

# LIBERTY CALL

## Basic Training:

Bloch Arena physical fitness program prepares Pearl Harbor Sailors for the new PRT standards.



Class participants (top) ETCS (SS) Roger Lee and QM2 Monica Toomey race in a sprint contest. All aspects of the class are designed to push one individual against another in the spirit of competition, and motivate to excel at the same time. Basic Training instructor, Wayne Fisher (left) leads and participates in all of the exercises during class. Fisher, a ten-year Navy veteran and certified group fitness instructor expects nothing less than the maximum effort from his students. The abdominal portion of the session builds "core" strength that helps build and improve all other aspects of physical fitness. The Basic Training "Fish Sun" logo (below) is instantly recognizable emblazoned upon the back of the black T-shirts worn by class members and instructors. Along with the "Pain is weakness leaving the body" motto on the shirts, the logo serves as a warning that the class is not for the weak at heart.

Photos and Story by PH2 Chad McNeeley  
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**W**HEN the new Physical Readiness Standards were introduced this past May, most service members were somewhat shocked to see that what used to be considered the minimum now were probably considered out of standards. And that even the most consistent "outstanding" performers, were going to have their work cut out for them to maintain that standard. At Bloch Arena, Morale, Welfare and Recreation offer specific classes to help service members raise the bar on their physical fitness life styles.

One of the most demanding classes, physically and mentally, is "Basic Training". Although the name implies boot camp, the class is based on Diver/SEAL style exercises that build strength and endurance. The founder and lead instructor, Wayne "Fish" Fisher, is a former 10-year Navy Diver as well as a member of the Seal Delivery Vehicle Team ONE. Along with Pete Koprowski, also a Navy Diver, Fisher implements some of the routines used to keep the Navy's Special Forces in the best condition possible.

The class can be a shock to the system for the unprepared. The class is often a combination of strength building exercises such as eight count body builders, push-ups, pull-ups, abdominal work and leg exercises interlaced in between sprints to build endurance. It truly is a "Full Body workout", something that is rarely achieved with other physical fitness programs.

It may seem a bit of a stretch to believe that an individual should be expected to go from the minimum standards on the Physical Readiness Test to the rigorous physical conditioning of the Navy SEALs. But according to Fish, if the commitment is there, anyone can be motivated to excel at their highest levels. All that he expects from his students is 100 percent effort every time.

"If you want to get in shape badly enough and start to train efficiently, your body has

no choice but to adapt, and that means getting in better shape. It's the most basic resistance training principle there is", Fish says. Many of the students have done just that. While the class is designed to assist military members pass the PRT, some have used it for other purposes. Corpsman 2nd Class Karl Race from Branch Medical Clinic Makalapa was the only military member from Hawaii selected to the All-Navy Volleyball Team this past spring and used the Basic Training class as a tool to help get her into the shape she needed to compete at a national level. As a result of her performance on the team she was offered a scholarship to play

volleyball for a major university.

"This class is incredible. When people found out I was trying out for the team, everyone supported me and pushed me to train harder. Fish really pushed me to my limits and it helped" said Race.

Quartermaster 2nd Class Monica Toomey, from Commander, Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific was given the opportunity to attend Navy Dive school last year, but wasn't in the physical shape to be able to complete the school. She sought out Fish and the Basic Training program to get her into the shape she needed to be in.

"I couldn't do even one pull-up, no more than 10 pushups. And as for being able to

run a mile and a half in under 12 minutes after doing a 500 yard swim, 50 sit-ups, 42 push-ups, and six pull-ups, forget it!" Toomey said with a laugh.

But after participating in the class for five months, Toomey had reached all of the goals that she had set for herself and was admitted to dive school. But even more than that, Toomey explains, "In addition to the physical progress that I was making, the class really supported me mentally. That is the most amazing thing about the class. It becomes a team effort with all of the individuals working together as a team to achieve personal goals."

"That is what makes it so easy to come back day after day and continue to work so hard," she said. "There is constant encouragement to push yourself beyond what you would do working alone." The Basic Training class is not limited to active duty members alone.

Nina Smith has been participating in the class since January and has seen her life and fitness levels change dramatically. Initially she struggled with the class she admits, "But after going for one month, three days a week," she said. "I was feeling much stronger," and that "I realized that after years of letting myself go it was going to take time build up strength and endurance and

the only way to do that would be consistency," she said. Smith also recognized the importance of the class as a group and how it has helped her achieve her goals.

"I immediately felt comfortable because of the camaraderie amongst the group. We were all working towards basically the same goal of becoming more fit," she added.

The class also instills a mental toughness that helps participants endure through the hour-long, non stop class. Electronic Technician Chief (sel.) (SS) Richard Snyder, from Commander, Submarine Force Pacific, explains, "In the beginning, at the first sign of pain due to muscle fatigue I'd give up, but I learned to re-tool my brain to focus more on completing the task at hand, rather than the temporary pain of physical exertion," he said.

Snyder has carried over that mental edge, which he has gained from class, to his personal weight lifting routine. "I now employ the focus and energy that I gained in Fish's class to my morning weight lifting routine. I've improved my overall strength and increased my maximum weight sets by 20 to 30 lbs," he said.

"This class is not easy and it is that way on purpose" says Fish. "If you want to pass the PRT, you have to do what is on the PRT, and that means pushups, sit-ups and running. You can't expect to sit around for six months or work out maybe once a week and suddenly demand that your body have strength. It doesn't work that way. Unfortunately, you can't fake strength and endurance. With the new PRT standards, you have to train and you have to train hard," he added.

One of the greatest aspects of the class is its proven track record for success.

"There are about a dozen commands that have sent their mandatory PT candidates to this class and each of them has improved enough to get off mandatory status" said Koprowski. "This program is great for command fitness leaders because they can bring their candidates to the field and know they will get a solid workout that is proven to work."

Basic Training is offered twice a day five days a week at Ward Field, across from Bloch



(Above) Jenice Gomez (left) and Lt. Tim Weber from Joint Intelligence Center Pacific perform "wide leg squats" during their Basic Training class. The class encompasses all aspects of physical training in one hour long session. (right) "You want results? We've got results!" Fisher, shows ETCS (SS) Roger Lee from Commander Submarine Force Pacific why "core building" exercises in a physical fitness routine are essential.



Instructors Wayne Fisher and Pete Koprowski perform another set "dive-bomber" push-ups in a seemingly endless array of upper body exercises. The participation and motivation of the two instructors helps bond the class and promotes a group effort to achieve personal goals.