

**SeaWolves Virtual Navy – After Action Report
Operation Joint Endeavor**

Exercise Name:

Operation Joint Endeavor Rescue 3 (OJER3)

Duration:

1 days

Exercise Date:

August 25, 2010

Location:

Off coast of Somalia; 14nm west of Mogadishu grid OA1-F6

Participating Organization(s):

SeaWolves Virtual Navy – Fleet Forces Group

Number of Participants:

- Participants 3 – RADM Sparchy, CAPT Smackie, ENS JCav
- Victim role players 2 – CAPT Harbinger, LCDR Spectre
- Observers 1 – ADM Uzzi

Platforms used:

(3) Three Seawolf class submarines.

Mission Overview

The goal of the mission was to recover two SVN downed pilots from the coastal waters of Somalia.

The mission was designed to:

1. Locate and extract two downed pilots before Somali pirates could locate and capture them.
2. Suppress enemy naval and ground assets that could pose a threat to the critical objectives.
3. Improve the operational readiness of the command and control system, and augment the capabilities of that system to respond to emergency situations.

Scenario

The events depicted in the mission take place during a period of intense combat operations over the city of Mogadishu, Somalia. While undertaking a night strike mission to take out an identified terrorist compound located in war grid OA1-F2, the Carrier Air Wing of the SeaWolves Virtual Navy encountered heavy triple A fire and operational SAM sites en-route to the target location. While coming feet dry the pilots lined up for the bomb run. The sortie encountered multiple SA8 attacks on final leg. Evasive maneuvers were carried out but to no avail both SVN F-16's were struck. Due to the technical ability of the two pilots they were able to make their way to the sea and ejected successfully as they went feet wet. CAPT Harbinger sent the distress call prior to ejection and the fleet forces commander, RADM Sparchy received the emergency call. RADM Sparchy immediately contacted the war department who released operational orders for the recovery of both pilots. The response time from the time of ejection to the deployment of the recovery mission was less than 24 hours.

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Modus Operandi:

RADM Sparchy was command and control for the mission and selected the overwatch submarine. In the mission was CAPT Smackie in SSN-21 and ENS JCav in SSN-22. Weapon load outs were discussed based on the pre-mission intelligence briefing from the war department. Prior to launching the mission the initial battle plan was discussed and it was made clear that no officer in the mission was to fire a weapon unless cleared by RADM Sparchy. It was RADM Sparchy's intent to get to the pilots as quickly as possible and to ensure the stealth of the mission was not compromised. Authorization to fire would only come if the combatants jeopardized the main objective. As the mission was launched all participants communicated their positions and all SONAR contacts they had on scope. CAPT Smackie immediately called out several broadband (BB) contacts but could not classify them. They would be linked to the rest of the rescue force. Constant communication and verification of all surface contacts was made during the search phase of the mission. A radio message was sent providing the location of each pilot. The pilots were over 15nm apart, so the recovery force had to split up to ensure recovery before the pirates were able to locate and close with. RADM Sparchy assigned CAPT Smackie, based on his current location, **to recover** LCDR Spectre and ordered ENS JCav to recover CAPT Harbinger. As each sub driver changed course and made for best possible speed; not compromising stealth RADM Sparchy maintained SONAR contact on all identified surface contacts and new ones that would appear on scope. RADM Sparchy took responsibility to take out all hostile targets should the need arise to allow the two submarines to focus on recovery at best possible speed. At one point a Somalian Boghammer appeared to take an offensive posture and CAPT Smackie was advised to go deep and silent until RADM Sparchy could better ascertain the intent of the Boghammer. After a few minutes of tracking using TMA, RADM Sparchy was convinced that the enemy Boghammer did not detect CAPT Smackie and it was not longer on a bearing to intercept LCDR Spectre. CAPT Smackie was ordered back to recovery depth and best possible stealth speed. ENS JCav detected on his SONAR a Somalian PTG and linked the information to RADM Sparchy. RADM Sparchy took control of the surveillance of the contact and ENS JCav went back to his recovery course. Just over the one hour mark, CAPT Smackie approached LCDR Spectre rubber raft and approached him at 2 knots and surfaced just long enough to get the pilot aboard. CAPT Smackie was then order to go deep and given an egress bearing to clear the area without engaging enemy surface ships. Shortly after the recovery of LCDR Spectre; ENS JCav was successful in recovering CAPT Harbinger and also give an egress bearing and was told not to engage known enemy contacts to continue stealth. As both CAPT Smackie and ENS JCav moved to egress positions, RADM Sparchy maintained and updated the locations of all enemy surface contacts and at 1+23 the mission was called a success by the attending war officer, ADM Uzzi.

Enemy Combatant Assessment:

- (4) Four Somalian Boghammers left intact.
- (2) Two Somalian Missile Patrol Ships left intact.
- (1) One Somalian Light Missile Patrol Ship left intact.
- (1) One SSM site left operational.

Operational Assessment:

The mission was a success in that both pilots were recovered before the Somalian pirates could locate them. The battle plan going into the mission was maintained and while there were developments during the mission that could have forced RADM Sparchy to modify his plan, he stayed the course and rather than engage and risk losing the pilots, he focused on the critical mission at hand which was recovery. It was RADM Sparchy's assessment that the remaining surface threats would not have an impact of future operations in the area and the risk far outweighed the reward by engaging.