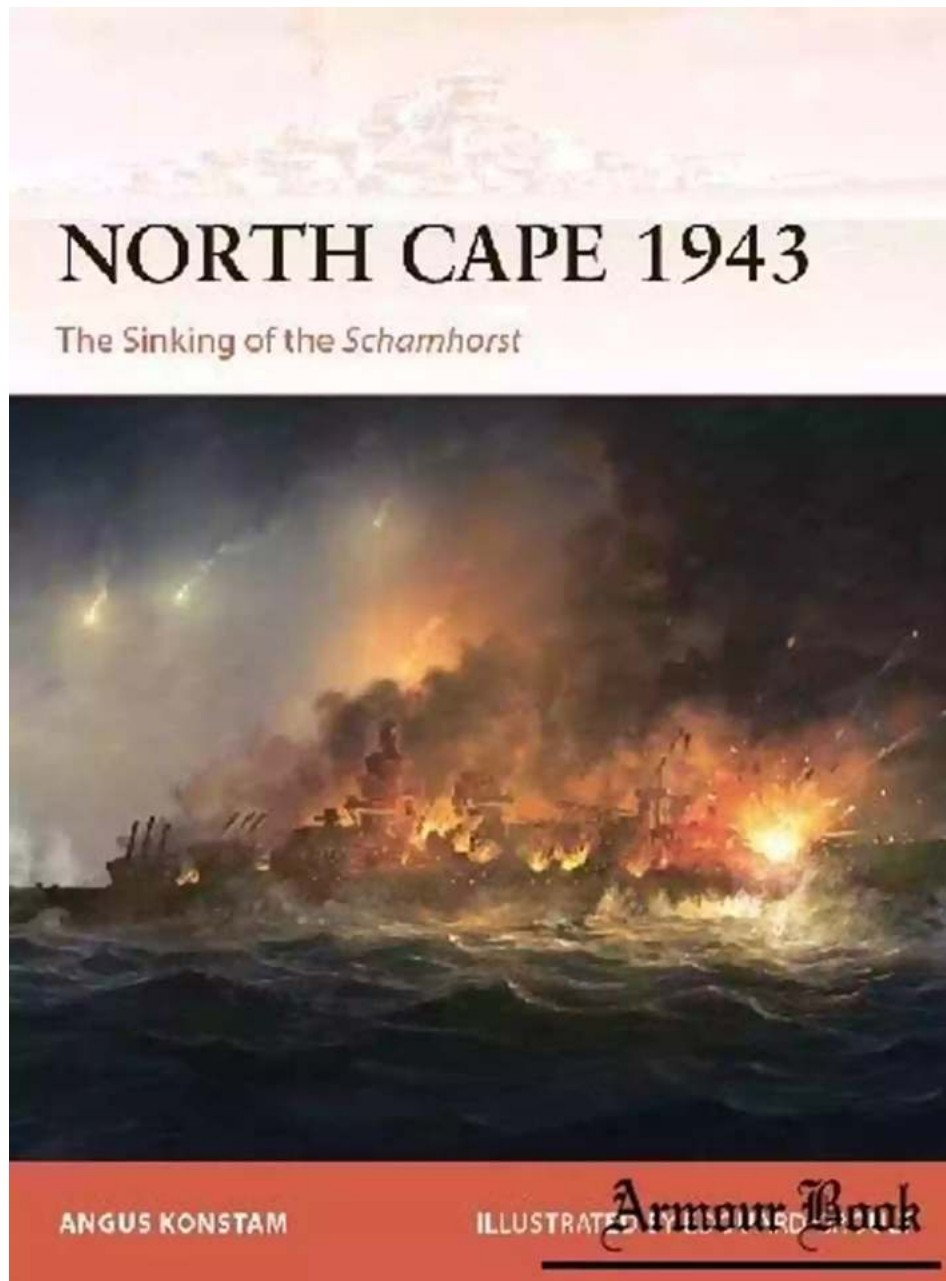


North Cape 1943: The Sinking Of The Scharnhorst Campaign 356

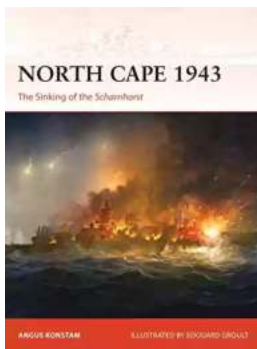


The year was 1943, and World War II was raging in full force. In the frozen waters of the Arctic, one of the most epic naval battles of the war took place. It was the battle of North Cape, and it would mark the end of the Scharnhorst, one of Germany's most feared battleships. The Scharnhorst was a symbol of German

naval superiority, and its sinking would become a turning point in the war. This article will explore the events leading up to the battle and the dramatic campaign that unfolded in the icy waters of the North Cape.

The Scharnhorst: A Formidable Battleship

The Scharnhorst was commissioned in 1939 and was part of the German Kriegsmarine's heavy detachment. It was armed with nine 11-inch guns and was capable of reaching speeds of up to 31 knots. The battleship had already earned a fearsome reputation by sinking the British aircraft carrier HMS Glorious and two destroyers during the Norwegian Campaign in 1940.



North Cape 1943: The Sinking of the Scharnhorst (Campaign Book 356) by Angus Konstam (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5



With its powerful armament and superior speed, the Scharnhorst became a thorn in the side of the Allies in the North Atlantic. It carried out several successful raiding operations, disrupting Allied shipping convoys and striking fear into the hearts of sailors.

The British Response

Recognizing the threat posed by the Scharnhorst, the Royal Navy devised a plan to neutralize the German battleship. They assembled a task force under the

command of Admiral Bruce Fraser, consisting of the battleship Duke of York, the cruisers Jamaica and Belfast, and several destroyers.

The British forces were determined to engage the Scharnhorst, and on December 24, 1943, they finally had their chance. The battle of North Cape was about to begin.

The Battle of North Cape

The Scharnhorst was on a mission to attack convoys bound for Russia when it was intercepted by the British task force. The Germans immediately recognized the danger they were in and tried to disengage, but it was too late. The British ships opened fire on the Scharnhorst, and a fierce battle broke out.

The Scharnhorst fought bravely, but it was outgunned and outnumbered by the British forces. Admiral Fraser skillfully maneuvered his ships, exploiting the Scharnhorst's weaknesses. The battle raged on for several hours, with both sides sustaining heavy casualties.

Finally, in the early hours of December 26, 1943, the Scharnhorst met its demise. It was hit by a series of torpedoes launched by the British destroyers, causing it to sink beneath the icy waters of the North Cape.

The Aftermath

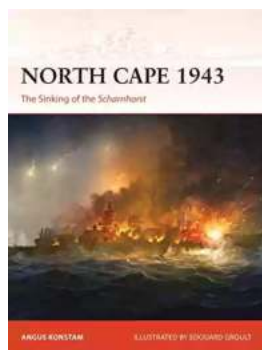
The sinking of the Scharnhorst sent shockwaves through Germany. It was a crushing blow to Hitler's naval ambitions and a morale booster for the Allies. The battle of North Cape demonstrated the resolve and effectiveness of the Royal Navy and dealt a significant blow to German naval power.

The Scharnhorst's sinking marked a turning point in the war. The Allies gained confidence in their ability to take on the German Navy, and the defeat of the

Scharnhorst paved the way for future victories.

The sinking of the Scharnhorst in the battle of North Cape was a pivotal moment in World War II. It represented the triumph of Allied forces over German naval supremacy and showcased the bravery and skill of the British sailors.

The battle of North Cape will forever be remembered as one of the most significant naval engagements of the war. It serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by those who fought and the importance of naval power in shaping the outcome of the war.



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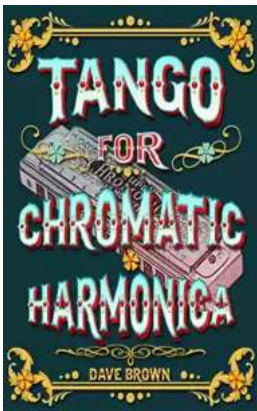
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The German battleship Scharnhorst had a reputation for being a lucky ship. Early in the war she fought off a British battlecruiser and sunk a carrier, before carrying out two successful forays into the Atlantic. In the spring of 1943, the Scharnhorst was redeployed to Norway. There, working in concert with other German warships such as the battleship Tirpitz, she posed a major threat to the Arctic convoys – the Allied sea lifeline to Russia. Her presence, alongside Tirpitz, forced the British to tie down ships in Arctic waters.

When Tirpitz was put out of action, and Hitler demanded naval support for the war in Russia, the crew of the Scharnhorst under Rear-Admiral Bey, had to act. In late December 1943, she put to sea, her target an Allied convoy passing through the Barents Sea on its way to Murmansk. Unknown to Bey, the British were using the convoy as bait to draw the Scharnhorst into battle. What followed was a two-day running battle fought in rough seas and near-perpetual darkness, ending with the destruction of the Scharnhorst and all but 36 of her crew, ending any serious German naval threat to the Arctic convoy lifeline.

In this illustrated study, leading naval historian Angus Konstam offers a fascinating new insight into this key engagement. He combines expert analysis with his unique knack for storytelling to offer a fascinating new perspective on the battle which sank the Scharnhorst.



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