

Vice Admiral Roeder Arrives on Bennington



Operation "Beadstring" was well underway for Bennington when Vice Admiral B. F. Roeder, Commander First Fleet, arrived by helicopter Jan. 9 to discuss the fleet exercise with Rear Admiral William J. Moran, Commander Antisubmarine Group Three.

The three-star Admiral spent one-half-day on Big Ben as he observed the hunter-killer section of the 26-ship exercise. Satisfied with what he saw, Admiral Roeder was off to another major ship in Beadstringer.

Top picture shows Admiral Roeder arriving on Big Ben, and in the bottom picture he is listening to Admiral Moran's plan of operation during Beadstringer.



Beadstringer Brings First Fleet Ships To Readiness

Simulated air and missile attacks, constant submarine contacts, refueling exercises, Condition Three watches and numerous deceptive measures, kept Beamen alert during her first major First Fleet Exercise since returning from the Western Pacific in late May.

Highlights of the overall exercise were surface-to-air missiles fired against drone aerial targets and live rocket and bombing attacks against targets in the San Clemente and the Chocolate Mountain impact ranges, as Beadstringer was conducted from January 4 through 13.

Bennington, joining the exercise January 8, was quickly thrown into the huge exercise, undertaking roles in surveillance of all area surface and subsurface vessels, search and rescue (SAR) missions, and antisubmarine patrols. With Rear Admiral William J. Moran, Commander Antisubmarine Group Three, embarked, Bennington commenced readiness Condition Three shortly after passing through the breakwater of her homeport, Long Beach.

Sailing in various stages of Condition Three, Beadstringer launched her aircraft and kept a constant surveillance for exercise submarines participating in Beadstringer. The ship was "attacked" several times early in the exercise by jets simulating enemy missiles. Beamen were called to General Quarters to repel the simulated attacks, and the guns, already manned, were trained on the targets, as Captain D. J. Murphy maneuvered the big ship out of danger without losing any operational capability.

Besides keeping subs under surveillance and being prepared at all times for possible attacks, Bennington participated in day and night underway refueling tasks during stages of the exercises that attacks were probable.

The First Fleet Exercise was well underway when Vice Admiral Bernard F. Roeder, Commander First Fleet, arrived via helicopter. During the half-day he stayed on Bennington, he observed operations of Rear Admiral Moran's antisubmarine task unit.

Bennington squadrons, VS-33, VS-38, HS-8 and VAW-111, were constantly in the air protecting against the opposing sub throughout the exercise as their home base, Bennington, repelled simulated surface to surface missiles.

Aboard ship electronic counter-measures, counter intelligence and darken ship became a routine part of the "war". Exercise messages dictated task group strategy and all hands hustled to keep up with the changes.

BEADSTRINGER

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