19 Years Ago â€“ Life at Sea â€“ Part I

Description

It was a typical Monday morning at Charleston Naval Station for USS CARR (FFG-52). Once more, the crew had come aboard before sunrise and added their efforts to that of the duty section to get the ship underway. The Getting Underway checklist was completed and the CO gave me permission to get the ship underway.

Off we sailed, without exceptional circumstances, to head outboard in the tight channel, â€œriding the rangesâ€• as was the convention for navigation in the lowlands of Charleston Harbor. Reaching the sea buoy, we left two engines on the line, turned due south and enjoyed the bright day. Preps were in place by the Operations and Engineering Departments to perform that late afternoon as scheduled: Ready deck for Helicopter Anti-Submarine (Light) Squadron 44 (HSL-44) landings to keep their new and old pilots and aircrews proficient.

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On such assignments, we knew the drill: We could sprint from Charleston early in the morning and be on station in the Jacksonville Operations Area (JAXOA) bu late in the afternoon, the transit being considered â€œlocal,â€• which allowed us to circumvent the normal transit speed limitation of 16 kts overall speed for the MOVREP (moving reporting) system. This trip south of homeport was no exception.

Comms were established with the helos and we commenced deck qualifications while the sun was still shining brightly. As the day drew on, with the deck crews, the fueling crews and the operations personnel keeping the helos coming and going, dusk was settling in. I donâ€™t recall exactly when it occurred, but it was sometime after nautical twilight, when the helo on approach requested to be chocked and chained on deck, so our assigned detachment Officer-in-Charge, LCDR Marty Keanny could come aboard and speak with the CO. PREGRA and Marty disembarked and headed through the hanger and forward to the Captainâ€™s Cabin.

After Marty left, Captain Wade Johnson called me to come up to his cabin. He told me Marty let him know HSL-44 would be heading to Warner-Robbins AFB first thing in the morning. That of course, left us on the OPSKED to bore holes in the JAXOA until Friday with no helos to land on us.

And so the day ended.

Category

1. Navy

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