**Pacific Fury #3 – Caught Flat Footed**

**Playtest Report by Badlandz May 2021**

I gave this one a try over the past few days. I cheated a bit and definitely got lucky. More on that later.

As I am sure most people do, I started by reviewing the assets available. I immediately noted the COIN aircraft. Uh oh, Belize all over again!

I also noticed the range circles on some of the ships in Subic bay. ( this is where I feel that I cheated) However, the go fast boat is what go my attention. I immediately sent the Philippine patrol boat back to the bay at maximum speed. Realizing that there was no hope of actually catching up to the speed boat, I launched 2 OV-10s in pursuit. ( One of my lucky moments). As luck would have it they were low over the bay when hostilities kicked off. I was surprised by the effectiveness of the patrol boat’s gunnery. It took down the 3 hostile ships fast enough that only one OV-10 made an attack. Expending 1/2 it’s rockets for little obvious impact. The OV-10 rockets were effective against the mortar crew though.

When hostilities started I decided to keep the replenishment group near the bay. I wanted the Kinkaid to act as an ASW screen for a short while. ( Another lucky point). Since my luck was holding, she was the initial air defense of the bay area. Her missiles stopped most of the first wave of cruise missiles. One got through. That’s where I discovered that the air defenses in place were unable to engage missiles. Was that intentional? I’m assuming that this is a database issue. I can’t believe that a Vulcan cannon couldn’t shoot at something the size of a small plane. My luck held! No explosion from the impact.

With the missile attacks in progress, I launched the F-5As and F-5Es in pairs. They turned out to be effective in intercepting the missiles. Kinkaids radar spotted them and the F-5’s got close enough for a lock on. While I never hunted the sub that launched the missiles, it’s attacks weren’t effective either.

Out at sea with the Carrier. At the scenario start I launched the E-2 to patrol north of the battle group. Soon after arriving on station there was a radar contact NW of a surfaced submarine. This contact turned out to be the Juliet mentioned in the brief. Wikipedia says she has to launch her missiles while surfaced. A surfaced nuclear capable sub near the CVBG? Not a good sign. An S-3 was sent up there. I believe it was the S-3 that reported the fist missiles inbound to the group. I also sent the USS San Francisco to intercept the Juliet just in case the S-3 wasn’t able to localize it. When the S-3 arrived the Juliet was on the surface. It didn’t dive away. The San Francisco fired a harpoon to sink it.

I had the Tidsdale recover her RHIBs and turn north at full speed. She and the Vincennes were added to the CVBG. Long term plan was to exchange the Kinkaid for the the Tidesdale in the URG.

The final bit of luck came from the same little S-3. After watching the harpoon hit the Juliet, it flew east towards the area where missiles were detected. At that point I wasn’t sure if I was dealing with an Oscar or just an offset missile route. Either way, another great piece of luck. The S-3 found an Oscar...with MAD. What’s the chance of that happening? Mr Oscar took 2 torpedoes before taking a final dive.

The CVBG launched an air strike with tanker and B-52 support from Andersen. One Sovremenny destroyer and the Minsk were eliminated. No other damage. The post scenario review showed the SA-6 missiles were not exhausted by the attacks. The Frunze had 47 remaining and the Slava having 15. With a bit more time the enemy SAG would have been chased down and eliminated. In retrospect, I think the on scene commander should have chased the Soviet group and met up with the replenishment group later. The method I used left both jobs undone. I guess my next job will be the commander of Thule latrine detail.

Losses to the CAG were 2 F-14, 3 F/A-18D and 1 S-3. All due to the bombardment. Total losses includes 3 F-5A, 1 KC-135, 1 P-3 and 5 SF.260.

The Yak-141 were a bit of a surprise. I wasn’t really paying much attention to the Soviet aircraft having assumed them to be Forgers. Nearly cost me a pair of F-18’s.

I had forgotten, at least for a while, about the available F-14s at Cubi. By the time I realized my mistake they weren’t needed,

No other contact with submarines occurred. Looks like the replenishment group passed the Charlie without being detected. The CVBG passed north of the Victor’s patrol zone.

Good news for the follow on scenarios ( many I hope), AIM-54 expenditures were kept to 18.

On the down side neither group will make the rendezvous on schedule.

Definitely enjoyed the puzzle with this one. Thanks for sharing another fun scenario!