

Iron Men and Tin Fish

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IRON MEN AND TIN FISH

**The Race to Build a Better Torpedo
during World War II**

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War, Technology, and History
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Praeger Security International
Westport, Connecticut • London

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出版者:Greenwood Pub Group

出版时间:2006-8

装帧:HRD

isbn:9780275990329

From the American entry into World War II until September 1943, U.S. submarines experienced an abnormally high number of torpedo failures, which resulted from defects present in the primary torpedo of the day, the Mark XIV. These failings were shared by the German torpedoes, but while the Germans fixed their defects in six months, it took the Americans twenty-two months. Much of the delay on the American side resulted from the denial of senior leaders in the operational forces and in the Navy's Bureau of Ordnance (BuOrd) that the torpedo itself was defective. Instead, they blamed crews for poor marksmanship or lack of training. In the end, however, the submarine force itself overcame the bureaucratic inertia, with one of World War II's forgotten heroes, Admiral Lockwood, driving the process of finding and fixing the major defects. This is first book that deals exclusively with the torpedo problem, building its case out of original research from the archives of the Bureau of Ordnance, the Chief of Naval Operations, Vice Admiral Lockwood's personal correspondence, and records from the Admiralty in the British National Archives. These sources are complemented by correspondence and interviews with men who actually participated in the events.

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