Ropeyarn Sunday "Sea Stories" and Open Trackbacks

Description

Last week netted two trackbacksâ€¦.and also I left off a sea story about War Gaming at War College.

So I was the Ops Boss for planning. We did that in the few intervening days. How to approach Pakistan during â€œheightened tensionsâ€• in order to pull US citizens out of danger ashore, while not losing our combat power. Rules of engagement were pretty restrictive, as you might expect.

Sometime in the next few days, I was told by Danny that I was going to the be the Big Kahuna for the war game execution. There you go. My low grade in the class, but wearing black shoes and a SWO pin. Never did think of it until now, but possibly the airdales had convincingly dodged the bullet and I was left to take the scepter unknowingly.

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Off we went, one morning to the red brick building a few blocks from the main building, where our command centers would be. We were given a current intelligence briefing for the area, and I distinctly recall that a Soviet Charlie II sub was out to the west, underway and, as part of the Soviet platforms in theater, a potential threat to the battle group. The complication of this presence was that India, a neutral party in the current raised tensions, had leased a C-II from the Evil Empire. Intel showed had same sub inport at an Indian Naval Base in the last 24 hours. Having come from the sub chasing world not but a few months before, I mentally cataloged the info as significant. Partly because my recent experience tuned me to it, but also because off all the beginning locations, the issue of the Charlie seemed to have the opportunity to come into play very early on in the games.Off we went, armed with pseudo factoids presented by the â€œand then the exact opposite of this briefing cannot be discounted disclaimer crowd (Yep, intel weenies), to our assigned warfare commander â€œmodulesâ€• to fight the war with paper charts, hand written radio logs and plexiglass edge lighted status boards.

Within an hour or so, an S-3A (no B birds in the fleet yet), played by one of the game controllers (a shoe LCDR), sent to the west to conduct ASW sweeps, sure enough got a solid sniff on a nuke boat, high probability that it was also the not located very recently Charlie II. The ASWC calls on the radio for direction and I issue a â€œtakeâ€• order on the contact. Roger, Out!

Then ASWC calls and tells me the â€œpilotâ€• said he couldnâ€™t do that, because it might be the Indian leased C-II. I, once more, say â€œtake the subsurface track.â€• Pilot continues to stall, argue. I get on the net and say words to the affect: â€œWhen I order you to engage, you put weapons in the water!â€• Response: â€œLost contact!â€• AW1 Tim and company knows there is always a handy-

dandy gouge for executing a â€œtime lateâ€• attack, yet this â€œcombat pilotâ€• seemed to have all sorts of excuses as to how not to take out the threat, for which we had the ROE to support the engagement in our hands.

At that point the ramp up to war was stilling in run, so I/we went back to work, foiled once more by â€œplaying to real.â€•

The next morning, at the new dayâ€™s intel brief, my peer in real rank insignia, yet not in the world of the war game, began to lecture during the putting forth of info, something about not starting a war with a friendly nation. Some part of his upbringing had not exposed him to the skillful tutelage of CAPT W.E. Jordan, Jr, in the finer points of physics a as a viable life application in decision making, specifically the parts about Time/Speed/Distance, the immutable factors of vehicle movement we learned to live by off the coasts of many lands.

I dispensed with the niceties of providing a full tutorial for the errant war game staff officer, but did provide a Readerâ€™s Digest version, telling him the Indian sub couldnâ€™t have made it from their last known location inport on the west coast of India to the vicinity of the PROBSUB contact of the S-3, unless it grew wings and engines like a really big airplane, so he should have put MK46s in to take the Soviet sub out to the picture right then. He wasnâ€™t happy, so I told him the next time I directed and engagement, all I wanted to hear was â€œBloodhound Away!â€• I didnâ€™t do the next part as well as Jack Nicholson in â€œA Few Good Men,â€• but I did directly ask for his complete understanding, which I got.

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Back to the modules we went, to begin a new day of evaluating ROEs and looking forward to making war, not love, within the confines of such political-military constraints.

Yes, later the C-II did somehow manage to arrive, undetected, in our neighborhood, and it spewed forth a few SSN-9s to get our blood flowing. If he only would have listenedâ€¦but then, if they had crafted their game force layout better, they could have put the Indian C-II at sea, close enough to require some in depth soul searching before I cold be so cavalier with the taxpayersâ€™ torpedoes.

Next week: More â€œWar Games.â€•

Category

1. Open Trackbacks

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