

10 40 am 9th April 1942 British aircraft carrier steaming at full speed ten miles off the coast of Ceylon, her captain and crew knew that an attack by Japanese Zero fighters was imminent. Just over 20 minutes later Hermes was sunk with half of her crew the Japanese bombers had taken their toll.

Captain Onslow had ordered a weaving course, but the Japanese pilots pressed on with their attack almost to the point of suicide. The first bomb screamed down onto the carpenter's shop on the foredeck, Hermes was being unmercifully attacked and survivors estimated that she took 50 direct hits in 10 minutes. The Oerlikon gunners were overwhelmed with sheer weight of numbers and one by one the crews were wiped out, until only one gun remained firing the gunner was seen to be loading when he too was killed. The planes were almost on top of Hermes when they let their bombs go one burst on the flight deck, while another hit the bridge killing many of the officers and crew, another went through the flight deck as though it was made of tin and burst with a terrific explosion in the ship.

Survivor.