

## THE DOCKS – FEBRUARY 2003

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### Harpoon 2 / Harpoon 3

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#### Survivors of Son Tay

By Klaus Behrman

LOCATION: SOUTHEAST ASIA

DATE/TIME: 12 SEPTEMBER 2002, 11:00 H Z

Back during the Vietnam war, the USA launched a brilliantly executed commando raid on the prison of Son Tay west of Hanoi, only to find out that American POWs were moved to another location shortly prior to the raid.

After hostilities ceased, most POWs were released to the International Red Cross, but some were still unaccounted for. According to Vietnamese officials, some escaped and must have died; and two others died in prison.

Some USAF and CIA officers never believed that story, and a few days ago a former Pathet Lao general, who defected to Thailand, briefed the CIA chief of station in Bangkok that there are still twelve survivors of Son Tay in a prison camp northeast of Louangphrabang in Laos. The Vietnamese kept them there because of their intimate knowledge of Russian/Vietnamese interrogation techniques and as a last bargaining chip in case something with the peace negotiations with the U.S. went wrong.

The American president decides against a negotiated release of these remaining prisoners of war, because the USA need to show a position of strength in view of the resurrection of worldwide terrorist groups. And, in addition, there is a need to send a message to the remaining communist nations of the world that you do not fool around with the US of A.

Contrary to standard procedures, the rescue mission has to be launched without delay, as it is feared that the defection of the Laotian general might force another relocation of the POWs. US forces in the region scramble to launch a rescue mission which must not fail.

#### Scenario Briefing

Orders for Commander U.S. operations:

An attempt long ago to rescue some of our best men from a Vietnamese prison camp failed - many of you may have heard of our unguided (by proper intelligence) mission to rescue our POWs from Son Tay prison camp near Hanoi.

This was many years ago. A few days ago, a former Pathet Lao general defected to Thailand and opened his heart. While we do not have exact coordinates, we know that the Vietnamese have moved our last missing boys years ago somewhere near and northeast of Louangphrabang.

Lacking the usual preparation time and due to the urgency of the situation, the President has ordered an immediate rescue mission, which, due to important political considerations and, of course, for the sake of the remaining survivors, must not fail.

#### ORDERS

We have been tasked to move north towards the Gulf of Tonkin and jam Vietnamese and Laotian radar sites as much as possible. We need to move with the utmost speed in order to be in launching position for our helicopters.

Once you launch the MC-130E Delta Force flights, you have to provide escort and air superiority missions as well as suppression of possible enemy radar activities.

You also need to scout the theatre of operations with your reconnaissance-capable planes.

#### INTELLIGENCE

Nobody has an idea about how Vietnam would take an incursion over her territory into Laotian airspace at the present moment; expect them to be hostile due to their ultimate responsibility for the POWs and their need for a public denial of the situation. However, operations against Vietnamese forces should be limited to the defence and protection of our special forces, and your Marines moving into Laos.

Thailand has not allowed us to use their airspace for combat-related operations, meaning you have to launch your MH-53Js from there but cannot return to your base - the Pave Lows have to proceed to the ARG in the Gulf of Tonkin; but a close friend in the Thai air force promised a helping hand in case the situation over Laos gets out of control.

Unfortunately, China has just announced it will be conducting ASuW exercises in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Tonkin.

## EXECUTION

At your discretion. But, in order to be more specific:

a) Our AWACS is down for at least 8 h due to maintenance problems (spare parts are being flown in from Pearl Harbor), so the USN has to cope with tactical recon; (*PLEASE USE THE AWACS AT PAYA LEBAR ONLY AFTER 10 H GAME TIME*).

b) Obviously, the only way to get out our guys is by helo, so move tankers up north, and possibly prepare as many as helos as possible in case the Delta Force Pave Lows get shot down.

In this respect, note that the Delta Force must parachute their troops from MC-130Es in the vicinity of the prison camp, supported by two AC-130 gunships. The prisoners will be flown out by two Pave Lows launched from Thailand and must then be flown to the ARG; Delta Force troops parachuted over the camp need to be recovered by the Super Stallions on board ESSEX.

**FLAG:** Paya Lebar

**Recommended EMCON:** C (no emissions)

**Victory conditions:** 2 Pave Lows and 8 Super Stallions have to hover over the camp marked by the reference points for a minimum of 10 min. The helicopters must then fly to the ARG. Game time is 2 days.

*Communication is a major factor in this scenario, so you must think hard what and where to deploy in order to stay in contact with your troops, because assigning them to AI-controlled missions will not work (never works in my scenarios).*

## The Humbler

By **Michael Mykytyn**

This is a quick force-on-force CVBG battle. A small test to see how good you are at meeting your match instead of the usual Kirov, Kuznetsov match... Good Luck.

Notes:

- You will notice ASW and submarine units missing from your CVBG composition. This was done on purpose; it's an air and surface exercise.
- The Stennis Battle Group is set in a typical CVBG posture. It works, but you are encourage to experiment.

## Scenario Briefing

John Stennis CVBG

**Sitrep:** You've spent the last 6 months on station waiting for this moment. Starting last year CINCPAC enacted a new wargame that every carrier must take part in when returning to the west coast. Basically, on your way past Pearl you must engage your replacement CVBG that is heading out in a mock force on force battle. The outgoing group is always reinforced by Navy and Air Force units from Pearl.

**Orders:** Completely destroy the outgoing battle group and supporting forces. In this case the Carl Vinson CVBG.

**Intel:** Mock intell reports have come in all night. Your opposition includes the Carl Vinson CVBG, elements of CruDesRon 1 out of Pearl Harbor and no less than 2 Fighter Wings out of Wheeler AFB. No submarine activity is expected. Scenario duration is six days.

## Harpoon Classic 97/2002

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### **Kola III** (EC2000 Norwegian Sea Battleset)

By **Bruce Fenster** and **Byron Audler**

Many of you may have tried Byron Audler's Kola Scenario which was previously posted on Edward Ladner's Harpoon **Pages** (<http://home.infi.net/~edladner/>). Byron designed this scen in response to comments that the AI would be a somewhat "lame" opponent for a formidable blue CVBG foray northward to the Kola Peninsula. As a result of several AAR's supporting that view, I have tried, with Byron's advice and support, to even the odds a bit and provide you, the blue player, with a more spirited Red defense.

To accomplish this we had to address 2 factors that often made for an easy Blue victory in the original scenario: a) Blue's tremendous aerial advantage from his 48 Phoenix-armed F-14s, and b) the all too frequent unwillingness of Red subs to attack the Blue CVBG. These factors were originally addressed in Kola II, currently available on Ed's site, and meant for play with the HC97 game engine.

The improved aerial and submarine warfare AI in Harpoon 2002 has necessitated yet another revision. It's a work in progress and I have uploaded 2 files here for you to experiment with.

'Kol3\_1' is an exact replica of Kola II except as pertains to AI submarines. This rev takes advantage of Bret Mckee's reprogramming and you should find the subs to be quite an improvement over what previously existed in Harpoon Classics.

'Kol3\_5' is my latest attempt to pare back on the AI Backfire component. Bret's new aerial AI has made the original version too lopsided in favor of the AI aerial attack. I'm still refining it, but it should be more "balanced" and afford the player at least a fighting chance to get a victory.

Good luck and good hunting.

Victory conditions are now as follows:

- Blue Minimum Victory -- Destroy 3 Bases
- Blue Total Victory -- Destroy all 4 Bases
  
- Red Minimum Victory -- Destroy either carrier or 6 escorts
- Red Total Victory -- Destroy both carriers

PS: Please note that your CVBG is already approaching the Kola Peninsula and the game engine does not allow ASW or CAP to be airborne at start-up. Expect hostile activity from the opening moments and deploy accordingly.

### **Doolittle II** (A scenario for the EC2000 Norwegian Sea battleset)

By **Brad Leyte**

#### BLUE ORDERS

The Russians have launched a massive attack throughout the Norwegian Sea theater, seizing a beachhead near Orland about halfway down the coast of Norway. The Norwegians are still in the fight, but it is doubtful for how long. The enemy has followed up their first wave of attacks with the deployment of not one, but two, very large carrier battle groups. Intel indicates that both Kuznetsov and Varyag have put to sea, together with a large number of escorts, including nuclear powered battlecruisers and ASW carriers. At least one of these CVBGs is expected to bolster the beachhead in Norway, while the other may threaten Iceland or even the North Atlantic.

Arrayed against the gathering Russian storm cloud, the US Navy has advanced a two-pronged defence. The Mobile Offshore Base Mitchel has forward deployed to a large fjord in eastern Greenland, together with a modified Air Expeditionary Wing. The Wing will have its hands full in defending against the two Russian CVBGs and in supporting our counter-attack.

And, in the south, we are pushing ahead with a plan to retake Norway. A PHIBGRU has been rapidly assembled and is now heading north for the Gap. It is critical that the group successfully reach its objective.

Send comments to [bkleyte@nflid.com](mailto:bkleyte@nflid.com)

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