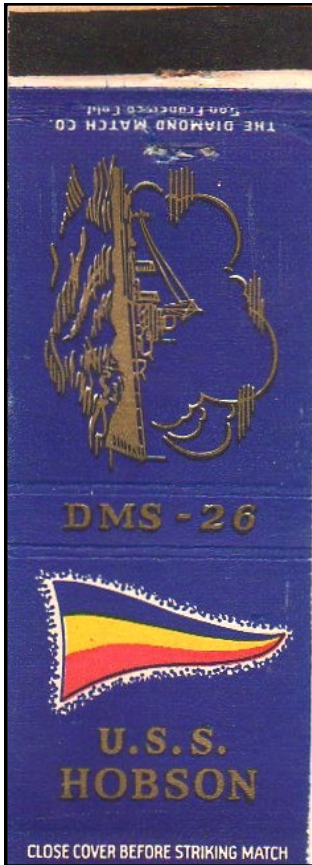


The Hobson Incident



Late on Saturday night, April 26, 1952, **U.S.S. Wasp** was completing night maneuvers some 1,200 miles east of New York. She turned into the wind to recover her aircraft. The skipper of the USS Hobson, a destroyer-minesweeper, apparently became confused in the dark and made a few turns that ended with the Hobson cutting in front of **Wasp**. The **Wasp** cut the Hobson in two.

From there, it rapidly got worse. The Hobson was hit aft of midship, and the entire ship sank in four minutes. Her captain and 174 other men were lost.

In rolling over, Hobson's keel sliced off an 80-ton section of Wasp's bow, from keel to about waterline, the section being carried away, with interior deck levels, oil tanks, fittings, and gears.

Those men from the Hobson who were fortunate enough to be thrown clear and rescued were covered with oil from Wasp's broken tanks. Fortunately, there were no crew quarters located in Wasp's bow, and Wasp, in fact, suffered no casualties in the affair.

Wasp had been under orders to relieve the carrier Tarawa farther east. Her bulkheads holding against the open bow, she turned for repairs at New York. Proceeding at a ten-knot speed, often reduced to near zero when heavy going forced her to proceed stern-first, she almost lost her two anchor chains (\$40,000 each).

Wasp, drydock-free by May 19, then ammunition and service fitted, was back on sea duty in less than five weeks, a record for major ship repairs.



↪ *Hobson crew being rescued.*

The battered bow of the mighty aircraft carrier Wasp was an awesome sight as the war-ship headed into New York Harbor this morning, the survivor of a collision 700 mile off the Azores.

