

Stringbags in Action

Vice-Admiral B.B. Schofield

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Admiral Schofield's accounts of the Taranto and Bismarck battles make for unforgettable reading.

The author traces the development of British naval aviation from its early beginnings in 1912, through the First World War and the frustrations of the inter-war years. The November 1940 attack on the Italian fleet in its strongly defended base at Taranto demonstrated for the first time the battle-winning capability of carrier-borne aircraft – from HMS Illustrious. The lesson was quickly learnt by the Japanese who just over a year later inflicted such devastating losses on the American Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor.

In the second part the Author recounts the legendary action that culminated in the sinking of the Bismarck. While this action involved large numbers of Royal Navy ships, not least the battle cruiser Hood sunk with terrible loss of life, the Rodney, Prince of Wales and numerous cruisers, aircraft from Ark Royal and Victorious played a pivotal role.

No two naval actions better demonstrate the early use of air power.



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