

## Killer WHALE

Thursday, 28 February 2008

**KILLER W.H.A.L.E.** A heavily-armed hovercraft used by the G.I. Joe team as an assault vehicle and landing craft. Usually deployed at sea, the Whale operates with a 4-man crew, and has room for several more passengers. Its armaments and ordnance include two twin-.50 caliber machine gun turrets, 2 forward-mounted cannons, 2 four-bay missile boxes and 2 depth charge racks. It also carries a small, one-man recon sled.

The Whale's captain was usually Cutter, the only member of the Joe team from the Coast Guard, with Shipwreck often serving as "first mate". The Joes first used the Whale during a battle against Cobra forces along the coast of Florida. Months later, Torpedo and Snow Job piloted the Whale during an assault on a small island holding a Cobra base. They defeated Cobra there, but failed to learn the reason for their presence. A larger operation was underway in the Gulf of Mexico. When the Joes investigated, Cobra attacked and tricked them into aggravating an undersea faultline, which caused the creation of a new island. The Whale, under Cutter's command, evaded enemy fire and delivered the Joes' landing force to the island. Their goal was to push Cobra off the island before they could gain sovereignty. The Joes had nearly won when word came from Washington: the island was now Cobra's own independent nation. The team was forced to call off the assault and the disappointed Joes boarded the Whale and returned home. For the next few years, the Whale participated in many missions for the Joes, including the rescue of Ripcord and Snake-Eyes from Cobra Island and a night raid on the island in which the team fought the Soviets' October Guard. At the start of the Joes' major involvement of the Cobra Island civil war, two Whale hovercrafts took the point, hoping to knock out Cobra's coastal defenses to allow the team's transport aircraft to land at the island's airfield. One of the two vessels made it through the initial attack, but Cutter's Whale was totalled by Cobra's machine gun emplacements -- most of which were destroyed shortly afterward by the Whale's crew.

(GI 28, 29, 36, 40, 41, 47, 74; YB 4)