

He Led

Task Force 58

to Glory

Pete Mitscher is modest and soft-spoken, but he blasted the Japs out of the Pacific

I WAS WITH Pete Mitscher and Task Force 58 for two years. I know them both well.

Pete Mitscher is little and skinny and he's got blue eyes and shaggy eyebrows and a wrinkled-up face. He hardly talks above a whisper, and from all he'd tell you, you'd never guess he was boss of the biggest naval force ever set loose in the Pacific. I'll never forget the day ace Vraciu shot down six Jap planes and landed on our carrier. Mitscher very politely asked the photographer, could he get his picture taken with Vraciu—just for his scrapbook, of course.

Quiet, and modest—but tough. They used to think a carrier was a hit-and-run fighter, but Pete changed that. He said "Hit 'em, and stay. Hit 'em again tomorrow." And he did. Our outfit knocked out 800 Jap ships and 4,500 planes in less than nine months. The Japs won't forget Pete Mitscher.

Nor will he forget them. He hates Japs. He wouldn't even look at prisoners we took on board.

Marc A. Mitscher was studying how to catapult planes in 1917. He wears a sheath knife he used in 1919, when he was piloting an NC-1 and his and three other planes tried the first hop from Newfoundland to the Azores. He didn't make it. That knife is the one he used to punch holes in a bucket to

Admiral Mitscher

