**Baltic Fury #1 – Storm the Gates.**

**AAR by maverick3320, Oct 2021**

13 Feb 1994  
  
Per the scenario designer's notes:  
  
You are the commander NATO’s BALTAP (Baltic Approaches) Command. BALTAP is a joint force of land, sea and air forces arrayed specifically to keep hostile WP forces bottled up in the Baltic Sea. Your forces are primarily Danish and German but some NATO reinforcements can be expected. The restricted waters in the western Baltic funnel hostile forces directly to the island of Zeeland and Copenhagen itself. One thing is certain, there will be a lot of combat power deployed into a very small space.  
  
Precautions over the past few hours have put a flight of F-16s forward on Bornholm Island, a few ships to sea and a NATO AWACs forward in the area of Kiel Germany. Other forces are preparing but so far there have been no hostilities.  
  
Things don't look good.  
  
The bad news: my intel tells me that the Soviets have a bunch of empty ports and the airfields covered with IR-defeating smoke. There are at least a dozen subs out there, well over 200 front-line fighters, along with a good amount of enemy strike and support aircraft. Judging by the number of Soviet airfields in range of the AO I could be in for a world of hurt. A Soviet SAG with a Kynda CG, 2x Sovremmeny DDGs, and an FFG Neustrashimyy are also headed my way. Further, it looks like Poland may be leaning toward joining the USSR and Sweden is blocking off it's airspace to NATO (but not to the USSR, for the most part). The airspace I can operate in is quite restricted which will likely make any strike attempts difficult as I'll have to funnel them through the anticipated Soviet CAP. Last but not least, there is a large mass of apparently civilian shipping north of Poland...right in the area where I will likely need to be firing any anti-ship missiles. I'm sure the Soviets will have no qualms hiding amongst the civilians as in other Fury scenarios. Curiously, though, there are no civilian ships around the NATO ports. Looks like all the European civilian captains have better intel than SACEUR...  
  
The good news: well, there isn't a whole lot. I've got an AWACs up. There are 4x F-16s with AIM-9Ls forward positioned on Bornholm...which are looking more like a liability at this point. Germany has 50+ Tornados IDS available (although it will take 6 hours for the loadouts), and Denmark has a similar number of F16As, although with a shortage of AIM-9s. Germany also has some Mig-29s, potentially my best air-to-air assets, along with some F4 ICEs that have an extremely limited number of AMRAAMs (24 I believe). I'm also "promised" 12x Tornado ADVs from England at some point. Scattered throughout the AO are 3x Patriot batteries along with a number of HAWKs as well. I have a good number of Atlantic ASW aircraft but until I have some sort of idea of what the air picture will look like I'm going to be quite conservative with them. I have a few subs at sea, but until I have an idea of what the Soviet naval picture looks like I'm going to keep them quiet. There are dozens of Harpoon- and Exocet-armed patrol boats in port, but readiness timelines are all over the place so I'll have to develop a strategy for them once I have a better operational picture. I have a few German DDGs and DDs, but I'm wary of sending them off into a heavy sub threat without having control of the air as well.  
  
One last note: BVR engagment logic is locked at "crank if possible". I edited this immediately, as I can't think of a reason why the theater commander (or whoever is my boss in this scenario) would dictate tactics to me. From experience, the Tornado/Sky Flash combo is basically useless if the Tornados try to crank after firing.  
  
My plan: To absorb the anticipated blow as best as possible. I set up three CAPs in the center of the map, just north of Rugen. Tornado loadouts would be a heavy mix of HARMs and Kormorans, with some AIM-9Ls thrown in for backup air defense. My main air platforms, the F16s, are manueverable, but they are going to be outclassed by the Soviet air both at range and in close (AA-11s give me nightmares). So my basic plan is to try and set SAM traps for as many front-line Soviet fighters as possible, as I believe the Soviet fighters to be their center of gravity. Hopefully I can send in my F-16s while the Mig-29s are dodging Patriot and HAWK missiles. At sea, I'm going to be extremely conservative with my surface forces until I have a better idea of what I'm up against.  
  
**AND SO IT BEGINS**  
  
The Soviets put what seems like 100+ aircraft in the air heading toward Roskilde and Vaerlose - fighters, jammers, bombers, everywhere. I have no hope of stopping them with my air so I watch as my SAMs do the best they can. A hasty evac of all the helos as Roskilde leads to disaster as the Soviet fighters detect them at long range and kill almost all of them. Roskilde takes a pounding like I've never seen an airfield get hit before; with one HAWK battery and a few MANPADs there was no hope of defense. Verlose fares a bit better, but is still almost completely wiped out. While the eastern Danish airfields are being pounded, ARM missiles start popping up everywhere headed toward most of the Danish land-based radar sites. Further ARM attacks go after the Patriots and HAWKs; thankfully, I'm able to protect my Patriots for the most part. Bornholm is also bombed into oblivion by waves of Fitters. Both Roskilde and Vaerlose would burn throughout the scenario.  
  
After the first wave, there were two additional large attack waves. My interceptor/fighter force slowly started taking losses, even with cautious use and judicious micromanagement. Micromanaging can only go so far when your fighters are outnumbered 5 to 1! However, attrition started to set in for the Soviets. I focused everything I could on the Flankers as they seemed the largest threat, and eventually by the end of the scenario I rarely saw them. In between, though, their long-range missiles made things very interesting.  
  
Poland, as expected, declared for the Soviets mid-scenario; thankfully they didn't add a lot to the fight other than a few patrol boats that were easily swept aside, and a SA-10 site that was less easily dispatched, but eventually buried under a blizzard of Tornado-flung HARMs. Having no jammer or ELINT aircraft made strikes somewhat risky business.  
  
Throughout the scenario, bases, including BALTAP HQ and several naval bases, started taking hits from high explosives (presumably Spetznaz/commandos). F35 Draken recon, equipped with IR, was the only way to find them, and usually it was after they had struck. In several cases they were able to hit passing ships from 10km away (?). Eventually, though, they were all taken care of.  
  
By mid-scenario I was able to inflict enough losses on the Soviet front-line fighters to allow my strike aircraft some breathing room. The Tornado/Kormoran combination went to work on the plethora of Grishas, Pauks, Nanachukas, Krivaks, and Tarantuls. The Soviet SAG was eventually destroyed as well, after taking down several NATO strike aircraft. NATO surface forces didn't fare well, either. Multiple patrol boats were hit by Su-24 strikes, and 5-6 of them were torpedoed when a group of seven Type 143s stumbled upon a diesel sub that I never did find. Multiple other boats were threatened by numerous SSC-1 Sepal strikes (range of 250km!); thankfully, the slow speed of the missiles allowed my CAPs to down most of them, followed by the RIM-116s, which did an excellent job throughout the scenario in close air defense. If only they could reach 36,000 feet...  
  
The fourth and last wave was composed almost entirely of Mig-29s and attacked what was left of Roskilde. Rather than tangle with 40 Mig-29s, I let them attack and then pounced on the trailing formations, downing eight with F16As and Tornados. A NATO fighter push further east led to a massive group of Mig-23 Flogger Ks heading out to intercept, so NATO beat a hasty retreat and called it a day.  
  
Overall, a massive and extremely fun scenario. Challenging on every front; I scored well, but many of the Soviet air losses were due to poor AI; in the hands of a reasonably competent player the USSR would have rolled NATO hard (which is what I suspect may happen in the book). As always, cheers to Gunner98 for the scenario design.  
  
**Final score: 525 (Triumph**, but certainly didn't feel that way)