

Navigation

In the mid-50s I was the X.O. and navigator onboard a patrol boat out of New London, CT. We had been operating out of Norfolk, VA for several weeks. The C.O. was a great ship handler and the day we were scheduled to depart Norfolk for New London it was "pea soup" fog. The C.O. was newly married and asked me if I was O.K. with radar navigating out of Norfolk.

The navigation out of Norfolk is a 3 hour sea detail, in good weather. I said, "no problem." So, we departed and slowly made our way out. The last buoy, to seaward, is 2 CB. I was in combat and the C.O. was on the bridge. I called to the bridge with the course to steer and said, "Buoy 2 CB is dead ahead." The C.O. said, "Roger". Then I called the C.O. and said "2 CB two minutes dead ahead". He said, "Roger". In two minutes I heard a bang on the hull and scraping under the hull. The C.O. called combat and said, "Mark, on top 2 CB." He was one cool C.O.

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P.S. No, we did not report it to the Coast Guard. A couple of months later we had the hull checked and somehow the pit sword was bent.