

SWEDEN'S COLD WAR NAVY

Did political blundering create a naval doctrine that would be unable to cope with a powerful aggressor such as the Soviet Union?

BY CHARLES H. BOGART



HSwMS *T-42* lead boat of the 15 boat *T-42* fast boat class. These boats were all built between 1956 and 1959. They displaced 40-tons and were 75.5-feet long, with a beam 19.4-feet and a draft of 4.5-feet. Armament was one 40mm gun, two machine guns, and two 21-inch torpedo tubes. Situated on the bow are twelve rail 57mm flare launchers. Speed was 45-knots. In 1976, *T-42* to *T-45* were rebuilt as *VO-1*-class patrol craft and then in 1983 four additional *T-42s* were rebuilt to *VO-1* specifications. The conversion of the *T-42* boats to *VO-1*-class involved replacing their gasoline engines with diesel engines, which reduced the boat's speed to 27-knots. In addition these boats lost their torpedo tubes. Upon *T-42* being rebuilt as a *VO-1*, she was renamed HSwMS *Skonor*.

HSwMS *Alvsnabben* started out life as a merchant ship but was converted to a mine layer. The ship was photographed in an interesting camouflage scheme on 17 April 1951.

Sweden became an independent nation in 1521 when under the leadership of King Gustav I it broke away from the Kalmar Union which governed Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. On 7 June 1522, Gustav I purchased a number of sailing and rowing warships from the Hanseatic League town of Lübeck to protect Sweden's merchant shipping from Baltic pirates. The Royal Swedish Navy thus considers 7 June 1522, as its date of birth.

The Royal Swedish Navy (*Svenska Marinen*) is composed of the Royal Fleet (*Kungliga Flottan*), which contains surface ships and submarines and the



HSwMS *Gilloga M-47* preparing to dock, notice the line handler on the bow and the old tires rigged as fenders. *Gilloga* was part of the seven-ship *Hisingen*-class of trawler minesweepers, which were a refinement of the 1948-built *Olust*-class. These ships were based on a commercial fishing boat design. Four boats, *M-43* to *M-46*, were built in 1957 and three, *M-47* to *M-49*, in 1964. These minesweepers were 76.2-feet long with a beam of 21-feet and a draft of 4.7-feet. They were armed with a 20mm gun on the bow and could make nine-knots. All were out of service by 1990.

Royal Marine Corps (*Amfibiekåren*). The ships of the Royal Swedish Navy are given the prefix "HMS," short for *Hans/Hennes Majestäts Skepp* (His/Her Majesty's Ship). In English, this is changed to "HSwMS" (His/Her Swedish Majesty's Ship) to differentiate Swedish vessels from those of the British Royal Navy or the Netherland Royal Navy.



HSwMS *Abborren* was one of nine *Kust*-class coastal defense submarines, *U-1* to *U-9*, built between 1941 and 1944. *Abborren* was launched in 1943 as *U-5*. Between 1960 and 1964, *U-4* to *U-9* were rebuilt by the Royal Swedish Navy as coastal attack submarines. In 1962, upon completion of her rebuilding, *U-5* was renamed *Abborren*. As rebuilt she was 164-feet long, with a beam of 14-feet, and a draft of 12.5-feet. Displacing 460-tons when submerged, she was armed with four bow 21-inch torpedo tubes and one stern 21-inch torpedo tube. Under-water speed was nine-knots. *Abborren* was stricken from the Royal Swedish Navy in 1976.

