**Mediterranean Fury #2 – Syrian Surprise**

**AAR by maverick3320, June 2021**

Situation: you start as the commander of the Kearsarge ESG near Cyprus when Warsaw Pact kicks off the fighting.

Assets:

-Kearsarge ESG (Mainly an Essex-class with 5 Harriers, a Leahy CG, Iowa BB, and some ASW and amphib assets with no ground forces) with 100 or so Tomahawks and 40 or so Harpoons

-Scattered other ASW and sustainment ships

-RAF Akrotiri air base, with 4x Tornados and 4x Phantoms

-Incirlik with E3 AWACs and 14x F-16 (AMRAAMs, although limited quantity, but still probably your biggest asset)

-10 F/A-18s in Greece with some HARMs and TALDs

-40ish other Turkish F4s and F16s with AIM-9Ls

-20+ Greek A-7 Corsairs with some GBUs (that need buddy guidance) and dumb bombs

Enemy: Intel says 12ish WP Mig 23s, plus jammers and a SAG centered on the CVH Moskva and a Slava CG (also confusingly named Moskva). A heavy SAM net, a ton of Syrian airbases (with 400+ aircraft), and several enemy subs.

Israel and Jordan both have large amounts of forces in the game, but aside from Israeli SAMs engaging a few Syrian aircraft, they played no role. Jordanian aircraft "harrassed" some Syrian aircraft, but never fired a shot.

Mission: given the extremely limited assets my initial strategy was simply to play defensively. The game opens up with numerous strikes of 20-40 Syrian aircraft on your ships and RAF Akrotiri; my aircrews eventually were simply exhausted and couldn't keep up, especially against the strikes that were escorted by 10-20 enemy fighters (including Mig-29s) which resulted in some damage to the airfield and ships. Later in the scenario the mission updates to what I thought was to destroy the WP SAG and some WP radars, but after reading the message I couldn't find in the game how to bring the message back up, so I had to guess a bit. The scenario states that you get no points for destroying Syrian aircraft, which is sad, as I ended up destroying 350+.

As mentioned above, the mission updates to destroy the soviet fleet which is sailing back and forth near Latakia under the aircover of what turned out to be 43 Soviet Mig-23s (not even close to 12...thanks a lot, intel weenies), numerous Syrian aircraft, jammers, and multiple Gammon, Grumble, Grizzly, and other SAM assets. I did what I could to whittle down the air cover but it never completely abated. My strategy was to get in Harpoon range of the Soviet ships to at least waste some of the Soviet SAMs along with an initial HARM strike, followed by a larger HARM strike on the SAM net.

I found the scenario to be quite difficult. I ended up with a negative score (-167) as the player loses 100 points for each ship lost (or damaged as well) and the scenario opens with your exposed ships facing a blizzard of ASMs. I considered myself lucky to only lose three ships. I destroyed the entire Warsaw Pact fleet, a Vic III sub, all the WP aircraft, three of the WP radars and a decent percentage of the SAM net, but it still wasn't enough points to get a positive score. I destroyed the port of Latakia as well but didn't seem to get any points for it (oddly, I also didn't get points for sinking the Slava). I was extremely tempted to bring the Iowa within 16 inch gun range of the Warsaw Pact port/SAM net/airbase, but the Soviets had numerous Styx sites around the coast and my ships were nearly empty on SAMs even after micromanaging each SAM launch. Iowa took a hit from a Kedge that wiped out five drones, which I believe resulted in the same point deduction as aircraft, unfortunately.

Overall, another fun experience though. At the end I wasn't really sure what else to do; with no HARMs or Tomahawks left, and the Soviet aircraft destroyed, I started attacking Syrian airbases with the Greek A-7/GBU combo, but didn't seem to get any points for that either. The negative score is a bit dismaying considering I destroyed the WP air, wiped out the Soviet Navy, and destroyed the bulk of the Syrian airforce in less than a day for the loss of three ships, three subs, and 10 aircraft; I think it was actually a pretty good showing.

Either way, I'm already looking forward to Med Fury 3.