Oct 2, 1992: (Very) Shortly after Midnight â€“ USS SARATOGA â€“ Part V

Description

The current subtopic of this series is the Combat Systems Training Team (CSTT) issues. To recap, in 1992, COMNAVSURFLANT did have a long standing instruction mandating the establishment of CSTTs on all ships. COMNAVAIRLANT did not. Not to cast any disparaging remarks, but I recall on several occassions, the offer had been made to some AIRLANT counterparts, to provide them a floppy with the instruction already formatted in WordPerfect for use. A few quick edits and an admiralâ€™s signature and Voila! Ready to levy new requirements on the Fleetâ€¦..in particular, the carrier sailors. When the accident first occurred, I had flashbacks of standing in my office, telling them we were happy to provide them with the documents, because we liked it so well, we thought they would, too.

It didnâ€™t happen, until after the event that ended lives and careers.

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Had CSTTs been in place that night, more than likely a â€œsimulation/deviationâ€• that would have been briefed for the drill would have been â€œNo live ordnance will be used. When the order is given to â€˜Arm SeaSparrow,â€™ the Sparrow FOC (Firing Officer Console) Observer will stop the operator from leaving the space and question them as what actions they would carry out in a live fire situation, and, if correct, tell them to resume their station and report to the TAS (Target Acquisition System) operator NSSMS was simulated armed.â€• Problem solved, safety ensured, operator still has to show â€œsmarts.â€•

Itâ€™s not like it would have been a new precedent, where one community â€œgaveâ€• something to the other.

Next post: Explosives Handling Personnel Qualification/Certification Program (EHPQCP)

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