



"SARGO" SURFACEL AT POLE

Warm welcome earned by cold courage.



CREWMEN PLANTING FLAG

U.S. Navy

trip to the North Pole. When *Sargo's* boyish skipper, Lieut. Commander John H. Nicholson, 35, told his tale, it was clear that the warm welcome was hard earned by cold courage.

Early on the morning of Feb. 9, *Sargo's* sophisticated SINS (for Ship's Inertial Navigation System) picked out the Pole. Up poked the sub's massive sail, *i.e.*, superstructure, lifting with it a three-foot layer of ice. Crewmen axed through the ice, climbed down a ladder, found by celestial navigation check that they had scored a bull's-eye—the Pole was only 25 yards away. Electronics Technician Second Class Harold ("Pineapple") Meyer marched to the Pole, planted a candy-striped pole on the spot, and hoisted the state flag of Hawaii. While other crewmen went out in rotating groups of 20 to explore, Skipper Nicholson radioed to Operation Deepfreeze headquarters at the South Pole (loud and clear). Then he submerged, took *Sargo* on "a quick seven-minute trip around the world."

On two of their Arctic surfacings, the crewmen spotted tracks of polar bears, happily went hunting for them. Score: none sighted, none bagged. But they had other adventures. The tougher surfacings and a close scrape against the ice pushed in *Sargo's* sail, punched a pair of holes in its afterdeck, ripped out a plastic dome in its bow. Once the sub scraped within five feet of the ocean's bottom; another time it came within an ace of being frozen rock-solid in the ice.

Taking risks paid dividends. *Sargo's* disciplined crew proved, among other things, that 1) the sub's guidance systems can be rated at pinpoint accuracy, 2) U.S. subs can travel submerged through the ice-locked Bering Straits in midwinter, 3) they can reach the top of the world from east or west at any time of year, and 4) that there are many more surfacing areas than previously suspected. All of this was glad news to scientists—and to future skippers of the U.S. Navy's Polaris-firing nuclear submarine fleet.

ARMED FORCES Through the Ice to the Pole

Two hovering helicopters dumped bright flowers on the dented and travel-worn U.S. nuclear submarine *Sargo* last week as it churned back to its Pearl Harbor home base after a 6,000-mile round

* Last week Pollster George Gallup showed Kennedy catching up with Vice President Richard Nixon in a national poll, coming from behind in January (47% Kennedy, 53% Nixon) to an even fifty-fifty split.