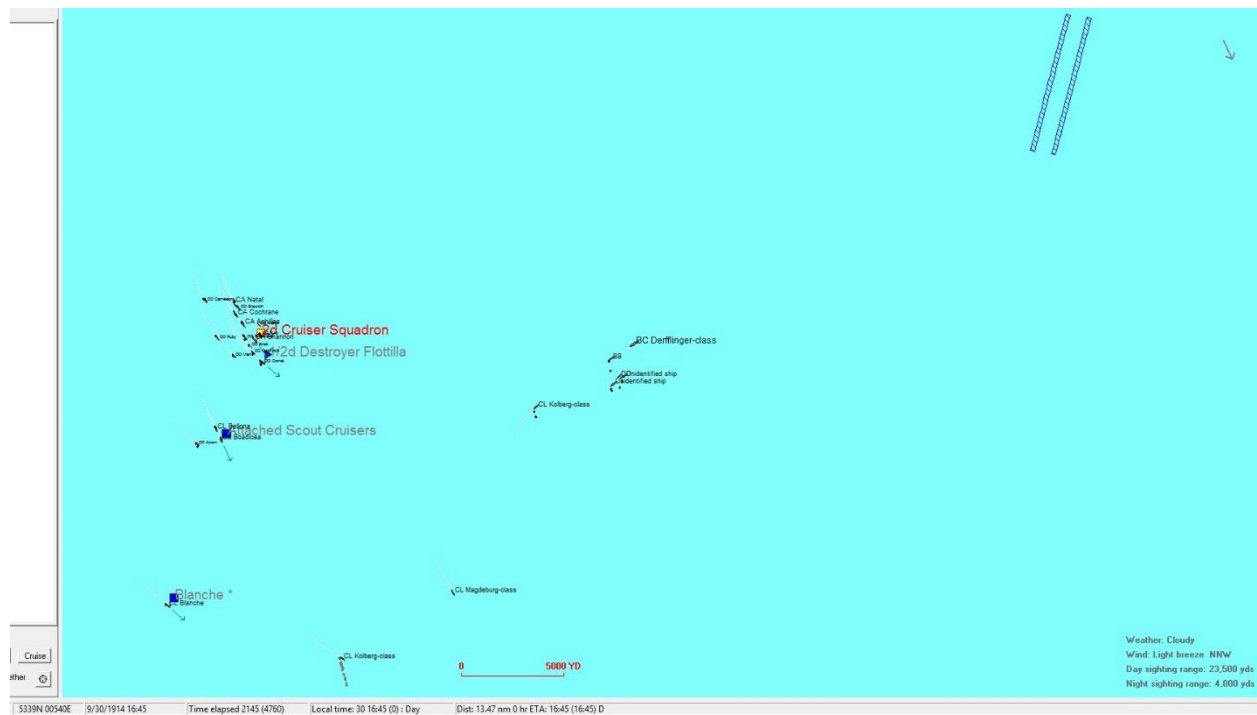
- 30 13:44 CL HMS BLANCHE cannot keep up and has been detached. The high speed run has scattered the German formation, with the DERFFLINGER leading, and the five escorting CLs/DDs trailing by up to 10,000 yards. I have the HMS BLANCHE go at best speed to the south to divert the Germans from the heavy cruisers. Additionally, it might allow the BLANCHE to work its way around and possibly attack one of the trailing escorts.
- 301415 The detachment of the HMS BLANCHE appears to be working. The DERFFLINGER begins to pursue it. However, the Germans also appear to be determined to get back to port. By alternating approaches towards the German force by the HMS BLANCHE, the heavy cruisers, and the remaining escorting light cruisers, the German squadron is constantly forced to change course to meet the latest threat. This “cat and mouse” game continues without either side being damaged for the next 3 hours as the squadrons move east. **Note: I believe the maneuver I used in this battle would have been very difficult to have performed by a WWI admiral. Once detached, the HMS BLANCHE moved south, well outside the flag signaling range of the flagship. Because of this, such a series of parries and thrusts that the BLANCHE and cruisers made against the German squadron could have only been made if the BLANCHE’s captain understood the commander’s intention to use this strategy before the engagement, and then acted independently to execute it. Although scouting cruisers had wireless, using it to communicate these types of tactical maneuvers would have been probably beyond the training and doctrine of the British in 1914.**
- 30 15:20 CL HMS BLANCHE opens fire at CL Magdeburg-class. **Note: By this time, the HMS BLANCHE has worked itself to a position 20,000 yards SW of the DERFFLINGER. The MAGDEBURG and a KOLBERG-class CL are trailing at the end of the German formation, which seems intent on making it back to port. This gives an opportunity to cut off the two CLs. Meanwhile, the heavy cruisers continue to parry and thrust against the head of the German squadron in an attempt to draw it further north towards the minefield.**
- 30 1630 Between 1520-1630 the HMS BLANCHE and the KOLBERG class CL engage in a long-range gunnery duel at approximately 8000 yards. Both sides score hits, but no significant damage is done. Meanwhile, the heavy cruisers have positioned themselves to the NW of the DERFFLINGER, which appears to be on a course back to port that will take it through the newly laid minefield. The speed of the German battlecruiser is too great to have been able to hold a position suitable for a nighttime torpedo attack. However, with twilight happening in about 30 minutes, the British stand a chance of cutting off the two tailing light cruisers. Their position to the West of the DERFFLINGER also gives them a retreat to the west should the battlecruiser come to the aid of these exposed light cruisers. The heavy cruisers turn towards the rear of the German formation.
- 301645 CA Shannon opens fire at MAGDEBURG –class CL. See attached figure.

- 301700 Between 1700-1930 the British force engages the two German light cruisers. The KOLBERG class CL escapes in the night. The MAGDEBURG-class is not so lucky, and it succumbs to the combined firepower of the British squadron. Although several British destroyers are damaged, none are sunk. Enroute back to Scapa, the force sweeps past the newly laid minefield, hoping to engage any ships that may have been damaged by the field. Only two minesweepers are encountered, and they both rapidly engaged and sunk. The squadron then returns to Scapa Flow.
- 01 06:33 DD HMS RIFLEMAN has rammed and sunk a submarine near Scapa Flow.

### **30 September Initial Contact**



### **301645 September 1914**



## Aftermath

While a British victory, this skirmish doesn't alter the balance of forces in the North Sea. The loss of the old armored cruiser HMS BACCHANTE is compensated for by the sinking of the SMS STRALSUND. Historically, I'm not sure how such a battle would have been perceived by the British public or admiralty. The fact that a German squadron had operated so closely to the Channel and sunk a cruiser would have been a cause for concern. Although the subsequent pursuit of the Germans resulted in a light cruiser being sunk, the remainder of the squadron escaped with minimal damage. The fact that the British cruiser squadron was inferior in terms of speed, armor, and firepower against the DERFFLINGER may not have saved the British commander in a case like this. As mentioned in my earlier post, in the roughly analogous situation of the August 1914 pursuit of the German battlecruiser GOEBEN off of Greece, Admiral Troubridge faced a Court of Inquiry for not engaging the GOEBEN with his four armored cruisers.<sup>27</sup> Like Admiral Troubridge, this situation also involved four cruisers against a German battlecruiser, with the engagement likely to occur in excellent weather and good visibility. Strategically, this game situation was slightly different. In the case of the GOEBEN, it was far from any German base or resupply. Forcing it to expend its ammunition or damaging it would have a direct impact on the GOEBEN's future combat capability. In any situation like the game scenario, any damage to the DERFFLINGER or expenditure of ammunition in a would easily be remedied in a German port. Therefore, the probable cost of losing several British cruisers with their crews would not be worth the benefit of merely temporarily damaging the German battlecruiser.

<sup>27</sup> Massie, Robert K., and Robert K. Massie. *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*, 51. New York: Random House, 2003.

During this scenario, there were multiple submarine sighting reports and one submarine sinking near the Scapa Flow and the Firth of Forth, showing that the Germans are watching the area. ASW efforts in the area will have to be increased. Already, the British destroyer force is being stretched by the requirements to screen the heavy units and convoy and patrolling duties.

As far as I can tell, the minefield did not damage any German ships. I believe that the DERFLINGER and at least 3 escorts went through the newly laid field. (Note: a check of the ship tracks at the conclusion of the scenario confirms the German squadron went through the field) However, there is no intelligence reporting that any ships were damaged. However, there is a report that in addition to the two German minesweepers that were destroyed by the cruisers, another was mined. Possibly a portion of the newly laid field was discovered and swept prior to the German squadron passing through it.

Finally, as noted earlier, the tactics I used in the game would have been very difficult to execute in WWI. The communications technology likely would have made such a series of coordinated feints between the main British force and the detached HMS BLANCHE almost impossible to duplicate. There is one other point to bring up in this regard. As a gamer, I have a “God’s eye” view of the battlespace. In World War I, the British were the only navy that had even begun plotting the positions of enemy and friendly forces.<sup>28</sup> While such plots would have only been in flagships, they were critical for giving the commander situational awareness necessary to deploy his ships.

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<sup>28</sup> Friedman, Norman. *Fighting the Great War at Sea: Strategy, Tactics and Technology*, 77-78. 2014.

## **14-28 October 1914**

### **Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn. The loss of a single light cruiser will have a minor negatively impact on German scouting abilities. German mining near Helgoland has significantly increased the size of the mine danger area. Now it extends from slightly north of the Danish border to the Jade. See the attached map.

### **Concept of Operations**

Like last turn, this turn will be devoted to low-level mining operations. A total of 10 capital ships are in being repaired, limiting the British options this turn. There is no intelligence concerning planned German operations.

Like last turn, the only operation planned is mining operation off the Dutch coast, supported by heavy cruisers from the Grand Fleet. All units will avoid any contact with enemy forces and will withdraw unless disproportionate casualties can be inflicted on the enemy.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Battle Squadron (HMS IRON DUKE, DREADNOUGHT, BELLEROPHON and TEMERAIRE) will be the reserve force if a reaction to a small German incursion is necessary. Additionally, local patrols by destroyers off Scotland, Harwich and the Channel will hopefully keep German minelayers at bay.

The game did offer the opportunity for a bombardment mission off the northern end of Sylt Island, located just off the Jutland Peninsula. Because of the increased mining activity in the area, combined with the relatively small advantage in British battleships, I will decline this mission.

### **Objectives**

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Conduct mining off the Dutch Coast while avoiding losses of any cruisers
2. Sink any light Forces encountered while avoiding losses of any cruisers.

### **Intelligence**

There is no intelligence concerning German operations. There are reports that the DERFLINGER suffered light damage the past turn. Because of this, it is likely to be repaired this turn. I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

1. **Most Probable ECOA**-Patrols by light forces in coastal areas
2. Mining by light forces off British East coast/Channel
3. **Most Dangerous ECOA**- Patrol in North Sea or off Danish coast by a Battleship squadron, possibly in conjunction with mining off East coast of England
4. Patrol in North Sea or off Danish coast by a Battlecruiser

### Available Forces

A total of 620 operational points are available. The addition of three seaplane carriers potentially gives an increase in scouting capabilities to the Grand Fleet. Although they will be in training this turn, I will have to give some consideration to their use in future operations. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

	Royal Navy										Imperial German Navy									
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	
Active	22	3	6	9	16	65	10	6	8		11	1	8	3	8	53	4	5	1	
Reinforce										3										
Training	1				2	1				3										
Repair	8	2	1		3	11	5	2	3			1			1					
Operational	13	1	5	9	11	53	5	4	5	0	11	0	8	3	7	53	4	5	1	
Advantage	2	1	-3	6	4	0	1	-1	4	N/A										
Ratio	1.2	###	0.63	3	1.6	1	1.3	0.8	5	N/A										

### Replacements/Detachments

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - AVs HMS RIVIERA, ENGADINE and EMPRESS
- Detachments
  - BC HMS PRINCESS ROYAL
  - Submarine E9

### Maintenance and Repairs

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - B DOMINION
  - BB THUNDERER
  - DD ACORN, SHELDRAKE, ACHATES
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - 4 DDs

## **Training**

One battleship, two CLs one DD and the seaplane carriers are sent for training.

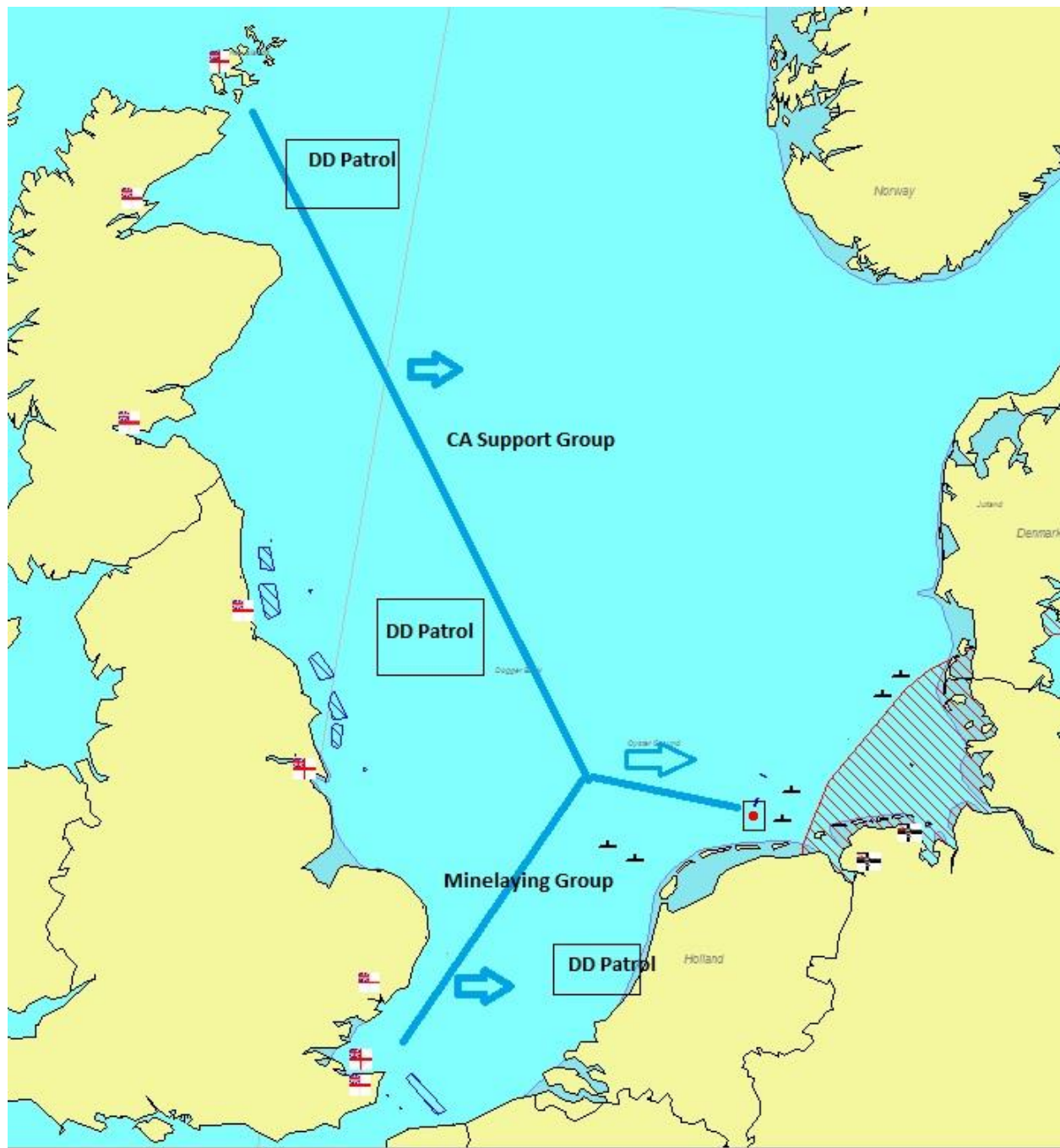
## **Administrative**

Historically, after the German operations in the channel, the Admiralty would likely have seriously considered basing a heavy response force further south to prevent a repeat of this tactic. Because the pre-dreadnoughts of the 3rd Battle Squadron are of limited use in a fleet action, I re-base them further south in Grimsby. From here, they can still rendezvous with the Grand Fleet in the central North Sea, help defend against raids against the east coast of England, as well as potentially cut off any raiding forces that enter the approaches to the English Channel. To provide a balanced force package, some older heavy cruisers and a small flotilla of destroyers are also transferred with them.

## **Operations**

See attached image for OPLAN. The heavy cruisers from Scapa will rendezvous with the minelaying force from Harwich and proceed to the mining area. My plan is to approach during night and begin mining at daybreak to maximize British gun range against any light forces in the area.

## **13 October OPLAN**



### **Battlelog and spotting reports**

13 October    The operation is postponed for 2 days due to WX.

150721        WX: Light rain, Wind: Strong NNE breeze. Sighting range: 6500 yds.

150721        Submarine D8 reports 1 BB, 3 CL at 5339N00612E (west of the approaches to Emden) heading NW

152325 One CA, 4 DDs are reportedly shelling the Ramsgate Battery, near Sheerness. The 5<sup>th</sup> CL squadron and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Destroyer flotilla at Harwich are activated.

160026 Submarine D8 reports 3 CL at 5341N00616E, heading SSW. Note: This places the CLs near the mining location.

160205 Submarine E2 reports 2 BB, 4 DD at 5451N00747E (off Sylt Island), heading NE

160401 HMS ALARM, which has lost contact with the main body of cruisers, has contact with a ship invic 5407N00425E, but almost immediately loses contact in the rain and darkness. See attached.

16 00:02 During the approach to the mining area, a total of five screening destroyers lose contact with the main body in the rain and darkness.

16 05:53 CL Latona and Naiad begin to lay mines

16 06:13 CL Latona and Naiad finished laying mines

161037 HMS LLEWELLYN, one of the five separated screening destroyers, makes contact with an unknown vessel at a range of approximately 5,000 yards and on an opposite course. As the range rapidly decreases, two more vessels come out of the mist. One is a capital ship, which opens fire. A nearby destroyer, HMS FURY, that is similarly separated from the main body is attracted to the gunfire and becomes engaged. **(Note: The subsequent action was fought completely under AI control. The log is reproduced below).**

16 1041 HMS LLEWELLYN launches torpedoes

16 10:43 DD Llewellyn Near miss Hull damaged by splinters

16 10:43 DD Llewellyn Superstructure passthrough hit \*

16 10:44 DD Llewellyn has reduced speed due to heavy flooding

16 10:44 Unidentified ship opens fire at DD Llewellyn

16 10:45 Enemy ship BB is hit by a torpedo

16 10:45 DD Llewellyn Near miss

16 10:46 DD Llewellyn identifies unknown ship as CL

16 10:48 DD Llewellyn has reduced speed due to heavy flooding

16 10:48 DD Llewellyn Superstructure hit.

16 10:50 BC Derfflinger-class fires 8 12in guns at DD Llewellyn 1 hits

16 10:50 DD Llewellyn Fore/aft hull hit

16 11:01 DD Fury Critical hit Fire control damaged

16 11:01 DD Fury Near miss

16 11:01 DD Fury Superstructure hit \*

16 11:02 DD Fury is launching torpedoes

16 11:02 BC Derfflinger-class fires 8 12in guns at DD Fury Target straddled 1 hits

16 11:02 DD Fury Secondary battery hit. Fire started

16 11:03 DD Fury identifies unknown ship as CL

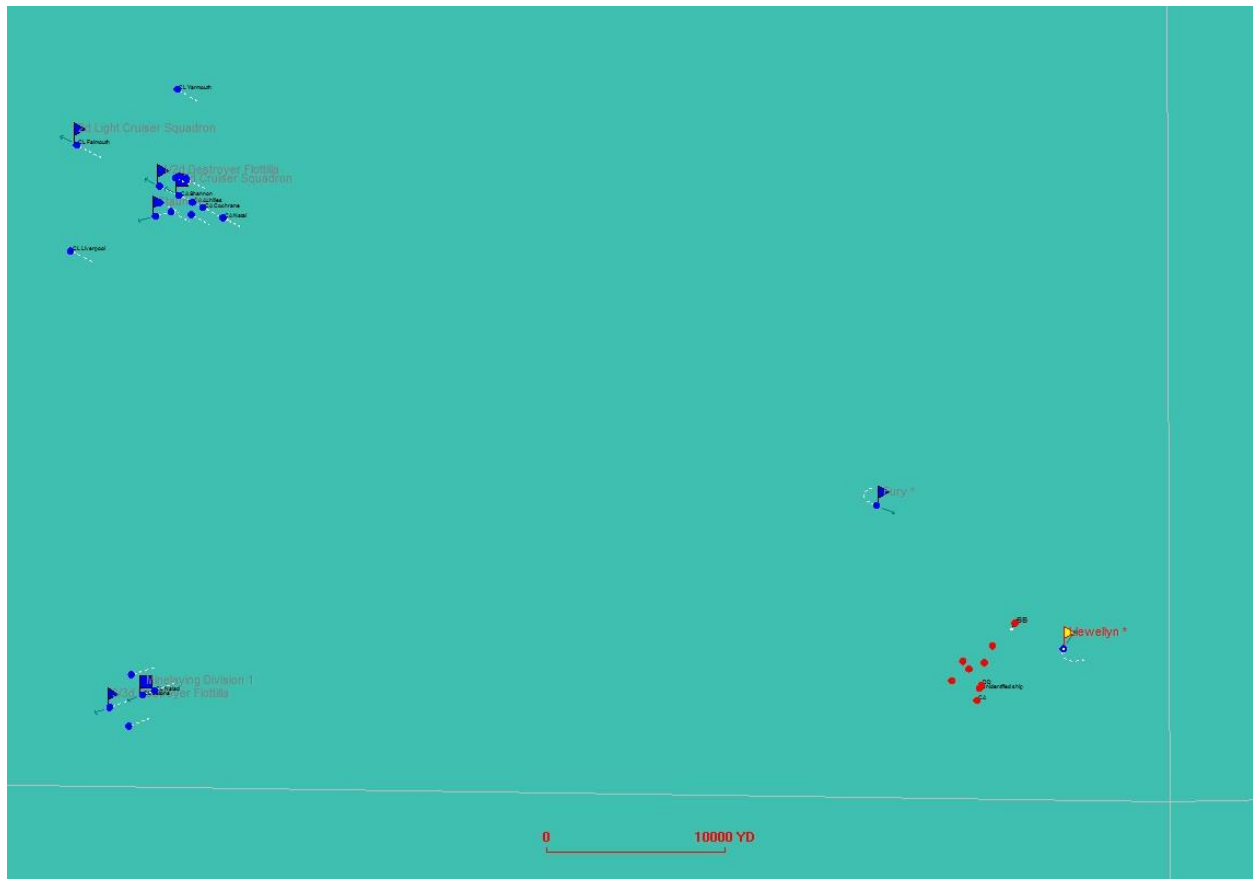
16 11:09 BC Derfflinger-class fires 4 12in guns at DD Fury Target straddled 0 hits

16 11:10 CL Kolberg-class fires 5 4in guns at DD Fury 1 hits  
16 11:10 DD Fury Near miss  
16 11:10 BC Derfflinger-class opens fire at DD Llewellyn  
16 11:11 DD Llewellyn sights an unknown ship  
16 11:20 At approximately 1120, the German force escapes to the east, and HMS FURY and HMS LLEWELLYN begin the trip back to England. Despite the heavy damage they received, they both safely arrive in port later that day.  
  
16 11:19 DD Fury Fire reduced by damage control  
16 11:37 DD Fury Fire extinguished  
Note: **Although the main body of the cruiser SAG was relatively close during this engagement (see attached figure), the low visibility and lack of situational awareness as to the location of the separated screening destroyers probably would have prevented them from reversing course and participating in the engagement. Historically, during the night action phase of the Battle of Jutland, the British destroyers were stationed 10,000 yards astern the main body. Despite the relatively short distance between them and the flagship, Jellicoe was unaware that they were engaged by the Germans throughout in the night, this failure being largely due to a failure to report contact with the enemy forces.**<sup>29</sup>

#### **161046 October 1914**

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<sup>29</sup> Gordon, G. A. H. *The Rules of the Game Jutland and British Naval Command*, 484. Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 2000



## Aftermath

To summarize this turn: the British laid a minefield, while the SMS DERFFLINGER made an ineffectual bombardment of Ramsgate. In a brief night action, two British destroyers are heavily damaged, but successfully torpedo the SMS DERFFLINGER. Additionally, submarine D-8 is overdue and presumed lost.

Had these events happened historically, they would have little operational or tactical importance. However, from the political viewpoint, these actions would potentially have a disproportionate effect on the minds and emotions of the British leadership and public. On two recent occasions in the game, the single surviving German battlecruiser has sailed into British home waters, sank a British cruiser, and bombarded English soil. In the game, a military target was shelled, so the outrage of the public would have likely been somewhat less than the historical 1914 Scarborough raid that hit civilian targets.<sup>30</sup> However, being the first naval bombardment of English soil since 1667, such an attack would likely have been viewed as an affront by the impetuous First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill. Such an operation

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<sup>30</sup> Massie, Robert K., and Robert K. Massie. *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*, 325. New York: Random House, 2003.

would have potentially set into motion political forces that potentially affect military operations. For instance, potentially a series of such operations could have resulted in the political necessity of deploying the Grand Fleet into the Helgoland Bight, setting the stage for a naval clash on terms favorable to the Germans. Over 2500 years ago, Sun Tzu recommended a similar strategy that targeted the mind of the commander, writing, "When he concentrates, prepare against him; where he is strong, avoid him. Anger his general and confuse him."<sup>31</sup> Historically, German raids such as these could have been part of such a strategy to shape the battlefield for a decisive naval clash on favorable terms.

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<sup>31</sup> Sun, Bin. *Sun Tzu The art of war*, translated by Samuel B. Griffith, 67. New York: Oxford University Press, 1963.

## **29 October -11 November1914**

### **Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn.

### **Concept of Operations**

Intelligence reports that the High Seas Fleet is planning an operation, and that it has sufficient operations points for it to include the entire Fleet. (See below). This gives the Royal Navy an opportunity to ambush the Germans. The Grand Fleet now has a 1.6:1 superiority in operational battleships and a 2:1 superiority in light cruisers. This superiority in both battle line and scouting forces should allow it to have a decisive superiority in any fleet action. Although the use of Zeppelins may somewhat mitigate the German scouting inferiority, the advent of bad weather in the North Sea will hopefully reduce their utility for the Germans.

Because the entire German Fleet is potentially sorting, the entire Grand Fleet, less the pre-dreadnoughts, will likewise sortie to conduct a sweep of the North Sea, excluding the area around Helgoland Bight. The superiority of the British Fleet is such it can accept equal losses in capital ships to the Germans for this mission. The Battlecruiser Fleet is reduced to a single operational ship, so the scouting will be done by the light cruisers. Because the single remaining German Battlecruiser is believed to be damaged by a torpedo, it is believed that any German counter-scouting forces are limited to light cruisers. Additionally, two heavy cruiser squadrons will support the light cruisers and act as bait to lure any German battleships into a trap. The single British battlecruiser will be far astern the heavy cruisers to provide support should any be necessary.

A secondary minelaying mission to help block the Horn's Reef exit to the Bight will also be part of the operation. Additionally, if the German High Seas Fleet does not sail, British light forces may raid the Helgoland Bight area.

Losses in submarines will force me to move the scouting line further out. Based on previous German deployments, the submarines will deploy NE of the Frisian coast minefields. A coastal submarine will deploy in the Broad Fourteens to provide early warning of German movements.

Destroyer patrols off of Scapa Flow, the east coast of England, and the entrances to the Channel are planned to prevent mining, submarines, and light forces from operating.

### **Objectives**

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Intercept and Destroy any German Capital ships that deploy outside of the Helgoland Bight, while taking equal or fewer losses in capital ships.
2. Conduct mining off the Horn's Reef while avoiding losses of any cruisers.
3. Raid Helgoland Bight with light forces and sink any light forces encountered.

### **Intelligence**

The German navy is reported to have 959 operational points and is reportedly planning an operation. This number of points allows for the sortie of the entire High Seas Fleet. However, no details are given about the operation, so it is merely speculation based on the operation points available that the planned operation involves the entire German Fleet.

The 16 October torpedo hit on the DERFLINGER is reported to only have caused light damage. Presumably, this is sufficient damage to require a short period in drydock, so she should not be available this turn. Because of this, it is likely to be repaired this turn. I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

1. **Most Probable ECOA** Deployment of the 11 Battleships and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to North Sea without Battlecruiser support. Probable minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
2. **Most Dangerous ECOA** - Deployment of the 11 Battleships and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to North Sea with Battlecruiser support. Probable minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
3. Patrol in North Sea or off Danish coast by a single Battleship squadron, possibly in conjunction with mining off East coast of England.
4. Mining by light forces off British East coast/Channel
5. Patrols by light forces in coastal areas.

### **Available Forces**

A total of 863 operational points are available. Two BB, one BC, two CLs, and seven destroyers complete repairs. However, one battlecruiser and one submarine are withdrawn. The losses in submarines are starting to significantly affect operational capabilities. With only eight submarines available with sufficient range to reach Helgoland Bight, the ability to maintain a patrol line sufficient to detect a High Fleet sortie is marginal. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

	Royal Navy										Imperial German Navy									
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	
Active	22	2	6	9	16	66	8	6	8		11	1	8	3	8	53	4	5	1	
Reinforce	1					1				3						2				
Training	1				1	1														
Repair	5	1	2			10	4	5	1	1		1								
Operational	17	1	4	9	15	56	4	1	7	2	11	0	8	3	8	55	4	5	1	
Advantage	6	1	-4	6	7	1	0	-4	6	N/A										
Ratio	1.5	###	0.5	3	1.9	1	1	0.2	7	N/A										

### Replacements/Detachments

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - BB HMS BENBOW
  - DD HMS MINOS
- Detachments
  - BC HMS INFLEXIBLE
  - Submarine E5

### Maintenance and Repairs

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - B AFRICA
  - DDs STAUNCH, LEOIDAS, LUCIFER and LEGION
  - AV RIVERA
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - 2 BB, 1 BC, 2 CL, 7 DDs

### Training

The 4<sup>th</sup> Battle Squadron needs training, but it cannot be spared this turn. Only HMS MINOS and HMS AURORA and the newly arrived BB HMS Benbow will be trained.

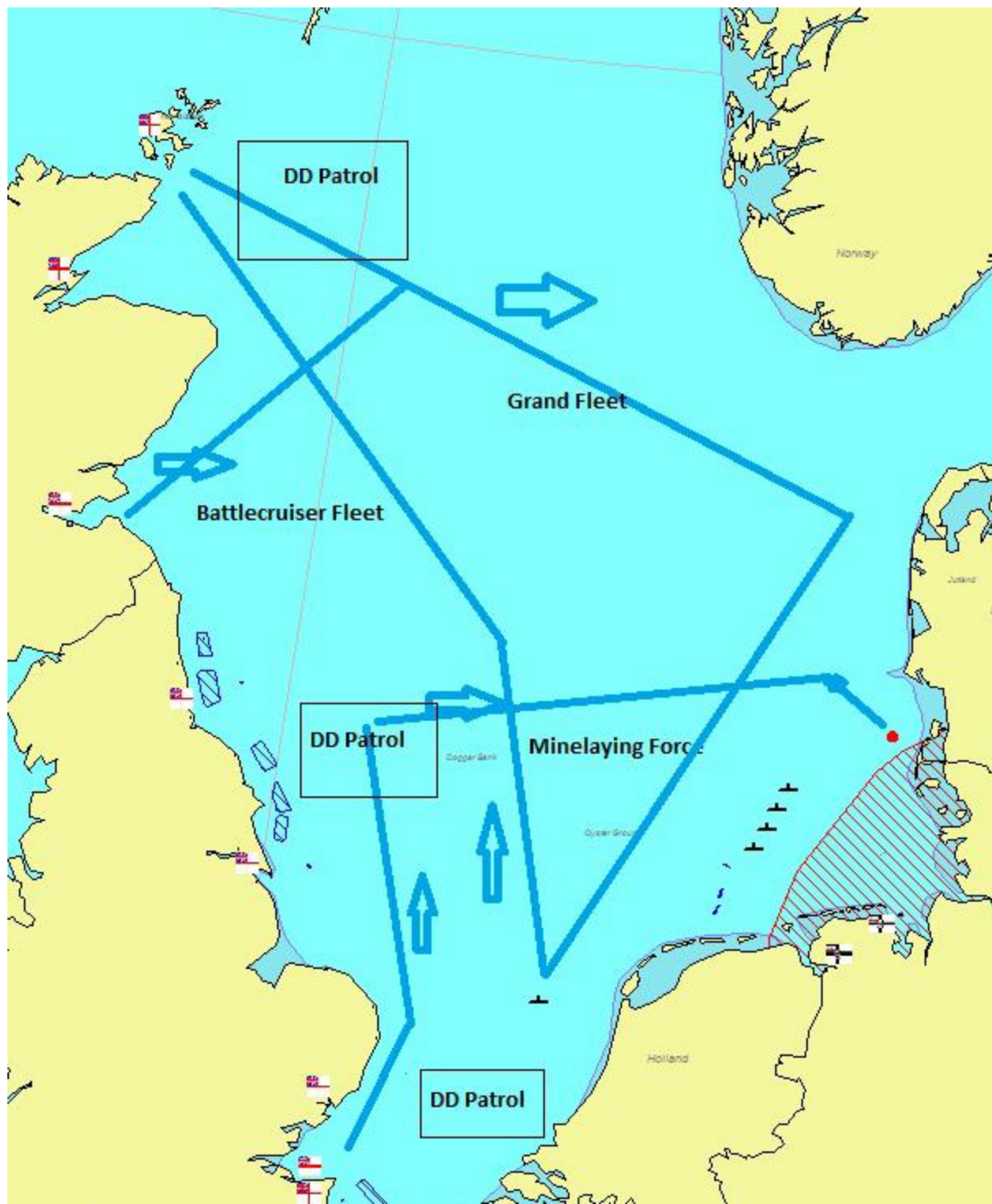
### Administrative

NSTR

## **Operations**

See attached image for OPLAN. The minelaying force from Harwich will proceed independently with the Grand Fleet in distant support , and begin minelaying operations at night, after the High Seas Fleet is located. The Grand Fleet will rendezvous in the northern North Sea, proceed south to the border of the Bight, proceed west to the Broad Fourteens to cut off any German units that operate against the east coast of England or the channel, then proceed back to the central North Sea before returning to base.

## **29 October OPLAN**



### **Battlelog and spotting reports**

- 291300 Intelligence reports 2 CAs near Helgoland heading west.
- 300142 HMS SPITFIRE, as part of a flotilla of British destroyers patrolling off the east coast of Britain sights a ship 50nm ENE of Grimsby. WX Overcast, Lt Breeze

from SW, sighting range 3500 yards. Between 0142 and 0330, a running gunbattle ensues between the HMS SPITFIRE, joined by HMS MIDGE, SWIFT and SHARK and what appears to be a screening force of light German ships as well as possibly one CA. There are no reports of any capital ships. **Note: The engagement above is done under AI control. Aside from some fragmentary reports, there is little information provided concerning this engagement. At the time of the contact, the Grand Fleet is on the opposite side of the North Sea, supporting the minelaying operation off Horn's Reef. As planned, this places it in a position to cut off any German returning from an operation against the east coast of England or Channel. The Grand Fleet turns to a SW course to cut off the German forces. The 260-mile distance between its position and these forces means that contact is expected at approximately 301200, which will give plenty of daylight for the engagement. I'm hoping to have an engagement at least 10,000 yards to avoid German torpedoes. To avoid ships losing contact in the rain and poor visibility, I set the fleet speed to 15 knots, which will still give ample time for the engagement during the day. Although no capital ships are reported, I expect there to be some as part of this force.**

300427 Minelaying commences

300447 Minelaying completed

300714 MS WEIGELIA reports 1 CL, 2 DD 20 nm ENE of Scarborough, heading NW.

300745 MS WEIGELIA reports 1 DD 20 nm ENE of Scarborough, heading ENE. **Note: The German fleet appears to be sailing NNW up the coast. I had expected them to simply shell Grimsby at daylight and head back to base. This delay means that contact between the Germans and the High Seas fleet may be delayed to dusk. Although this delay in the engagement is troubling, it has a bright lining in that the Grand Fleet has also been badly scattered in the night, so this will give it time to rejoin the lost units. See attached image.**

301021 Whitby makes a series of reports indicating at least reports 3 BB, 1 BC, 2 CL, 2 DD heading in a northwesterly direction. WX: Light rain, visibility is 7,000 yards. **Note: This is the first indication that capital ships may be part of the raiding force. Surprisingly, they are still off the east coast. I fully expected the German force to conduct a short bombardment at sunrise, then retire to avoid contact with British Forces. Unfortunately, their**

delay in leaving also will delay the expected interception time.  
Assuming the German fleet heads east now, it will be at least 1530 before there is any contact. Twilight is shortly thereafter, at 1616. This reduced visibility increases the risk of a nighttime torpedo attack as well as the chance that the Grand Fleet will miss the German force entirely.

301147 WX clears; Overcast, WSW Gentle Breeze, 14,000yds visibility

30 11:47 The Heugh battery near Hartlepool engages an unknown ship.  
30 11:55 Unknown ship fires HMS River. **Note: In the next hour, light forces stationed at Hartlepool (under AI control) engage the German screening forces. Note: The German force has sailed well north of where I expected them to be. This makes me suspicious the German operation is intended to lure elements of the British fleet into a trap. The German force is currently located approximately 238 nm from Scapa Flow, but only 95 nm from the Firth of Forth. This indicates the Germans may be intended to draw the British Battlecruisers based in in Edinburgh into a battle.**

30 15:18 **Note: The action between the Hartlepool screening forces continues (under AI control) Near dusk the CL HMS FORWARD, which is part of the Hartlepool force, is hit by a torpedo. At this point, the action has been going on for 3.5 hours, yet no heavy German units have been spotted, despite the forces closing to within torpedo range. I don't want to have a nighttime engagement with torpedo-armed vessels. Neither can I allow the German forces to escape. To avoid these consequences, the Grand Fleet establishes a blocking position approximately 60 miles east of Hartlepool. From this position the British screen is likely to make contact with any German forces withdrawing from Hartlepool towards Helgoland. It also delays any action until closer to sunrise.**

31 0100 **Note: The lack of contact between the Grand Fleet and any German units, combined with periodic reports of bombardment of the Hartlepool coastal defenses prod me into making a cautious approach towards Hartlepool. My intent is to arrive at daybreak to the east of any German forces to prevent their escape.**

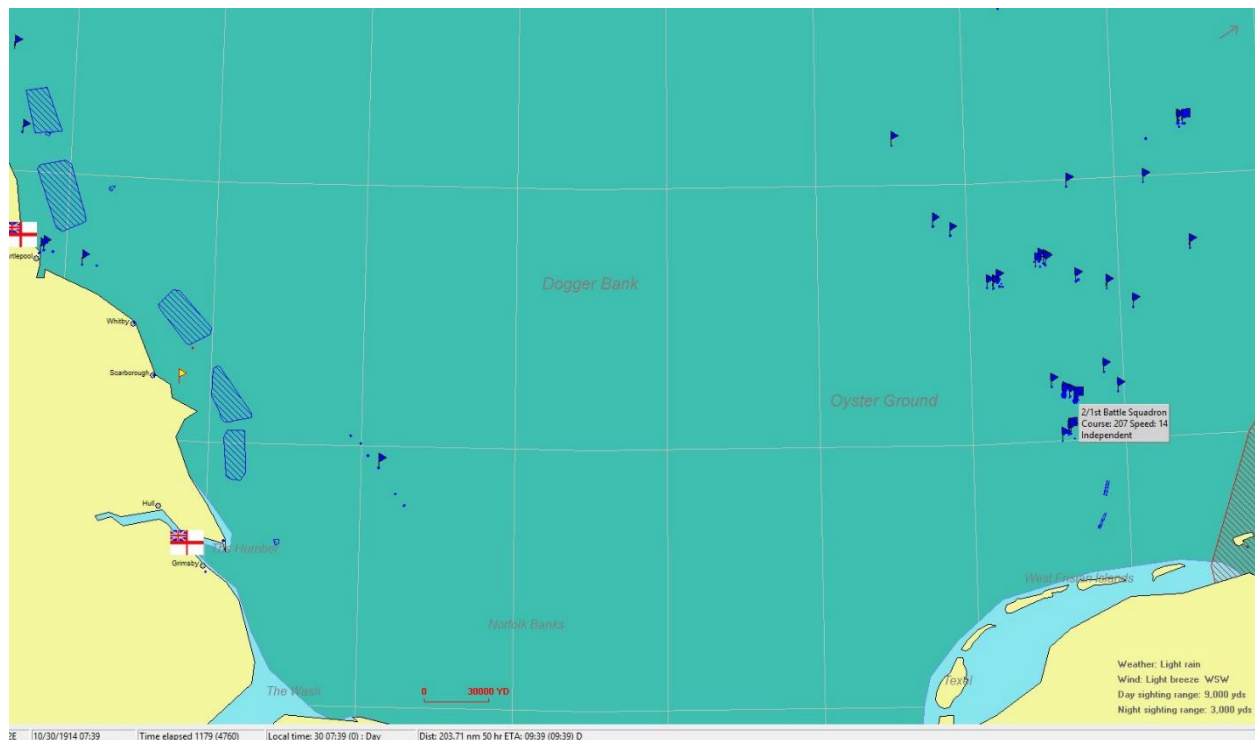
31 03:56 DD Hydra sights an unknown ship approximately 17 nm NE of Hartlepool.  
31 03:57 DD Hydra identifies unknown ship as DD  
31 04:02 DD fires 2 3in guns at DD Hydra Target straddled 1 hits  
31 04:02 DD Hydra fires 1 4in guns at DD Target straddled 1 hits  
31 04:03 BB Monarch sights an unknown ship  
31 04:07 BB Centurion opens fire at CL Magdeburg-class  
31 04:07 BB Monarch opens fire at CL Magdeburg-class

31 04:08 BB Monarch is avoiding torpedoes **Note: It appears the Grand Fleet has made contact with the German fleet's screening forces, unfortunately at a closer range than I would have liked. I'm not convinced that there are any German capital ships present. Since the spotting report by Whitby eighteen hours ago, there have been no reports of capital ships. Additionally, the slow rate of damage received by the coastal defenses appears to be more consistent with a bombardment by light or medium caliber guns.**

31 04:08 BB Centurion identifies CA as Kolberg-class

31 04:08 BB Monarch fires 8 13in guns at CL Kolberg-class **Note: The Grand Fleet battleline quickly engages the German light forces. In a night action over the next 3.5 hours, the German light forces are blocked from escaping to the east by the Grand Fleet and annihilated. A total of five German CLs and fifteen DDs are lost. Only a single German destroyer managed to escape. At times, the engagement was at extremely close range, as demonstrated by the fact that two of the German destroyers are sunk after being rammed by British battleships. No German capital ships were encountered. There are no British losses, although three battleships (HMS MONARCH, ORION and ST. VINCENT) are hit by torpedoes. Several British destroyers are also badly damaged, but they can make the nearby port of Hartlepool. Survivors from the German force report that the German force was from Emden, and not Wilhelmshaven**

**300739 October 1914**



## **Aftermath and Analysis**

In game terms, this victory will go a long way towards establishing British naval supremacy over the German fleet. Slightly over 25% of the total German destroyer force was sunk, as well as 62% of the German light cruisers. These losses would cripple the High Seas Fleet scouting forces, and significantly reduce much of their torpedo capability. Simultaneously, the British have largely blinded the German navy while significantly reducing the torpedo threat against the British battle line.

Historically, it is unlikely the Germans would have engaged in a raid planned and executed as this operation was. Although the Germans did conduct ‘tip and run’ raids the British east coast several times, they did so with Battlecruisers. The purpose of such raids was to help “shape the battlespace” for a future fleet clash by leading the British into dispersing the Grand Fleet down the English coast to counter such raids.<sup>32</sup> By dispersing the Grand Fleet, the Germans hoped to make elements of the British fleet susceptible to piecemeal interception and destruction by the High Seas Fleet. Had the German Fleet used only light forces, as occurred in this scenario, it is unlikely they would have created the impetus for the Royal Navy to disperse its capital ships. Such raids by German light forces could be adequately countered by British light forces and mining, mitigating the need to

<sup>32</sup> Tarrant, V. E. *Jutland: The German Perspective*, 30, 55. London: Cassell, 2001.

disperse battleships. Further, the raid in this scenario differed from the historical “tip and run” raids in that the historical raids did not need to patrol off the coast, such as happened in this scenario. Rather, the historical German concept was that their forces would reveal their presence by shelling the coast, and then retire, while leading the responding British ships over minefields and through submarine patrol lines.<sup>33</sup> The German battlecruisers and their escorts would be able to outrun or outfight any British ships that managed to intercept. As German Admiral Ingenhol later stated “It appeared that the risk [in such a raid] was not as [great as] it seemed. If the battle cruisers suddenly appeared on the spot at daybreak, remained there for an hour or an hour and a half, and then retreated at high speed, it would be a very unfortunate coincidence indeed if, just at this time of the year, when the days were so short, superior enemy forces were met before dark.”<sup>34</sup> In contrast, in the game scenario, the patrolling off the east coast by the German light forces allowed them to be cut off by the British. Further, the lack of battlecruiser support meant that they had no chance to outfight any British force that intercepted them, and were destroyed.

This scenario also raises an historical “what if” situation. Had such an engagement occurred during World War I, it might well have been a mixed blessing for the British. This is because it may have led the German navy to change its codes. Historically, by December 1914, British naval intelligence had several German codebooks: a copy of the HVB code seized in August by the Australians; a copy of North Sea charts and the VB code, dredged from the bottom of the North Seas after it was jettisoned by a sinking German destroyer; and most critically, the SKM code, seized by the Russians from a German light cruiser that had run aground.<sup>35</sup> Despite suspecting that codebooks might have fallen into allied hands, the Germans failed to take decisive measures to ensure the security of their communications.<sup>36</sup> In the scenario, most of the twenty German ships sank in water that was approximately 200 feet (60 meters) deep. By 1914, divers had reached depths of 274 feet (83 meters).<sup>37</sup> This loss of so many vessels in such shallow water, along with the capture of their crews could have convinced the German navy that its codebooks may have been captured and resulted in their changing of the naval codes.

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<sup>33</sup> Friedman, Norman. *Fighting the Great War at Sea: Strategy, Tactics and Technology*, 144-45. 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Massie, Robert K., and Robert K. Massie. *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*, 313. New York: Random House, 2003

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 315-17

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 317-18.

<sup>37</sup> Marx, R. F. (1990). *The history of underwater exploration* (p. 70). New York, NY: Dover Publications.

**12-26 November 1914**

### **Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn. At the Operational level, the Royal Navy is temporarily hamstrung by the necessity to take major elements of the fleet offline for repair and training. For instance, the battlecruiser fleet is effectively non-operational for the next month. Although HMS TIGER arrives as a reinforcement, the untrained status of her crew effectively removes her from front-line service. Further, HMS QUEEN MARY ran aground entering port last turn, necessitating a month in drydock. Similarly, there is a shortage of escorts. Although relatively few destroyers were damaged in the engagement, a late October gale damaged over twenty destroyers. Because of the need to still conduct ASW operations, and the need to repair these destroyers, the number of escorts available to screen the Grand Fleet is minimal. This lack of escorts and the absence of the battlecruisers means that for the next two weeks, the High Seas Fleet will have numerical superiority over the Royal Navy. Because of this, Royal Navy operations will be limited during this period to light operations, training, refit, and repair. I'm hoping that the onset of winter weather in the North Sea will dissuade the Germans from exploiting their temporary superiority by attacking British coastal or channel traffic.

### **Concept of Operations**

I plan on only engaging in minor mine laying operations off Jutland. Only the Fourth Battle Squadron will be on standby to react to German operations, and then only if a very favorable opportunity presents itself. All other units will conduct training or maintenance operations. A light screen of submarines is set near Horn's Reef to provide early warning of a German deployment from that axis. Similarly, a short patrol line of submarines is placed off the Dutch coast to provide warning of German movement towards the Channel. A screen of destroyers is placed at the entrance to the Channel to respond to German light forces that try to raid the channel, while a similar force is placed between Scapa and Cromarty to respond to mining or submarine operations in the area. See attached OPLAN.

### **Objectives**

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Prevent damage/loss of British Capital ships
2. Protect the British east coast and Channel from any raiding German units.
3. Conduct mining off the Horn's Reef while avoiding losses of any cruisers.

### **Intelligence**

There is no indication of a German operation this turn. Only eight German dreadnoughts are reported available, and two German battleships are reported to be in repair. This is close to the 11 BBs I estimate make up the High Seas Fleet. Because of training and maintenance being conducted by the British fleet, if the High Seas Fleet deploys, it will have a numerical superiority, by at least 2 and possibly 3 battleships. The German navy also reportedly receives four new destroyers. Because of the significant number of British destroyers in maintenance, this gives the Germans an advantage in light forces. I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

1. **Most Probable ECOA** Deployment of light forces to conduct small scale patrols into North Sea. Probable minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
2. Mining by light forces off British East coast/Channel
3. Patrol in North Sea or off Danish coast by a single Battleship squadron, possibly in conjunction with mining off East coast of England.
4. **Most Dangerous ECOA** - Deployment of the Battleships and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to North Sea or English Channel with Battlecruiser support. Probable minelaying operations off the English coast in support of the deployment.

### Available Forces

716 Operational points are available. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

	Royal Navy										Imperial German Navy									
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	
Active	23	2	6	9	16	66	8	6	8	3	11	1	8	3	8	40	4	5	1	
Reinforce		1				1	1			1						4				
Training	10	1	4		1	1				1										
Repair	7	2	2	3	6	29	4	4	2		2									
Operational	6	0	0	6	9	37	5	2	6	3	9	1	8	3	8	44	4	5	1	
	-																			
Advantage	-3	-1	8	3	1	-7	1	-3	5	N/A										
Ratio	0.7	0	0	2	1.1	0.8	1.3	0.4	6	N/A										

### Replacements/Detachments

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - BC HMS TIGER
  - AV HMS VINDEK
  - DD HMS GOSHAWK
- Detachments
  - None

### **Maintenance and Repairs**

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - Numerous units (7 BB, 2 BC, 2 B, 3 CA, 6 CL, 29 DD) are under maintenance.
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - 1 AV, 5 DDs

### **Training**

1, 2 and 3 Battle Squadrons are ordered to training. 4<sup>th</sup> Battle Squadron will be used as a reserve to respond in the event of a German operation.

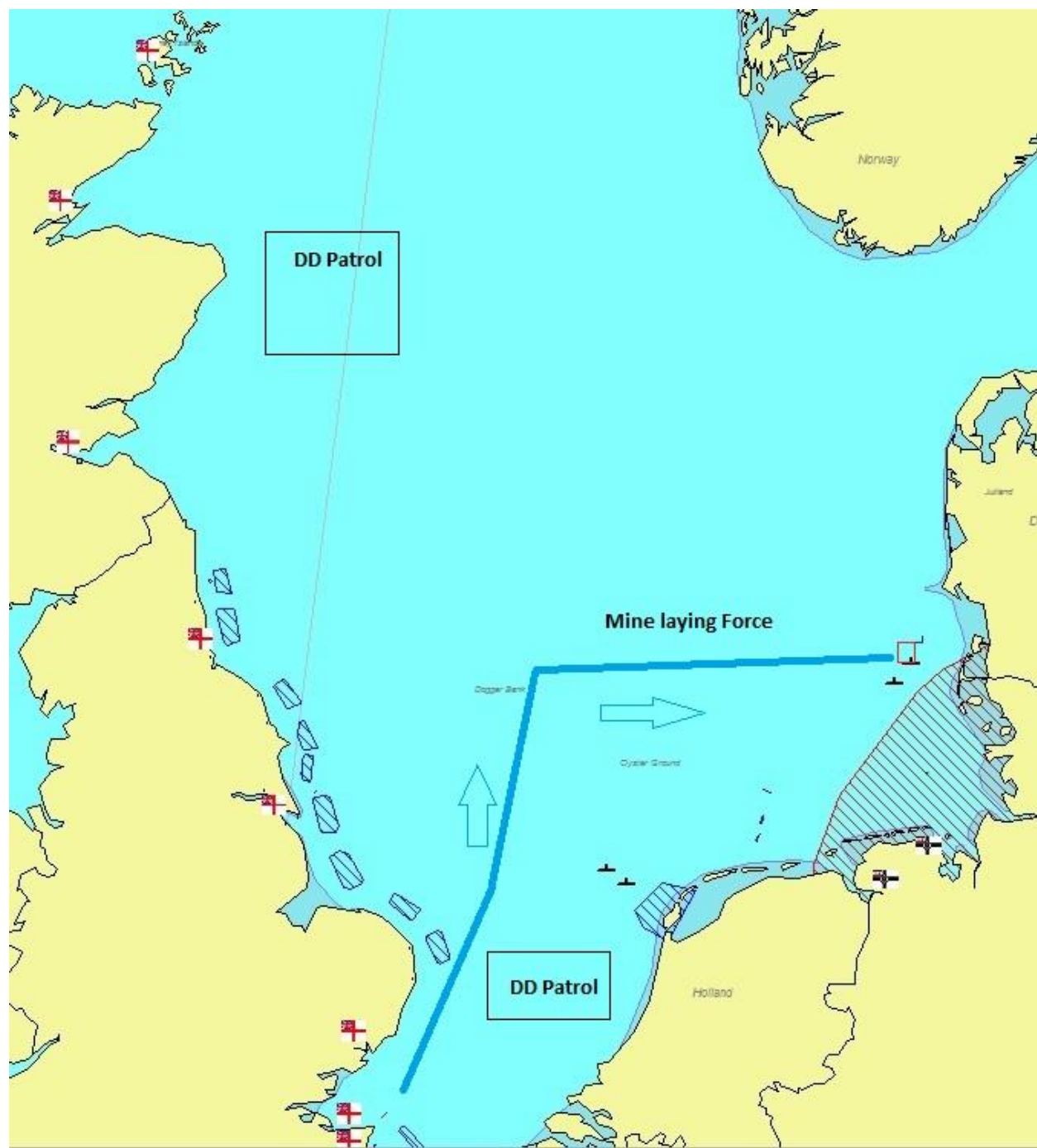
### **Administrative**

NSTR

### **Operations**

See attached image for OPLAN.

### **12 November 1914 OPLAN**



### **Battlelog and spotting reports**

120500 Nov WX: Partly Cloudy, Fresh Breeze WNW

120643 Submarine E3 1 CA, 1 CL, 3 DD invic 5457N00750E (28nm off Sylt Island) heading WSW

121400 Intel reports 1 CA invic 5346N00407E (approx. 40 nm NNW of Texel Island.)

130415 Minelaying completed

140726 Submarine E4 reports 3 CA, 3 DD in posit 5455N00734E (25 nm off Sylt Island) heading S.

### **Aftermath and Analysis**

As expected, (and hoped for) there was no contact between the British and German fleets this turn, giving the Royal Navy the opportunity to repair and refit. The reports of a heavy cruiser and escorts operating off Sylt Island create the possibility of conducting an operation in the area to snare them.

Despite stationing the submarine patrol line further out, submarine E-4 is lost due to mining, indicating the German minefields lay further north from Helgoland. Future submarine patrol lines will have to lay north of the Dutch border. On the positive side of the ledger, U-16 is mined off Sheerness. There is only minor operational damage this turn, with a destroyer and a pre-dreadnought being damaged due to running aground.

The report of a U-16's sinking off Sheerness, combined with the intel report of a heavy cruiser off Texel raise the possibility that the German fleet is probing towards the Channel, possibly with an eye towards raiding the shipping there.

**27 November-10 December 1914**

### **Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn. At the operational level, the Royal Navy remains temporarily hamstrung by the necessity to take major elements of the fleet offline for repair and training. Five battleships, two battlecruisers and twenty-two destroyers remain under repair, significantly affecting the British operational capabilities. In particular, the loss of the Battlecruisers and destroyers has a pronounced impact on operations. Like last turn, Royal Navy operations will be largely limited during this period to light operations, training, refit and repair.

### **Concept of Operations**

This turn, the British will attempt to shape the Battlespace for future engagements. The plan for this turn will be almost identical to the plan last turn in terms of major fleet deployments. The chief difference is that this turn I will incorporate a sweep by two squadrons of heavy cruisers and their escorts partway through the Skagerrak and then down the Jutland coast in conjunction with the mining off Jutland. The goal of this sweep is primarily to support the mine force, and possibly catch the heavy cruiser that was reported operating off Sylt Island last turn. More importantly, I am hoping that if I can establish a pattern of such cruiser sweeps, the German forces would eventually deploy heavy units in an effort to ambush the cruisers. In response, the Grand Fleet could ambush the ambushers, and hopefully win a decisive naval battle. Because the German fleet has the operational-level initiative and can determine the when and where to fight the Royal Navy, this strategy of “dangling” tempting targets such as this heavy cruiser force may encourage the High Seas Fleet to take the bait and allow a decisive engagement.

There is a degree of risk to this operation. This turn, the heavy cruisers will be operating without battlecruiser support, so they are vulnerable to interception by the remaining German battlecruiser. While there is a danger, it can be mitigated to some degree by including a strong scouting force of light cruisers with the heavy cruisers.

The Fourth Battle Squadron will be on standby to react to a High Seas Fleet deployment into the North Sea. As was the case last turn, the squadron would only engaged if a very favorable opportunity presents itself. All other units will conduct training or maintenance operations.

A light screen of submarines is set near Horn's Reef to provide early warning of a German deployment. Similarly, a short patrol line of submarines is placed off the Dutch coast to provide warning of German movement towards the Channel. A screen of destroyers is placed at the entrance to the Channel to respond to German light forces that

try to raid the channel, while a similar force is placed between Scapa and Cromarty to respond to mining or submarine operations in the area. See attached OPLAN.

### **Objectives**

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Prevent damage/loss of British Capital ships
2. Sweep along the Skagerrak /Jutland coast, destroy any German medium or light forces or merchants encountered and conduct mining operations off Jutland while avoiding superior forces.
3. Protect the British east coast and Channel from any raiding German units.

### **Intelligence**

There is no indication of a German operation this turn. Two separate intelligence reports indicate the German fleet has either six or nine submarines available for operations. The OOB tally I have indicates a maximum of 3 SS and 5 SSCs. Likely, the OOB tally sheet is undercounting the submarines, a situation that is probably the result of not having inadequate information on German reinforcements. To support operations in the real world, there is typically a 3:1 ratio of units to deployable assets. Based on this ratio, the Germans have a minimum of 18 submarines. As far as is known, there have been no losses among the five initial coastal submarines in the OOB so this indicates that the German OOB has at least 13 patrol submarines in inventory. I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

1. **Most Probable ECOA- Deployment** of German light forces to conduct small-scale patrols into North Sea. Probable minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
2. Deployment of the remaining German Battlecruiser to sweep off Jutland
3. Mining by German light forces off British East coast/Channel
4. German patrol in North Sea or off Danish coast by a single Battleship squadron, possibly in conjunction with mining off East coast of England.
5. **Most Dangerous ECOA** - Deployment of the High Seas Fleet and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to North Sea or English Channel with Battlecruiser support. Probable minelaying operations off the English coast in support of the deployment.

## Available Forces

902 Operational points are available. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

	Royal Navy										Imperial German Navy									
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	
Active	23	3	6	9	16	66	8	6	8	4	11	1	8	3	8	44	13	5	1	
Reinforce				1		1										1				
Training	1	1			1	2														
Repair	5	2	3	4	6	22	6	5	1											
Operational	17	0	3	6	9	43	2	1	7	4	11	1	8	3	8	45	13	5	1	
Advantage Ratio	-																			
	6	-1	-5	3	1	-2	11	-4	6	N/A										
	1.5	0	0.38	2	1.1	1	0.2	0.2	7	N/A										

## Replacements/Detachments

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - CA HMS HAMPSHIRE
  - DD HMS MANLY
- Detachments
  - None

## Maintenance and Repairs

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - Numerous units (5 BB, 2 BC, 3 B, 4 CA, 6 CL, 22 DD) are under maintenance.
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - 8 DDs
  - BB HMS MARLBOROUGH

## Training

- BB HMS BENBOW
- BC HMS TIGER
- 1 CL
- 2 DD

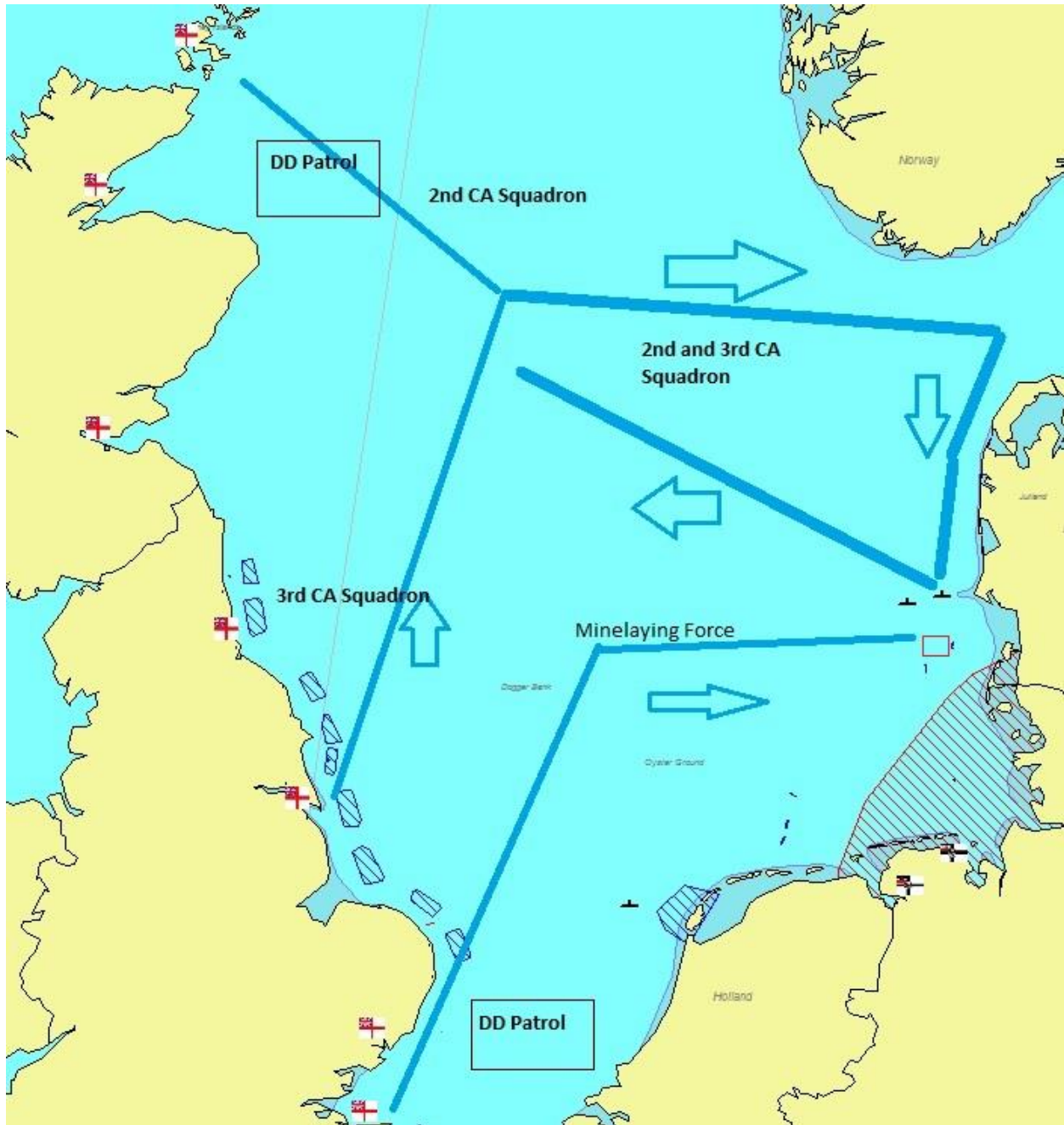
## Administrative

NSTR

## Operations

See attached image for OPLAN.

### 27 November 1914 OPLAN



## **Battlelog and spotting reports**

260500 Nov WX: Cloudy, Light Breeze NW

270806 Nov HMS APOLLO and INTREPID commence laying mines

270826 Nov HMS APOLLO and INTREPID finish laying mines

271313 Nov DD Viking strikes a mine 5nm NE of Ramsgate and is sunk

271955 Nov DD Laforey sights an unknown ship invic 5400N00348E (Oyster Ground)

271957 Nov Unidentified ship fires 8 12in guns at DD Laforey 1 hits

271958 Nov Unidentified ship fires 8 8in guns at DD Laforey Target straddled

271959 Nov DD Laforey identifies unknown ship as BC

272008 Nov DD Laforey identifies unknown ship as CL **NOTE: HMS LAFOREY is one of the escort vessels for the minelaying force returning from laying mines off Jutland. Made up of two obsolete CLs and a small force of destroyers, this force is completely unable of engaging any German battlecruiser. Covered by the night, I have it withdraw. Despite the heavy damage, HMS LAFOREY manages to escape and makes port.**

281055 Nov CL Bellona has spotted a submarine

30Nov AMC HMS Andres strikes a mine and is sunk invic 5840N00200W (SE Scapa Flow)

## **Aftermath and Analysis**

The brief engagement off Oyster Grounds between HMS Laforey and the German Battlecruiser, combined with the intelligence from last turn of a heavy cruiser operating off Texel indicate that the German fleet is probing towards the Channel, possibly with an eye towards raiding the shipping there. This gives an opportunity to lay a trap and cut off the German squadron in the area.

The loss of the third AMC off Scapa Flow shows that the German Fleet is conducting mining of Grand Fleet bases with a likely eye towards damaging British Battleships. Thus far, I have been lucky that none has been hit. Similarly, the loss of the HMS VIKING off Ramsgate indicates that the Germans have a capability of laying mines by submarine. The loss map shows that all the AMCs have been lost in the same area SE of Scapa. I will avoid this area with capital ships but increase the patrolling by DDs to catch the ship or submarine that is laying the mines.

There were no British submarine losses this turn, validating the tactic of stationing the submarine patrol line further north from Helgoland. However, there were also no reports of German activity from the patrol line, indicating that while safe, such a patrol line may provide little intelligence of German movements.

## Strategic Overview

## Intelligence

1. **Most Probable ECOA/ Most Dangerous ECOA** - Deployment of multiple Battle squadrons of the High Seas Fleet and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to North Sea or English Channel with Battlecruiser support. Probable minelaying and/or submarine operations off the English coast in support of the deployment.
2. Deployment of the remaining German Battlecruiser and/or one Battle Squadron to sweep in the North Sea
3. Deployment of German light forces to conduct small-scale patrols into North Sea. Probable minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
4. Mining by German light forces off British East coast/Channel

998 Operational points are available. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

	Royal Navy										Imperial German Navy									
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	
Active	23	3	6	10	16	67	8	6	8	4	11	1	8	3	8	44	13	5	1	
Reinforce	1					1										1				
Training						1														
Repair	3	1	3	1		15	4									1	8			
Operational	21	2	3	9	16	52	4	6	8	4	11	1	8	3	8	44	5	5	1	
Advantage	10	1	-5	6	8	8	-1	1	7	N/A										
Ratio	1.9	2	0.38	3	2	1.2	0.8	1.2	8	N/A										

## **Objectives**

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Prevent damage/loss of British capital ships unless disproportionate loss can be inflicted on German capital ships.
2. Engage and destroy any German capital ships that deploy outside the Helgoland area.
3. Protect the British east coast and Channel from any raiding German units.
4. Conduct minelaying operations off Holland

## **Concept of Operations**

Intelligence reports that the Germans are planning an operation. However, there are no details provided about the operation. Nevertheless, the fact that the German High Seas Fleet may sail gives an opportunity to surprise and cut them off. Because of the reduced visibility from the short daylight hours and winter weather, any interception will be difficult and will likely occur at shorter ranges.

Because of the German sortie through Oyster Grounds last turn, I am assuming that the German Fleet will again revisit the area, whether for a patrol or enroute to a bombardment or mining operation off the English coast. This hypothesis is admittedly based on very weak evidence, but it is my best guess based on the limited information I have.

To meet this possible deployment of the High Seas Fleet, I will deploy the entire Grand Fleet, less the pre-dreadnoughts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle Squadron. This force will give the Royal Navy up to a decisive 1.9:1 advantage in battleships in a fleet encounter. The Grand Fleet will deploy to an area ENE of Dogger Banks, approximately 200nm east of Grimsby. This position will allow the fleet to cut off any German forces that move west along the Dutch coast to attack the English Channel or east coast. Likewise, this force may be able to cut off any German sweep that sails north along the Jutland peninsula. A minelaying operation off the Frisian Islands will reinforce the existing fields there and damage any returning German units.

Because of the short days, scouting will be critical in rapidly locating and bringing the German Fleet to battle. Because of this, the two operational Battlecruisers will support the Grand Fleet to provide both scouting services and to counter the remaining German battlecruiser should it make an appearance. Similarly, all available light cruisers will sail with the Grand Fleet for scouting purposes. All the available coastal and patrol subs will also deploy, in three patrol lines to provide warning of any German movement off Jutland,

the Frisian Islands, and NW of Helgoland. Finally, two of the seaplane carriers (AV) will provide reconnaissance. Although I expect the December weather to limit the utility of the seaplanes, they still may be useful. Because of the possibility of a night engagement, two squadrons of heavy cruisers will accompany the Grand Fleet to help fend off German destroyer attacks.

Such a large deployment will require the use of most of the available destroyers to screen, leaving relatively few for ASW and patrol duties. A small flotilla of Destroyers is tasked to patrol SW of Scapa, near the earlier losses of the auxiliary cruisers. (See attached plot of sinking positions). Hopefully, they will catch the minelayer responsible for these losses.

### **Sinkings Near Scapa Flow**



### **Replacements/Detachments**

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - BB HMS EMPEROR OF INDIA
  - DD HMS MATCHLESS
- Detachments
  - None

### **Maintenance and Repairs**

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance

- 14 DD
- 3 BB
- 1 BC
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - BB HMS KING GEORGE V
  - BC QUEEN MARY
  - CA ANTRIM
  - 6 DDs

## **Training**

- BB HMS EMPEROR OF INDIA
- DD HMS MATCHLESS

## **Administrative**

HMS IRON DUKE and HMS MARLBOROUGH re-assigned to 2/4 BS, to make it an all-IRON DUKE-class squadron. By matching up ships with identical capabilities into the same squadron, I will maximize the combat effectiveness of the squadrons.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle squadron and escorts rebase from Cromarty to Scapa Flow. (See attached image for a war-time view of Cromarty).<sup>38</sup>(1) The shortage of escorts and the German mining activity off the northern British ports leads me to conclude that it is better to put all my battleship eggs in a single basket, which I can better protect with my limited destroyer assets. In my opinion, the remoteness of Scapa from German bases makes it a safer base. Although this remoteness also makes it difficult for forces based in Scapa to intercept German raiding forces, it also makes it difficult for them to be surprised by superior forces and cut off.

Historically, Scapa Flow was viewed as being better suited for a Grand Fleet base due to its position near the Scotland-Norway gap. Additionally, it was believed that the distance between it and German bases made it impossible for the German Fleet to launch a surprise torpedo attack using destroyers. This was a major concern of Admiral Jellicoe in 1914 (initially, submarines were thought to have too short of a range to reach Scapa from Germany).<sup>39, 40</sup> (2, 3) Historically, the August 1914 sinking of U-15 between Scapa and the

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<sup>38</sup> HMS Natal | Cromarty Firth before world war 1. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.hmsnatal.co.uk/index.asp?pageid=362646>

<sup>39</sup> Massie, Robert K., and Robert K. Massie. *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*, 152-53. New York: Random House, 2003.

<sup>40</sup> Jellicoe, J. R. (1919). *The Grand Fleet: 1914-1916. Its Creation, Development and Work. With 9 Plates and 13 Plans and Diagrams* [Google Play] (p. 29).

Shetland Islands demonstrated that German submarines could operate in these waters. Similarly, the game sinking of U-29 ESE of Scapa shows the computer is operating subs near the Cromarty and Scapa bases.

### **Operations**

The Grand Fleet will transit from Scapa to the modified location (MODLOC), where it will rendezvous with the seaplane carriers (AV) and mine forces and patrol until the German movements are determined. Once the German Fleet is located, the Grand Fleet will position itself to cut off the German fleet and engage. In the event of no contact, the Grand Fleet and supporting units will proceed to the Dutch coast, lay a minefield, and proceed back to base. See attached image for OPLAN.

**11 December 1914 OPLAN**

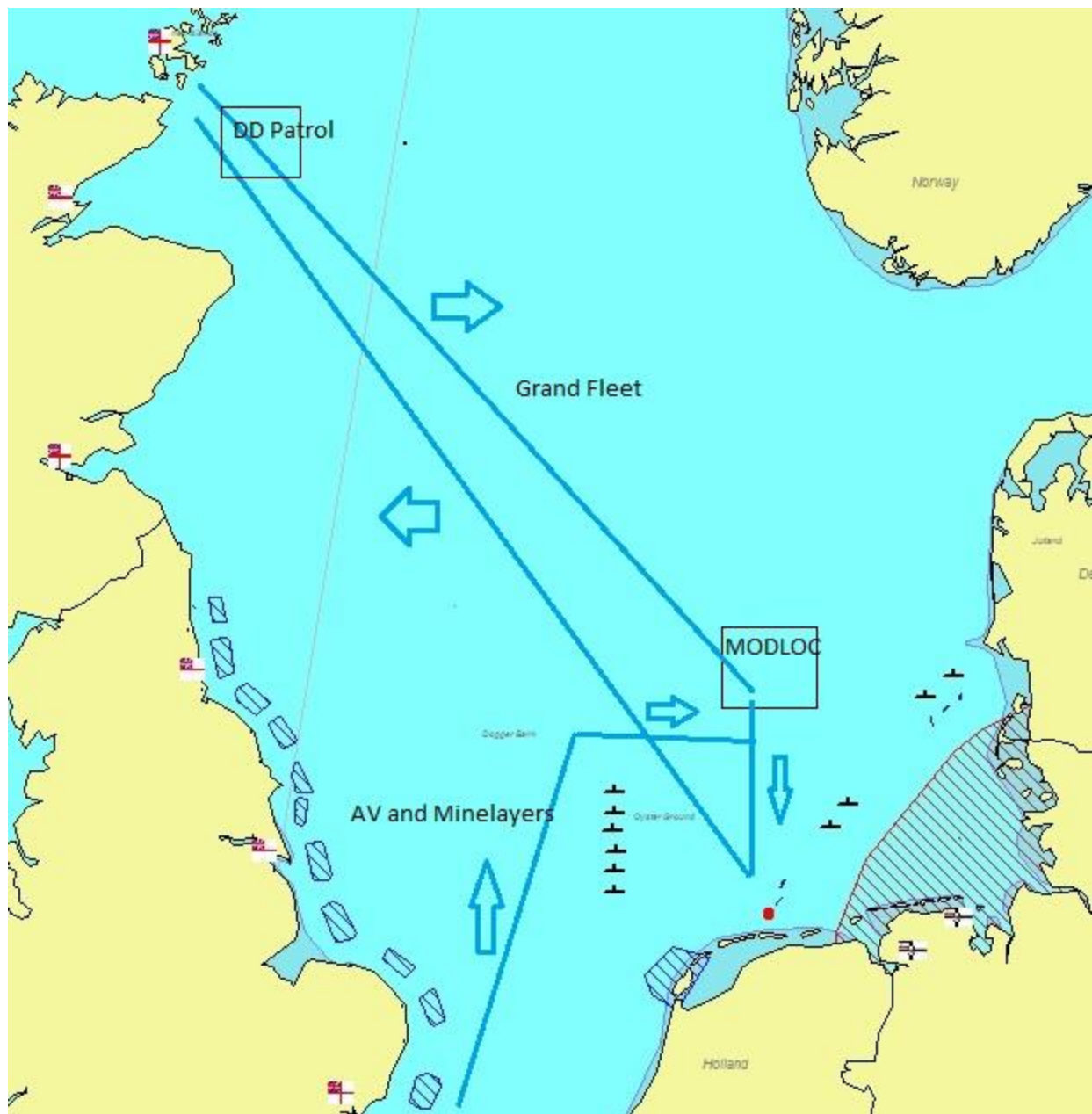
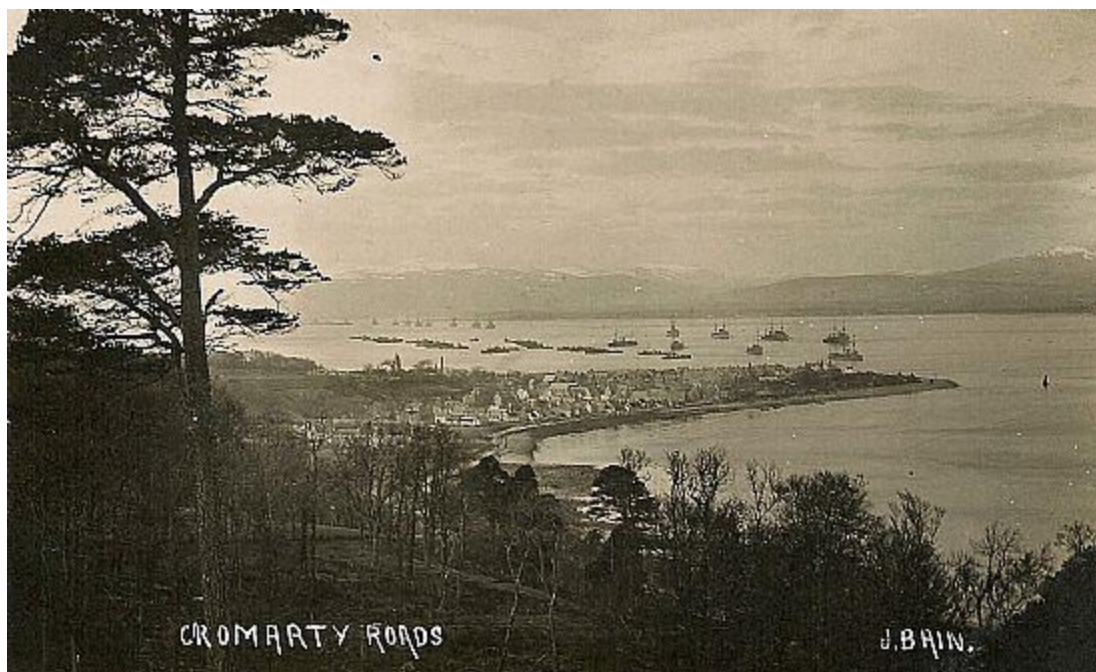


Image: Cromarty Roads



## END NOTES

- 1) HMS Natal | Cromarty Firth before world war 1. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.hmsnatal.co.uk/index.asp?pageid=362646>
- 2) Massie, Robert K., and Robert K. Massie. *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*, 152-53. New York: Random House, 2003.
- 3) Jellicoe, J. R. (1919). *The Grand Fleet: 1914-1916. Its Creation, Development and Work. With 9 Plates and 13 Plans and Diagrams* [Google Play] (p. 29).

## Battlelog and spotting reports

100600 Nov WX: Overcast, Light Breeze SE

10 11:57 CL Birmingham sights an unknown ship at 5533N00411E  
10 12:02 CL Southampton identifies unknown ship as CL (See attached image). **NOTE:**  
**Given the distance from Helgoland, this contact is likely to be a scout for the main German body. Unfortunately, the Grand Fleet is approximately 20 miles to the north, while the Battlecruiser squadron is west of the likely German main body. This gives the German squadron(s) an escape route to the SE back**

**to Helgoland. I will try to lure (or alternatively force) the German units to the north.**

10 12:10 CL Southampton identifies CL as Graudenz-class CL

10 12:14 BC Tiger opens fire at CL Graudenz-class

10 12:16 CL Southampton sights an unknown ship

10 12:17 CL Southampton identifies unknown ship as BC

10 12:17 CL Southampton identifies unknown ship as CA. **NOTE: It looks like the two Battlecruiser squadrons have met again. It is unknown whether this German squadron is operating independently, or as the scouting force for the High Seas Fleet.**

10 12:17 BC opens fire at CL Southampton

10 12:19 BC Queen Mary opens fire at BC. **NOTE: The German squadron refuses to be lured to the north and has turned away. My strategy is to now do a high-speed run to the SE and attempt to drive the Germans north. I will try to damage the Germans with long-range gunnery to slow them down.**

101227 **Note: Two destroyers have detached from the German squadron and may be attempting a torpedo attack. They are currently at approximately 12000 yards range, so it will be a while before they get into position. Unfortunately, my destroyers have fallen behind and are not able to help fend off the attack.**

10 12:27 BC Queen Mary identifies CA as Blücher-class

10 12:27 BC Tiger opens fire at CA Blücher-class

10 12:36 BC Queen Mary identifies DD as V180-class.

10 12:36 CL Southampton identifies DD as G7-class

10 12:36 CA Blücher-class opens fire at BC Queen Mary

10 12:37 CL Southampton opens fire at DD V180-class

10 12:41 BC Queen Mary Turret hit T \*

10 12:45 BC Queen Mary is avoiding torpedoes.

10 12:45 BC Queen Mary is hit by a torpedo **Note: The British battlecruisers have outrun their escorts, depriving them of an adequate screen. I had hoped that the frequent course changes, combined with fire from the secondary guns would have prevented an effective torpedo attack. Unfortunately, I was wrong.**

10 12:49 BC Queen Mary has been detached because of heavy flooding. **Note: the detachment of the QUEEN MARY cuts my firepower by more than half, as HMS TIGER has a relatively untrained crew. Nevertheless, it will continue to attempt to drive the German squadron north. Because of TIGER's poor shooting and the danger of plunging shell fire igniting a magazine, it will try to close and quickly damage the DERFFLINGER enough to slow it down.**

10 12:54 UNSIGHTED fires 4 12in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 0 hits

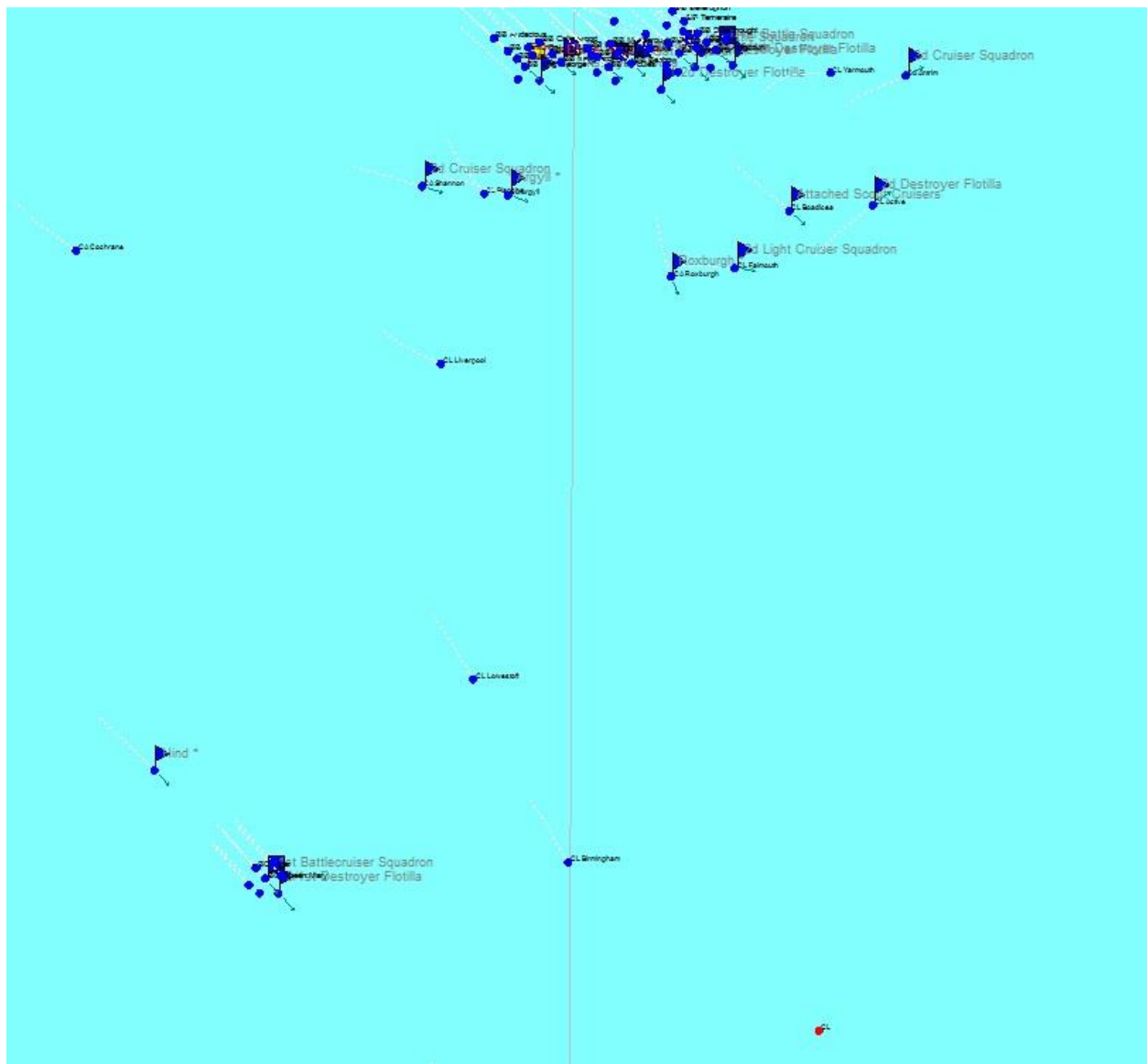
10 12:59 BC fires 6 8in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 1 hits

10 12:59 BC Tiger Engine room hit B

10 13:04 BC Tiger fires 2 6in guns at DD G7-class 1 hits  
10 13:04 DD G7-class Hit  
10 13:13 BC opens fire at CA Shannon. **Note: the lead scouts of the Grand Fleet are within gunnery range.**  
10 13:38 BC Tiger is avoiding torpedoes  
10 13:45 BC Tiger fires 6 6in guns at DD V180-class 1 hits  
10 13:46 BC fires 4 12in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 1 hits  
10 13:46 BC Tiger Turret hit T  
10 13:57 BC Tiger Bearings overheating on high revolutions  
10 14:05 CA Blücher-class fires 6 8in guns at BC Tiger 1 hits  
10 14:05 BC Tiger Hull hit BE  
10 14:07 CL Blanche fires 2 4in guns at DD V180-class 1 hits  
10 14:07 DD V180-class Hit  
10 14:09 CA Blücher-class fires 6 8in guns at BC Tiger 1 hits  
10 14:09 BC Tiger Fore/aft hull hit \*  
10 14:12 BC Tiger fires 4 13in guns at BC Derfflinger-class 1 hits  
10 14:12 BC Derfflinger-class Hit  
10 14:17 CA Blücher-class fires 6 8in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 1 hits  
10 14:17 BC Tiger Fore/aft hull hit \*  
10 14:18 CL Blanche fires 5 4in guns at DD V180-class Target straddled 1 hits  
10 14:18 DD V180-class Hit  
10 14:19 CA Blücher-class fires 8 8in guns at BC Tiger 1 hits  
10 14:19 BC Tiger Superstructure hit BE  
10 14:22 BC Derfflinger-class fires 8 12in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 1 hits  
10 14:22 BC Tiger Superstructure passthrough hit \*  
10 14:23 CL Blanche fires 5 4in guns at DD V180-class Target straddled 1 hits  
10 14:23 DD V180-class Hit  
10 14:28 CA Blücher-class fires 4 8in guns at BC Tiger 1 hits  
10 14:28 BC Tiger Hull hit BE \*  
10 14:40 BC Derfflinger-class fires 4 12in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 1 hits  
10 14:40 BC Tiger Superstructure hit DE \* Fire started  
10 14:40 The German destroyer DD V191 sinks.  
10 14:41 DD Rifleman is picking up survivors from DD V191  
10 14:43 CA Blücher-class fires 2 8in guns at BC Tiger 1 hits  
10 14:43 BC Tiger Hull hit DE \*  
10 14:43 BC Tiger Fire spreads  
10 14:44 BC Tiger Hull hit B \*  
10 14:44 BC Derfflinger-class fires 2 6in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 1 hits  
10 14:44 BC Tiger Turret hit T. **Note: My tactic of closing the range to quickly damage and slow the DERFFLINGER is not working out so well. The TIGER is getting beat up pretty good, without causing any noticeable damage in return.**  
10 14:47 CA Blücher-class fires 4 8in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 1 hits  
10 14:47 BC Tiger Hull hit B.  
10 14:49 BC Tiger Fire spreads

10 14:57 BC Tiger fires 2 13in guns at BC Derfflinger-class Target straddled 1 hits  
 10 14:57 BC Derfflinger-class Hit  
 10 14:58 BC Tiger Fire spreads  
 10 15:01 BC Derfflinger-class fires 4 12in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 1 hits  
 10 15:01 BC Tiger Secondary battery hit \*  
 10 15:08 BC fires 4 8in guns at BC Tiger Target straddled 1 hits  
 10 15:08 BC Tiger Engine room hit D. **NOTE: At this point, the TIGER disengages. The engine room hit slows it to 22 knots, which is too slow to catch the German squadron. Moreover, three of its four turrets are out of action, giving the German squadron a decisive fire superiority. Finally, the TIGER has a raging fire, and needs to slow down and disengage to put it out. At this point, the risks of losing one of my few Battlecruisers outweighs the remote chance of being able to destroy the DERFFLINGER.**  
 10 15:17 BC Tiger fires 2 13in guns at BC 1 hits  
 10 15:17 BC Hit  
 10 15:35 BB Bellerophon Bearings overheating on high revolutions. **NOTE: although the lead scouting elements of the Grand Fleet are engaged, the Battleline is still over the horizon from the DERFFLINGER and is unable to close the distance.**  
 10 15:36 BC fires 4 12in guns at BC Tiger 1 hits  
 10 15:36 BC Tiger Turret hit T  
 10 15:38 BC Tiger Fore/aft hull hit \*  
 10 15:41 BC Tiger Fire spreads  
 10 15:42 BC Tiger Fire spreads  
 10 15:59 BC Tiger Fire spreads  
 10 16:48 BC Tiger Fire spreads  
 10 16:49 BC Tiger Fire reduced by damage control  
 10 16:55 BC Tiger Fire reduced by damage control  
 10 16:57 BC Tiger Fire spreads  
 10 17:07 BC Tiger Fire spreads  
 10 17:10 BC Tiger Fire reduced by damage control  
 10 17:43 BC Tiger Fire extinguished  
 10 21:05 CL Latona and Thetis are laying mines  
 10 21:23 Minelaying completed  
 10 21:33 DD Acasta has attacked a submarine off the Dutch coast invic 5350N00522E  
 11 07:40 BB Neptune has spotted a submarine invic 5540N00640E  
 11 08:32 CA Shannon is avoiding torpedoes invic 5540N00640E

#### **101304 December 1914**



## Aftermath and Analysis

Both HMS TIGER and QUEEN MARY return safely to port. Returning to Scapa, both HMS CONQUEROR and HMS MARTIN hit mines. The CONQUEROR requires five weeks of repair, while the MARTIN is lost.

The result of the engagement with the DERFFLINGER was a disappointment. Unfortunately, the initial contact with the German units gave them a ready line of retreat to the SE, and they did not take the bait of my attempt to lure them further to the NW. The torpedoing of the QUEEN MARY early in the engagement left only the TIGER available to attempt to drive the German squadron north towards the Grand Fleet. However, TIGER's

poorly trained crew was unable to sufficiently damage the DERFFLINGER to slow it down, and insufficiently fast to cut off the German squadron's retreat. As historically occurred in the Dogger Banks battle, the inclusion of the 25-knot SMS BLUCHER in the German squadron could have been fatal, as it gave the British battlecruisers a 2-knot speed advantage over the German squadron.<sup>41</sup> (1) This could have allowed the British battlecruisers to catch up and destroy the German squadron. However, unlike Dogger Bank, the early torpedoing and subsequent detachment of QUEEN MARY left the British squadron with insufficient firepower to successfully engage the Germans. Additionally, unlike the historical Dogger Banks battle, in this engagement, the German squadron was close to the safety provided by the Helgoland minefields.

In terms of lessons learned, the ability of two German destroyers to approach, torpedo and withdraw from two Battlecruisers shows the vulnerability of these ships. The supporting destroyers and cruisers should have been able to screen the battlecruisers, but they had difficulty in keeping up, and so were ineffective. In retrospect, given the lack of support from the escorting units, I should have attempted to take the destroyers under fire from the QUEEN MARY, while having the TIGER engage the DERFFLINGER.

The two mining off Scapa Flow show that the destroyer patrol last turn was ineffective. Because of this, in addition to increased patrols, there may need to be some defensive fields laid off Scapa to attrition the German minelayers. The submarine sightings off the Dutch coast and Helgoland indicate that the Germans have set up defensive submarine patrols near the approaches to Emden and Helgoland.

There were no British submarine losses this turn, validating the tactic of stationing the submarine patrol line further north from Helgoland. However, there were also no reports of German activity from the patrol line, indicating that while safe, such a patrol line may provide little intelligence of German movements.

## **END NOTES**

Battle of Dogger Bank | World War One - The War At Sea. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://navymuseum.co.nz/worldwar1/battles-operations/battle-of-dogger-bank/>

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<sup>41</sup> <http://navymuseum.co.nz/worldwar1/battles-operations/battle-of-dogger-bank/>

**24 December 1914**

**Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn. At the operational level, the Grand Fleet continues to have a significant superiority in operational battleships over the German fleet. However, the damage to the Battlecruiser Fleet has rendered it combat ineffective for the next two months, leaving the British fleet without heavy scouts. Fortunately, the single German battlecruiser is also damaged. Strategically, this likely limits the options for major German operations to either relying on light forces and/or submarines, as deployment of the High Seas Fleet without battlecruisers would be a high-risk operation. The Royal Navy's shortage of destroyers remains serious, but several damaged units will be returning to duty at the end of the year.

**Intelligence**

There is no intelligence concerning German operations. Additional intelligence indicates the SMS DERFFLINGER is in repair for 9 weeks because of battle damage. This lack of information about German operations, and the reduction in the German screening capabilities resulting from damage to the DERFFLINGER, indicates that any German operations will likely be limited to deployments of light forces. Further, the probable lack of support from heavy units means that German forces are likely to remain close to their bases. Alternatively, the German 1<sup>st</sup> scouting squadron, led by the armored cruiser SMS BLUCHER could still conduct patrols, but is presumably, this is too light of a force to raid the English coast. I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

1. **Most Probable ECOA-** Deployment of German light forces to conduct small-scale patrols into North Sea. Possibly minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
2. Patrol or Raid conducted by 1<sup>st</sup> Scouting squadron led by the SMS Blucher and associated light forces, likely along Dutch or Danish coast.
3. **Most Dangerous ECOA -** Deployment of multiple Battle squadrons of the High Seas Fleet and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to North Sea or English Channel. Possible minelaying and/or submarine operations off the English coast in support of the deployment.
4. Mining by German light forces off British East coast/Channel

**Available Forces**

665 Operational points are available. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

	Royal Navy										Imperial German Navy									
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	
Active	24	3	6	10	16	67	8	6	8	4	11	1	8	3	8	43	13	5	1	
Reinforce					2	1			1						1					
Training	4				1	5			3											
Repair	6	3	1	3	5	26	4	3	1			1	1							
Operational	14	0	5	7	12	37	4	3	5	4	11	0	7	3	9	43	13	5	1	
Advantage	3	0	-2	4	3	-6	-9	-2	4	N/A										
Ratio	1.3	###	0.71	2.333	1.3	0.9	0.3	0.6	5	N/A										

## Objectives

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Protect the British east coast and Channel from any raiding German units.
2. Conduct Defensive minelaying operations off Scapa Flow
3. Conduct Cruiser Operations off Jutland
4. Continue repair and training to increase Royal Navy Efficiency
5. Engage and destroy any German capital ships that deploy outside the Helgoland area.

## Concept of Operations

The primary goal during this two-week period is to complete repairs to the damaged British units, while laying defensive mines near Scapa Flow to destroy the German minelayers that have been effectively targeting Scapa Flow. A sweep of the Skagerrak and down the western coast of Jutland by cruisers will aim to catch any merchants or German light forces that might sail too far out of the protection of the Helgoland Bight.

The difficulty in coordinating the movements of the seaplane carriers and the Grand Fleet lead me to believe the carriers need to be based with the Grand Fleet. Accordingly, they will rebase from Harwich to Scapa this turn.

## Replacements/Detachments

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - CL HMS PENELOPE, GALATEA
  - DD HMS MILNE
  - AMC /Minelayer PRINCESS MARGARET
- Detachments
  - None

### **Maintenance and Repairs**

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - BB HMS BELLEROPHON and HMS DREADNOUGHT
  - CA HMS SHANNON and ACHILLES
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - B HMS AFRICA and HMS DOMINION
  - 3 DDs

### **Training**

- 4<sup>th</sup> Battle Squadron
- HMS THUNDERER
- 3<sup>rd</sup> DD Flotilla
- AMC /Minelayer HMS PRINCESS MARGARET

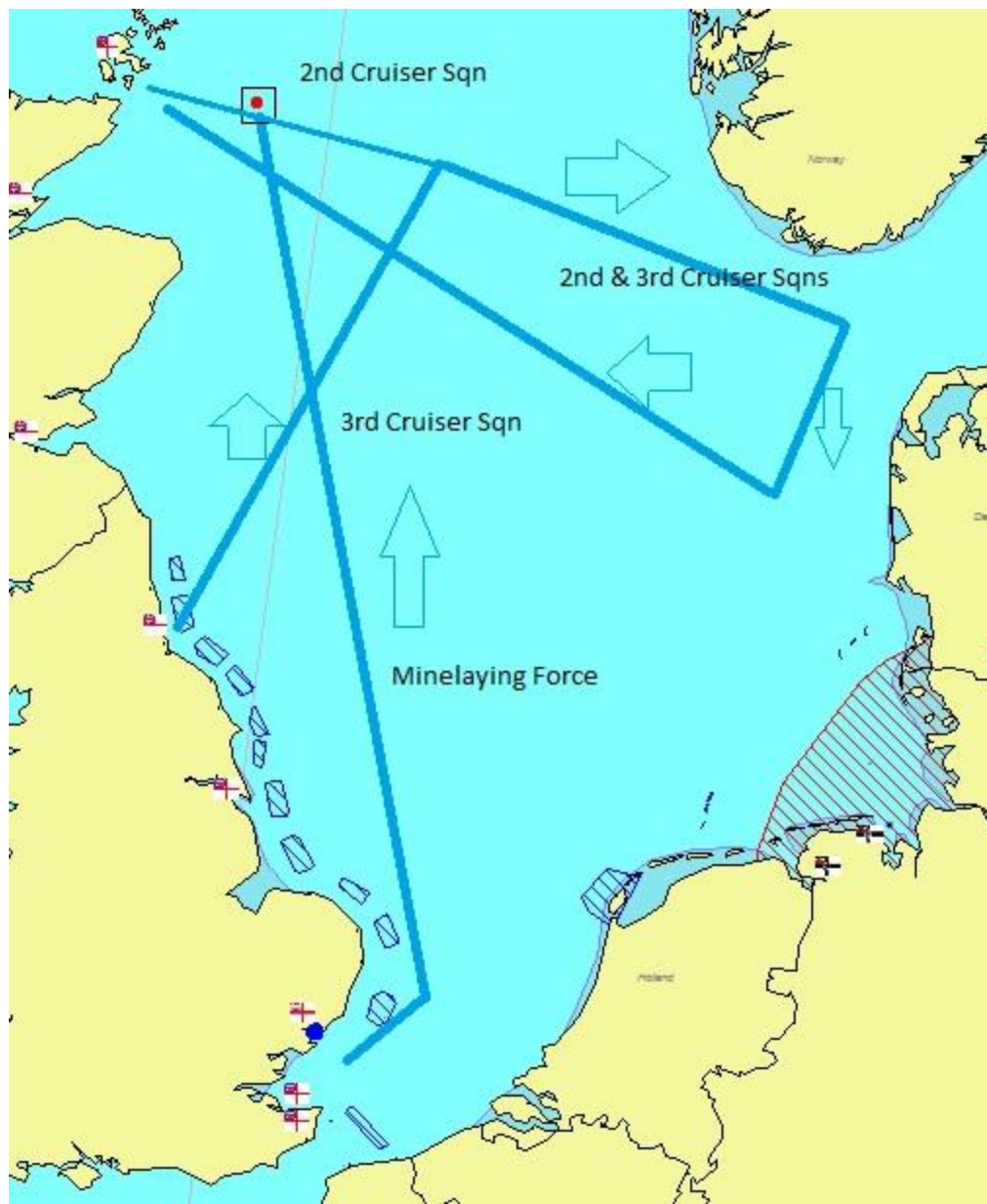
### **Administrative**

Seaplane carriers and 3/3 Destroyer Flotilla re-base from Harwich to Scapa Flow. The 1<sup>st</sup> light cruiser squadron is temporarily reassigned from the Battlecruiser Fleet to the Grand Fleet while the Battlecruisers are being repaired.

### **Operations**

See attached OPLAN. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Heavy Cruiser Squadrons will deploy from Grimsby and Scapa Flow and conduct a sweep of the Skagerrak and down the western coast of Jutland, while a defensive minefield is laid off Scapa Flow.

### **24 December 1914 OPLAN**



### **Aftermath and Analysis**

There was no contact of any type with German forces. A westerly gale severely restricted visibility during the second day of operations. Fortunately, there was no damage to any of my scarce destroyers.

### **A Year end's Perspective**

I am relatively happy with my game performance in 1914. A large part of the German battlecruiser fleet, and one squadron of battleships were destroyed. However, it is

noteworthy that these victories have occurred only when two elements are present: the German ships are both cut off from their ports and overwhelmed by vastly superior British forces. The implication of this is that the British must continue to deploy the entire Grand Fleet along with the Battlecruisers, when seeking to bring the Germans to battle. With their speed and acting as a "fast wing," the Battlecruisers have a chance of cutting the German retreat, while the battleships provide the necessary firepower to sink the German ships. Working independently, neither the Grand Fleet nor the Battlecruiser Fleet will be capable of achieving a decisive victory.

However, this strategy is dangerous. British Battlecruisers are simply not capable of engaging German battleships or even battlecruisers at near 1:1 odds. The in-game damage suffered by the battlecruiser fleet, including the sinking of the HMS LION and HMS INVINCIBLE as well as the historical losses of the loss of HMS INVINCIBLE, HMS INDEFATIGABLE and HMS QUEEN MARY at Jutland show that British Battlecruisers are unable to fight other capital ships without suffering serious damage. Part of this problem is the result of the tactical role of the battlecruiser not being clearly defined in British naval thought. As Gary Staff recently wrote:

Although their specific role was not clearly defined, in general they [battlecruisers] were to conduct reconnaissance in force, be able to sweep aside enemy cruisers and support their own light cruisers, be employed in commerce protection on overseas stations, and finally be able to support the fleet as a fast wing, capable of outflanking the enemy line and pursuing the enemy as it fled.

The German conceptual model for their battlecruisers was different. Germany knew that it would always have fewer warships than its potential opponent, Britain, and therefore its battlecruisers were designed to be able to join the battleline as "gap fillers" after the fight had commenced.<sup>42</sup>

While the British may have had a vague concept of the battlecruiser as flanking the enemy line, there appears to have been insufficient attention to what should be the defensive requirements of such a ship. Such a ship, being exposed to large caliber shellfire, would necessarily need to have the armor and compartmentalization sufficient take hits. Additionally, damage and fire control, as well as material improvements to shells would need to be made for the battlecruisers to act as a fast wing against capital ships.

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<sup>42</sup> "Naval History Blog » Blog Archive » Contrasting Battlecruisers." Naval History Blog. Accessed July 30, 2016. <https://www.navalhistory.org/2016/06/10/contrasting-battlecruisers>.

Historically, these factors do not appear to have been considered in either the conceptual design of the British battlecruisers, nor in their tactical doctrine. Part of this may have been simply insufficient staff work. Andrew Gordon observed that Admiral Fisher, the leading proponent of the battlecruiser concept, might have failed to “[foster] a free-thinking naval staff which might expose his visionary scheme to the perhaps disenchanting light of analysis.”<sup>43</sup> Such an analysis may have revealed and corrected some of the design and tactical flaws in the battlecruiser, allowing them to be used as a fast wing in a battlefleet engagement.

Nevertheless, until the arrival of a squadron of HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH “fast battleships,” the Grand Fleet lacks battleships that can cut off the German Fleet’s retreat. Without such a fast squadron, the numerical superiority of the Royal Navy will likely be insufficient in achieving a decisive victory. The QUEEN ELIZABETHs will not be operational with sufficient numbers and training until 1916. Until then, if the Grand Fleet is to achieve a decisive victory, it will have to depend on the Battlecruiser Fleet to act as a fast wing, to cut off the German Fleet’s retreat. Therefore, the training and preservation of the Battlecruiser Fleet, as well as its integration into Grand Fleet operations is necessary if a decisive victory is to be achieved in 1915.

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<sup>43</sup> Gordon, G. A. H. *The Rules of the Game Jutland and British Naval Command*, Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 2000, pg. 350

**07 January 1915**

### **Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn. At the operational level, the Grand Fleet continues to have a significant superiority in operational battleships over the German fleet. In contrast, the effectiveness of the Battlecruiser Fleet is seriously compromised. Damage as well as the requirement to train has rendered it combat ineffective for the next 1-2 months. The temporary loss of its support seriously affects the ability of the Grand Fleet to engage the High Seas Fleet in a decisive battle. This loss of operational capability is further exacerbated by loss of visibility brought on by the short winter days, which make it difficult for the Grand Seas Fleet to find and engage the German Fleet at the long ranges necessary to avoid German torpedo attacks.

Fortunately, the single German battlecruiser is also damaged. Strategically, this likely limits the options for major German operations to either relying on light forces and/or submarines, as deployment of the High Seas Fleet without battlecruisers would be a high-risk operation. The Royal Navy's shortage of destroyers remains serious, but several damaged units are returning to duty in the next month.

### **Intelligence**

There is no Intelligence concerning German operations. The Germans have 1143 operations points, making a High Seas sortie possible, although there is no indication that such an operation is planned. Intelligence from two weeks ago indicates the SMS DERFFLINGER will remain in repair for 7 weeks because of battle damage. Like last turn, this lack of information about German operations, and the reduction in the German screening capabilities resulting from damage to the DERFFLINGER, indicates that any German operations will likely be limited to deployments of light forces. Further, the probable lack of support from heavy units means that German forces are likely to remain close to their bases. Alternatively, the German 1<sup>st</sup> scouting squadron, led by the armored cruiser SMS BLUCHER could still patrol. However, this is presumably too light of a force to raid the English coast. I evaluate the ECOA to be like those of last turn:

1. **Most Probable ECOA-** Deployment of German light forces to conduct small-scale patrols into North Sea. Possibly minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
2. Mining by German light forces off British East coast/Channel
3. Patrol or Raid conducted by 1<sup>st</sup> Scouting squadron led by the SMS Blucher and associated light forces, likely along Dutch or Danish coast.
4. **Most Dangerous ECOA -** Deployment of multiple Battle squadrons of the High Seas Fleet and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to North Sea or

English Channel. Possible minelaying and/or submarine operations off the English coast in support of the deployment.

### Available Forces

777 Operational points are available. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

	Royal Navy										Imperial German Navy									
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	
Active	24	3	6	10	18	69	8	6	9	4	11	1	8	3	9	43	13	5	1	
Reinforce		2		5		2									1	1				
Training	1	3		4	1	5														
Repair	7	2	1	3	4	17	3	2		1		1								
Operational	16	0	5	8	13	49	5	4	9	3	11	0	8	3	10	44	13	5	1	
Advantage	5	0	-3	5	3	5	-8	-1	8	N/A										
Ratio	1.5	###	0.63	2.667	1.3	1.1	0.4	0.8	9	N/A										

### Objectives

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Continue repair and training to increase Royal Navy effectiveness
2. Protect the British east coast and Channel from any raiding German units.
3. Conduct destroyer operations off the Dutch coast to attrition German light forces.
4. Conduct Defensive minelaying operations off Scapa Flow

### Concept of Operations

This turn, I will restrict the Royal Navy to a sweep off the Dutch coast with light forces. While hopefully destroying some German light forces, this will help the Royal Navy maintain the initiative while simultaneously giving the fleet's capital ships time to repair and retrain, as well as allow the fleet to stockpile some operation points in the event of a High Seas Fleet sortie in later turns. In addition, the defensive minefield around Scapa

Flow will be expanded. While there is a chance the High Seas Fleet will deploy to raid the English coast, the lack of intelligence concerning such an operation, combined with lack of any operational German battlecruisers makes this a low probability event. More likely is a deployment of German light forces off the Dutch coast, which the British destroyer flotillas should be able to manage. To ensure combat superiority, I will have most of the Harwich force deploy. Their speed should be sufficient to allow them to disengage if faced with a superior force. On the remote chance that the High Seas fleet attempts a sunrise bombardment of the English coast, I will time Harwich Force's arrival off the Dutch coast for 6 PM, well after sunset. This should allow the force to intercept any German force enroute to England. Depending on the tactical situation, a nighttime interception will allow for either a torpedo attack on the German force, or a speedy disengagement.

### **Replacements/Detachments**

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - BC HMS PRINCESS ROYAL
  - BC HMS INDOMITABLE
  - CA HMS DEFENSE, DUKE OF EDINBURGH, BLACK PRINCE, WARRIOR and MINOTAUR
  - DD HMS MORRIS and MURRAY
- Detachments
  - None

### **Maintenance and Repairs**

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - BB HMS COLLOSSUS
  - 1 CL, 2 DD
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - BC HMS NEW ZEALAND
  - 4 DDs

### **Training**

To improve the combat effectiveness of the Battlecruiser Fleet, all undamaged units are sent to training.

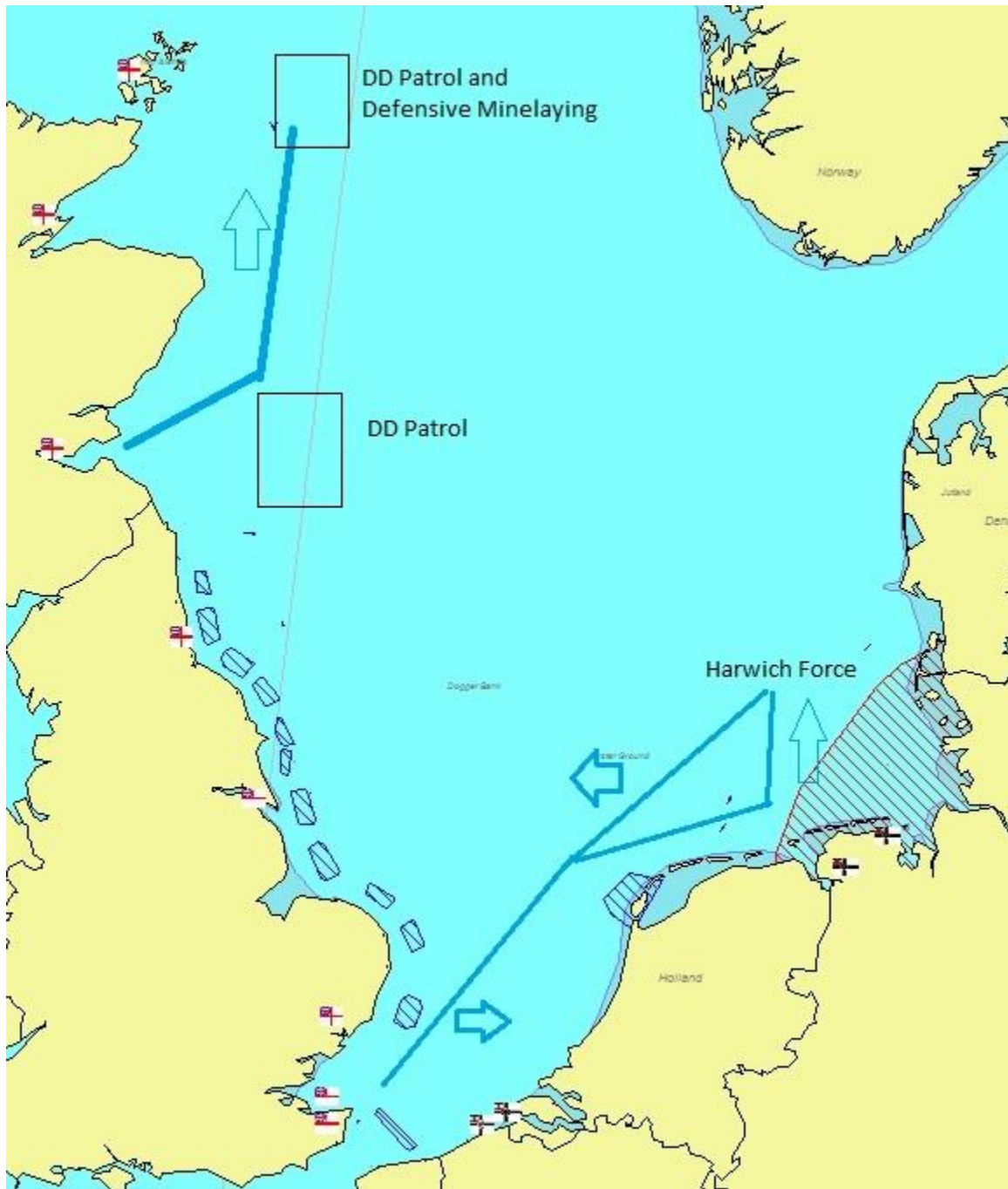
### **Administrative**

NSTR

### **Operations**

See attached OPLAN. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Flotilla and the 5<sup>th</sup> Light Cruiser Squadron will deploy from Harwich and conduct a sweep of along the coast near Emden, while a second defensive minefield is laid off Scapa Flow.

### 07 January 1915 OPLAN



### Battlelog and spotting reports

07 0900 WX: Light Rain, Fresh Breeze from North

08 0111 Lowestoft battery reports being shelled by an unknown ship. **NOTE: This report is surprising. Although such a raid is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most likely predicted German course of action, I am surprised it was actually done, given the lack of operational battlecruisers in the 1<sup>st</sup> Scouting squadron. The relatively slow rate of damage to Lowestoft battery indicates that the German forces are likely only light forces, or possibly the SMS BLUCHER. At this point, the Harwich force is engaged in its sweep near Emden, and it is recalled to hopefully intercept the raiders.**

08 03:08 Unknown ship opens fire at Lowestoft

08 07:35 DD Lennox sights an unknown ship approximately 50 nm NW of Texel. **NOTE: This is unfortunate. During the nighttime high-speed run east, the Harwich force has become somewhat scattered. Only a small squadron of Destroyers (the 3/1 Flotilla) from Harwich Force made contact, with what is likely to be at least the screening elements of a German squadron. See attached image.**

08 07:36 DD Oak identifies unknown ship as CL

08 07:37 CL opens fire at DD Ariel!

08 07:37 CL opens fire at DD Oak!

08 07:40 CA fires 6 8in guns at DD Oak! Target straddled! 1 hits

**08 07:40 DD Oak Fore/aft hull hit \* Fire started**

08 07:42 DD Oak identifies CL as Graudenz-class

08 07:46 DD Ariel identifies CL as G7-class

08 07:48 CA Blücher-class fires 2 8in guns at DD Oak! Target straddled! 1 hits

**08 07:48 DD Oak Hull hit B \***

08 07:51 DD Acheron identifies CA as Pillau-class **NOTE: The presence of the Blücher and the absence of any other heavy units indicates that this is the German 1<sup>st</sup> Scouting Squadron. Unfortunately, my battlecruisers are still in port and too far away to ever get involved in this engagement. Harwich Force will have to manage it as best it can. The main body of the Harwich Force is approximately one hour from the engagement. My plan is to try to get a get a torpedo or two into the Blücher. Once it is disabled, the British light cruisers should be able to deal with the German escorts.**

**08 08:03 DD Ariel Torpedo tubes hit Torpedo explodes!**

**08 08:03 DD G7-class Hit**

08 08:03 DD Oak Fire spreads

**08 08:08 DD Ariel Near miss! Hull damaged by splinters!**

**08 08:08 DD Ariel Near miss! Torpedo tubes damaged by splinters!**

**08 08:08 DD Oak Turret hit T \* Turret destroyed**

**08 08:08 DD G7-class Hit**

08 08:10 CA Blücher-class fires 8 8in guns at DD Acheron! 1 hits

**08 08:10 DD Acheron Superstructure hit \***

08 08:11 CA Blücher-class fires 7 3in guns at DD Oak! Target straddled! 1 hits

**08 08:11 DD Oak Superstructure hit \***

**08 08:12 DD Acheron Superstructure hit \***

08 08:12 CA Blücher-class fires 1 6in guns at DD Acheron! Target straddled! 1 hits

**08 08:12 DD Acheron Superstructure hit BE \***

08 08:12 DD Oak Fire spreads

**08 08:12 DD Acheron is sinking!**

**08 08:13 DD Acheron has sunk! NOTE: My plan is not working so well. Although some minor damage has been done to a German torpedo boat, the overwhelming firepower of the German squadron is quickly whittling away the British destroyers.**

08 08:21 DD Oak identifies CL as Graudenz-class

08 08:26 CL Pillau-class fires 3 6in guns at DD Lennox! Target straddled! **NOTE:**

**Surprisingly, the German main body, including the Blücher is withdrawing to the northeast as the main body of the Harwich force arrives on scene to the Southwest. Several German light cruisers have become separated from the fleeing Germans and may be cut off between the battered remains of the Destroyer Flotilla and the light cruisers of the Harwich Force.**

08 08:27 CL Graudenz-class opens fire at DD Oak!

08 08:27 CL Pillau-class fires 3 6in guns at DD Lennox! Target straddled! 0 hits

08 08:29 CL Graudenz-class opens fire at DD Oak!

08 08:30 CL Arethusa opens fire at CL Graudenz-class!

08 08:33 CL Fearless opens fire at CL Graudenz-class!

08 08:33 CL Fearless fires 1 4in guns at CL Graudenz-class! Target straddled! 0 hits

08 08:33 CL Graudenz-class opens fire at DD Ariel!

**08 08:33 DD Ariel is sinking!**

08 08:44 CL Fearless fires 3 4in guns at CL Graudenz-class! Target straddled!

**08 08:44 CL Graudenz-class Hit**

**08 08:49 DD Lennox Hull hit B \***

08 08:49 CL Graudenz-class opens fire at CL Fearless!

**08 08:50 DD Lennox Fore/aft hull hit \***

08 08:53 CL Arethusa fires 1 6in guns at CL Graudenz-class! 1 hits

**08 08:53 CL Graudenz-class Hit**

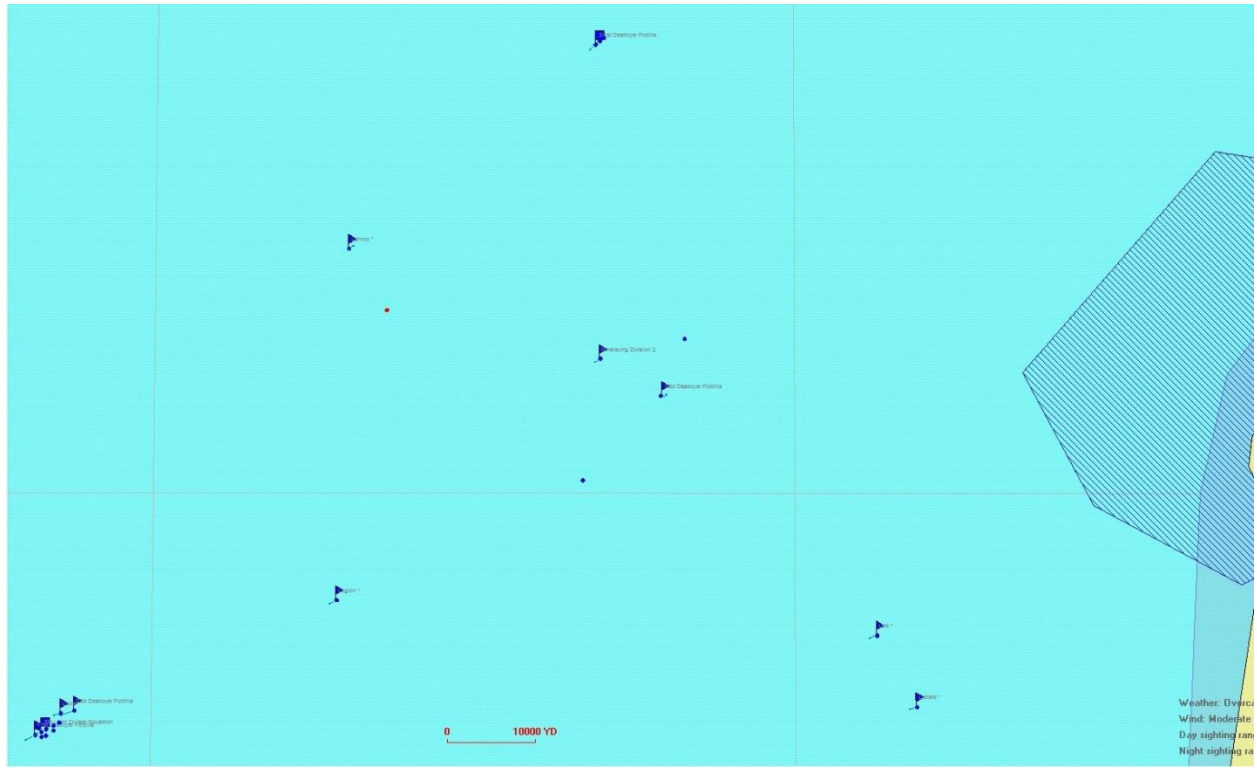
**08 08:56 DD Ariel has sunk! NOTE: The second battered British destroyer sinks, while the HMS Oak, is a flaming wreck, and may well founder. However, one German light cruiser has been cut off and is now heavily engaged by five British light cruisers. Over the next ten minutes, it is hit ten times and crippled. The German squadron has left the area, leaving the cruiser, later identified as the SMS REGENSBURG to its fate. It finally sinks at 1146, after absorbing 22 medium and 119 light caliber hits.**

08 09:13 DD Lark is picking up survivors from DD Ariel

**08 09:56 DD Oak is sinking!**

08 11:46 CL Undaunted is picking up survivors from CL Regensburg

**080735 January 1915-Intial Sighting**



## **Aftermath and Analysis**

The engagement was a draw, with the British trading three destroyers for one German light cruiser. Additionally, subsequent analysis showed that the German squadron also lost a torpedo boat that was apparently hit by an errant torpedo. The Germans also successfully bombarded Lowestoft. The toughness of the German ships was again displayed, with the SMS REGENSBURG being engaged by the entire Harwich Force for over three hours before finally sinking.

In terms of strategic implications, this engagement would have few lessons. Historically, the goal of the German raids was to force the RN to distribute its forces along the coast, thereby setting the stage for defeating the scattered squadrons in detail. Conceivably, after this third raid of the English coast, elements in the British public would advocate to rebasing the Royal Navy to better respond to German incursions. However, as each raid has been successfully engaged, it is unlikely there would be a sufficient outcry to force such a rebasing.

## **21 January 1915**

### **Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn. While the British fleet has an advantage in capital ships, the number is not so great as to allow for a diversion of the fleet to open a second front along the Baltic. Effectively, the German navy continues to act as a "Fleet in Being," tying down the Royal Navy to the Baltic area of operations.

While the Grand Fleet continues to have a significant superiority in operational battleships over the German fleet, the effectiveness of the Battlecruiser Fleet remains compromised relative to its German counterparts. However, the situation is improving. Damage as well as the requirement to train has rendered it only marginally combat capable for the next remainder of January 1915. The temporary loss of its support seriously affects the ability of the Grand Fleet to engage the High Seas Fleet in a decisive battle. This loss of operational capability is further exacerbated by loss of visibility brought on by the short winter days, which make it difficult for the Grand Seas Fleet to find and engage the German Fleet at the long ranges necessary to avoid German torpedo attacks.

Fortunately, the single German battlecruiser remains damaged. Strategically, this likely limits the options for major German operations to either relying on light forces and/or submarines, as deployment of the High Seas Fleet without battlecruisers would be a high-risk operation. The Royal Navy's shortage of destroyers remains serious, but several damaged units are returning to duty in the next two weeks.

One recent change to the operational picture is the opening of the German ports at Oostende and Zeebrugge on the Dutch coast. Harwich Force will be required to patrol against sorties by light forces from these two ports against Channel shipping. In the future, minefields and bombardment by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle Squadron may help alleviate this problem, but there are insufficient forces for anything more than a patrol this turn.

### **Intelligence**

There is no Intelligence concerning German operations. The Germans have an estimated 1000 operations points, making a High Seas sortie possible, although there is no indication that such an operation is planned for this turn. Intelligence from one month ago indicates the SMS DERFFLINGER will remain in repair for 3 more weeks because of battle damage. This indicates that the 1<sup>st</sup> Scouting Group will not have any heavy ships, aside from the SMS BLUCHER during the next two weeks. Intelligence also estimates the Germans have eight operational dreadnoughts, indicating that as much as 25% of their battlefleet is undergoing maintenance. This high level of maintenance indicates 1) that there will be no sailing of the High Seas Fleet during the next two weeks and 2) that the

Germans may be “front running” their maintenance in preparation for a large operation in February. I evaluate the ECOA to be like those of last turn:

1. **Most Probable ECOA**- Deployment of German light forces to conduct small-scale patrols into North Sea. Possibly minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
2. Mining or raids by German light forces off British East coast/Channel
3. Patrol or Raid conducted by 1<sup>st</sup> Scouting squadron led by the SMS Blucher and associated light forces, likely along Dutch or Danish coast.
4. **Most Dangerous ECOA** - Deployment of multiple Battle squadrons of the High Seas Fleet and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to North Sea or English Channel. Possible minelaying and/or submarine operations off the English coast in support of the deployment.

### Available Forces

904 Operational points are available. The Order of Battle for this turn is below. Damage to the Harwich Force’s destroyers and the need to conduct training is significantly impacting on the availability of destroyers during this two-week period.

	Royal Navy										Imperial German Navy									
	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	
Active	24	5	6	15	17	67	8	6	8	4	11	1	8	3	9	43	13	5	1	
Reinforce					1	1			3							1				
Training	5	2			3	21			3	2										
Repair	5	1	1	2	4	18	2	3		1	3	1			1	1				
Operational	14	2	5	13	11	29	6	3	8	1	8	0	8	3	8	43	13	5	1	
Advantage Ratio	-																			
	6	2	-3	10	3	14	-7	-2	7	N/A										
	1.8	###	0.63	4.333	1.4	0.7	0.5	0.6	8	N/A										

### Objectives

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Continue repair and training to increase Royal Navy effectiveness, particularly in the Battlecruiser Fleet. Conserve operations points and heavy fleet units in preparation for an anticipated major High Seas Fleet deployment in the February-March timeframe.
2. Protect the British east coast and Channel from any raiding German units.

3. Conduct light force sweep operations off the Dutch coast
4. Conduct offensive minelaying operations off Heligoland in preparation for the expected future deployment of the High Seas Fleet.

### **Concept of Operations**

This turn, I will restrict the Royal Navy to a sweep off Skagerrak with light forces, supported by heavy cruisers. While hopefully destroying some German light forces or merchant vessels, this will help the Royal Navy maintain the initiative while simultaneously giving the fleet's capital ships time to repair and retrain, as well as allow the fleet to stockpile some operation points in the event of a High Seas Fleet sortie in later turns. In addition, an offensive minefield near the Bight will be re-seeded, as the previous fields have deteriorated. This field will hopefully be useful in the event of a High Seas Fleet sortie in February.

### **Replacements/Detachments**

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - CL HMS COMUS
  - DD HMS MENTOR
  - 3 AMC
- Detachments
  - CL HMS LATONA

### **Maintenance and Repairs**

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - Significant forces are entering maintenance. See above list
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - BC HMS QUEEN MARY

### **Training**

To improve the combat effectiveness of the Battlecruiser Fleet, all undamaged units are sent to training. The Second Battle Squadron is also sent to training, leaving the 1st and 4<sup>th</sup> Battle Squadrons and the pre-dreadnoughts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle Squadron available to respond to a large German sortie.

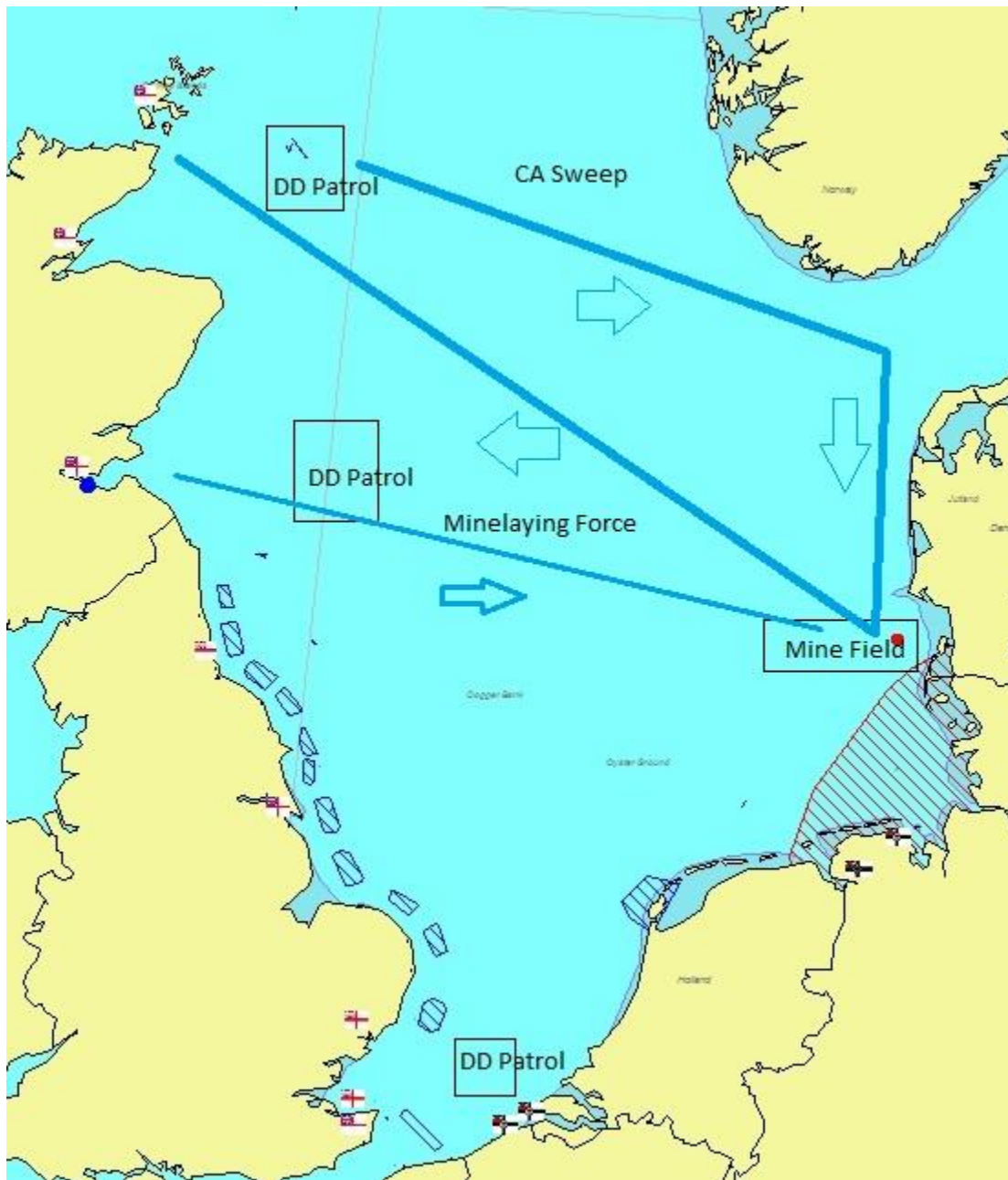
### **Administrative**

NSTR

## Operations

See attached OPLAN. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Cruiser Squadrons will deploy from Scapa Flow and conduct a sweep of the Skagerrak and down the Danish coast. Off Horn's reef, they will support an offensive minelaying operation by HMS PRINCESS MARGARET. DD and CL Patrols off Scapa Flow, the Firth of Forth, and the Channel will attempt to prevent German minelaying and light force raiding.

### 21 January OPLAN



## **Battlelog and spotting reports**

21 0900      WX: Light breeze, WNW

220237      DD HMS Brisk sights an unknown ship invic 5755N00448E

22 02:37      DD Brisk is launching torpedoes

22 02:40      **Enemy ship Unidentified ship is hit by a torpedo!**

22 02:56      DD Brisk fires 2 4in guns at CL! Target straddled! 2 hits

22 02:56      CL Hit

22 02:56      CL Hit

22 03:04      DD Alarm identifies CL as Medium Merchant-class

23 00:57      **AMC Princess Margaret is commencing to lay mines!**

23 01:08      **CL Aurora is commencing to lay mines!**

23 01:19      **Objective Lay minefield with 1 ships (any ship) Accomplished!**

23 03:40      DD Alarm sights an unknown ship invic 5449N00747E

23 03:45      DD Alarm identifies unknown ship as CA

23 04:01      CA fires 1 3in guns at DD Alarm! Target straddled! 0 hits

23 04:05      CA fires 1 3in guns at DD Alarm! Target straddled! 0 hits

23 07:00      CL Amphion opens fire at Coastal battery!

23 07:04      CL Undaunted opens fire at Coastal battery!

23 07:05      Coastal battery fires 4 6in guns at CL Undaunted! Target straddled! 1 hits

23 07:05      CL Undaunted Hull hit BE \*

23 07:07      Coastal battery fires 4 6in guns at CL Undaunted! 1 hits

23 07:07      CL Undaunted Secondary battery hit \*

23 14:03      CL Undaunted fires 1 4in guns at Coastal battery! Target straddled! 1 hits

23 14:03      6 in battery Hit **[Note: Over the next 30 minutes, the HMS UNDAUTED engages in a gunnery duel with Oostende and Zeebrugge shore batteries, with some damage being done to both sides.]**

## **Aftermath and Analysis**

The sweep off Skagerrak was modestly successful, resulting in the sinking of a blockade running merchant transport, the CORNBERG. The chief lesson learned from this engagement is that British torpedo shooting is terrible. Although the first torpedo hit the CORNBERG, a total of three were fired at close range, the final two being fired when the CORNBERG was already damaged and maneuvering at only 5 knots. This poor accuracy under near optimal consistent raises questions as to whether the British destroyers would be effective in an engagement with the High Seas Fleet. Notably, the game accuracy of the torpedoes in this scenario appears to be consistent with what was historically achieved. During the Battle of Jutland, the British achieved a 5.5 % hit rate overall with their

torpedoes, with the destroyer flotillas achieving an overall 10.3% hit rate.<sup>44</sup> However, these were largely against maneuvering warships. During Jutland, the disabled SMS WIESBADEN was hit by a single torpedo out of four fired, for an overall accuracy of 25%.<sup>45</sup> The 33% hit rate achieved in the game against a merchant is consistent with this historical example.

As the Grand Fleet Commander in the game, the demonstrated low torpedo accuracy rate has me questioning the utility of massed destroyer attacks against the battle line. It also has me question what tactics I should use when faced with massed torpedo attacks. During Jutland, Admiral Jellicoe turned the Battle fleet away from a German torpedo attack, thereby allowing it to escape. (See <http://www.jutland1916.com/tactics-and-technologies-4/torpedoes-2/> for a discussion for the torpedo in Royal Navy doctrinal thinking). Jellicoe had reasons for his concerns about the effect of underwater weapons. The historical sinking of the HMS AUDACIOUS by a single mine proved that underwater weapons, if they hit, could do critical damage to warships. However, Jellicoe may have exaggerated the importance the torpedoes, considering the numerical superiority of the British Fleet. Jellicoe's tactic of executing a battle fleet turn-away made sense in 1914 and early 1915, when the numerical superiority of the Grand Fleet was less. However, by the time of Jutland, the Royal Navy had a definite numerical superiority in capital ships. This superiority and the low accuracy of the torpedo indicated that the British battle line could maintain combat superiority over the German Fleet after a massed torpedo attack. Therefore, in a general engagement where the British intend to maintain contact with the German force, the Royal Navy should turn towards, and not away from a torpedo attack. Such a maneuver would allow it to maintain contact with the German fleet, while reducing the chances of a torpedo hit.

Because of this analysis, I make the doctrinal decision that in future engagements with the High Seas Fleet in the game, I will turn the fleet towards an anticipated torpedo attack, unless the engaged British forces do not have a significant combat superiority.

The subsequent minefield laid off Helgoland was less successful than I planned, as it was inadvertently laid in a North-South direction, instead of a NE-SW direction, thereby limiting its effectiveness.

In addition to sinking the CORNBERG, the U-21 was sunk by a minefield near Hull. This is the first known submarine deployment in the area, indicating the Germans are beginning to do reconnaissance and/or interdiction of the smaller east coast ports. While not a major factor yet, continued German submarine deployments off the smaller ports may require additional destroyer patrols. Heretofore, I have had light forces patrolling off the

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<sup>44</sup> Campbell, N. J. M. *Jutland: An Analysis of the Fighting*, 355. New York, N.Y.: Lyons Press, 1998, pg. 401

<sup>45</sup> Campbell, N. J. M. *Jutland: An Analysis of the Fighting*, 355. New York, N.Y.: Lyons Press, 1998, pg. 401

major bases to limit mining and ambushing of capital units. Having to increase destroyer patrols off the smaller ports would stretch my already overtasked destroyer fleet.

The unplanned reconnaissance and bombardment by Harwich Force's Channel patrol did not detect any mines or patrols off the new German bases at Oostende and Zeebrugge. Possibly a bombardment mission of these facilities by the pre-dreadnoughts in conjunction with a sweep by the Grand Fleet would be profitable in the next month before any minefields are laid.

**Image. SMS SEYDLITZ Damage from Torpedo Hit**



**04 February 1915**

**Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn. At the operational level, the Grand Fleet continues to have a significant superiority in operational battleships over the German fleet.

**Intelligence**

There is no Intelligence concerning German operations. The Germans likely have sufficient operations points to deploy their entire fleet, although there is no indication that such an operation is planned for this turn. Additional intelligence indicates the SMS DERFFLINGER has completed her repairs. Intelligence from last turn indicating that the Germans may be front running their maintenance raises the possibility that the High Seas Fleet sorties this turn.

I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

1. **Most Probable ECOA-** Deployment of German light forces to conduct small-scale patrols into North Sea. Possible minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
2. Patrol or Raid conducted by 1<sup>st</sup> Scouting squadron led by the SMS Blucher or SMS DERFFLINGER and associated light forces, likely along Dutch or Danish coast.
3. **Most Dangerous ECOA -** Deployment of multiple Battle squadrons of the High Seas Fleet and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to North Sea or English Channel. Possible minelaying and/or submarine operations off the English coast in support of the deployment.
4. Mining by German light forces off British East coast/Channel

**Available Forces**

The British have 915 Operational points are available. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

Royal Navy										Imperial German Navy									
BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	
24	5	6	15	19	68	8	6	8	4	11	1	8	3	9	44	13	5	1	
	1			1	3														
3	1	1	2	3	8	3	2	1						1	1				
21	3	5	13	15	57	5	4	7	4	11	1	8	3	8	43	13	5	1	

Advantage	10	2	-3	10	7	14	-8	-1	6	N/A
Ratio	1.9	3	0.63	4.333	1.9	1.3	0.4	0.8	7	N/A

## **Objectives**

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Conduct minelaying operations off the Helgoland area
2. Conduct bombardment of the Belgium ports to delay their use by light forces and submarines
3. Protect the British east coast and Channel from any raiding German units.
4. Conduct blockade Operations invic Skagerrak
5. Continue repair and training to increase Royal Navy Efficiency

## **Concept of Operations**

The primary goal during this two-week period is to conduct minelaying operations off Helgoland. Although there is currently no indication of a High Seas sortie, I expect one soon. The minefields off Helgoland are intended to attrition the High Seas fleet, “shaping the battlespace” before any engagement with the Grand Fleet. Similarly, the bombardment of the Belgium ports will hopefully restrict their use for any German submarine or light force operations and directed at the east coast and channel, in preparation for the expected fleet action. To conserve operations points, only the Battlecruiser Fleet and the pre-dreadnoughts will be deployed this turn. There is some risk to deploy the three battlecruisers without support from the Grand Fleet. However, I expect that these forces would have sufficient firepower superiority to safely engage the SMS DERFFLINGER should it be encountered, and enough speed to disengage from the High Seas Fleet should it be at sea.

On the return from supporting the minelaying mission, the Battlecruisers will act as distant support for the bombardment force tasked with shelling the Belgium ports. From their position in the southern portion of the North Sea, the battlecruisers should be able to cut off any light forces that sortie from Helgoland.

A small scouting force of submarines off Horn’s Reef and the Belgium coast will hopefully provide advance notice of any German ships deploying from Helgoland. In the event of a High Seas Fleet sortie, the bombardment mission will be canceled, and the bombardment force ordered to port.

## **Replacements/Detachments**

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - None
- Detachments
  - None

## **Maintenance and Repairs**

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - CA HMS WARRIOR and ROXBURGH
  - CL UNDAUNTED
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - BB HMS MONARCH
  - AV HMS ENGADINE
  - CA HMS SHANNON and ACHILLES
  - 9 Destroyers

## **Training**

- CA HMS DRAKE
- CL HMS COMUS, PENELOPE
- 3d Battlecruiser Squadron
- 1<sup>st</sup> Light cruiser squadron

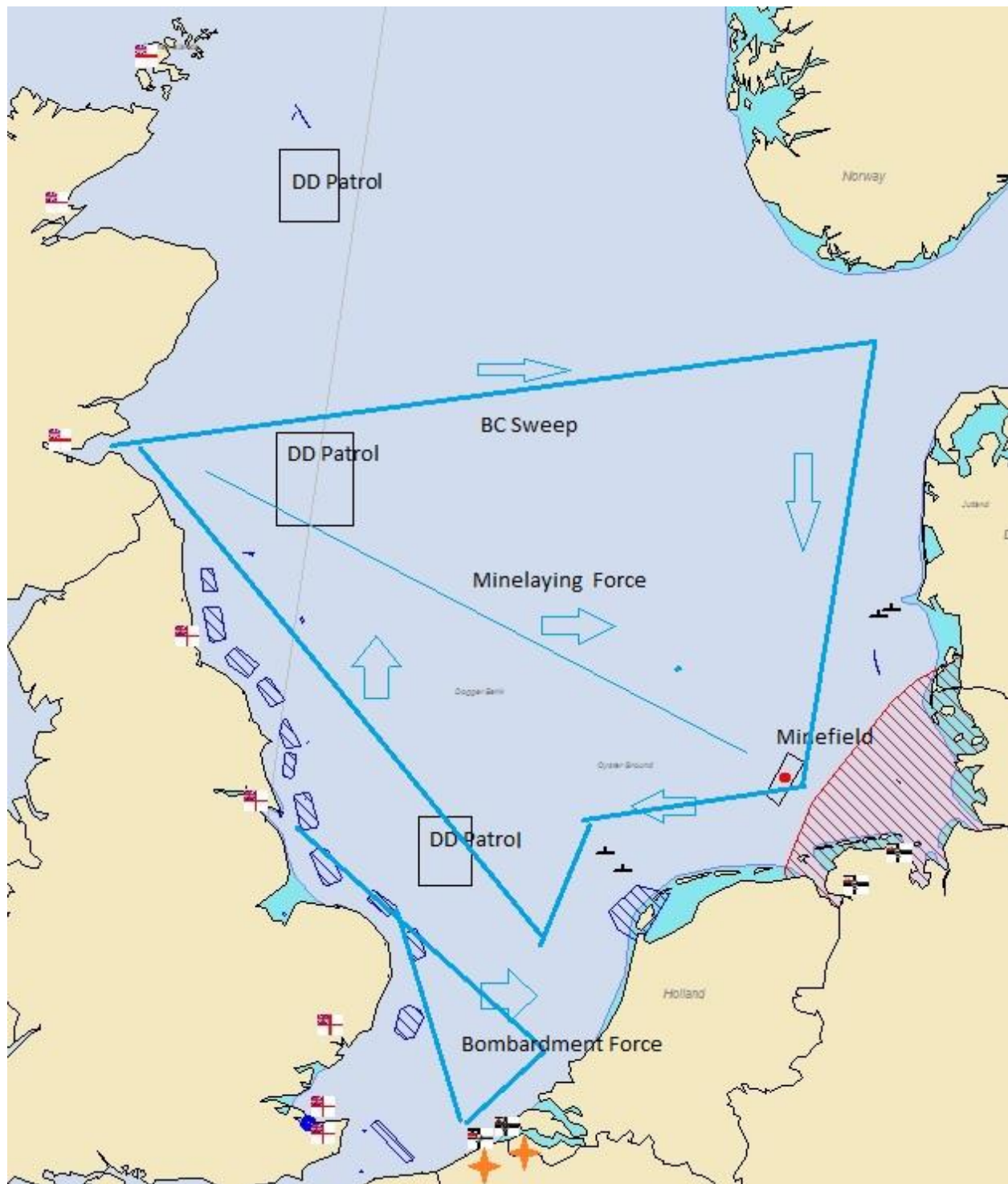
## **Administrative**

The Grand Fleet's 2<sup>nd</sup> Light cruiser squadron is temporarily reassigned to the Battlecruiser Fleet for scouting duties. The 5<sup>th</sup> light cruiser squadron and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Destroyer Flotilla are temporarily reassigned from Harwich Force to the Grand Fleet to provide escorts for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle Squadron.

## **Operations**

See attached OPLAN. The Battlecruiser Squadron will deploy from Scapa Flow and conduct a sweep of the Skagerrak and down the Danish coast, where it will provide cover for a mine laying operation off Helgoland. They will then proceed down the Dutch coast to cover a bombardment force from the pre-dreadnaughts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle Squadron, which are tasked with shelling the Belgium ports to deny these facilities to German light forces. DD and CL Patrols off Scapa Flow, the Firth of Forth, and the Channel will attempt to prevent German minelaying and light force raiding.

04 February 1915 OPLAN



## **Battlelog**

04 0300 WX: Mist, Light breeze, NW

04 1311 1 CL, 7 DD reported by Norwegian coastal shipping invic 5753N00624E. Course: North

04 1330 1 CA, 5 CL reported by Norwegian coastal shipping invic 5745N00619E. Course: NW

04 1336 5 BB, 1 BC reported by Norwegian coastal shipping invic 5800N00622E. Course: WNW. Range: 62 nm from Battlecruiser fleet.

04 1356 3 BB, reported by Norwegian coastal shipping invic 5802N00617E. Course: NNW. Range: 59 nm from Battlecruiser fleet.

04 1456 3 BB, 1 BC reported by Norwegian coastal shipping invic 5817N00559E. Course: NW. Range: 52 nm from Battlecruiser fleet.

04 1552 HMS NEREIDE attacks a submarine in the approaches to the Firth of Forth, invic 5608N00211E

041526 Battlecruiser Fleet assumes nighttime cruising disposition, course 167/14 knots.  
**Note: The multiple reports of German battleships lead me to believe the High Seas Fleet is at sea. Not wanting to gain contact at night and close range with a superior force, I have the Battlecruisers turn south.**

041704 HMS FALMOUTH sights an unknown ship invic 5734N00544E, Brg 2.5 nm SW from Battlecruiser Fleet.

041706 HMS FALMOUTH identifies ship as a German merchant blockade runner, which is subsequently engaged and sunk.

04 17:23 AMC Princess Margaret is commencing to lay mines!  
04 17:24 AMC Princess Irene is commencing to lay mines!

04 18:29 AMC Princess Margaret has finished laying mines!  
04 18:30 AMC Princess Irene has finished laying mines!

05 10:31 CL Arethusa opens fire at Coastal battery near Zeebrugge  
05 10:53 B King Edward VII fires 5 6in guns at Coastal batteries invic Zeebrugge and Oostende  
05 10:56 B Africa opens fire at Coastal batteries invic Zeebrugge and Oostende  
05 10:59 B Hibernia opens fire at Coastal batteries invic Zeebrugge and Oostende

05 10:59

B Africa fires 4 12in guns at Coastal batteries in vic Zeebrugge and Oostende

**Note: Over the next four hours, the pre-dreadnoughts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle Squadron bombard the shore batteries, heavily damaging them, and receiving minor damage in return. After exhausting most of its ammunition, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle Squadron sets course for Grimsby. Similarly, the Battlecruisers set course for the Firth of Forth. All British units return home without incident.**

### **Aftermath and Analysis**

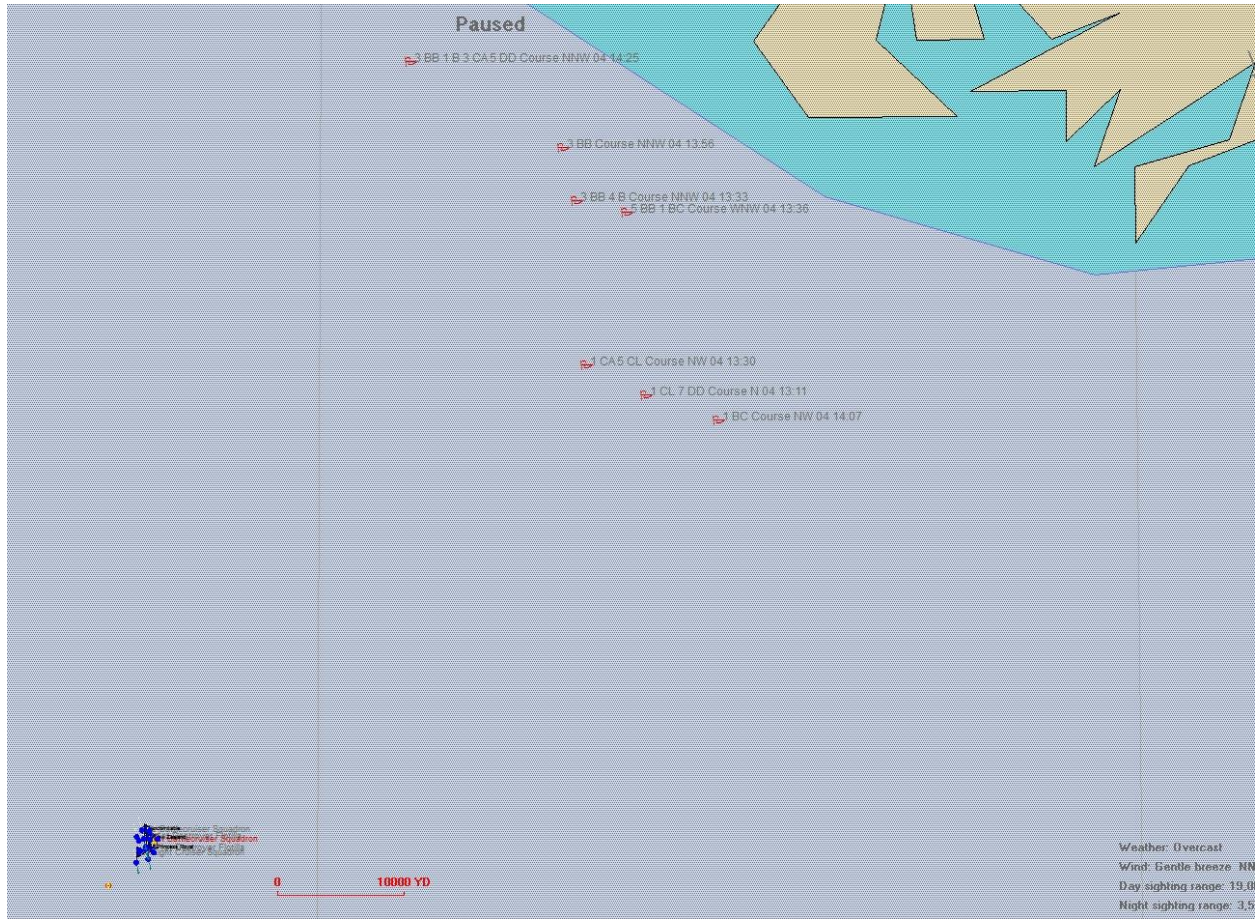
The sweep off Skagerrak was modestly successful, resulting in the sinking of a blockade runner, the VINEA. Subsequent analysis indicated the HMS NEREIDE attacked and sunk the U-24 in the approaches to the Firth of Forth, indicating the need for some defensive minefields in the area.

The multiple sightings of the Battleships off the Norwegian coast is strong evidence that the High Seas Fleet sortied. However, the subsequent lack of sightings by my destroyer patrols indicate it remained well off the eastern British coast. The fact that British naval intelligence (Room 40 ) failed to identify the High Seas Fleet sortie is concerning. Historically, this is like what happened during the December 1914 Scarborough Raid, where Room 40 failed to identify the sortie of the High Seas Fleet in support of Hipper's battlecruisers.<sup>46</sup> In the Scarborough raid, the failure of Room 40 to identify the High Seas Fleet sortie led the Admiralty to only deploy the Battlecruiser Fleet and a squadron of Battleships. This potentially set the stage for a decisive battle between the German High Seas Fleet and only a small portion of the British fleet. During the historical Scarborough Raid, the Royal Navy was fortunate to have avoided such an unequal encounter. Similarly, I was fortunate to have avoided such an encounter this turn, although the risk I ran was somewhat less. This is because during a daylight encounter, the British Battlecruisers could avoid action by outrunning German dreadnoughts. However, in a night encounter, the close initial ranges could easily result in crippling damage being done before the battlecruisers disengaged. More troubling is the danger faced by the pre-dreadnoughts. In any engagement, they would be outgunned, outnumbered and unable to outrun any German capital ship. Fortunately, this time they were on the opposite side of the North Sea, and near the British coast. They might not be so lucky the next time. Therefore, the chief lesson learned is that intelligence can be wrong, and that absence of evidence of an enemy's presence does not equate to evidence of absence of the enemy.

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<sup>46</sup> Massie, Robert K., and Robert K. Massie. *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*, 332. New York: Random House, 2003.

## 041704 February 1915-Multiple Sighting Reports of the German Fleet off Norway



## **18 February 1915**

### **Strategic Overview**

The strategic situation is unchanged from last turn. At the operational level, the Grand Fleet continues to have a significant superiority in operational battleships over the German fleet.

### **Intelligence**

Intelligence reports the German fleet is planning on operation off the British East Coast. However, there are no details of the operation. The Germans likely have sufficient operations points to deploy their entire fleet, although there is no indication that such an operation is planned for this turn. The lack of any response last turn to the bombardment of the Belgium ports indicates that the Germans have not based light forces to the area.

Notably, the ASW requirement has increased from 10 to 20, showing that the German navy is increasing deployments of submarines in a commerce raiding role. Historically, on 4 February 1915 Germany issued a warning that it was instituting unrestricted submarine warfare beginning on 18 February 1915.

I evaluate the ECOA for this two-week period in descending probability as follows:

1. **Most Probable ECOA /Most Dangerous ECOA** - Deployment of multiple Battle squadrons of the High Seas Fleet and unknown number of pre-dreadnaughts to British East coast, English Channel or North Sea. Possible minelaying and/or submarine operations off the English coast in support of the deployment.
2. Patrol or Raid conducted by 1<sup>st</sup> Scouting squadron led by SMS DERFFLINGER and associated light forces, likely along British East coast., without support of the High Seas Fleet
3. Deployment of German light forces to conduct small-scale patrols into North Sea. Possible minelaying operations in conjunction with the deployment.
4. Mining by German light forces off British East coast/Channel

## Available Forces

The British have 885 Operational points available. The Order of Battle for this turn is below:

	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine	AV	BB	BC	B	CA/AC	CL	DD	SS	SSC	Mine
Active	24	5	6	15	18	69	8	6	8	4	11	1	8	3	9	44	13	5	1
Reinforce		2			3														
Training																			
Repair	1	1	3	2	3	11	3	4							1	1			
Operational	23	6	3	13	18	58	5	2	8	4	11	1	8	3	8	43	13	5	1
<b>Advantage</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>N/A</b>									
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>4.333</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>N/A</b>									

## Objectives

In priority order, the objectives for this turn are as follows:

1. Engage and destroy any German Capital Ships in the North Sea
2. Prevent loss of British Capital Ships
3. Protect the English Coast from Bombardment
4. Conduct seaplane raid of German coast

## Concept of Operations

Intelligence indicates that both the most likely and the most dangerous enemy courses of action are a deployment of the High Seas Fleet. Accordingly, the entire Grand Fleet will also sortie, with the objective of engaging and destroying any German capital ships that sortie into the North Sea. This large deployment will require all the 865 operations points available, leaving few available for the next turn. With the preponderance of force, the Royal Navy should be able to destroy the German Fleet, if it located and intercepted. A few minor units, such as a squadron of heavy cruisers, will be left behind, mostly because of insufficient operations points.

The operation will consist of a preemptive sortie of the Grand Fleet to an MODLOC north of the Oyster Banks. The Battlecruiser Fleet will provide scouting to the SE of the Grand Fleet. By keeping the Battle cruisers to the SE, they should be able cut off the German retreat to their bases. Hopefully, this force will intercept the German fleet enroute to its estimated destination of the English east coast. If the Grand Fleet misses the Germans

on their outward leg, a patrol of destroyers off Grimsby will hopefully contact the German fleet.

A line of submarines off the Bight will provide early warning of any sailings by the German fleet. Two minelaying cruisers will deploy mines off Helgoland to attrition the German fleet on its return journey.

After the German fleet has been neutralized, the seaplane carriers will conduct a raid of the German ports. This is a secondary operation. Additionally, a patrol light cruisers in the English Channel will guard against a possible raid by German light forces in the area.

### **Replacements/Detachments**

- Reinforcements/Additions
  - BC HMS AUSTRALIA
  - BC HMS INDEFATIGABLE
  - CL HMS GLOUCESTER, INCONSTANT, CAROLINE
  - DD HMS MANSFIELD
- Detachments
  - None

### **Maintenance and Repairs**

- Units entering Repair/Maintenance
  - B HMS HIBERNIA
- Units returning from Maintenance
  - B HMS DOMINION
  - CA HMS ABOUKIR
  - 2 DDs

### **Training**

- Minelaying Division 2
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Cruiser Squadron
- CL HMS AURORA

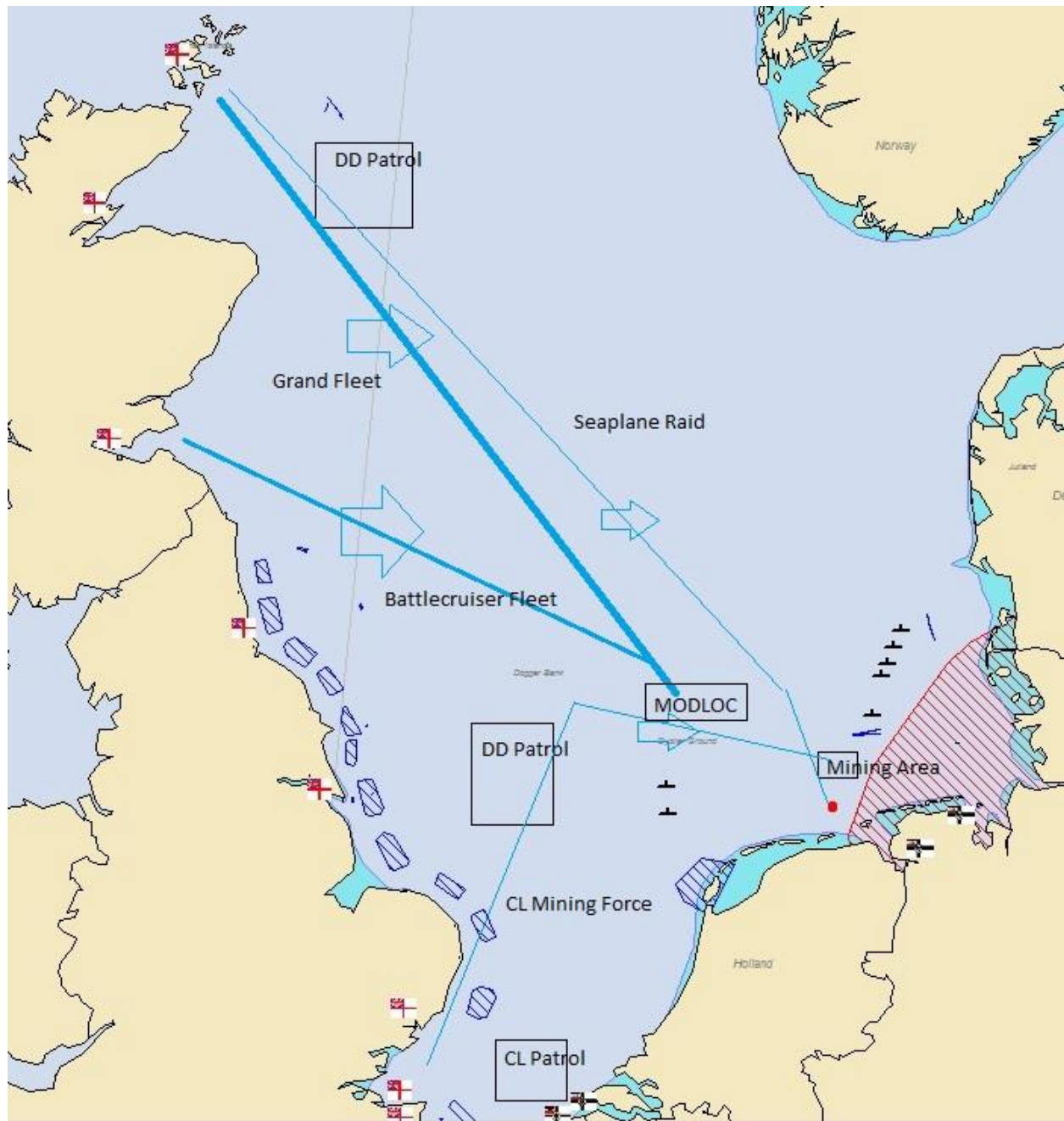
### **Administrative**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Light cruiser squadron is returned to the Grand Fleet from its temporary duty with the Battlecruiser Fleet. Similarly, the 5<sup>th</sup> light cruiser squadron and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Destroyer Flotilla returned to Harwich Force.

### **Operations**

See attached OPLAN. The Grand Fleet and Battlecruiser Fleet will rendezvous in the central North Sea and proceed to the MODLOC position to intercept the German fleet after cutting off its retreat to base. The minelaying light cruisers from Harwich Force and the seaplane carriers will approach Helgoland only after the High Seas Fleet is confirmed away from the area or neutralized.

### **18 February 1915 OPLAN**



### **Battlelog and spotting reports**

**Note: During this turn there was a major encounter between the German and British fleets, with the initial encounter occurring about one hour before dusk. I saved the game at the point where the fleets come into contact and will fight the scenario twice: Once with no restrictions on my ability to control the forces, and once with a more conservative strategy, more like what Jellicoe followed at Jutland. My purpose in doing this is to try to illustrate some of the factors that Admiral Jellicoe may have been considering at dusk during the Battle of Jutland, after the Germans executed their second battle turn away. I will then do an analysis based on the two engagements. Below is the first run through of the engagement:**

**Note: The action that followed was largely a confused night action fought at close range. The Battlelog is over 100 pages in length and recorded over 920 heavy caliber and 49 torpedo hits. I have severely edited it below to give a feel for the action.**

180934 E6 reports 4 BB 1 B 1 CA course WNW invic 5450N00710E. Based on this course, I assume the target is Hartlepool, and the German fleet will change course to due west shortly.

18 15:26 CL Bellona sights an unknown ship invic 5527N00424E. WX Clear, Lt Breez NNW, Sighting Range: 23,000 yds, 1hr, 05 min before Dusk. This interception is further north than I thought it would be.

18 15:27 CA Natal sights an unknown ship

18 15:29 CL Bellona identifies unknown ship as DD

18 15:30 CL Bellona sights an unknown ship

18 15:31 CL Bellona sights an unknown ship

18 15:32 CL Bellona sights an unknown ship

18 15:32 CL Bellona identifies DD as Bremen-class

18 15:34 CL Bellona identifies unknown ship as BB

18 15:34 CL Caroline sights an unknown ship

181531 **Grand Fleet turns to 146/20 knots. Line ahead Note: I strongly suspect the Grand Fleet has run into the High Seas Fleet, unfortunately earlier than I had wanted to.**

181531 **Battlecruiser Fleet turns to 105/25 knots and forms line ahead.**

18 15:41 BB opens fire at CL Bellona!

18 15:43 CL Bellona identifies BB as Nassau-class

18 15:46 CL Bellona identifies unknown ship as BB

18 15:46 CL Bellona identifies unknown ship as BB

18 15:49 CL Bellona identifies unknown ship as BB

**NOTE: At this point, a General Engagement between the scouting forces and the High Seas Fleet. I start withdrawing the scouting forces while the Grand Fleet forms a battleline to the**

**North of the German fleet, and the Battlecruiser Fleet does a high-speed run to the South, to cut off the Germans from their base.**

18 15:50 BB Nassau-class opens fire at CA Minotaur!  
18 15:52 BB opens fire at CL Boadicea!  
18 15:52 BB opens fire at CL Boadicea!  
18 15:52 BB Helgoland-class opens fire at CA Minotaur!  
18 15:55 BB Emperor of India opens fire at BB Nassau-class! Range 18,000 yds

18 15:57 BB Nassau-class opens fire at BB Benbow!  
18 15:58 BB Nassau-class opens fire at BB Emperor of India!  
18 15:58 BB Helgoland-class opens fire at BB Iron Duke!  
18 15:58 BB Nassau-class opens fire at CA Drake!  
18 15:58 BB Nassau-class opens fire at CA Drake!  
18 15:58 B Deutschland-class opens fire at CA Minotaur!  
18 15:58 B Deutschland-class opens fire at CA Minotaur!  
18 15:58 B Deutschland-class opens fire at CA Minotaur!  
18 15:58 B Braunschweig-class opens fire at CA Natal!  
18 15:58 B Deutschland-class opens fire at CA Natal!  
18 15:58 B opens fire at CA Natal!  
18 16:00 CA Shannon identifies B as Deutschland-class  
18 16:00 CA Minotaur identifies MS as V162-class  
18 16:03 BB Nassau-class opens fire at BB Benbow!  
18 16:03 BB Nassau-class opens fire at BB Emperor of India!  
18 16:03 BB Helgoland-class opens fire at BB Iron Duke!  
18 16:03 BB Helgoland-class opens fire at CA Natal!  
18 16:03 BB Helgoland-class opens fire at CA Minotaur!  
18 16:03 BB Nassau-class opens fire at CA Drake!  
18 16:03 BB Nassau-class opens fire at CA Drake!  
18 16:03 B Deutschland-class opens fire at CA Shannon!  
18 16:03 B Deutschland-class opens fire at CA Achilles!  
18 16:03 BB Emperor of India opens fire at BB Helgoland-class!  
18 16:03 BB Iron Duke opens fire at BB Nassau-class!  
18 16:03 BB Marlborough opens fire at BB Nassau-class!  
**18 16:10 BB Helgoland-class Hit**

1610 Fleet course changed to 045/20 knots. **Note: Over the next two hours, torpedoes take a heavy toll on both the British and German forces.**

**18 16:43 Enemy ship B Braunschweig-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 16:47 BB Benbow is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 16:55 BB Vanguard is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 17:09 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 17:18 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!**

18 17:18 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:18 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:19 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:22 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:22 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!

**Note: By 1723, The German Fleet is being overwhelmed by the superior British firepower.**

18 17:23 BB Nassau-class Hit  
18 17:23 BB Nassau-class Hit  
18 17:23 BB Nassau-class Hit  
18 17:23 BB Nassau-class Hit  
18 17:23 BB Nassau-class Hit  
18 17:24 B Braunschweig-class Hit  
18 17:24 B Braunschweig-class Hit  
18 17:25 BC Queen Mary is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:27 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:30 BC Princess Royal fires 8 4in guns at B! Target straddled! 3 hits  
18 17:30 B Hit  
18 17:30 B Hit  
18 17:30 B Hit  
18 17:33 BC Queen Mary is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:33 BC Queen Mary is sinking!  
18 17:35 Enemy ship CL is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:37 BB Superb is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:39 BC Princess Royal is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:41 Enemy ship BB Helgoland-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:41 Enemy ship BB Helgoland-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:43 BB St Vincent is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:44 BC Princess Royal is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:44 BB Superb is hit by a torpedo!  
  
18 17:44 BB St Vincent is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:44 Enemy ship CA is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:46 Enemy ship B is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:46 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:47 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:48 BB St Vincent is sinking!  
  
18 17:49 Enemy ship B is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:50 Enemy ship DD V25-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:52 BB Vanguard is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:52 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 17:52 BB Vanguard is sinking!

**18 17:52 BC Princess Royal is sinking!**  
 18 17:54 BB Nassau-class fires 2 11in guns at CA Duke of Edinburgh! 1 hits  
**18 17:54 CA Duke of Edinburgh Critical hit \*! Magazine hit! Ship blows up!**  
 18 17:57 BB Nassau-class fires 6 11in guns at BB St Vincent! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 17:57 BB St Vincent ## Turret hit T \* Turret flash fire! Ship blows up!**  
**18 17:58 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:02 BB Audacious is avoiding torpedoes!**  
**18 18:02 BB Audacious strikes a mine!**  
**18 18:03 DD Lyra is sinking!**  
**18 18:04 Enemy ship UNSIGHTED! is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:07 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:10 BB Superb is sinking!**  
**18 18:12 Enemy ship BB Helgoland-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:13 DD Comet is sinking!**  
 18 18:14 CL Southampton sights an unknown ship  
 18 18:14 DD Druid identifies unknown ship as DD  
 18 18:14 BB Nassau-class opens fire at BB Neptune!  
 18 18:14 BB Helgoland-class fires 6 6in guns at BB Iron Duke! Target straddled! 0 hits  
 =  
 18 18:14 BC Indomitable fires 6 12in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 18:14 BB Helgoland-class Hit**  
**18 18:14 BB Helgoland-class Hit**  
 !  
**18 18:15 BB Colossus is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:23 Enemy ship BB Helgoland-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:25 DD Minstrel is sinking!**  
**18 18:27 Enemy ship BB Helgoland-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:27 BC Queen Mary has sunk!**  
**18 18:29 DD Lyra has sunk!**  
**18 18:31 CL Gazelle-class ## Superstructure hit. Mines explode! Ship blows up!**  
 18 18:34 BC fires 4 11in guns at CA Devonshire! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:34 CA Devonshire Critical hit \*! Magazine hit! Ship blows up!**  
**18 18:34 DD Comet has sunk!**  
**18 18:34 CA Devonshire has sunk!**  
**18 18:40 BB Benbow is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:53 BC New Zealand is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:57 DD Minstrel has sunk!**  
**18 19:01 BC Princess Royal has sunk!**

Note: By 1906, the engagement is essentially a mopping up operation. The remaining hulks of the German fleet are sunk by a shelling from the Royal Navy, although several heavily damaged British battleships sink in the ensuing hours.

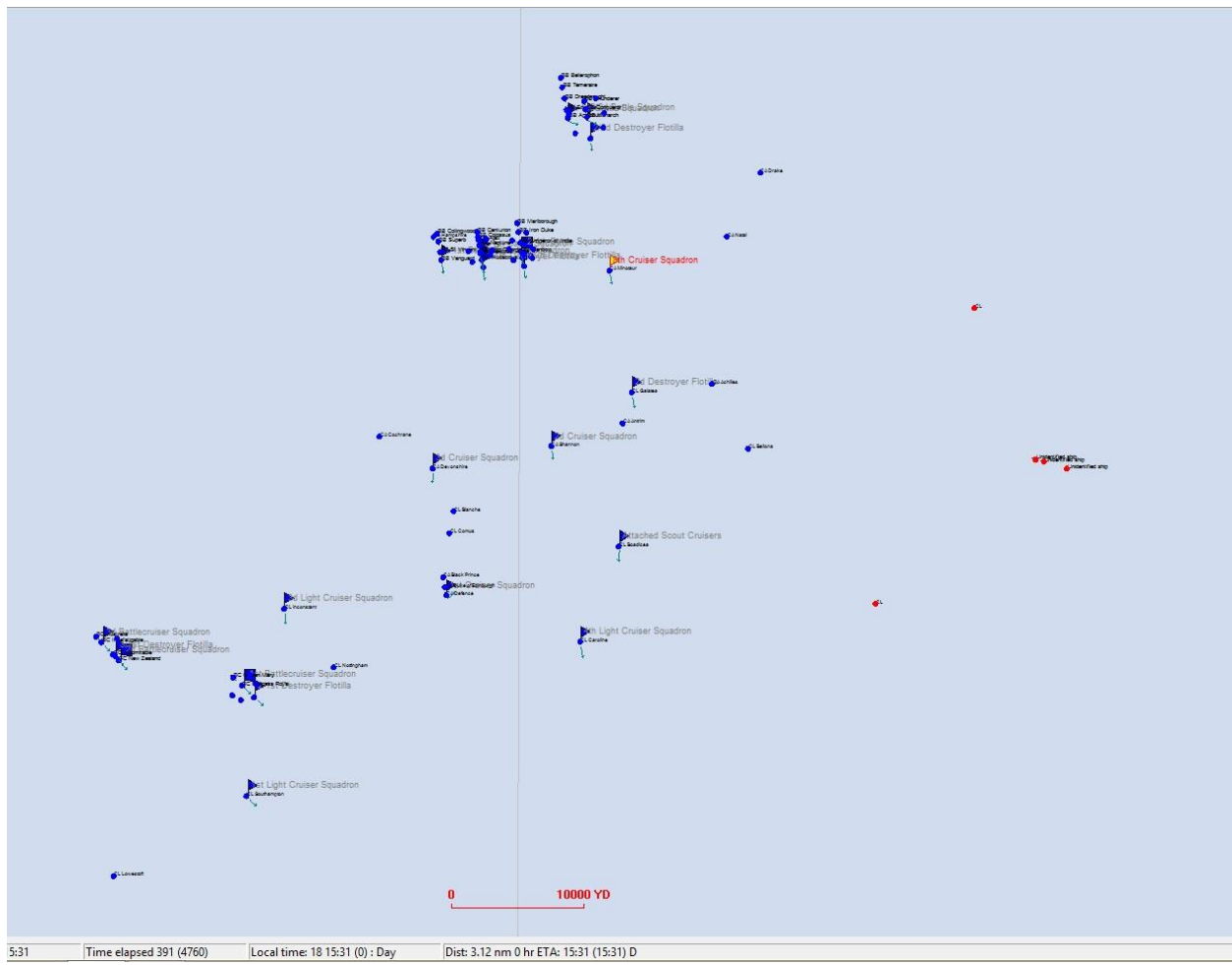
**18 19:07 BB Vanguard has sunk!**  
**18 19:08 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!**

18 19:10 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 19:14 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 19:20 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 19:27 Enemy ship BB is hit by a torpedo!  
18 19:29 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 19:30 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 19:31 BC New Zealand has reattached to 2d Battlecruiser Squadron  
18 19:32 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 19:51 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 20:07 BB Superb has sunk!  
18 21:04 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!  
18 21:04 BB Iron Duke is hit by a torpedo!  
18 22:01 BB Iron Duke fires 10 13in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
18 22:01 BB Nassau-class Hit  
18 22:01 BB Nassau-class Hit Note: this is the final broadside of the engagement

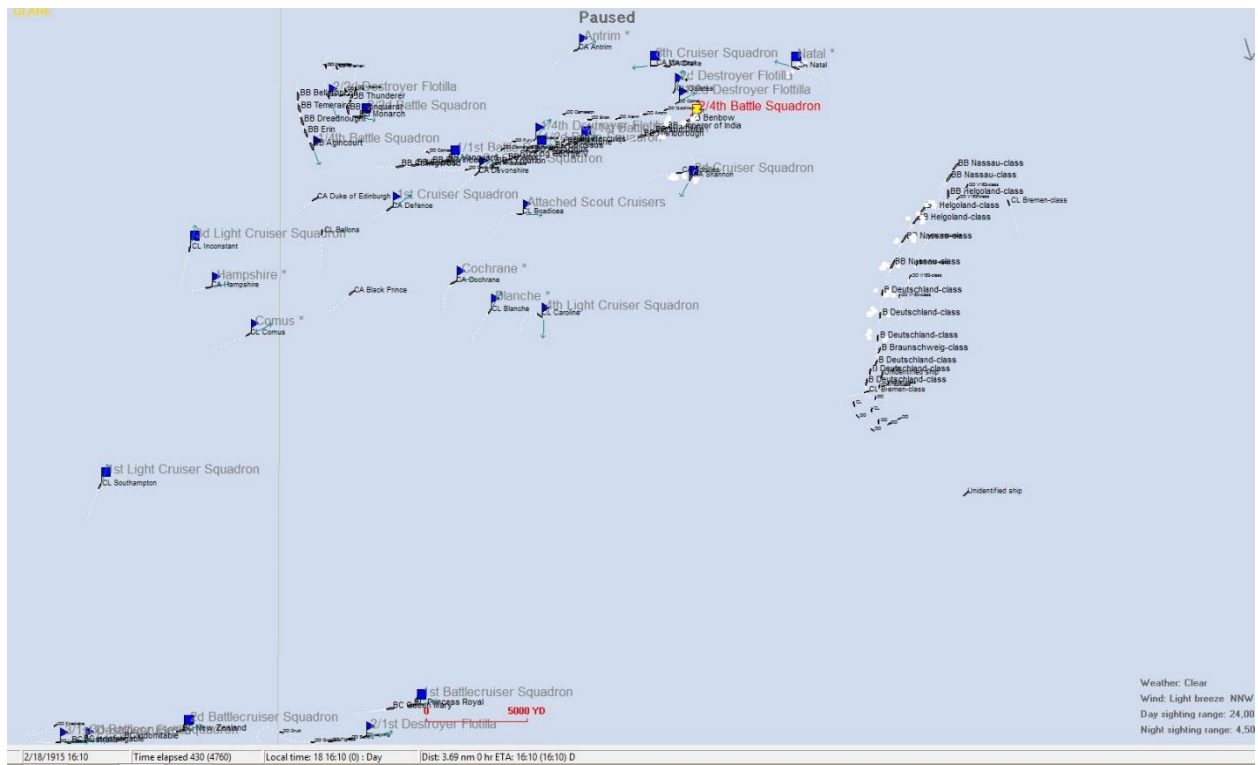
19 00:20 CL Apollo is commencing to lay mines!  
19 00:20 CL Intrepid is commencing to lay mines!  
19 00:40 CL Intrepid has finished laying mines!  
19 00:40 CL Apollo has finished laying mines!  
19 04:30 BB Benbow is sinking!  
19 05:33 BB Benbow has sunk!  
19 05:39 DD Achates loses contact with division!

190216 Submarine D4 reports 2BB, 2 B heading SE invic 5443N00643E **Note: This is apparently some survivors from the battle that have managed to escape the British in the night.**

**181531 February 1915-Intitial Contact**



## 181610 February 1915-The Initial Engagement of the Battlelines



## Aftermath and Analysis

**Full disclosure:** The night action that I played this game would be unlikely to ever have occurred in the real world, only because of the lack of control. The final tally for this engagement was seven German battleships 4 pre-dreadnoughts, one light cruiser and sixteen destroyers sunk. Three pre-dreadnoughts, although all were significantly damaged. In return, the British lost four battleships, two battlecruisers, two heavy cruisers and three destroyers sunk. Sixteen battleships and three battlecruisers are either undamaged or only lightly damaged.

## Rematch: 18 February action

### Introduction

In the first play thorough of the 18 February engagement, The British squadrons closed and individually melee with the German Fleet at extremely close range. Although a highly risky maneuver, in the game it was successful, with the British trading 4 BB, 2 BC, 2 CA and 3 DD sunk in exchange for sinking 7 BB, 4 B, 1 CL and 16 DD of the High Seas Fleet. Historically, the problem with the tactic I used in the first play through was that it was unrealistic. In World War

1, it would have been impossible for the British commander to have exercised the type of command and control I did in the first play through. Flag and signal lights were inadequate for the type of rapid, coordinated maneuvering that I used. In contrast to the tactical voice communications used in World War II, radio communications in World War One was conducted via Morse code, making it much slower. Further, it was frequently jammed by nearby enemy units. Further, without radar, the “God’s Eye” view that I enjoyed as the commander in the game would have been replaced by manual plotting, with ranges to ships manually estimated by stadimeter and manually plotted. The resultant plot would have been almost entirely inadequate for the fleet maneuvers in low visibility under combat conditions. Then there was the danger of the torpedo. British doctrine was to engage at medium ranges between 10,000-15,000 yards, to both give time to defeat approaching torpedo boats, and to maneuver to avoid the torpedoes.<sup>47</sup> With nighttime ranges of 5,000 yards or less, there simply was not time to counter the torpedo threat. Admiral Bacon summarized this dynamic, noting “[d]arkness cramps and renders the finest ships largely powerless. It degrades the offensive strength of the various vessels down to a common level. The battleship, proud in an armament of ten guns able to fire at ranges of up to ten miles, finds her range limited to one thousand yards. The torpedo rises in values, as near approach to a battleship is permitted by the shielding darkness, and the battleship supreme in daytime is at a disadvantage to the destroyer owing to the obscurity of the night.”<sup>48</sup>

Because of these factors, the British navy really did not have an effective night fighting doctrine for the Grand Fleet in 1915. Even if they had wanted to fight night actions, it is questionable whether an effective doctrine could have been put in place. The revolution in naval engineering that began around the turn of the century had created such a rapid technological change that it is questionable that any night fighting doctrine could have been written, distributed, and inculcated throughout the fleet before technological developments made the doctrine obsolete.

Because of the dangers inherent in a night action, Jellicoe properly decided to avoid one. However, that raises a question: For much of the year, the North Sea is shrouded in darkness or poor visibility, with the average visibility in the North Sea varying from 3-8 miles.<sup>49</sup> This low average visibility meant that any clash between the British and German fleets would quite possibly take place in either low light or low visibility conditions. Because of this, an almost necessary precondition to achieving a major victory would be the ability of the Royal Navy to inflict a defeat in low visibility conditions. Otherwise, the Germans could rely on either slipping away, or use their torpedoes to inflict disproportionate losses on the British. Accordingly, the ability to achieve a decisive victory over the German fleet necessitated the Royal Navy developing a decisive advantage in torpedo craft and destroyers, as well as a

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<sup>47</sup> Sumida, J. T. (2007). Expectation, Adaption, and Resignation: British Battle Fleet Tactical Planning August 1914-April 1916. *Naval War College Review*, 60(3), 114-116. Retrieved from <https://www.usnwc.edu/getattachment/abc15535-32f3-4476-bdbe-eb284e6f3bc8/Expectation,-Adaptation,-and-Resignation--British-.aspx>

<sup>48</sup> Harper, J. E. (2016). *The Jutland scandal: The truth about the First World War's greatest sea battle* (p. 161).

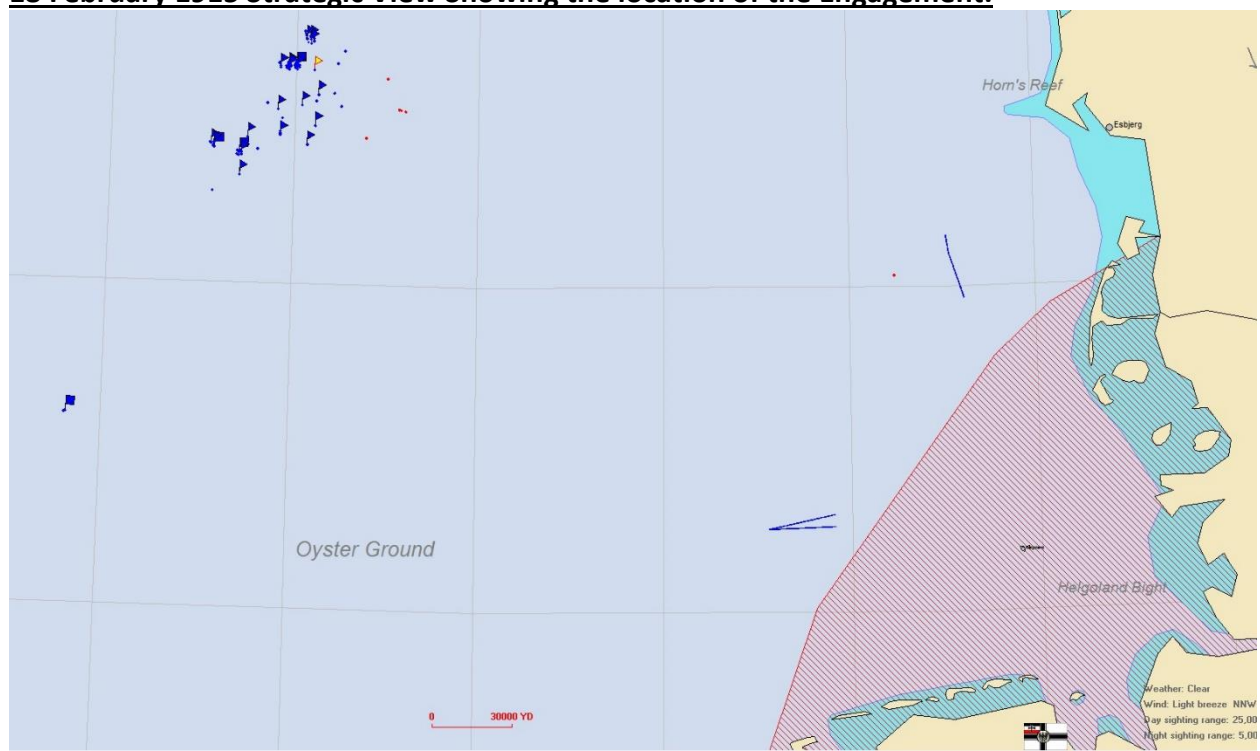
<sup>49</sup> Ekins, A., & Australian War Memorial. (2010). *1918 year of victory: The end of the Great War and the shaping of history, citing North Sea Pilot Part III*.

doctrine that would allow these light forces to achieve a decisive victory during night/low light conditions.

In the subsequent replay of the 18 February action, the scenario is restarted on 18 February at 1527, with the initial contact between the Grand Fleet and High Seas Fleet scouts. I will attempt to replay this scenario using what I believe to be a more “realistic” British doctrine than I used in the first run through. For the second play through, I will assume that British doctrine allowed squadron commanders to take more initiative than what in fact existed in 1915. However, as in 1915, I will try to maintain the engagement outside of 10,000 yards to avoid torpedo attacks. Finally, I will try to achieve a decisive victory over the High Seas Fleet, even at accepting some risk to British capital ships.

Achieving a decisive victory over the High Seas Fleet is complicated by the fact that at the time of the initial contact, twilight is at 1627, a mere 60 minutes away. Sunrise will be at approximately 0700. The 14.5 hours of darkness gives the German fleet ample time to retreat the approximately 105 miles to reach the safety of the Helgoland minefields. Accordingly, the British fleet must cripple the German fleet before nightfall. (Image Below).

#### **18 February 1915 Strategic View Showing the location of the Engagement.**



#### **Battlelog and spotting reports**

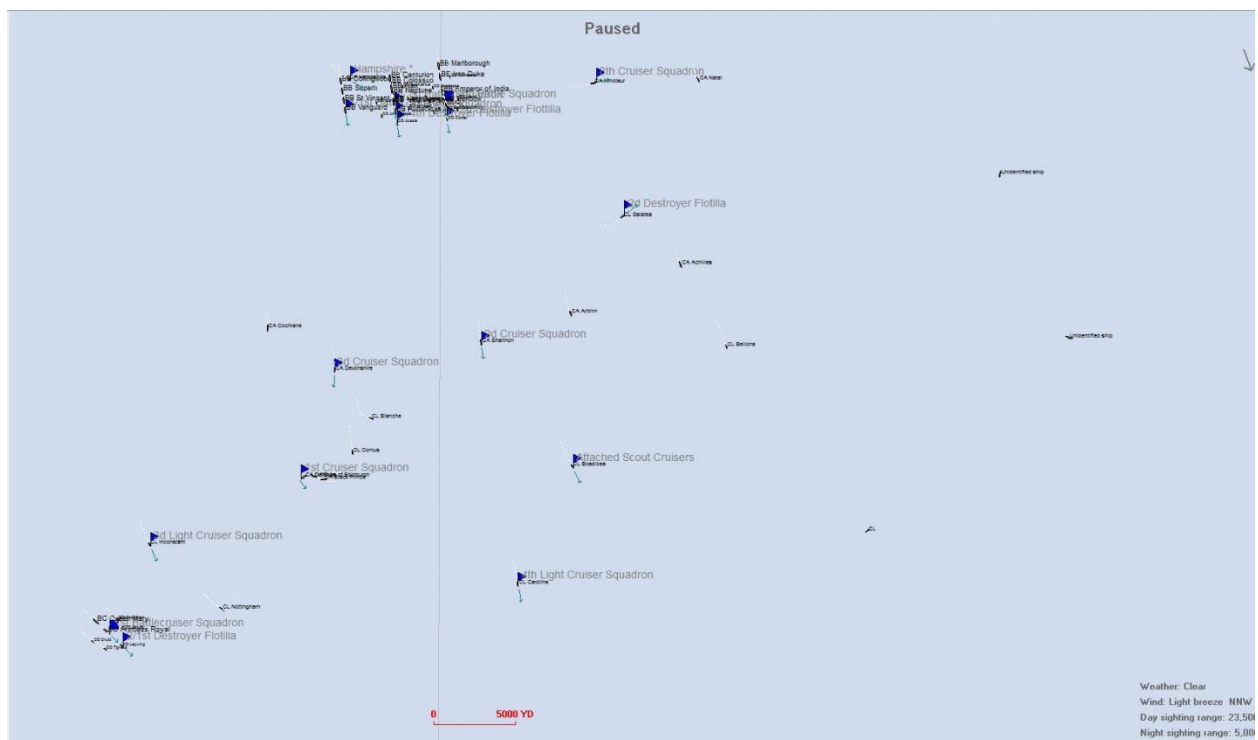
181525: WX: Clear, Light Breeze NNW, sighting range 24,000 yards

18 15:30 CA Drake sights an unknown ship

18 15:31 CL Bellona sights an unknown ship.

1532 Sensing that this may be the German High Seas Fleet, I form the Grand Fleet into two units: 1 and 2 BS forms a battleline to the west, while 4<sup>th</sup> BS forms a squadron to the North of the German fleet. The Battlecruiser Fleet does a high-speed run to the South, to cut off the Germans from their base. I must prevent the Germans from reaching safety, while remaining relatively safe from torpedo attacks. Making this task more difficult is the fact that the nighttime sighting range will be 4000 yards, well within effective torpedo range. My strategy will be to parallel the Germans and try to launch a nighttime torpedo attack. German escape to the West, North and East is impossible. They must run to the SE.

### 181538 February 1915



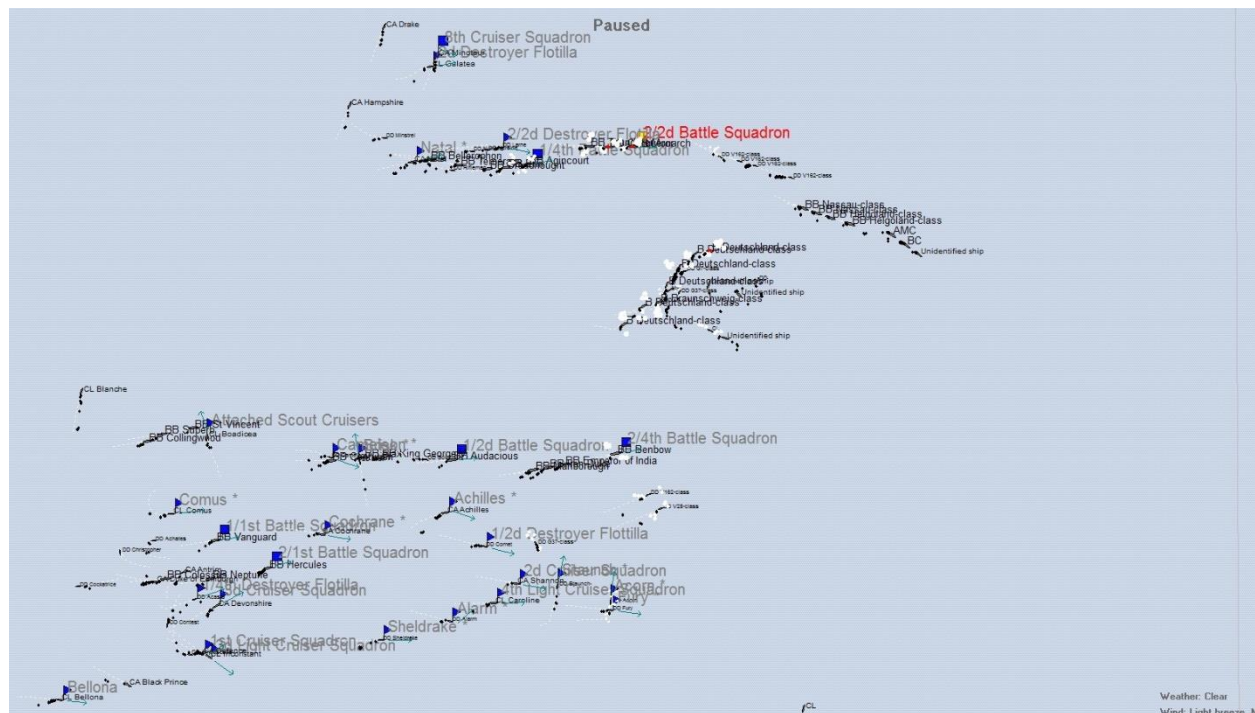
1544 All cruisers, except those in contact with the Germans are withdrawn to support the Capital ships. The purpose of this move is to strengthen the battle line's defense against an attack by the German destroyers.

18 16:19 BB Benbow fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hit

**18 16:19 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:19 BB Thunderer fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:19 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:19 BB Nassau-class fires 8 11in guns at BB Thunderer! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:19 BB Thunderer Turret hit T \* Turret disabled**  
18 16:20 BB Nassau-class fires 2 11in guns at BB Conqueror! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:20 BB Conqueror Hull hit B \***  
18 16:20 BB Neptune fires 8 12in guns at B Braunschweig-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:20 B Braunschweig-class Hit**  
18 16:20 CA Natal fires 4 9in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:20 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:20 BB Monarch limits flooding!  
18 16:22 BB Colossus fires 8 12in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:22 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:22 B Deutschland-class fires 2 7in guns at BB Benbow! 1 hits  
**18 16:22 BB Benbow Hull hit DE**  
18 16:23 B Braunschweig-class fires 2 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:23 BB Monarch Turret hit T \* Turret disabled**  
**18 16:24 DD Acorn is avoiding torpedoes!**  
18 16:24 BB Conqueror fires 4 13in guns at B Braunschweig-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:24 B Braunschweig-class Hit**  
18 16:24 BB Monarch fires 8 4in guns at DD V162-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:24 DD V162-class Hit**  
18 16:25 BB Marlborough fires 6 6in guns at DD G37-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:25 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:25 BB Iron Duke fires 6 6in guns at DD G37-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:25 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:27 BB Iron Duke fires 6 6in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 16:27 DD G37-class Hit**  
**18 16:27 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:27 BB Agincourt fires 4 12in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:27 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:27 B Braunschweig-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Emperor of India! 1 hits  
**18 16:27 BB Emperor of India Fore/aft hull hit \***  
18 16:28 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Erin! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:28 BB Erin Turret hit TT**  
18 16:28 B Braunschweig-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Emperor of India! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:28 BB Emperor of India Turret hit T**  
18 16:28 BB Iron Duke fires 6 6in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:28 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:29 BB Bellerophon fires 8 12in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:29 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:29 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Conqueror! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:29 BB Conqueror Superstructure hit BE**

18 16:29 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:29 BB Monarch Hull hit BE \***  
18 16:30 BB Marlborough fires 6 6in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:30 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:30 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 16:30 BB Benbow Superstructure passthrough hit \***  
**18 16:30 BB Benbow Turret hit T**  
18 16:31 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! 1 hits  
**18 16:31 BB Monarch Superstructure hit \***  
18 16:31 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Thunderer! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:31 BB Thunderer Fore/aft hull hit \***  
18 16:31 B Braunschweig-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Conqueror! 1 hits  
**18 16:31 BB Conqueror Engine room hit B**  
18 16:31 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Benbow! 1 hits  
**18 16:31 BB Benbow Lower belt edge hit**  
18 16:31 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Benbow! 1 hits  
**18 16:31 BB Benbow Fore/aft hull hit \***  
18 16:32 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:32 BB Benbow Secondary battery hit \***  
18 16:32 BB Thunderer fires 8 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:32 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:33 BB Monarch fires 4 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 16:33 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
**18 16:33 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:33 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Conqueror! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:33 BB Conqueror Superstructure hit \***  
18 16:33 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:33 BB Monarch Turret hit T \***  
18 16:34 BB Iron Duke is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 16:34 BB Iron Duke is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 16:34 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Thunderer! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:34 BB Thunderer Hull hit B**  
18 16:34 B Braunschweig-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:34 BB Monarch Turret hit T \***  
18 16:34 B Braunschweig-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Benbow! 1 hits  
**18 16:34 BB Benbow Superstructure hit \***  
18 16:34 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Erin! Target straddled! 0 hits  
18 16:34 BB Audacious fires 4 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:34 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:34 BB Monarch fires 4 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:34 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:34 BB Conqueror fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 16:34 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
**18 16:34 B Deutschland-class Hit**

## 181634 February 1915-Situation at Twilight



1634 Twilight Falls. Sunset is in 30 minutes. The German pre-dreadnoughts are isolated. One is burning, and several are reported as having medium damage. Hopefully I can deal them a crippling blow before nightfall. However, the German dreadnoughts in the van are insufficiently damaged. They will get away. The torpedoing of the HMS IRON DUKE is unfortunate, but if there aren't any more such incidents, the British can take the damage.

18 16:35 B Braunschweig-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:35 BB Monarch Engine room hit B**

18 16:37 DD Comet fires 2 4in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:37 DD G37-class Hit**

18 16:37 BB Conqueror fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:37 B Deutschland-class Hit**

18 16:37 BB Conqueror fires 8 4in guns at DD G7-class! 1 hits

**18 16:37 DD G7-class Hit**

18 16:37 BB Monarch fires 4 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:37 B Deutschland-class Hit**

18 16:37 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:37 BB Benbow Superstructure hit BE**

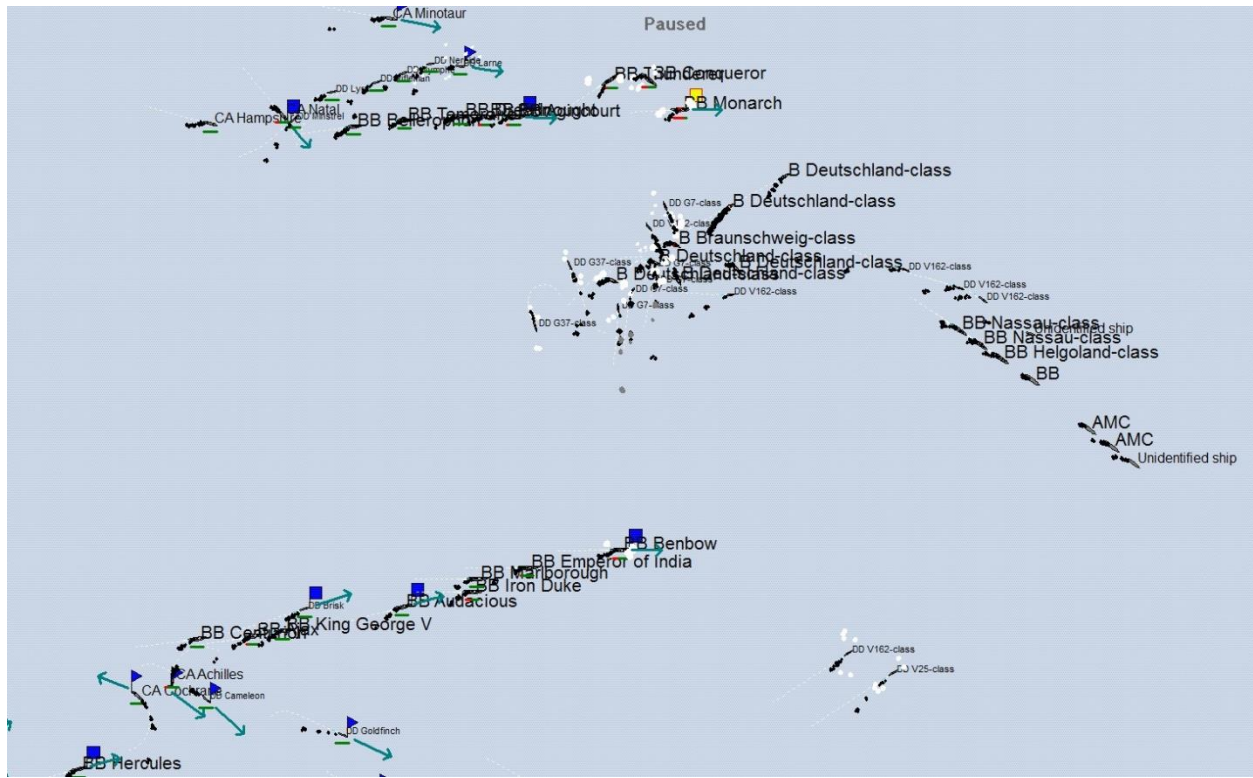
18 16:37 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:37 BB Monarch Hull hit B \***  
18 16:37 B Deutschland-class fires 6 7in guns at BB Thunderer! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:37 BB Thunderer Turret hit T**  
18 16:37 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 0 hits  
18 16:38 CA Shannon fires 4 9in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:38 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:38 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Agincourt! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:38 BB Agincourt Turret hit T**  
18 16:39 BB Benbow fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:39 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:39 BB Agincourt fires 14 12in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:39 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:39 BB Thunderer fires 8 4in guns at DD G7-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:39 DD G7-class Hit**  
18 16:39 B Deutschland-class fires 2 11in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:39 BB Benbow Fore/aft hull hit \***  
18 16:39 B Deutschland-class fires 2 7in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 0 hits  
18 16:39 B Deutschland-class fires 4 7in guns at BB Agincourt! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:39 BB Agincourt Fore/aft hull hit \***  
18 16:39 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Thunderer! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:39 BB Thunderer Superstructure hit \***  
18 16:39 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:39 BB Monarch Secondary battery hit \***  
18 16:39 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:39 BB Monarch Secondary battery hit \***  
18 16:39 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at BB Benbow! 1 hits  
**18 16:39 BB Benbow Turret hit T**  
18 16:39 BB Iron Duke limits flooding!  
18 16:40 DD Alarm fires 2 4in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:40 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:41 B Deutschland-class fires 2 7in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:41 BB Benbow Turret hit T**  
18 16:41 B Deutschland-class fires 4 7in guns at BB Agincourt! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:41 BB Agincourt Turret hit T**  
18 16:41 CL Gazelle-class fires 4 4in guns at DD Fury! 1 hits  
**18 16:41 DD Fury Near miss! Hull was damaged by splinters!**  
18 16:41 BB Ajax fires 8 4in guns at DD G37-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:41 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:41 BB Conqueror fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 16:41 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
**18 16:41 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:41 BB Thunderer fires 8 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 16:41 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
**18 16:41 B Deutschland-class Hit**

18 16:41 BB Benbow fires 8 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:41 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
 18 16:41 BB Emperor of India opens fire at B Braunschweig-class!  
 18 16:41 BB Iron Duke fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:41 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
 18 16:41 CL Caroline fires 2 6in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:41 DD G37-class Hit**  
  
 18 16:42 BB Agincourt fires 10 6in guns at DD G37-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:42 DD G37-class Hit**  
 18 16:42 BB Thunderer fires 8 4in guns at DD G7-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:42 DD G7-class Hit**  
 18 16:42 BB Hercules fires 2 12in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:42 DD G37-class Hit**  
 18 16:42 BC Queen Mary fires 8 13in guns at DD G37-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:42 DD G37-class Hit**  
 18 16:42 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:42 BB Monarch Hull hit BE \***  
 18 16:42 B Deutschland-class fires 2 7in guns at BB Emperor of India! Target straddled! 0 hits  
 18 16:43 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:43 BB Monarch Hull hit BE \***  
 18 16:43 BB Hercules fires 2 12in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:43 DD G37-class Hit**  
 18 16:43 BB Monarch fires 4 13in guns at B Braunschweig-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:43 B Braunschweig-class Hit**  
 18 16:43 BB Agincourt fires 10 6in guns at DD G37-class! 2 hits  
**18 16:43 DD G37-class Hit**  
**18 16:43 DD G37-class Hit**  
 18 16:44 BB Ajax fires 8 4in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 16:44 DD G37-class Hit**  
**18 16:44 DD G37-class Hit**  
 18 16:44 B Braunschweig-class fires 2 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:44 BB Monarch Turret hit T \* Turret destroyed**  
 18 16:44 B Braunschweig-class fires 2 7in guns at BB Agincourt! Target straddled! 0 hits  
 18 16:44 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:44 BB Monarch Turret hit T \***

1644 Another torpedo attack is developing against the British van. I order a turn away because of the night falling.

**181644 February 1915-British Battle Turn Away**



**18 16:45 BB Monarch Superstructure hit BE \***

18 16:45 BB Hercules fires 4 12in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:45 DD G37-class Hit**

18 16:45 BB Audacious fires 8 4in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:45 DD G37-class Hit**

18 16:46 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at BB Emperor of India! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:46 BB Emperor of India Secondary battery hit**

18 16:46 BB Audacious fires 4 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:46 B Deutschland-class Hit**

18 16:46 BB Benbow fires 8 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 2 hits

**18 16:46 B Deutschland-class Hit**

**18 16:46 B Deutschland-class Hit**

18 16:46 CA Achilles fires 2 3in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 16:46 DD G37-class Hit**

**18 16:47 Enemy ship DD G37-class is hit by a torpedo!**

18 16:47 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at BB Emperor of India! 1 hits

**18 16:47 BB Emperor of India Fore/aft hull hit \***

18 16:47 BC Queen Mary fires 8 13in guns at DD G37-class! 1 hits

18 16:47 DD G37-class Hit

18 16:47 BB Hercules fires 8 12in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 2 hits

**18 16:47 DD G37-class Hit**  
**18 16:47 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:47 BB Conqueror fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:47 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:47 BB Benbow fires 8 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:47 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:47 DD Cameleon fires 2 4in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:47 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:48 BB Hercules fires 8 12in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:48 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:48 BB Marlborough fires 4 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:48 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:48 CA Achilles fires 2 3in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:48 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:49 BB Iron Duke is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 16:49 BB Iron Duke is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 16:49 BB Audacious is avoiding torpedoes!  
18 16:49 BB Audacious is avoiding torpedoes!  
18 16:50 BB Audacious fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:50 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:50 BB Benbow fires 5 6in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:50 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:50 BB Iron Duke fires 6 6in guns at DD G37-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:50 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:51 BB King George V is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 16:51 BB King George V is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 16:51 BB Helgoland-class fires 6 12in guns at BB Emperor of India! 1 hits  
**18 16:51 BB Emperor of India Hull hit BE \***  
18 16:51 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Marlborough! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:51 BB Marlborough Turret hit T**  
18 16:51 BB Iron Duke fires 6 6in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:51 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:51 CA Hampshire fires 3 6in guns at DD V162-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:51 DD V162-class Hit**  
18 16:52 BB Ajax is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 16:52 BB Ajax is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 16:52 CA Minotaur fires 5 7in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:52 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:52 B Braunschweig-class fires 6 3in guns at DD Nereide! 1 hits  
**18 16:52 DD Nereide Fore/aft hull hit \***  
18 16:52 B Deutschland-class fires 2 11in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:52 BB Benbow Secondary battery hit \* Fire started**  
18 16:52 BB Helgoland-class fires 2 6in guns at BB Emperor of India! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:52 BB Emperor of India Turret hit T**

18 16:52 DD Goldfinch has reattached to 1/2d Destroyer Flotilla  
**18 16:53 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 16:53 BB Nassau-class fires 8 11in guns at BB Iron Duke! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:53 BB Iron Duke Near miss!**  
18 16:53 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:53 BB Benbow Secondary battery hit \***  
18 16:53 CA Minotaur fires 4 9in guns at B Braunschweig-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:53 B Braunschweig-class Hit**

18 16:55 CA Minotaur fires 4 9in guns at B Braunschweig-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:55 B Braunschweig-class Hit**  
18 16:56 B Deutschland-class fires 1 7in guns at DD Brisk! 1 hits  
**18 16:56 DD Brisk Hull hit B \***  
18 16:56 BB Erin fires 8 6in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:56 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:56 BB Benbow opens fire at B Deutschland-class!  
18 16:56 BB Emperor of India opens fire at B Deutschland-class!  
18 16:57 CA Drake fires 8 6in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:57 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:57 CA Natal fires 2 3in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:57 DD G37-class Hit**  
18 16:58 BB Audacious fires 4 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 16:58 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 16:58 B Deutschland-class opens fire at BB Monarch!  
18 16:58 B Deutschland-class opens fire at CA Natal!  
18 16:58 B Deutschland-class fires 2 11in guns at CA Natal! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 16:58 CA Natal Superstructure hit \***  
18 17:00 BB Conqueror fires 10 13in guns at B Braunschweig-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:00 B Braunschweig-class Hit**  
18 17:01 BB Iron Duke fires 6 6in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 17:01 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 17:01 B Deutschland-class fires 5 7in guns at CA Natal! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:01 CA Natal Hull hit BE \***  
18 17:01 B Deutschland-class fires 2 11in guns at CA Natal! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:01 CA Natal Hull hit BE \***  
18 17:01 B Deutschland-class fires 4 11in guns at BB Monarch! 1 hits  
**18 17:01 BB Monarch Turret hit T**  
18 17:01 DD Sheldrake is picking up survivors from DD V45  
18 17:02 BB Iron Duke fires 10 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 17:02 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 17:02 BB Benbow fires 8 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits  
**18 17:02 B Deutschland-class Hit**  
18 17:02 BB Conqueror fires 10 13in guns at B Braunschweig-class! 1 hits

**18 17:02 B Braunschweig-class Hit**

18 17:02 BB Monarch fires 4 13in guns at B Braunschweig-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:02 B Braunschweig-class Hit**

18 17:02 B Deutschland-class fires 6 7in guns at BB Monarch! 1 hits

**18 17:02 BB Monarch Turret hit T**

18 17:03 CA Hampshire fires 1 6in guns at DD V162-class! 1 hits

**18 17:03 DD V162-class Hit**

18 17:03 CA Natal opens fire at B Deutschland-class!

18 17:03 DD Sheldrake is picking up survivors from DD V45

18 17:04 CA Natal fires 4 9in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 0 hits

18 17:04 BB Thunderer fires 8 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:04 B Deutschland-class Hit**

18 17:04 DD Sheldrake is picking up survivors from DD V45

18 17:05 B Deutschland-class fires 7 7in guns at BB Agincourt! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:05 BB Agincourt Engine room hit B**

18 17:06 BC Princess Royal fires 6 13in guns at CL! 1 hits

**18 17:06 CL Hit**

18 17:06 DD G7-class fires 1 3in guns at DD Brisk! 1 hits

**18 17:06 DD Brisk Fore/aft hull hit \***

18 17:07 B Braunschweig-class fires 2 11in guns at BB Monarch! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:07 BB Monarch Engine room hit B \***

**18 17:08 Enemy ship B Braunschweig-class is hit by a torpedo!**

18 17:08 CL Blanche has lost sight of target

18 17:08 CA Natal has lost sight of target

18 17:08 CA Natal has lost sight of target

18 17:08 CA Natal fires 2 3in guns at DD G37-class! Target straddled! 0 hits

18 17:08 CA Hampshire has lost sight of target

18 17:08 CA Hampshire has lost sight of target

18 17:08 CL Galatea has lost sight of target

18 17:08 CL Galatea has lost sight of target

18 17:08 CA Drake has lost sight of target

18 17:08 CA Minotaur has lost sight of target

18 17:08 CA Minotaur has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Marlborough has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Marlborough has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Marlborough has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Iron Duke has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Iron Duke has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Iron Duke has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Emperor of India has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Emperor of India has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Emperor of India has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Benbow has lost sight of target

18 17:08 BB Benbow has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Benbow has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Bellerophon has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Temeraire has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Temeraire has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Dreadnought has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Erin has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Erin has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Agincourt has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Agincourt has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Thunderer opens fire at B Braunschweig-class!  
 18 17:08 BB Conqueror fires 10 13in guns at B Braunschweig-class! Target straddled! 3 hits  
**18 17:08 B Braunschweig-class Hit**  
**18 17:08 B Braunschweig-class Hit**  
**18 17:08 B Braunschweig-class Hit**  
 18 17:08 BB Conqueror has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Conqueror has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Monarch opens fire at B Deutschland-class!  
 18 17:08 BB Monarch has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB King George V has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Audacious has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Audacious has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Audacious has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Colossus has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Neptune has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Hercules has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Hercules has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Collingwood has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Superb has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB St Vincent has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BB Vanguard has lost sight of target  
 18 17:08 BC Princess Royal has lost sight of target  
 18 17:09 BB Conqueror fires 4 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! 1 hits

1709 **At nightfall, the German pre-dreadnoughts are completely isolated from the German battleships, which have disappeared in the darkness to the SSE of the pre-dreadnought's position. The lack of return fire from the pre-dreadnoughts indicates that they have been neutralized. Because of this, the Grand Fleet will continue bombarding them at close range to ensure their sinking. To guard against the German van from doubling back to the NW and surprising the fleet while it is engaged with the pre-dreadnoughts, the Battlecruisers will continue to sail to the ENE to establish contact with the German van but will avoid engagement.**

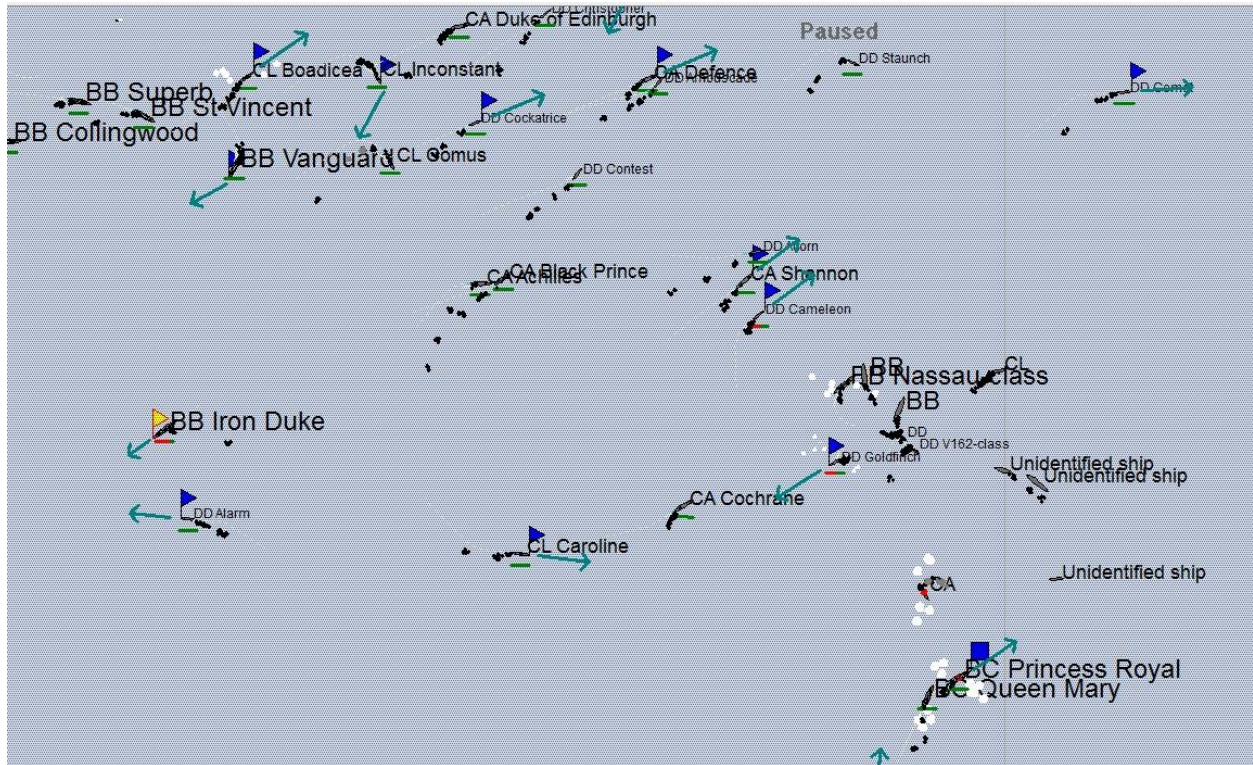
#### **181709 February 1915-Situation at Nightfall**

**18 17:26 DD Cameleon Torpedo tubes hit Torpedo explodes!**

18 17:26 BB fires 6 3in guns at DD Goldfinch! Target straddled! 4 hits  
**18 17:26 DD Goldfinch Near miss!**  
**18 17:26 DD Goldfinch Turret hit T \***  
**18 17:26 DD Goldfinch Turret hit T \* Turret destroyed**  
**18 17:26 DD Goldfinch Critical hit \*! Machinery damaged!**  
18 17:27 BC Princess Royal fires 2 4in guns at CA! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:27 CA Hit**  
18 17:27 BB Nassau-class opens fire at CA Shannon!  
18 17:27 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at DD Cameleon! Target straddled! 0 hits  
18 17:27 DD Shark is laying smoke!  
18 17:27 DD Lynx is laying smoke!  
18 17:28 CL Galatea is laying smoke!  
18 17:28 CL Comus is laying smoke!  
**18 17:28 Enemy ship BB Nassau-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 17:28 Enemy ship BB is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 17:28 BC Princess Royal sights an unknown ship. **Notably, the German force appears to be traveling to the NNW, so it may have been attempting to engage the portion of the fleet that was bombarding the German pre-dreadnoughts. While my intention was merely to locate the German van, the torpedoing of two Battleships leaves the possibility of the British cutting off and sinking the damaged ships. Because of this possibility, I detach eight battleships south towards the German battleships. Over the next 45 minutes, a confused action develops, with the British Battlecruisers and this detached force suffering from accurate German gunfire and torpedoes. Despite the effort to break off the action, it continues in fits and starts as units of the opposing fleets come into contact in the dark.**

18 17:28 CA Cochrane opens fire at BB Nassau-class!  
**18 17:28 BB Nassau-class Hit**  
18 17:28 BB Emperor of India fires 4 13in guns at B Deutschland-class! Target straddled! 0 hits  
18 17:28 BC Queen Mary fires 4 13in guns at CA! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:28 CA Hit**  
18 17:28 Unidentified ship fires 6 12in guns at BC Princess Royal! 1 hits  
**18 17:28 BC Princess Royal Superstructure hit BE \***  
18 17:29 CA Shannon fires 4 9in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:29 BB Nassau-class Hit**  
18 17:29 CA Shannon fires 5 7in guns at BB! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:29 BB Hit**  
18 17:29 BB Nassau-class fires 6 11in guns at CA Shannon! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 17:29 CA Shannon Hull hit B \***  
**18 17:29 CA Shannon Engine room hit B \***

#### **181729 February 1915-Contact with German Battleline**



18 17:29 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at DD Cameleon! Target straddled! 0 hits

**18 17:30 BB Neptune is avoiding torpedoes!**

18 17:30 BC Queen Mary is launching torpedoes

18 17:30 BB Centurion is launching torpedoes

18 17:30 DD Acorn is launching torpedoes

18 17:30 DD Larne is launching torpedoes

18 17:30 BB Benbow is launching torpedoes

18 17:30 DD Acorn fires 2 4in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:30 BB Nassau-class Hit**

18 17:30 DD Acorn fires 1 3in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 0 hits

18 17:30 CA Shannon fires 5 7in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:30 BB Nassau-class Hit**

18 17:30 BB Emperor of India fires 2 6in guns at BC! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:30 BC Hit**

18 17:30 BC Queen Mary fires 8 13in guns at CL Bremen-class! 1 hits

**18 17:30 CL Bremen-class Hit**

18 17:30 BC Princess Royal fires 8 13in guns at DD V162-class! Target straddled! 2 hits

**18 17:30 DD V162-class Hit**

**18 17:30 DD V162-class Hit**

18 17:30 BC Princess Royal fires 8 4in guns at DD V162-class! Target straddled! 2 hits

**18 17:30 DD V162-class Hit**

**18 17:30 DD V162-class Hit**

18 17:30 Unidentified ship fires 2 3in guns at BB Neptune! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:30 BB Neptune Critical hit. Bridge destroyed!**

18 17:30 BC fires 2 11in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:30 BB Benbow Turret hit T \***  
18 17:30 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at DD Acorn! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:30 DD Acorn Fore/aft hull hit \***  
18 17:31 BB Centurion is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 17:31 BB Centurion is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 17:31 BC Queen Mary is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 17:31 BC Queen Mary is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 17:31 BB fires 6 3in guns at DD Acorn! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:31 DD Acorn Turret hit T \* Turret disabled**  
18 17:31 DD V162-class fires 2 3in guns at BC Princess Royal! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:31 BC Princess Royal Superstructure hit \***  
18 17:31 BC fires 2 7in guns at BB Benbow! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:31 BB Benbow Fore/aft hull hit \***  
18 17:31 Unidentified ship fires 2 3in guns at BB Neptune! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:31 BB Neptune Superstructure hit \***  
18 17:31 BC Princess Royal fires 8 4in guns at DD V162-class! Target straddled! 3 hits  
**18 17:31 DD V162-class Hit**  
**18 17:31 DD V162-class Hit**  
**18 17:31 DD V162-class Hit**  
18 17:31 BB Audacious fires 2 4in guns at BC! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:31 BC Hit**  
18 17:31 BB King George V has lost sight of target  
18 17:31 CA Shannon fires 4 9in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:31 BB Nassau-class Hit**

18 17:32 CL Bremen-class fires 5 4in guns at DD Goldfinch! Target straddled! 3 hits  
**18 17:32 DD Goldfinch Hull hit B \***  
**18 17:32 DD Goldfinch Near miss!**  
**18 17:32 DD Goldfinch Near miss!**  
18 17:32 CL Bellona detaches to move independently against close enemy  
**18 17:33 BB Neptune has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 17:33 BB Nassau-class fires 2 6in guns at CA Cochrane! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:33 CA Cochrane Superstructure hit \***  
18 17:33 CL Bremen-class fires 5 4in guns at DD Goldfinch! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:33 DD Goldfinch Engine room hit B \***  
18 17:33 BB fires 6 6in guns at BC Princess Royal! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:33 BC Princess Royal Turret hit T**  
18 17:33 Unidentified ship fires 2 3in guns at BC Queen Mary! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:33 BC Queen Mary Superstructure hit BE**  
18 17:33 Unidentified ship fires 2 11in guns at BB Superb! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:33 BB Superb Engine room hit B \***  
18 17:33 BB Superb fires 4 12in guns at Unidentified ship! 1 hits  
**18 17:33 Unidentified ship Hit**

18 17:33 BB Hercules fires 8 4in guns at DD V162-class! 1 hits  
**18 17:33 DD V162-class Hit**  
18 17:33 BB Neptune has lost sight of target  
18 17:34 BB Neptune is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 17:34 BB Neptune is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 17:34 CA Cochrane fires 3 9in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 17:34 BB Nassau-class Hit**  
**18 17:34 BB Nassau-class Hit**  
18 17:34 CL Blanche fires 5 4in guns at DD! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:34 DD Hit**  
18 17:35 CA Cochrane fires 3 9in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:35 BB Nassau-class Hit**  
18 17:35 DD Staunch detaches to move independently against close enemy  
18 17:36 CA Cochrane fires 3 9in guns at BB! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 17:36 BB Hit**  
**18 17:36 BB Hit**  
18 17:42 CA Defence is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 17:42 CA Defence is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 17:42 Critical hit! Rudder damaged  
**18 17:44 BB Neptune has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 17:46 CL Lowestoft fires 5 6in guns at CL Bremen-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 17:46 CL Bremen-class Hit**  
**18 17:46 CL Bremen-class Hit**  
18 17:46 BC Indefatigable fires 8 4in guns at CL Bremen-class! 1 hits  
**18 17:46 CL Bremen-class Hit**  
18 17:47 CL Lowestoft fires 1 6in guns at CL Bremen-class! 1 hits  
**18 17:47 CL Bremen-class Hit**  
18 17:47 BB Vanguard has lost sight of target  
18 17:47 BB St Vincent has lost sight of target  
18 17:47 BB St Vincent has lost sight of target  
18 17:47 BB Superb fires 4 12in guns at BB! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:47 BB Hit**  
18 17:47 BB Superb holds fire - uncertain identity  
18 17:47 CL Blanche fires 5 4in guns at DD G7-class! Target straddled! 3 hits  
**18 17:47 DD G7-class Hit**  
**18 17:47 DD G7-class Hit**  
**18 17:47 DD G7-class Hit**  
18 17:47 BB Centurion limits flooding!  
18 17:47 CL Lowestoft is laying smoke!  
18 17:47 CA Cochrane detaches to move independently against close enemy  
**18 17:48 CA Defence has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 17:48 BB Neptune has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 17:48 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 17:48 UNSIGHTED! opens fire at BC New Zealand!

18 17:48 UNSIGHTED! fires 8 11in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 0 hits  
18 17:48 UNSIGHTED! opens fire at BC New Zealand!  
18 17:49 Unidentified ship fires 8 11in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:49 BC New Zealand Fore/aft hull hit \***  
18 17:49 Unidentified ship fires 5 6in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:49 BC New Zealand Turret hit T**  
18 17:49 Unidentified ship fires 6 12in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 17:49 BC New Zealand Engine room hit B \***  
**18 17:49 BC New Zealand Superstructure hit \***  
18 17:49 Unidentified ship fires 7 6in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 3 hits  
**18 17:49 BC New Zealand Fore/aft hull hit \***  
**18 17:49 BC New Zealand Superstructure hit BE \***  
**18 17:49 BC New Zealand Superstructure hit \***  
18 17:50 BC New Zealand is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 17:50 BC New Zealand is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 17:50 BC New Zealand sights an unknown ship  
18 17:50 BC New Zealand identifies unknown ship as BB  
18 17:50 BC New Zealand identifies unknown ship as BB  
18 17:50 BC New Zealand identifies unknown ship as DD  
18 17:50 BB fires 8 11in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 3 hits  
**18 17:50 BC New Zealand Hull hit BE \***  
**18 17:50 BC New Zealand Engine room hit B \***  
**18 17:50 BC New Zealand Engine room hit B \***  
18 17:50 BB fires 5 6in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:50 BC New Zealand Hull hit BE Armor pushed in**  
18 17:50 Unidentified ship fires 8 11in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:50 BC New Zealand Secondary battery hit \* Fire started**  
18 17:50 Unidentified ship fires 6 6in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 17:50 BC New Zealand Fore/aft hull hit \***  
**18 17:50 BC New Zealand Secondary battery hit \***  
18 17:50 CA Defence limits flooding!  
18 17:50 DD Cockatrice detaches to move independently against close enemy  
**18 17:51 CA Defence has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 17:51 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
-class! Target straddled! 0 hits  
18 17:51 DD Cockatrice fires 3 4in guns at DD G7-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:51 DD G7-class Hit**  
18 17:51 Unidentified ship fires 6 6in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:51 BC New Zealand Secondary battery hit \***  
18 17:51 DD Goldfinch machinery repaired!  
18 17:51 BB King George V Turret back in action!  
18 17:51 BB Neptune limits flooding!  
18 17:51 CA Defence limits flooding!  
18 17:51 BC Queen Mary limits flooding!

**18 17:52 CA Defence has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

18 17:52 BB Collingwood identifies DD as G37-class

18 17:52 DD Larne identifies MS as V162-class

18 17:52 CL Lowestoft identifies BB as Nassau-class

18 17:52 BB Nassau-class fires 8 11in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 2 hits

**18 17:52 BC New Zealand Secondary battery hit \***

**18 17:52 BC New Zealand Secondary battery hit \***

18 17:53 BC Princess Royal fires 6 13in guns at BB! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:53 BB Hit**

18 17:53 BB fires 8 11in guns at BC New Zealand! 1 hits

**18 17:53 BC New Zealand Hull hit BE \***

18 17:53 BC New Zealand limits flooding!

18 17:53 BB Benbow Fire spreads

18 17:53 BB Neptune limits flooding!

18 17:53 BC Queen Mary limits flooding!

**18 17:54 BB Neptune has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

**18 17:54 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

18 17:54 BB fires 5 6in guns at BC Princess Royal! Target straddled! 2 hits

**18 17:54 BC Princess Royal Hull hit BE Armor pushed in**

**18 17:54 BC Princess Royal Hull hit BE**

18 17:55 BC Princess Royal is avoiding torpedoes!

**18 17:55 BC Princess Royal is hit by a torpedo!**

18 17:55 BB fires 8 11in guns at BC Princess Royal! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:55 BC Princess Royal Turret hit T \***

18 17:55 BB fires 5 6in guns at DD Sandfly! Target straddled! 2 hits

**18 17:55 DD Sandfly Near miss! Machinery damaged by splinters!**

**18 17:55 DD Sandfly Fore/aft hull hit \***

18 17:55 BB fires 7 6in guns at BC Princess Royal! Target straddled! 2 hits

**18 17:55 BC Princess Royal Turret hit T Turret disabled**

**18 17:55 BC Princess Royal Superstructure hit BE \***

18 17:55 BC Princess Royal fires 6 13in guns at BB! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 17:55 BB Hit**

**By 1755, the damage to the British ships is sufficient that I break off the engagement. I believe the Royal Navy has put at least two of the Battleships in sinking condition, but the Grand Fleet must break off and attempt to save its damaged ships.**

18 17:55 BC New Zealand has lost sight of target

18 17:55 CL Lowestoft has lost sight of target

18 17:55 BB Vanguard has lost sight of target

18 17:55 BB St Vincent has lost sight of target

18 17:55 BB Superb has lost sight of target

18 17:55 BB Collingwood has lost sight of target

18 17:55 BB Hercules has lost sight of target

18 17:55 BB Neptune has lost sight of target  
18 17:55 BB Colossus Turret jammed!  
18 17:55 BB Audacious has lost sight of target  
18 17:55 BB Ajax has lost sight of target  
18 17:59 BB fires 6 12in guns at DD Goshawk! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 17:59 DD Goshawk Hull hit B \***  
18 17:59 BC Princess Royal limits flooding!  
18 17:59 BB Centurion high speed increases flooding!  
18 17:59 BC Queen Mary limits flooding!  
**18 18:00 CA Defence has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:00 CL Blanche is laying smoke!  
**18 18:00 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:00 CL Inconstant is laying smoke!  
18 18:00 CL Comus is laying smoke!  
18 18:00 BB King George V is avoiding torpedoes!  
18 18:00 BB Agincourt sights an unknown ship  
**18 18:00 DD Tigress is sinking!**  
18 18:01 BC Princess Royal high speed increases flooding!  
18 18:01 BC New Zealand Fire spreads  
18 18:01 BB Centurion limits flooding!  
18 18:01 BB Neptune limits flooding!  
18 18:01 BC Queen Mary limits flooding!  
**18 18:02 CA Defence has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:03 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:03 DD Goshawk is sinking!**  
**18 18:05 CA Defence has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:05 BB Neptune has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:05 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:05 BB Erin is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 18:05 BB Erin is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 18:07 BB Nassau-class fires 8 11in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:07 BC New Zealand Turret hit T \* Turret destroyed**  
18 18:08 Unidentified ship fires 8 11in guns at BB Audacious! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:08 BB Audacious Hull passthrough hit \***  
18 18:08 BB Hercules holds fire - uncertain identity  
18 18:08 BB Neptune holds fire - uncertain identity  
18 18:08 BB Colossus holds fire - uncertain identity  
**18 18:10 CL Comus is avoiding torpedoes!**  
**18 18:10 CL Comus is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 18:10 Unidentified ship fires 3 4in guns at DD Christopher! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:10 DD Christopher Superstructure hit BE \***  
18 18:10 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at DD Ambuscade! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:10 DD Ambuscade Near miss! Gun crew cut down by splinters!**  
18 18:10 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at CL Lowestoft! Target straddled! 5 hits

18 18:10 CL Lowestoft  
18 18:10 CL Lowestoft Superstructure hit BE \* Fire started  
18 18:10 CL Lowestoft Engine room hit B  
18 18:10 CL Lowestoft Near miss!  
18 18:10 CL Lowestoft Superstructure hit \*  
18 18:10 BB Nassau-class fires 6 3in guns at DD Ambuscade! Target straddled! 1 hits  
18 18:10 DD Ambuscade Superstructure hit BE \*  
18 18:10 BB Helgoland-class fires 2 3in guns at DD Sandfly! Target straddled! 0 hits  
18 18:10 BC opens fire at BB Audacious!  
18 18:10 BC Princess Royal high speed increases flooding!  
**18 18:10 CL Comus has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:10 CL Comus has been detached because of heavy flooding.  
**18 18:11 CA Defence has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:11 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:11 DD Christopher identifies unknown ship as CL  
18 18:11 CL Lowestoft is launching torpedoes  
18 18:11 UNSIGHTED! fires 6 11in guns at BB Audacious! Target straddled! 0 hits  
18 18:11 BB Helgoland-class opens fire at DD Ambuscade!  
18 18:11 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at DD Ambuscade! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:11 DD Ambuscade Hull hit B \***  
18 18:11 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at CL Lowestoft! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 18:11 CL Lowestoft Hull hit BE \***  
**18 18:11 CL Lowestoft Superstructure hit \***

**1811 In a final contact, the British Fleet again encounters a squadron of Battleships.**

18 18:11 BB Emperor of India fires 10 13in guns at BC! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 18:11 BC Hit**  
**18 18:11 BC Hit**  
18 18:11 BB Marlborough fires 10 13in guns at BC! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:11 BC Hit**  
18 18:11 BB Marlborough fires 6 6in guns at BC! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:11 BC Hit**  
**18 18:11 BB Neptune is sinking!**  
**18 18:11 DD Goshawk has sunk!**  
**18 18:13 CL Comus has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:13 BB Erin has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:13 DD Tigress has sunk!**  
**18 18:14 CL Comus has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:14 CA Defence has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:14 BB Agincourt fires 12 12in guns at BB! Target straddled! 3 hits  
18 18:14 BB Vanguard fires 8 4in guns at CL Gazelle-class! 1 hits  
**18 18:14 CL Gazelle-class Superstructure hit. Mines explode! Ship blows up!**  
**18 18:15 CL Comus has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

**18 18:15 BB Erin has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:15 CL Galatea sights an unknown ship  
18 18:16 BB Audacious fires 10 13in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 4 hits  
**18 18:17 CL Comus has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:17 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:17 BC Indefatigable has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:17 B fires 8 12in guns at BC Indefatigable! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:17 BC Indefatigable Critical hit. Bridge destroyed!**  
18 18:17 BB Nassau-class fires 8 11in guns at BC New Zealand! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:17 BC New Zealand Superstructure hit \***  
18 18:17 BB Nassau-class fires 6 6in guns at DD Sandfly! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:17 DD Sandfly ## Hull hit B \***  
18 18:17 BB opens fire at BC New Zealand!  
18 18:17 BB fires 6 11in guns at BC New Zealand! 1 hits  
**18 18:17 BC New Zealand Turret hit T \* Turret destroyed**  
18 18:17 BB fires 6 6in guns at DD Sandfly! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 18:17 DD Sandfly ## Near miss!**  
**18 18:17 DD Sandfly ## Critical hit \*! Machinery damaged!**  
18 18:17 BC Indefatigable fires 8 4in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 3 hits  
18 18:17 BB Audacious fires 10 13in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:17 BB Helgoland-class Hit**  
18 18:17 CA Defence limits flooding!  
18 18:17 BB Erin high speed increases flooding!  
**18 18:17 DD Sandfly has sunk!**  
18 18:17 DD Cockatrice has reattached to 1/4th Destroyer Flotilla  
18 18:17 BC New Zealand has been detached due to heavy damage  
18 18:18 BC Australia is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 18:18 BC Australia is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 18:18 Turret destroyed  
18 18:18 BC Indefatigable is avoiding torpedoes!  
**18 18:18 BC Indefatigable is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 18:18 BB Audacious fires 4 13in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:18 BB Helgoland-class Hit**  
18 18:18 BB Erin high speed increases flooding!  
**18 18:19 CA Defence has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:19 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 18:19 BB Vanguard identifies DD as V162-class  
18 18:19 BB Bellerophon is launching torpedoes  
18 18:19 CA Shannon opens fire at BB Helgoland-class!  
18 18:19 BB Emperor of India fires 8 13in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 2 hits  
18 18:19 BC Indefatigable fires 8 4in guns at BB! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:19 BB Hit**  
18 18:19 DD Nereide is laying smoke!  
**18 18:20 BB Erin has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

**18 18:20 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

18 18:20 BB Emperor of India fires 8 13in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 18:20 BB Helgoland-class Hit**

**18 18:21 BB Erin has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

**18 18:21 BC Indefatigable has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

18 18:21 BC Indefatigable is launching torpedoes

18 18:21 BB Marlborough fires 10 13in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 18:21 BB Helgoland-class Hit**

18 18:21 BB Emperor of India fires 8 13in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 3 hits

18 18:21 BB Audacious fires 10 13in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 18:21 BB Nassau-class Hit**

18 18:21 BB Audacious fires 2 4in guns at BB! Target straddled! 0 hits

18 18:21 BB Collingwood fires 2 12in guns at DD V162-class! 1 hits

**18 18:21 DD V162-class Hit**

18 18:21 BB Vanguard opens fire at DD!

18 18:21 BB Vanguard fires 2 12in guns at DD! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 18:21 DD Hit**

18 18:21 BC Australia high speed increases flooding!

18 18:21 CA Defence high speed increases flooding!

**18 18:22 CL Comus has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

**18 18:22 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

18 18:22 BB Marlborough fires 10 13in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 4 hits

**18 18:22 BB Helgoland-class Hit**

**18 18:22 BB Helgoland-class Hit**

**18 18:23 BB Benbow has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

18 18:23 BB Audacious is avoiding torpedoes!

**18 18:23 BB Benbow is sinking!**

18 18:25 BB Helgoland-class fires 7 6in guns at CA Cochrane! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 18:25 CA Cochrane Hull hit BE**

**18 18:26 CL Comus has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

**18 18:26 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!**

**18 18:26 Enemy ship B Deutschland-class is hit by a torpedo!**

18 18:26 BB Hercules fires 4 12in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 18:26 BB Helgoland-class Hit**

18 18:27 BB St Vincent fires 8 4in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 2 hits

**18 18:27 BB Nassau-class Hit**

**18 18:35 BC Indefatigable has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

**18 18:35 BB Erin has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

**18 18:35 Enemy ship BB is hit by a torpedo!**

18 18:36 BB Emperor of India is avoiding torpedoes!

**18 18:36 BB Emperor of India is hit by a torpedo!**

**18 18:39 BC Indefatigable has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**

18 18:39 BB Vanguard fires 2 12in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits

**18 18:39 BB Helgoland-class Hit**

18 18:40 BB fires 2 6in guns at BB Vanguard! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:40 BB Vanguard Secondary battery hit \***  
18 18:40 CL Caroline is laying smoke!  
**18 18:41 BC Indefatigable has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**18 18:41 BB Erin has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:42 BB Marlborough fires 10 13in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:42 BB Helgoland-class Hit**  
**18 18:44 Enemy ship BB Helgoland-class is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 18:44 BB Emperor of India is avoiding torpedoes!  
18 18:44 BB King George V fires 6 13in guns at BB! 1 hits  
18 18:45 BB Helgoland-class fires 2 12in guns at BB Vanguard! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:45 BB Vanguard Turret hit T \* Turret destroyed**  
18 18:45 BB fires 6 6in guns at BB King George V! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:45 BB King George V Turret hit T**  
18 18:45 BB Superb fires 8 12in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:45 BB Helgoland-class Hit**  
18 18:45 BB King George V fires 8 4in guns at BB! Target straddled! 3 hits  
**18 18:45 BB Hit**  
18 18:49 BB fires 6 11in guns at BB King George V! Target straddled! 2 hits  
**18 18:49 BB King George V Hull hit B \***  
**18 18:49 BB King George V Turret hit T \* Turret destroyed**  
**18 18:50 BB Monarch bulkhead ruptures! Flooding increases!**  
**18 18:52 CA Defence is sinking!**  
18 18:52 DD Brisk is laying smoke!  
**18 18:53 BB Erin has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 18:53 BC Indefatigable has been detached because of heavy flooding.  
**18 18:54 Enemy ship BB is hit by a torpedo!**  
**18 18:54 Enemy ship BB is hit by a torpedo!**  
18 18:55 BB Superb fires 6 12in guns at BB Helgoland-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 18:55 BB Helgoland-class Hit**  
**18 18:56 BB Neptune has sunk!**  
18 19:12 BB Bellerophon fires 8 12in guns at BB Nassau-class! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 19:12 BB Nassau-class Hit**  
**18 19:22 BB Nassau-class Hit**  
**18 19:24 DD Lurcher bulkhead ruptures! Flooding increases!**  
18 19:32 BB Bellerophon fires 2 12in guns at BB! Target straddled! 1 hits  
**18 19:32 BB Hit**  
**18 19:40 BC Indefatigable has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
18 19:44 BB Benbow is sinking and has been detached  
**18 20:03 BC New Zealand has sunk!**  
**18 20:32 BB Benbow has sunk!**  
**18 20:45 CA Defence has sunk!**  
18 21:56 BB Emperor of India bulkhead ruptures! Flooding increases!  
**18 22:38 BB Monarch is sinking!**

**18 23:53 CL Apollo is commencing to lay mines!**  
**18 23:53 CL Intrepid is commencing to lay mines!**  
19 00:13 CL Intrepid has finished laying mines!  
19 00:13 CL Apollo has finished laying mines!  
**19 00:13 Objective Lay minefield with 1 ships (any ship) Accomplished!**  
19 00:41 BC Indefatigable has been detached because of heavy flooding.  
**19 00:43 BB Monarch has sunk!**  
**19 01:23 BC Princess Royal bulkhead ruptures! Flooding increases!**  
**19 03:07 DD Lapwing bulkhead ruptures! Flooding increases!**  
19 03:09 DD Ambuscade machinery repaired!  
19 06:42 BC Indefatigable has been detached because of heavy flooding.  
**19 06:45 DD Lapwing is sinking!**  
**19 07:05 DD Lapwing has sunk!**  
**19 14:57 BC Indefatigable has reduced speed due to heavy flooding!**  
**20 01:00 CA Natal bulkhead ruptures! Flooding increases!**  
20 01:02 CA Natal limits flooding!  
**20 05:22 CA Natal is sinking!**  
**20 06:29 CA Natal has sunk!**

**ANALYSIS:** The result for this action was a German victory. The Royal Navy sank 2 BB, 6 B, 1 CL and 9 DDs, with heavy damage to an additional 2 BBs and 1 B. In exchange, the Royal Navy lost 3 BBs, 1 BC, 2 CA and 4 DD, with another 3 BB, 2 BC, 2 CL and 3 DDs heavily damaged. This action demonstrates why Jellicoe did not want to fight the Germans at night. Had the engagement taken place at medium to long range, the Royal Navy's overwhelming advantage in numbers would have easily resulted in a decisive victory. However, at night, the German torpedo capability evened the odds, inflicting heavy British losses in dreadnoughts.

### **18 February Battle Results**

