

SQUID MORTAR/BOMB - Mk IV

Squid was a British Late World War II ship-mounted anti-submarine weapon. It consisted of a three-barreled mortar which launched depth charges. It replaced the Hedgehog system, and was in turn replaced by the Limbo system.



Squid on aft deck of HMCS HAIDA showing yellow Mortar and loading carriage.

LIMBO, or Anti Submarine Mortar Mark 10 (A/S Mk.10)

Limbo A/S Mk.10 was the final development of the forward-throwing anti-submarine weapon Squid, and was developed by the Admiralty Underwater Weapons Establishment in the 1950s.

Limbo was used on Royal Navy escort ships, Royal Australian Navy Daring class destroyers and River class destroyer escorts, Royal Canadian Navy St. Laurent, Restigouche, Mackenzie, and Annapolis class destroyer escorts and Iroquois class destroyers, and South African Navy Type 12 President Class frigates from 1955 to the mid-1990s.



Both the Squid and Limbo used a propelling cartridge to throw the depth charges into the water, like a mortar.

Many of the propelling cartridges were made from empty casings recovered from expended gun and mortar shells. Below are some examples of reused casings that were cut down shorter, refilled, re-primed and re-stamped.

AS and A/S are both used to indicate anti-submarine.

Information found on the British Ordnance Collectors Network. Specifically, one person who used to work at RNAD Trecwn (Royal Navy Armaments Depot) provided some decent information. Although, there seems to be some discrepancies.

The squid charge was smaller than the Limbo, The A/S mk10 when firing light practice bombs used a sub-calibre breech adaptor to accept the older, smaller, Squid propelling cartridge. Original Squid cases were re-used plus newly manufactured cases

The first projectile AS manufactured in the early 40s was the HE MK3 and used a 6pdr case, which is 2.25". (definitely used for squid)

Later ones were the HE MK6 (no mention of whether used for squid or Limbo or both)

Both types were filled with minol approx weight Fuzed 392 lbs + or - 2 lbs

The HE MK6 Projectile was Bronze Green

The HE (unsure if MK3, 6 or both?) Projectile cases were filled with approx 29 ozs of propellant and were called AS 29.

The Limbo cartridges all seem to be marked with A/S Mk 10 and are 3". Since Limbo's range was 1000' vs the squids 300', this makes sense.

The Mk4 Practice Projectile was Yellow. This weapon was reusable

It weighed approx 130 lbs.

It used a smaller case filled with 11 ozs of propellant and was called AS 11. There were also Cases called AS 12 and AS 13.

A version of the MK4 may have also used a 12 oz charge.

The Limbo Practice Projectiles have 'testing' stamped on them. However, Limbo also appears to have used the AS 12 cartridge cases.

Below is an A/S 13 case, made by E. Curran & Co of Cardiff (ECC) Lot 22 1955
The case was reworked at RNAD Trecwn in 1959, in this example, the case was originally made for AS Mortar use and refilled for the same purpose.



This is a Squid HE MK3 cartridge made from a 2.25" 6pdr casing.



This pic compares the size of the HE MK3 and the smaller A/S 12 practice cartridge.



A/S 12 - 171x64mm made 1965 ECC lot 40, Primer has been reworked and is a N38 Mk 1, CY 8/74 - inked mark RW CY 11/77.

Stencil on case side reads - MK N29, RNP 2796, 11oz - 44GR, TRE 1-78.

This A/S 12 case was filled at RNAD Trecwn and was used for the practice light projectile



A/S 12 case side stencil



A/S 13 - 171x64 made 1961, ECC, lot 1 knurled edge to base, no primer.



Two 1938 3 inch 20 CWT mortar cases reused for Limbo (mk-10)



Limbo Testing case



A suggestion given in one post was to contact the explosion museum for more info.
<https://www.nmrn.org.uk/explosion-museum-naval-firepower>

And some bonus information that you never knew you needed!

Water tunnel tests of the British "SQUID" projectile Type "C"

<https://authors.library.caltech.edu/61128/1/ND-24.pdf>

<https://authors.library.caltech.edu/61104/1/ND-24.1.pdf>