GERMAN DESTROYER TYPE 36a
Z37 HISTORY

Z-37 was one of the 1936A(Mob) Zerstorers (destroyers). Because of the shortage of light cruisers in the Kriegsmarine in WWII, the destroyers of this class were given 150MM (5.9") guns. They had to be deployed as both destroyer and cruiser at times. The larger gun gave them a greater weight of broadside but the slower rate of fire reduced their effectiveness. In truth the larger gun was not as successful as the 127MM,(5") gun and later Zerstorer reverted to the 127MM (5"). The added weight of the forward twin turret reduced sea worthiness making them difficult in rough seas and this was a primary reason for their lack of success in the Battle of Biscay Bay at the end of 1943.The type consisted of :- **Z37, Z38, Z39**

Z-37 was commissioned in **July 1942** with Korvettenkapitan Georg Langheld commanding but the lack of materials delayed her entering service until December. She arrived in France **March 2 1943** escorting blockade runners and U-boats in the Bay of Biscay and fought in the Battle of Biscay on **December 28 1943**. In **January 1944** Fregattenkapitan Heinrich Gerlach took command. Later that month off Bordeaux she collided with **Z-32** while on exercises. A torpedo warhead exploded causing the 37MM AA ready ammo to ignite and the leaking gashes caused a heavy list as **Z-23** towed her back to port. **Z-37** was decommissioned after it was decided not to repair her.
Her guns were removed and used for coast defense.
She was scuttled at Bordeaux to prevent her falling into allied hands.
The French scrapped her after the war in 1949.

Compiled by **Bob "Wulfmann" Ruff** from "German Destroyers of WWII"; by Koop and Schmolke