

Sub-Versus-Sub Exercise Practiced by Navy To Increase American Security

Editor's note: One of the greatest threats to American security in the present is the growing submarine fleet. To counter this threat, the Navy is practicing new techniques, employing one sub against another in the primary weapon against the enemy, the submarine. United Press staff correspondent Glenn Stackhouse, recently was assigned to a 10-day assignment covering the West Coast of Mexico following his dispatch.

By GLENN STACKHOUSE
United Press Correspondent

Aboard the USS Pomodon off Baja California—Lt. Cmdr. Hal Trueblood, relaxed and natural with his elbows draped over the handles of a periscope.

The growing 300-carload submarine fleet from Yokosuka, Wash., is in his element in a coming battle. He is one of the many professional killers assigned to the job of knocking out the Soviet sub fleet in the event of war. After 13 years at the periscope, he knows his job well.

The U.S. Navy subscribes to the adage: "Set a killer to catch a killer." As a result, the USS Pomodon and others like her today have the primary mission of underwater assassination of their own kind.

Pretty Hairy Assignment

This, to borrow an Air Force expression, is a pretty hairy assignment.

"In sub versus sub operations, we have only two problems," Trueblood says. "These are detection and destruction. Detection nowadays is tantamount to destruction. You might say the mission is 98 per cent detection and two per cent destruction."

The thing is to detect without being detected and to destroy without being destroyed.

To kill a surface ship is a relatively simple thing for a submarine which can lie in ambush, shoot and hide.

No Errors Allowed

But when you're dealing with another sub, that advantage is gone. One mistake — just one bad calculation — and you're a dead fish.

We are aboard a Guppy II class snorkel submarine, one of the Navy's fastest and most effi-

cient non-atomic undersea boats.

Somewhere a few miles away is the radar picket sub USS Spinnaker, taking her turn at playing "enemy" for the Pomodon's acoustical homing practice torpedoes.

A few moments ago a klaxon alarm blatted twice and Trueblood gave the order, "Dive, dive."

The Pomodon nosed downward and a steward's mate swore as he grabbed for skittering coffee cups in the pantry.

Level at Periscope Depth

As the fathometer pointer crawled to 60 feet the Pomodon leveled out at periscope depth. A seaman blew the negative tank to establish buoyancy and the change in pressure made your ears pop.

Trueblood hung his arms over the scope handles and propped his forehead to the eyepiece. Salt water drooled down the scope tube and dripped hollowly into the well below.

"Nice and clear," he remarked. Then he added, "Stinkin' day for periscopes. Flat calm."

Lt. (j.g.) George T. Harper, 26, of Hoboken, N. J., gunnery officer, hunched over the illuminated table of the dead reckoning tracer, ready to plot out the bearings of the enemy.

Con Silent

It was silent in the crowded con except for the "gunk" of a worm gear in the tracer and a faint nasal whistling as a man breathed heavily nearby.

It was hot and stuffy and there was a smell of stale air and sweat.

The Pomodon is not a so-called "killer" sub. These postwar specialists are on their way out as vessels like the Pomodon are gradually being rigged with the newest sonar gear and taking over a dual mission.

With the spectacular success of the atomic submarines, the Navy is now moving toward a single all-purpose boat combining the missions of the radar picket, killer, guided missile and

troop carrier subs into one vessel.

Trueblood is enthusiastic about the guided missile as a submarine weapon.

"The missile will eventually be the thing," he said. "The time will come when we won't be firing torpedoes at all. A torpedo is a missile. We'll just get the weapon out of the water and into the air."

The soundman, his ears cupped in a headset, reported: "High noise level at zero six zero."

The captain, swung his scope, stopped, and swung back.

"Here it is! Target bearing. Mark."

Harper: "Zero zero one."

Trueblood dived his scope and almost immediately poked it up again.

"Let's check his angle of bow this time. Bearing. Mark."

Harper: "Zero zero five."

Every few seconds the skipper ran up his periscope, took a quick reading, then yanked it down before the Spinnaker could catch its telltale wake.

Down in the officers' wardroom, hastily converted into a plotting center, a young officer and three sailors listened to the bearings and plotted a series of pencil dots across the face of a circular maneuvering board.

The dots marched across in a gentle arc, then broke abruptly into a sharp curve. That was the tip-off that the enemy sub was at a 90 degree angle to the Pomodon's bow. In a few seconds of calculation they had all the factors — bearing, range, speed and course — needed for a torpedo shot.

In the conning tower, Trueblood issued the final orders quietly.

"We will shoot one mark 28 acoustical homing torpedo. Tube eight."

"Range 3800 yards. Right full rudder."

"Tubes after open outer door. Rudder amidships."

"Torpedo run. All ahead two-

thirds."

Then, "Fire eight."

An officer, checking sonar, reported: "Torpedo course zero zero two."

Seconds ticked by as Trueblood pecked through his periscope.

Then he relaxed. "Got him," he grinned.

Everybody else grinned back. A sailor dug in his dungaree shirt for a cigarette.

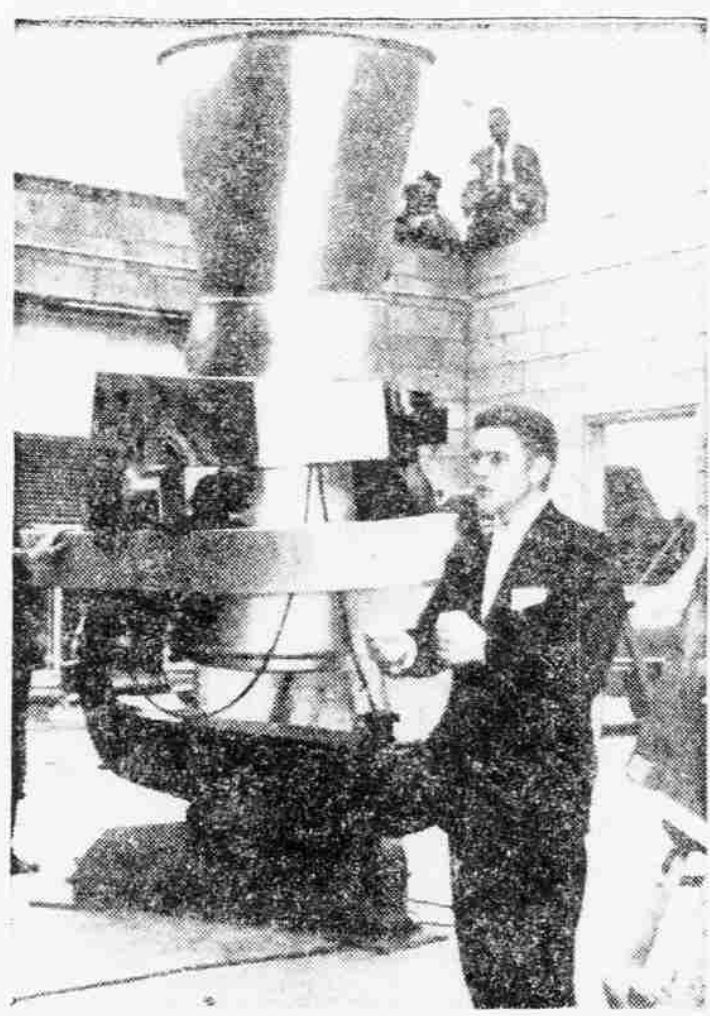
FORM REVERSAL

Hollywood — Irish McCalla, blonde actress who's too tall for many leading men, says she's not worried about type-casting—just type-titling. She's usually seen on TV as "Sheena," a jungle queen who rescues good guys. Now she'll be in a film, "She Demons," in which the leading man rescues her.

EARLY PRACTICE

Muskegon, Mich. — Muskegon police "blew the whistle" on basketball practice at a school playground and sent the five players to the showers.

Neighbors complained about the noise and the car headlights used to illuminate the court. It was 4 a.m.



SATELLITE SEEKER—Smithsonian astronomer Dr. Karl G. Henize explains the giant, specially designed U. S. IGY satellite tracking camera as it is unveiled in Los Angeles. The camera is the first of 12 to be placed strategically around the world to comprise a satellite photographic network. The complex design of the optics was necessary to enable the camera to photograph the satellite, a job similar to attempting to photograph a golf ball thrown from a plane at 60,000 feet.

Switzerland has 27 cantons or states and 3,000 communes or counties.

It is estimated about 3,000 Negroes served in the American Revolutionary armies.

N.Y. TREE OFFER

Albany, N. Y. — The New York State Conservation Department has 36,000,000 seedling trees available for planting by private land-owners next spring. The price is only \$5 per thousand, but there's a catch. Under state law the seedlings cannot be sold for ornamental or landscaping purposes and must be used on at least one acre of land.

About 72 per cent of the rubber consumed in the U. S. is for automobile tires and sundries. Mechanical goods take 10 per cent, footwear 6 per cent, and wire and cable insulation 4 per cent.

THE BUCOLIC LIFE

Morley, Mich. — When farmer Frank Green, attempted to corral his cow, the animal kicked at him, stirring up a nest of bees. Green took off his hat and began swatting the bees. The hat slipped from his grip and landed on the cow's nose. She ate the hat and Green ran from the bees.

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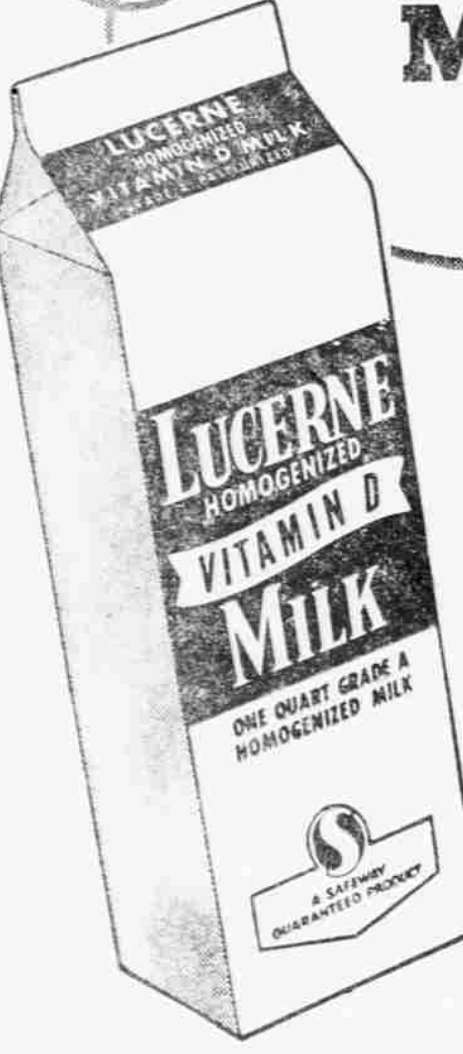
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