Ropeyarn Sunday â€œSea Storiesâ€• and Open Trackbacks

Description

Sometime in late 1989, there I was, watching Marty, the valiant rotary wing aviator and Det Officer-in-Charge (OIC), and one of his boy wonders saunter past me in the centerline passageway, wearing their flight helmets, and carrying helmet bags that appeared to have helmets in them. Me, having recalled the warning to always heed the â€œlittle warning bells in the back of your headâ€• at Prospective Executive Officer (PXO) school, I called to marty to inquire at what looked to be out of sorts.

It went something like this:

Me: â€œMarty, whatâ€™s in the helmet bags?â€•
Marty: â€œOh, tapes, XO.â€•
Me: â€œReally, what kind?â€•
Marty: â€œMusic cassettes.â€•
Me: â€œWhy, pray tell, are you taking music cassettes up in the helo?â€•
Marty: â€œThe training device in the console can also play music.â€•

default watermark

Interesting. Never forget sailors (and officers) will always figure out the capabilities of anything you provide to them. I will admit to also being much like that as a JO. Certainly if one person doesnâ€™t, the next one will, and the word spreads.

Me: â€œSo, youâ€™re gonna be cranking up the tunes while you fly your mission?â€•
Marty: â€œSure, it gets boring up there.â€•

That, well not exactly the precise words, nevertheless, portray the conversation. They headed out to pre-flight and off they went into the skies over the Med, or the Persian Gulf, to head bang while conducting surface surveillance. Iâ€™m sure they were not the only crew in the fleet to figure out they had a built in stereo system to chase away the boredom while being vibrated along with several thousand other parts of the SH-60B airframe.

The epilogue to this happened a few years later, when I was inspecting Atlantic Fleet ships for Combat Systems readiness. I poked my head into the Electronic Warfare module of a DDG-38 Class ship, and pushing back the curtain, saw the Electronic Warfare On Board Trainer (EWOBT), an IBM PC system, equipped with a CD-ROM, off to the side. This computer was fielded to keep EW operators proficient by running training scenarios, complete with audio of various electronic emitters fro the CD-ROMs provided. The headset hung close by on a hook, and there was a heavy metal band music CD laying out of itâ€™s jewel case on top of the case. Once more, being curious, I asked the EW on watch what the CD was there for. â€œOh, we can play music CDs on there, tooâ€• he said without flinching, or thinking. I had had an EWOBT on my ship (same as the one discussed above with the musical helo), and had no clue the EWs were most likely playing tunes while on watch, looking very much like they were sharpening their skills as EW operators. Oh, well.

I made a point of letting the officers on the ships that the EWs might also be enjoying some entertainment on the mid-watch.

Category

1. "Sea Stories"
2. History
3. Military
4. Military History
5. Navy
6. Technology

Date Created
October 11, 2006
Author
admin

default watermark