

• Battle of Midway

- June 3rd thru June 6th
1942
- Midway is part of
NW Hawaiian Island Chain,
1400 miles from Maui
- - Midway is actually two
islands that are part
of an Atoll
- US Navy had a base
there
- - battle was actually at
sea, northwest of Midway

- Japanese plan...
 - (again by Admiral Yamamoto)
 - attack and occupy Aleutian Islands in Alaska,
 - and invade and occupy Midway simultaneously
 - any American force sent to either spot would be "trapped and pinched" and ultimately destroyed

- Japanese force...

4 aircraft carriers

15 submarines

90 other ships

280 planes

5,000 troops to invade
Midway

- American force...

3 aircraft carriers

(USS Hornet, USS Enterprise,
USS Yorktown)

24 other fighting ships

380 planes based on

carriers and Midway

- Yorktown had been badly damaged a month before (in another battle)

• - Japanese assumed it had been towed to US mainland

- in fact it had been towed to Honolulu and given light repairs in 3 days

- Key Aspect...

- American Codebreakers had previously broken Japanese codes
- so US forces knew Midway was a target and when
- US carrier force was waiting

- main part of battle was
June 4th, 1942

- early morning, Japanese launch planes to attack

Midway, attack is a

• success

- Japanese planes return and land, prepare for another attack

— Key Moment

• - Japanese planes are re-loading & re-fueling when they get word where the US carriers are

• - they change their decision, un-load ground attack bombs for

- armor piercing bombs
- and torpedoes
- at this exact moment US planes site Japanese carriers
- Japanese decks full of planes, fuel and bombs
- US dive bombers from Enterprise sink 3 Japanese carriers
- as US planes return to their carriers, they are followed by

Japanese planes

- - upon arrival, Japanese pilots are shocked to see 3 US carriers, not 2
- - fight goes on, Yorktown is most damaged, it is abandoned but still afloat
- - US planes from Yorktown & Enterprise follow Japanese planes back to remaining carrier
- and sink it at 5pm in the afternoon

- - Yorktown torpedoed twice 2 days later, as it's being towed, sinks 14 hours later

Importance

- 1) This US victory turns the tide of the war in Pacific
- 2) Japanese lose 4 carriers and over 3000 men (significant loss of mechanics & technicians)
- 3) US losses are 1 carrier and 362 men

4) Japan cannot remain

- "offensive", they become "defensive" for rest of war

5) Japan keeps loss a secret back home

- injured men separated to different hospitals

- non-injured dispersed to other areas

- only Emperor and high ranking military knew

6) Japanese film and photos

- of Pearl Harbor attack

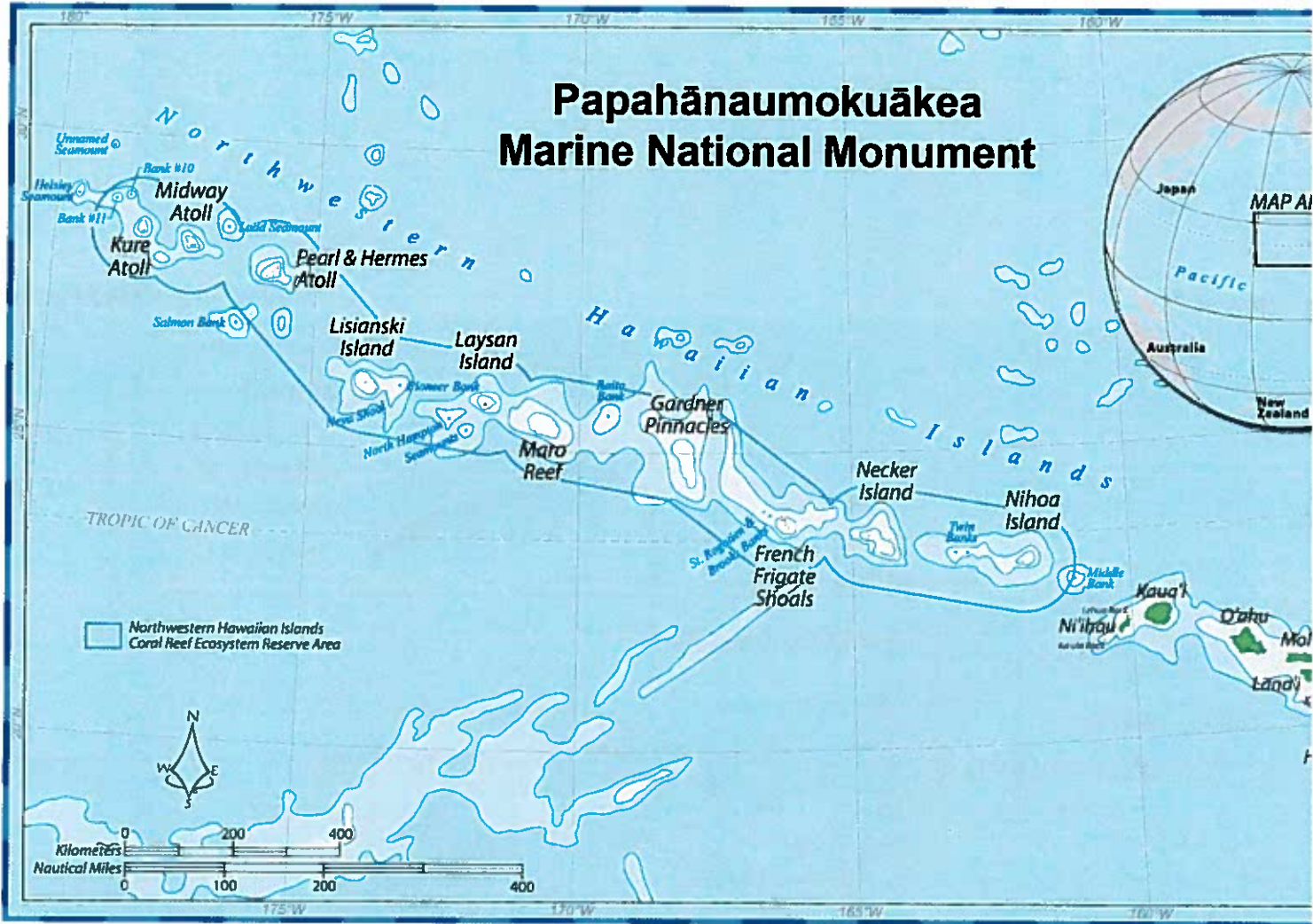
- taken by Japanese

pilots 6 months earlier
are all lost

7) Midway is considered
a "naval" battle...

but neither navy
ever sighted the other

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument



0 1 2 3 4 5

NAUTICAL MILES

0 2 4 6 8 10

KILOMETERS





