

USS Chosin 'smokes' CART

By Lt. j.g. J.C. Dudley
USS CHOSIN

In just two weeks following a Ship's Selected Restricted Availability (SRA) that saw significant modifications to USS Chosin's (CG 65) AEGIS Combat System, Communications suite and Electronic Warfare Systems, the crew of Chosin had to quickly change gears and ready themselves for a Comprehensive Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART). In spite of the challenges faced in readying the Combat Information Center and Engineering watch teams for CART, Chosin's Combat Systems, Engineering Casualty Control, Damage Control, and Seamanship Training Teams managed to achieve outstanding results. Even with the challenges faced with getting ready for CART on such a compressed schedule, the crew managed to accomplish all of the required training while staying in 10-section inport duty.

Chosin's Engineering Department achieved excellent results in their evaluations. In the non-main propulsion areas, the ship was assessed as being at the Final Evaluation Problem (FEP) level, thereby validating a majority of the training cycle needing only to complete a FEP scenario this summer. In the main propulsion area, all material checks were completed and the Engineer Casualty Control Training Team (ECTT) was certified. All that essentially remains for the Engineering Certification (ECERT) process is an underway demonstration of drills and evolutions and a main space fire drill.

The other areas of the ship fared equally as well in their evaluations with most areas being assessed as being ready for FEP. The key to getting ready for CART in just two weeks following SRA was in maximizing time and available resources. According to Chosin's Damage Control Assistant (DCA), Ens. Derek Vestal from Memphis, Tennessee,



file photo

The Combat Information Center and Engineering watch teams for Comprehensive Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART), USS Chosin's (CG 65) Combat Systems, Engineering Casualty Control, Damage Control, and Seamanship Training Teams achieved outstanding results. The crew managed to accomplish all of the required training while staying in 10 section inport duty.

"We did a lot of individual group training during the SRA that did not affect the whole ship, just a small portion of it. For example, I would gather up the Repair Locker Investigators and conduct training with just those guys. During the two weeks prior to CART, the only thing that we concentrated on was General Quarters." With so little time to pre-

pare, the temptation was there to collapse the duty sections, but, according to Ens. Vestal: "It was definitely more challenging getting around 10-section duty and an SRA, however, I think it was worth it for crew morale not to collapse the duty sections."

Chosin's Commanding Officer, Capt. T.J. Gregory, is pleased with the crew's performance. Said Capt.

Gregory: "I am real proud of the crew, they did all the CART preparations by remaining in ten section duty and rarely working evenings or on the weekends." Being evaluated at such high levels in so many areas enables the crew to have much more flexibility in the individual unit training that can be conducted as the training cycle progresses.

O'Kane takes part in RIMPAC sports

By Lt. j.g. Kevin Hoffman
USS O'KANE

The relative calm of Pearl Harbor life changed significantly with the commencement of RIMPAC. With ships arriving from Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Republic of South Korea, and the West Coast of the U.S., Pearl Harbor has become a bustling international community.

Along with its operational exercises, RIMPAC offers several different navies the chance to meet and compete in a variety of sporting events. With every other Destroyer Squadron 31 ship underway for the Memorial Day weekend tournaments, USS O'Kane (DDG 77) found itself defending the Sea Warriors' honor single-handedly.

USS O'Kane's Soccer team began tournament play May 27. The team, plagued by injuries, faced off against a hard-nosed Australian team. Winning their first-ever international soccer game 2-1, O'Kane moved on to play an experienced Japanese team, in a game that proved to be so close that it was decided by a shoot-out. O'Kane's

Damage Controlman 3rd class Chris Esperti emerged as the hero, not only scoring a shoot-out goal, but filling-in as goalie for an injured teammate.

O'Kane played USS Chosin (CG 65) next. During this game, Chief Sonar Technician (Surface) (SW) Charles Krokkel, O'Kane's goalie, sacrificed his body to make an incredible save. It was Chief Krokkel's daring save, and subsequent placement on the injured player list, that inspired O'Kane's team on to a 2-1 victory. O'Kane would have to play against an outstanding team from USS Santa Fe (SSN 763) for the championship.

The hard fought game finally came to an end when Santa Fe scored a breakaway goal that just could not be stopped. O'Kane's team finished with an impressive 3-1 record and took 2nd Place overall. Not to be outdone by the soccer team, O'Kane's softball team also excelled during the weekend of tournaments.

The 25-member O'Kane "Fighting Irish" softball team, coached by Hull Technician 1st class (SW) Rhonda Ruckle, entered the tournament among a field of fifteen other teams. After a close call

against an excellent team from FACSAC in the first round of the tournament, O'Kane advanced to play USS Chosin's "A" Team. The "Fighting Irish" won that game and later defeated USS Coronado's (AGF 11) squad to advance to the RIMPAC softball tournament championship game.

USS O'Kane faced off against USS Chosin's "Last Call" team for the trophy. "Last Call" jumped out to an early lead, a lead that they held until late in the game. Trailing by one run, O'Kane's Sonar Technician (Surface) 3rd class Jeremy Buckner hit a two-run triple in the bottom of the seventh inning to win the game. After an amazing comeback, spurred-on by some outstanding playing and a little "luck of the Irish", O'Kane's softball team emerged victorious.

Competing against fine teams from all over the Pacific in the weekend RIMPAC sports tournaments, O'Kane's teams ably represented their ship and squadron. More importantly, the sports tournaments enabled O'Kane to meet sailors from different commands and nations, and establish a growing relationship among the navies of the Pacific.

Chosin visits Acapulco

By Lt. j.g. J.C. Dudley
USS CHOSIN

USS Chosin (CG 65) recently took the opportunity to combine some vital training with a chance for the crew to see the world in the form of a port visit to Acapulco, Mexico.

Coming off the heels of a very successful Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART), Chosin embarked a cadre of air defense experts from AEGIS Training and Readiness Command (ATRC), Pearl Harbor, to provide Force Air Defense and Undersea Warfare training to Chosin's Air Defense and Undersea Warfare watch standers. The four-day port visit in Acapulco was the perfect ending to a successful week of training.

Following Chosin's arrival and anchorage, Commanding Officer, Capt. T. J. Gregory made official calls on the senior military official present in Acapulco, Vice Adm. Antonio Vazquez Del Mercado, chief of staff for the 18th Naval Zone and Mayor of Acapulco, Zeferino Torreblanca.

While inport, Chosin's crew demonstrated their Aloha spirit by hosting Acapulco's deputy chief of police and senior police officials for a VIP tour of the ship. Members of the local Navy League were also invited for a VIP tour and lunch. The Navy League reciprocated by hosting an informal reception at a local restaurant for Chosin's ward-

room. The crew was afforded the opportunity to interact with Sailors of the Mexican navy in various sporting events. The ship's basketball and soccer teams competed against teams from the local Mexican naval base. The Mexican navy teams were made up of members of the Mexican navy's special forces. The competition, while good-natured, was very spirited and resulted in the Mexican navy's soccer team winning 8-2 over Chosin. However, Chosin's basketball team remained undefeated "on the road" with a 64-62 victory.

While the crew enjoyed liberty by going to the beaches, shopping and taking in the sights, a contingent of 11 volunteers, led by Chosin's Chaplain, Lt. Vic McInnis, visited the Villa De Los Ninos orphanage to deliver Project Handclasp materials and perform minor repairs to the orphanage's main building.

While most of the volunteers painted the orphanage's reception area, Damage Controlman 1st class (SW) Edrick Calejo and Engineman 1st class (SW) Christopher Hegeman repaired a ruptured water pipe that supplied water for the laundry.

The wife of the Mayor of Acapulco, Mrs. Gala Martin De Torreblanca was on hand to pass on her gratitude and share lunch with the Chosin volunteers.

Speaking through Chosin's interpreter, Interior Communications Technician 3rd class Jose Lopez, Mrs. Torreblanca said "The children really enjoy your visit. They feel special and very happy when a group of people like yourselves come and visit them. They look up to you, and your visit gives them a sense of pride and hope."

Upon learning that Chosin's Sailors were there voluntarily on their own liberty time, Mrs. Torreblanca, stated "I hope you know how much this means to us."

Storekeeper 2nd class Eskinder Gebertensia summed up the feelings of the volunteers. "We were glad to help. Thank you for allowing us to be a small part of your life."

The visit to the orphanage was covered by camera crews from local television stations.

On an economic impact note, a survey was conducted to determine the amount of money that Chosin infused into the local economy via services, fuel, and crew expenditures.

During the four-day port visit, the ship injected over a half-million dollars into the local economy.

Around the Fleet

USS Nassau welcomes new Sailors with Career Mentorship Program

For Sailors checking aboard their first ship, the transition to sea life can be overwhelming. USS Nassau (LHA 4) Sailors have come together to help out each other.

With the implementation of the Career Mentoring Program, the "Top Gator" is paving new ground in aiding Sailors in the correct career path.

By assigning new Sailors as "protoges" to senior enlisted Sailors who are the "mentors" from different departments, Nassau is looking to provide new Sailors with a perspective on Navy life beyond what was previously available to them.

The mentorship program is not a new idea for the Navy. However, according to the ship's program coordinator, BMCS Stanley Williams, they are trying something new on Nassau.

"Where our program differs is that we will give a motivated first class from Engineering department a

new Airman to mentor. Or we will give a Sailor from Deck department a fireman to mentor.

It is the variety of knowledge and the cross rate training that will make our program a success."

Signonella receives Installation Excellence Award

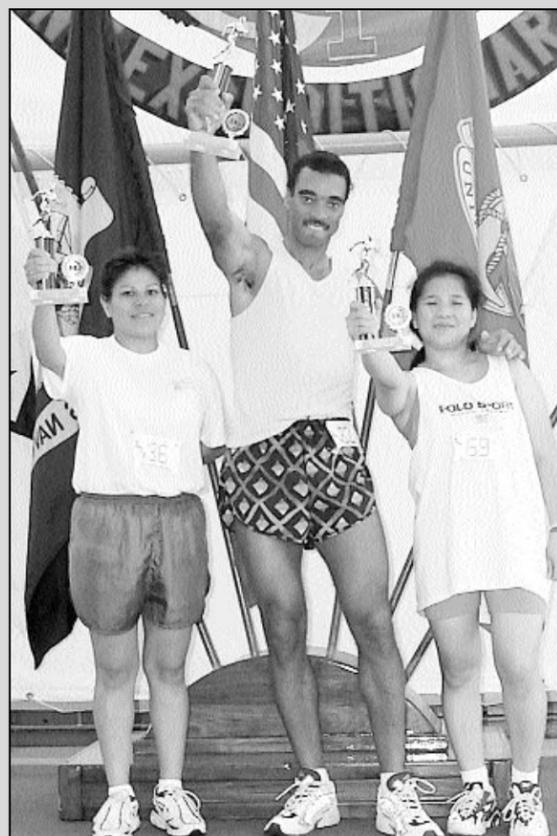
Naval Air Station Signonella, Italy was recently awarded the 1999 Commander In Chief's Installation Excellence Award, which recognizes the base as number one among all installations in the Navy.

The award exemplifies the hard work and dedicated service of everyone stationed at Signonella. Each year, one base is distinguished as the best and is awarded the red Battle "E" and \$100,000 for base improvements.

Commanding Officer Capt. Arne Nelson recently went to Washington D.C. to accept the award.

The skipper expressed in his speech that the award was a result of an outstanding Signonella team.

Coronado runners 'semper ductor'



J01 Palmer Pinckney II photo

Sailors from USS Coronado (AGF 11) kept the pace and the "Semper Ductor" (Always the Leader) spirit of U.S. Third Fleet's command ship during the first of two scheduled five-mile runs celebrating Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2000 military exercises. From left to right, Petty Officer 1st Class (SH1) Mariana Garcia, Petty Officer 2nd Class (PH2) Jim Christopher and Petty Officer 2nd Class (MS2) Evelyn G. White.

In a field of 250 runners the Coronado Sailors scored three trophies, more than any other visiting ship. Garcia placed second in the 35 years and older Master's course with a finish time of 43 minutes 28 seconds. White earned second place honors running 39:48 in the open contest. Beating out all contenders, Jim Christopher took first place honors in with an unbeatable run time of 27:20.2