**Indian Ocean Fury #2 – Mozambique Madness**

**AAR by HLE Oct 2021**

This is a micro AAR from Indian Ocean Fury #2: Mozambique Madness, written in more of a narrative than a proper AAR. Given CMO's modeling limitations, some liberty as been taken for actions toward the end of Cazadora's life.  
  
This scenario is vast and complex, with so many engagements and so many nationalities suddenly thrust into the Third World War in 1994. However, I wanted to share the story of one such engagement in a massive global conflict:  
  
The most heroic downfall of the Spanish Corvette ESPS Cazadora, a vessel whose crew will be immortalized as "Los Espartanos del Mar", or The Spartans of the Sea.  
  
At the outbreak of the Third World War in 1994, the Cazadora was on patrol with USS Gary and USS Cayuga off the Coast of Somalia as part of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150), an Anti-Piracy force protecting merchant shipping.

As with the rest of the world, major attacks caught these three ships completely by surprise, with word coming in of Soviet Bloc and Allied attacks seemingly everywhere on the planet, including in their own AO. To name a few, The HMS Ark Royal Group fought off a pair air raids launched against it by Mozambique and Madagascar, losing two Sea Harriers in the process. Kenya came under surprise attack from Tanzania and Uganda, with the Kenyan Air Force fighting back hard, launching small airstrikes against Entebbe Mwanza Airports, destroying several fighters on the ground, and engaging in Air-to-Air Combat with Ugandan MiGs, with losses heavy on both sides. The Small Kenyan Navy also successfully sank a handful of Tanzanian warships with missiles and guns, and successfully destroying several of their coastal radars with rapid offshore raids. Also HMS Trenchant, a Trafalgar Class Submarine, was able to find and sink two Soviet Warships with her Harpoons and Torpedoes.  
  
Back to the coast of Somalia. Allied Command order that NATO forces primarily gather at a rally point near the Horn of Africa for an assault on the Soviet held island of Socotra. However, Intelligence intercepts showed clearly that the Soviets were advising and coordinating a massive outbreak of Somaili Pirates against merchant traffic in the area.  
Only ESPS Cazadora, USS Gary and USS Cayuga were in the area and had to do what little they could to defend innocent sailors on the high seas from these Soviet Sponsored Pirates. This was not an easy task.  
  
USS Cayuga was only an LST with no offensive capability of her own, and thus had to rapidly depart the area for the rally point, as she would be needed for the assault of Socota.  
  
That left Gary and Cazadora. They were not very close to each other, and only Gary had air support, with her pair of Seahawk Helicopters, but the only weapons they could use against the pirates were a handful of Penguin Missiles. Meanwhile Gary had four Harpoon Missiles, and 76mm and 25mm guns for Anti-surface combat, while Cazadora had 8x Harpoon missiles as well as a 76mm Gun and two 40mm Bofors mounts.  
  
At first this seemed like it might be enough, but as Gary was engaging a pair of Pirate ships in the open ocean, radars picked up dozens of craft pouring out of Somaili ports. Far more than ether vessel could hope to handle.  
Gary was the first to engage in a major battle with the pirates, coming out unscathed having sunk 4 boats, but had expended all of its 76mm ammunition, deeming the Harpoons not worth the expenditure. The Commander of the Gary elected to disengage and try to protect merchants more northward while en-route to the rally point.  
  
As for ESPS Cazadora, She had not yet engaged any of the pirates, and her commander was unsure as to how to proceed, given the massive number of contacts and limited weaponry he had at his disposal.  
  
His mind was made up for him when his radioman reported receiving a panicked distress call from a Large Container Ship to the southwest of her position. Cazadora's commander instantly made the decision to come to her aid, especially since there wasn't any other known merchants in the area. He ordered the Cazadora to the Container ship at flank speed.  
  
Upon receiving more panicked radio transmissions from the stricken ship, claiming she is being swarmed by several pirate ships, raking the vessel with Machine Guns and RPGs, Caradoza's commander made the decision to use his Harpoon missiles against the pirates, with targeting help from one of Gary's Helicopters.  
  
All 8 missiles were used, with 4 hitting the pirate ships. The reprieve for the container ship was only temporary as more pirates closed in rapidly. Cazadora's commander pressed on.  
  
Upon coming within gun range, Cazadora opened fire with her 76mm, and once in range, 40mm guns. Still at Flank speed, she charged into the melee blasting pirates all around her, sinking several, but taking minor damage from RPG fire.  
  
Nonetheless, the immediate threat to the Container Ship was neutralized, with the one remaining pirate ship having decided to run for home. By now, Cazadora had expended all of her weaponry: Harpoons, 76mm shells, 40mm shells. She had also taken a couple minor hits to her superstructure. The container ship was damaged severely, with wounded onboard, but able to make a slow speed under her own power.  
  
Cazadora's commander was determined to escort this vessel out of danger. After a short period though, danger arrived. More pirate vessels, at least a dozen, had been detected bearing down on Cazadora and the Container ship.  
  
Cazadora's captain radioed to the Captain of USS Gary, requesting support. Gary's captain promised to race to the area as soon as he could, but the distance was great at this time. The only immediate help he could provide was a Seahawk helo with Gary's last Penguin missile. This helo promptly destroyed one of the pirate ships, and remained on station overhead, reporting on the situation back to Gary.  
  
Cazadora's captain made the desperate decision to use his last remaining weapons: Sea Sparrow SAMs were switched to surface mode, and the ASW Torpedoes would attempt to be used.  
  
The pirates came on in at high speed. Cazadora's captain fired off Sea Sparrows rapidly, but several missed, only destroying two pirate ships, it was not long before all of those were exhausted. The ASW Torpedoes were equally ineffective, unable to detect any signature of the pirates to home in on.  
  
Cazadora's captain got on the Ship's announcement system and stated the following to his crew, which was also picked up via radio by the Helicopter from Gary:  
  
  
***"Gentlemen. Our Situation is desperate. Our beloved ship has exhausted all of her munitions and the damned pirates are still coming. The Container ship is still in danger, and we are the only ones close enough to help. The American Frigate Gary is on her way, but I do not believe she will arrive for some time.  
  
Today's events have come as a total shock to all of us, and I know all of you, myself included, are concerned about the well being of our families and loved ones back home. But the fact of the matter is that the Third World War has begun, whether we like it or not. We did not start this war, but we are now fully in it.  
  
My intention is to draw the pirates away from the container ship for as long as we can. All hands prepare for possible boarding action. We will protect those civilians for as long as possible. No matter what happens, I am sure none of you will ever be forgotten."***

Cazadora's captain fully meant it. He ordered his ship northward toward the pirates, and as expected they all swarmed his vessel.  
  
As the unarmed Helo circled above, out of small arms and RPG range, it's crew observed a most horrific battle.  
Cazadora maneuvered aggressively, attempting to ram some of the pirate ships without success, her crew were now on the decks, fighting with what small arms they could muster. The pirates showed no mercy, dozens of RPGs were fired a Cazadora, with several scoring hits. Early in the fight, the ship's radio masts were destroyed, so all remaining contact other than visual was lost with the corvette.  
  
Approximately 10 minutes later, an RPG hit from close range seemed to damage Cazadora's propulsion, and the ship slowly came to a halt.  
  
Then in a scene straight out of the 18th century, several pirate ships closed on the Cazadora, and a furious melee broke out. Some of Cazadora's sailors were cut down by Machine Gun and AK 47 fire, but at least a couple sailors successfully killed pirates and started using their AK 47s against them.  
  
This was apparently enough for the pirates to back off, as well as the fact that Cazadora now seemed to be listing to starboard. The remaining pirate vessels, now under long range Harpoon attack from Gary, pummeled Cazadora with RPGs and Machine Guns. It was obvious to all now that Cazadora would sink, and she did so a few minutes later.  
  
Only 2 or 3 survivors were seen in the water by Gary's helicopter, and they were rapidly machinegunned by the pirates.  
  
Shortly afterward, the pirates swarmed the Container ship, and using more heavy weaponry (no doubt with Soviet training) were able to damage the merchant ship enough that they were forced to abandon ship. The handful of surviving sailors were similarly murdered by the pirates.  
  
After the Pirates left the area, USS Gary arrived and searched, with no success for Survivors of ether Cazadora or the container ship. Both vessels were lost with all hands.  
  
While this story would be lost in the short term given the global conflict, it would become known around the world as a most inspiring story of self-sacrificing heroism against great odds. The Entire crew of ESPS Cazadoza would Posthumously be awarded Spain's highest honor, the Royal and Military Order of Saint Ferdinand, as well as several posthumous decorations from several Allied Nations.