

**The Gulf of Tonkin Incident**  
An Introductory Scenario for Bulldogs Away  
By Dave Schueler

This scenario represents the daylight encounter between USS Maddox and 3 North Vietnamese torpedo boats on August 2, 1964.

On August 2, 1964, *USS Maddox* (DD-731) was conducting a DeSoto mission (an electronic and signal intelligence gathering mission) in the Gulf of Tonkin off the coast of North Vietnam. After encountering several fishing junks during the morning, the signals technicians on *Maddox* intercepted North Vietnamese radio signals that indicated they were planning on some sort of military operation involving ships operating in the Tonkin Gulf. The *Maddox*'s Captain informed the US Seventh Fleet command of the situation and asked for instructions; he was told to continue with his mission. In the late afternoon *Maddox* sighted three North Vietnamese torpedo boats heading toward the destroyer. *Maddox*'s Captain radio the nearest American carrier for air support and prepared his ship for action.

**North Vietnamese Forces:** 3 P-4 class torpedo boats. All the crews are rated as Nondescript and the Command Quality is Mediocre.

**American Forces:** *USS Maddox*, a Sumner class destroyer with a Trained crew quality and Average Command Quality.

**Set Up:** Use a standard size table (6x4 or 8x4) and randomly determine the weather using the Pacific column of the Sea State table. This is a day time encounter. *USS Maddox* sets up first anywhere within 2' of the center of the playing area, heading in any direction the American player chooses, moving at Slow speed. The P-4s enter as a single unit from any map edge moving at Medium speed or less. Neither side may change speed until after the enemy is detected.

**Special Rules:** *USS Maddox* may not fire on the North Vietnamese on the first turn they are detected (*Maddox* had not been given permission to fire unless under attack and this delay represents the time taken to try and warn the North Vietnamese boats to turn away). *Maddox* cannot exit the play area.

**Victory Conditions:** The North Vietnamese win if *Maddox* is Wrecked or Sunk. The American player wins by avoiding the North Vietnamese victory conditions.