

2 January 1985

### AFTER-ACTION REPORT

This report describes a Harpoon battle fought on 2 December, 1984 that depicted a maximum-effort attack by SNA on a NATO carrier battle group. It was an attempt to determine in a general manner the events that would take place in the chapter **Dance of the Vampires** from our book.

This battle took place on the second day of a hypothetical war on the Central Front between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. On the first day, the Soviets had captured Iceland, depriving NATO of a major airbase. The most important role of this base was detecting and attacking Soviet aircraft and submarines attempting to reach the North Atlantic from the Norwegian Sea. The loss of this block to Soviet movement gives SNA (Soviet Naval Aviation) freedom to attack the military and civil shipping over most of the Atlantic.

The force being attacked consists of major elements of the Sixth Fleet, combined with a battle group of the French Navy. USS *Eisenhower*, with an escorting battle group, has sortied from the Mediterranean a few days before the war started, escorting a MAU (Marine Amphibious Unit). This consists of a marine battalion and all its equipment, embarked on three large amphibious ships. The US elements have been ordered to rendezvous with the French aircraft carrier *Foch* and its escorting ships. Once assembled, the combined Task Force will proceed north, towards the war.

The NATO and Warsaw Pact orders provided to the respective commanders are enclosed in Annexes A and B. These also describe the forces available to each of the players. The NATO carrier battle groups were created using the draft rules for Convoy. Both NATO and the Warsaw Pact had submarines available to them, but the players for both submarine forces had to leave early, before they could engage. This was probably fortuitous, since the demands on the referee created by the AAW battle were very heavy.

While the Soviet player received moderately detailed information on the forces he was to attack in his briefing, NATO was told only to expect a maximum-strength attack by SNA. He was, however, told what the current strength of the Northern Fleet's air arm was. He was told that he



Bear 02 detected the main body and the decoy group immediately upon lighting off its radar. Its radar was also detected by the main body and its position established by cross-fix. F-8 02 was vectored to engage.

0425: E-2 02, F-14s 09 and 10, and KA-6D 01 launched. The KA-6D took station directly over *Eisenhower*, as a contingency tanker. The two F-14s accompanied the E-2 as they proceeded on course 270 at 270 kts (E-2C cruise speed).

0430: F-8 02 detected Bear 01 as it made its approach on 02. It destroyed both aircraft with R.530s, one missile for each aircraft. It was then ordered to return to *Foch*. F-14 02 continued its tail chase of Bear 06. The CAG commander decided that it would take too long to close to Sparrow range, and ordered the pilot to expend another Phoenix. This hit and destroyed Bear 06. It then headed for *Eisenhower*. F-14s 11 and 12 detected Bear 08 and destroyed it with a single Phoenix. F-8 01 broke off his intercept and returned to *Foch*.

The Soviet commander now knew the location and composition of the battle group. After several radar sweeps, he was informed that the large group of ships, on course 330 at 15 knots, consisted of seven large radar contacts and 11 small radar contacts. A second group of ships was located 70 nm to the north, and consisted of 1 large and 6 small contacts. He interpreted the large group as the two carrier battle groups, and the group to the north as the MAU. He ordered both regimental formations, loitering at low altitude, to climb in place and prepare for missile launch.

0430.5: Bear 03 detected E-2C 02's APS-125 after launch from *Eisenhower*.

0431.0: E-2C 02, the Tu-22M formation, and the Tu-16 formation all climbed from low altitude.

0431.5: The three air groups continued to climb.

0432.0: E-2C 02 detected the Tu-22M formation as a group of large contacts as both reach medium altitude simultaneously.

0432.5: The NATO commander ordered all ship radars on, all aircraft radars on, all blip enhance sets energized, and all intercept-capable aircraft to launch. All remaining Lamph helicopters (2) were ordered to launch, with

This left a total of 95 AS-6 missiles inbound towards the main body. No other defensive action was possible until the AS-6 raid closed to within SAM range of the main body.

0453.5: *Mahan* fired 2 SM1ER at a range of 38 nm.

0454.0: After the movement phase, the missiles were at 26 nm. *Mahan's* missiles reached the raid in this movement phase, with 1 hitting. *Farnell* fired in the planned fire phase of this turn.

0454.5: The raid was at 14.5 nm, and *Farnell's* missiles reached the raid, killing two.

0455.0: The raid was 2.6 nm from the main body, and *South Carolina* was in range. All three ships fired, two missiles each. The only ship that scored a kill was *Farnell*.

The missiles then began their dive attack. Since the missiles were launched on the basis of a DR position, the exact target of each missile was determined randomly, using the BOL rules in Chapter 3 of *Harpoon*. A table summarizing the missiles targeting each ship in the main body, missiles killed by point defenses, and the number hitting each ship, appears in Annex E. In summary, every ship was attacked by at least three, and in some cases, seven missiles. Point defenses accounted for a fraction of them, approximately 20%. The remainder made their attacks, rolling 75% to actually hit. This chance to hit includes all causes of missile failure, including ECM, human error in aiming, mechanical unreliability, etc.

The only ship to escape unscathed was *Eisenhower*. Her Phalanx accounted for all three of the missiles targeted against her. The only other ship to survive was *Sacramento*, who had three targeted, killed one, and had one miss. The one missile that did hit caused a major fire and flooding, as well as knocking out both of her Phalanx mounts. Although gravely damaged, she stayed afloat, with her cargo and propulsion systems intact.

*Foch* was the only other ship not directly killed by a missile hit. She was hit by 2 missiles, which caused a total of 11 critical hits. The additional damage points inflicted by fire and flooding casualties were enough to sink her, irrespective of the casualties' resolution.

## ANNEX C

### LIST OF PLAYERS AND POSITIONS

#### NATO

Overall: Sam Baker

US CVBG: Jackie Conlon

US CAG: John Goetke

FR CVBG: Woody White

FR CAG: Scott Hartmann

MAU Cdr: Greg Lyles

NATO Subs: Paul Mansfield

#### SOVIET

Overall: Tom Clancy

A/C Regiments:

Jim Baker

Mark Whitman

Steve Hall

John Sanders

Submarine: Chris Carlson

<u>Ship Callsign</u>	<u>Acquisition Chance</u>	<u>Die Roll</u>	<u>Targeted</u>	<u>Defensive Kills</u>	<u>Survi- vors</u>	<u>Hits</u>	<u>Result to Ship</u>
DUT	1	01-02	4	1	3	3	sunk
SCR	3	03-06	7	1	6	6	sunk
FCH	3	09-14	4	0	4	2	sunk (11 criticals)
SAC	3	15-20	3	2	1	1	damaged (4 crit.)
IKE	3	21-26	3	3	0	-	
YRN	3	27-32	6	2	4	2	sunk
LWR	2	33-36	5	0	5	5	sunk
DUR	2	37-40	3	0	3	3	sunk
BRS	3	41-46	6	0	6	6	sunk
PNC	3	47-52	7	0	7	4	sunk
SPN	3	53-58	7	0	7	7	sunk
NPT	3	59-64	4	0	4	4	sunk
L5	1	65-					
L6	1		7	7			
L7	1	-70					
THR	3	71-76	3	1	2	1	sunk
DGR	1	77-78	3	0	3	3	sunk
PHR	2	79-82	7	0	7	6	sunk
DUG	1	83-84	4	2	2	1	sunk
MHN	3	85-90	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	sunk
Totals			87	19	68	56	

Of the ships not sunk outright by damage points exceeding their rated damage capacity, *Foch* received 11 critical hits, which inflicted enough additional damage (fires, flooding, etc.) to sink her immediately. *Sacramento* rolled 4 criticals on the .8 line of the critical hit chart and suffered a major fire, flooding, and lost both her Phalanx mounts. Although gravely damaged, she was afloat, and relatively intact. *Eisenhower's* Phalanx performed as advertised and killed all three missiles attacking her.