**Northern Fury #5 – Bardufoss Blues**

**AAR by bladesinger79, Jul 2022**

This was just a badass crazy battle. Took about three months to complete it, I am sadly an older gamer with a job and family to burn up 90% of my waking hours. Horrible. 8-)  
  
The air war didn't quite turn out the way I wanted, there were just too many Russians to deal with and didn't have enough good planes on my end. Typical Russian tactic: We have more of us than you have ordinances to kill us! My pilots managed to kill well over 100 of them to losing about 20 of ours, but they ultimately held the skies from Bodo to Russia. I did NOT expect the Finns to turn against us, they will pay later in the way I guess. Managed to keep all of the Grim Reapers (493 US sqn) alive so that helps.  
  
The Battle of Lofoten was what won it for me. After sinking three enemy subs, I had clear sailing from there on because the Russians did not have any ground-attack aircraft to attack any ships. Even better, I managed to shoot down all 12 enemy Il-38 Mays, freeing up my subs. When the Utsira sank an SAG, and the combined efforts of Missile Group Falk and TG Bergen sank another one, I ordered them on a suicide run against the amphibious group to engage with guns and torpedoes. FOR THE GLORY OF NORWAY! Once we were in range, the unthinkable happened:  
  
THE RUSSIAN SHIPS NEVER FIRED BACK!!!  
  
Taking advantage of the scenario design flaw (It was later revealed I could edit the WRA for the enemy to make it realistic), I spent the better part of nine hours destroying each and every enemy ship in that group! With them out of the way, Trondheim was safe.  
  
The icing on the cake occurred when my fighters shot down practically every ASW helo in TG Kusnetsov. It took about seventeen hours to do so but when I did, it cleared a path for the USS Annapolis to sit deep and silent in front of the formation and sank both the Kuznetsov AND the Kirov!!! For some reason, they came to a full stop at about three hours left in the battle. So I emptied my tubes and destroyed the crowning jewels the Russians had in the Atlantic!  
  
MAJOR DECISIVE ASS WUPPIN'!!!!  
  
Details follow:  
Z1208. Air war begins. Used groups of F-16As from Sqn 331 and F-5As from Andoya to initiate enemy long-range missiles and outrun them in afterburners, while groups of 493 Eagles returned fire from angles. It was fire-and-flee tactics that did not always work against afterburning enemies. First wave was made up of MiG-23MLD Flogger K’s. I had determined that all F-5As were sacrificial lambs, as their capabilities are next to nothing. Not good leadership but it’s just a game. Long-range missile hits were 50-50. Flt 4587, 340 Sqn #3-4 sacrificed to save two F-16AMs to escape. Finnish air units join the war. 23 MiGs shot down at this point.  
  
Z1222. Battle of Lofoten begins. Two Flankers from the SCG sped to attack my Orion, ended up firing at my fighters. One Flanker hit my Orion with heavy damage but was shot down by F-16s for his zealousness. The Orion #5 is forced to land at Bodo despite enemy fighters closing in from the east. Yak-38 Forgers were getting shot down by a combination of fighters and TG Bergen, they never had a chance. The Utsira managed to slip past the ASW helos, lowered to deep depth and waited for their chance against a surface group of four ships. The HMS Talent closes in on another group but faces a stiffer challenge against more radical ASW units. The USS Annapolis is desperately fleeing away from a wave of ASW units from both the Kiev and Kutnesov groups. Another Su-33 shot down a fighter from the RNLAF before going down itself.  
  
Z1226. Thanks to the brave F-5A pilots dogfighting against the enemy wave, this placed the enemy within firing height of the SAM battery at Bardufoss. They suffer massive casualties against missiles coming from the both the battery and from long-range firing Eagles. Current losses: 2 F-5As, 1 F-16A vs 26 MiG-23MLD-K, 2 Su-33, 5 Yak-38s.  
  
Z1228. Battle of Lofoten. Enemy sub spotted by sonobuoy near shoreline, but not risking an attack by my ships. More Forgers are attacking but they are nothing more than just target practice. My lone supporting flight of F-15Cs are shooting at helos before I order them to stop, killing all they shot at. A skilled Forger shot down RNLAF #3 and 4, lucky. Sonobuoys are thick for surface group causes the HMS Talent to break off.  
  
Z1233. More planes from Evenes and Andoya take off, speeds low and fast to avoid air conflicts. Second enemy wave arrives near Bardufoss, with a few attempting to engage my picket of Eagles. After a few kills, the wave near Bardufoss breaks off pursuit. All my fighters head to Orland. Large amount of land-based Su-27 Flankers speeds on afterburner towards my fleeing planes.  
  
Z1235. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. All Yak-38 Forgers successfully shot down. Fearful of enemy subs, I attempt to use the coastline to skirt my ships away from impending enemy air attacks. Dared not send any Orions to clear a path for them. Utsira in position to attack SAG Kresta near Vesteralen Island.  
  
Z1236. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Utsira begins attack on SAG Kresta. The Kinn attempts to intercept known enemy sub before it attacks TF Bergen.  
  
Z1244. Sovremenny sunk by Utsira.  
Z1248. Ornevoy (Mod Kashin) sunk by Utsira.  
  
Z1250. Bombardment of Bardufoss begins. Enemy destroys a gun emplacement there. Five Flankers blitz towards Bodo, many head for other bases. Circle jerk of Flankers, Fulcrums, and others form east of Evenes, preventing any more planes from launching out of there.  
  
Z1252. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Kresta II sunk by Utsira.  
Z1257. Udaloy II sunk by Utsira. Heads for shallow waters near Andoya.  
  
Z1306. All pursuing Flankers shot down NE of Orland but lost 1 F-5A and one damaged. One F-16AM lost, glitch.  
  
  
Z1307. Attack on Andoya begins. Nearly all initial enemy fighters were shot down. NASAM site did well. Managed to sneak 493 #19-20 past the Flankers and made a dash for Orland.  
  
Z1310. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Sent missile group Lom to try and distract the enemy Kilo sub from TG Bergen. P986 Hauk sunk. P960 sunk. Msl Gp Lom destroyed. Kinn barely avoids torpedo, forced to surface due to dead batteries. TG Bergen makes a break north hoping to avoid subs.  
  
Z1331. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Utsira sinks enemy sub, unknown model type but is under attack by torpedoes. 340 Sqn #9-10 attempts to shoot down enemy helos with guns, they suck.  
  
Z1340. Lull in the conflict. A lone Su-27S pursues my planes enroute to Orland. The Annapolis and Talent continues to speed away from enemy ships, while TG Bergen steams north to engage and avoid subs. Utsira heads south to avoid enemy Mays bearing on him from Russia. Over 50 planes rearming and refueling at Orland. The Kinn is cautiously searching for hunter-killers. The lone Flanker retreats, probably low on fuel. Changed its mind when a pair of F-5As from Andoya flew close by. Shot down by CAP of Eagles. Current score: 7 total fighters, 3 missile boats lost vs. 60 enemy fighters, four ships, two subs.  
  
Z1410. Managed to trap two more Su-33 Flankers from their CAP to chase my planes near Orland. They may turn back due to fuel. The Utsira is tracking down an enemy sub that fired at it earlier. A circle jerk of Mays huddle 120 nm west of Andoya waiting for trouble.  
  
Z1418. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Kinn fires on enemy sub contact to its rear. The attack succeeds, sinking a Kilo-class sub.  
  
Z1434. New wave of fighters heading into the fight from Russia and Finland. Several are flying at 40,000 feet, suggesting they are probably the Foxhounds.  
  
Z1435. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. A group of four enemy helos approach TG Bergen with ill intent. TG fired missiles at the low flying birds. All were shot down.  
  
Z1450. Large wave of enemy fighters is heading southwest to Orland and Bodo, possibly Foxhounds. All my F15s are out of fuel and grounded or RTB. All I have left that can fly are F16s and F5s. Enemy wave circles just east of Bodo, teasing me to get closer, which I won’t for now.  
  
Z1515. A pair of Il-38 Mays attempted to intercept the Kinn, they were shot down by TG Bergen. That group is running out of Sea Sparrows. They are heading out to open seas.  
At odd intervals, Il-38 Mays and helos will end up getting shot down by the SAMs from Andoya and TG Bergen too often to keep track.  
  
Z1610. Wave of fighters break off, headed back to Russia. Lone chance to launch last 2 F-5As to join Orland. A continuous scattering of shoot downs occurred here and there, mostly at Andoya, Evenes, and with TG Bergen. Lonesome and pairs of Su-33 Flankers were lured out to deep ocean by F-5s and were systematically picked off by F-16AMs and F-15Cs.  
  
Z1612. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Goblin contact by Kinn, closes in for the potential kill, while the Utsira speeds south away from the ASW net. Msl Gp Falk closes the gap on second SAG, the Yunashev.  
  
Z1644. Two F-5s from Bodo attempted to shoot down an Il-38 May close to TG Bergen. Five shots, zero hits. Both 336 Sqn #3-#4 were shot down. Pathetic.  
  
Z1708. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Msl Group Falk begins attack on SAG Yunashev. First four shots from P970 Brann fired at Otchnayanny (Sovremenny class), Russian ship put up a LOT of SAMS! All four shot down. A massive wave of enemy fighters, mostly Su-27 Flankers and MiG-31 Foxhounds, head towards Orland. All available NATO craft are launched for the big showdown. Second flight of Penguins shot down. Enemy wave breaks off 150nm from Orland, perhaps due to fuel, but Foxhounds continue to advance. Fired last eight Penguins from Falk. Otchayanny hit three times. DDG of unknown name hit four times, sunk. The Talent closes in.  
  
Z1730. I’ve turned several flights northeast to trap a few enemies closer to within range of my Orland SAMs and to drain their fuel out. They don’t fall for it, they turn back within a few nm of my SAM range. Only when I risked sending a few flights did I manage to kill a few Su-27s. None of the Foxhounds bit on the baiting trap.  
  
Z1800. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Kinn attacks Goblin contact, with Utsira closing in 17nm away. HMS Talent within range of one ship from SAG Yunashev, waits for all three to close in before firing. Spotted by the enemy, probably by a Sonobuoy, and launches all torpedoes while dodging an enemy torpedo. Kinn misses its target, torpedo exploded by a glitch. The Mod Kashin was sunk by a Spearfish torpedo, but the Talent is on the run by a homing torpedo.  
  
Z1812. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Kinn sinks enemy sub of unknown make and model. Yunashev hit by torpedo.  
  
Z1900. Continuous game of baiting going on around Orland. Foolish enemy craft comes in individually or in pairs against my own numbers with no casualties to this point. Either they get shot down or run out of fuel. Either way, I’m winning. A flight of F-15Cs #9-#10 are picking off enemy ASW units too far from their surface groups for any SAM support. Orland SAM site of Hercules have been sub-par to pathetic, but thankful I have them. RNLAF 332 Sqn #13-#14 took on a total of 12 enemy missiles and dodged them all as bait for the other flights to shoot down the enemy.  
  
Z1923. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. TG Bergen attacks Amphibious group with Penguin missiles. First 12 missiles did not pass through the beehive of Russian SAMs, so they chose to attack with guns. TG Bergen comprised of the Bergen, Stavanger, Skjold, Djerv, Rokk, Orn, and Snogg. They were going to fight it out against superior numbers and firepower. Rastoropnyy (Sovremenny class) hit by one missile. TG Bergen decides to battle with guns by isolating enemy ships with numbers on their side instead of charging into the fray. Rastoropnyy sunk by multiple cannon hits and two torpedoes. Admiral Vasilyevsk (Udaloy-class) was next, hit by dozens of shots, damaged and slowed. Soobrazitelny (Kashin-class) hit by torpedo, slows down and minor fire, moderate flooding. Bessmenny (Krivak II-class) and Otvazhny (Kashin-class) were attacked by final torpedoes both missed. Vdumchivyy (Sovremenny-class) was next, damaged but working. The Otvazhny (Kashin-class) suffered our wrath up close. Ends with five Russian ships damaged, burning, and sinking in various degrees. I sent the TG away to reload and regroup before attacking the landing ships. NOT ONCE DID THE RUSSIANS SHOOT BACK!  
During this time, SAMs from Bardufoss, Andoya, and Evenes would fire at low flying enemies, shooting down several of them from time to time.  
  
Z2023. Attacks the LST Ropucha I: Medium damage, major fire, heavy flooding.  
Z2028. Attacks LST Ropucha II: Medium damage, heavy flooding.  
Z2033. Attacks a different LST Ropucha I: Heavy damage, Conflagration, minor flooding.  
Z2039. Attack on LPD Mitrofan Moskalenko: Light damage, minor flooding.  
Z2046. Attack on MLS Polnocny C: Sunk!  
  
Z2050. Msl Group Falk moves in to finish off the Yunashev. Uses all guns, saving the last two torpedoes for later opportunities. It is sunk!  
Z2051. Attacks on another LST Ropucha I: Heavy damage, minor flooding.  
Z2104: Attack on another LST Ropucha I: Medium damage, minor fire.  
I had broken off from the attack, ran out of ammo. The TG sailing east to cover the Utsira and Kinn from enemy ASW planes. Missile Group Falk and the HMS Talent are steaming to intercept the remaining ships in the amphibious group.  
  
Z2150. Big air battle at Orland, didn’t go as well as I wanted. Ended up losing 2x F-16aAMs, 2X F-16A from 331 Sqn and 2x F-5As from 340 Sqn to only 9 Flankers. Seven more shot down by 493 Sqn.  
  
Z2220. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. Utsira and Kinn ran out of battery power. Sent TF Bergen to cover them for recharging, as a May was circling nearby. Talent and Missile Group Falk closes the gap on the Amphibious group.  
  
Z2307. TG Bergen shoots down 12th enemy Il-38. There should be no more of them to deal with.  
  
Z2325. Sent a flight of F-15Cs to shoot down enemy ASW helos from the Kuznetsov group. Utsira and Kinn are recharging batteries with TG Bergen covering them. Seven are shot down, took some fire from the surface ships with no damage.  
  
Z0010. BATTLE OF LOFOTEN. MSL Gp Falk begins gun assault on remaining healthy ship in Amphibious group.  
First attack on the Krondstadt (Kresta II-class): sunk by torpedo.  
Z0029. Attack on Grozyashchiy (Krivak II-class): heavy damage, medium fire, medium flooding. Sunk.  
Z0055 Attack on Polnocny (Med Landing Ship): Sunk  
Z0100. Torpedo attack on a Ropucha I (LST-class): Sunk.  
Z0102. Attack on damaged Ropucha I: Sunk.  
Z0112. Attack on another damaged Ropucha I: Sunk.  
Z0125. HMS Talent attacks Mitrofan Moskalenko (LPD-class)  
Z0143. Talent attacks Bessmenny (Krivak II class): Sunk.  
Z0157. Attack on Vdumchivyy (Sovremenny-class): Sunk.  
Z0205. Attack on Otvazhny (Kashin-class): heavy damage, moderate flooding.  
Z0207. Talent resumes torpedo attack on Mitrofan Moskalenko:  
Z0220. Talent begins torpedo attack on Otvazhny: Sunk.  
Z0230. Talent torpedo attacks on Vdumchivyy and Soobrazitelny (Kashin-class): both sunk.  
Z0240. Attack on Marshal Vasilyevsky (Udaloy I-class): Sunk.  
The entire Amphibious task force is destroyed. The Kinn, Utsira, Talent, and TG Bergen turn towards Trondheim with almost all major ordinances spent.  
  
Z0250. Flight 9426, of 493 Sqn #1-#2 begins shooting down enemy helos of TG Kuznetsov in hope to clear a path for the Annapolis. 8 AMRAAMs fired, 6 hits. They return to base.  
  
Z0308. A lone Helix A from the TF Kuznetsov tried to attack the HMS Talent but is intercepted by Group Falk.  
  
Z0320. Flight 9427 of 493 Sqn #3-4 attacks ASW helos of TG Admial Gorshkov. 7 shots, five hits. They have no air units protecting them from sub attack for now.  
Z0350. Five Su-27s in a five-point box formation speeds towards my fighters at Orland. Two are shot down.  
  
Z0419. Decided to launch my four operational Orions to attack TF Kiev in hopes of at least one Harpoon missile gets through.  
  
Z0445. No helos are in the air covering the two carrier groups. USS Annapolis closes in deep and slow to avoid sonobuoys, while my Orion flight flies low to sneak in their Harpoons.  
  
Z0452, the Orion flight launches all missiles at the Kiev-class battle group. Sunk unnamed Udaloy-class.  
  
Z0630. USS Annapolis began setting up for an attack on the Kuznetsov group. Positioned in front of the group 40nm out, dove deep and cut engines. At Z0810, the ships came to a full stop with my sub just 3.4nm away from the carrier!!! Must be a mission design. The same happened to the Kiev group, they conducted a full stop also. At this range, it would not have made a difference if they kept moving or not, so I took the opportunity. I turned north, crept behind the carrier instead of being parallel to it within their ASW weapon range, waited until I was a good 7nm out, fired all four tubes, and ran like hell. They didn’t react to the torpedoes behind them at all. Four torpedoes struck, damage assessment unknown. No reaction from the Russians. I waited, reloaded, and attacked again. With six total torpedoes, the Kuznetsov is sunk! The last torpedo targeted the Kirov. The rest of the ships tried to flee at high speeds, but the Kirov was hit in the stern at Z0828: damage is minor flooding.  
  
Z0903. With five total torpedoes, the Annapolis sinks the Kirov. The rest of the group flees top speed away.  
  
At this point, I sped the remaining three hours until the scenario was over. The Russians did not attempt any more attacks anywhere. I landed all my remaining planes and gave the crews a rest. The Norwegian navy sailed south in triumph, while the Annapolis sailed north then turned west to Iceland.  
  
Final Score: 1565