

FLEET FOCUS

U.S., Royal Malaysian navies conduct night encounter exercise

By Lt.j.g. J. Fikes
USS REUBEN JAMES

The Straits of Malacca was the stage for several exercises, to include anti-submarine warfare, anti-air warfare, and gunnery exercises between U.S. and Royal Malaysian navies during CARAT-00.

These bilateral exercises are designed to enhance military to military relationships between these two great nations. Among the exercises was a final battle problem or Night Encounter Exercise.

The task group was divided into two groups. The "Blue Forces" consisted of USS Reuben James (FFG 57), USS Germantown (LSD 42), USS Mount Vernon (LSD 39), KD Sri Indera Sakti, KD Lekir, and Kaneohe's own HSL 37 DET Four. The "Orange Forces" were composed of USS Sides, KD Perkasa, KD Laksamana Tun Abdul Jamil, and a P-3C Orion aircraft. The goal of the exercise was for the Blue Forces to successfully screen the three amphibious units; USS Germantown, USS Mount Vernon, and KD Interi Sakti allowing them to transit the exercise area without suffering any mission limiting damage. This battle problem improved at sea communications and unified tactics between the two nations.

While involved in the Night Encounter Exercise, Reuben James Sailors gained invaluable training experience.

"This was a stimulating scenario for the watchstanders which enabled us to enhance warfighting techniques. Communications are always important and I think we got a little bit better in Malaysia," responded Operations Specialist 1st Class L. Smith. Smith was one of the combat information center players during the exercises.

"Despite the simulation of firing 32 SM-1 missiles, I don't think we shot enough. Send more missiles, ASAP," remarked a smiling and enthusiastic Lt. T. Bruce, the Reuben James' Tactical Action Officer during the event.

"This was a challenging and realistic scenario. It provided an opportunity for us to exchange tactical ideas with our Malaysian counterparts,



file photo

USS Reuben James (FFG 57) recently participated with the Royal Malaysian Navy in several bilateral exercises that are designed to enhance military to military relationships between these two great nations. Reuben James Sailors participated in many community relations project as well as war at sea exercises.

learn the terrain from those who know it best, improve our Command and Control capability when working with the Royal Malaysian Navy, and finally, execute and assess the plan we developed. In all it was a resounding success with all of us growing professionally," Cmdr. Carl Cramb, Commanding Officer, USS Reuben James.

Overall, the Malaysian Phase of CARAT-00

was a huge success. From community relations projects at local schools to a war at sea exercise, Reuben James Sailors continue to serve the United States Navy in an exemplary fashion and represent the "Hawaiian Fleet" proudly.

They are looking forward to upcoming port visits in Thailand, and Malaysia prior to participating in the final phase of CARAT 2000 in Singapore.

USS O'Kane Chief selectees form baseball team

By Lt.j.g. Jennifer Herron
USS O'KANE

IT wasn't that the ship's original team, which had recently won the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) competition, had fallen on hard times and began to sport a losing record. Nor had a disgruntled group of baseball enthusiasts decided to make a go of it on their own.

Rather, formation of this new team was a direct result of the recent Chief Petty Officer selection list, which named nine of O'Kane's first class petty officers as prospective chief petty officers.

Although O'Kane's crew had heard and read much about Navy-wide efforts to restore pre-drawdown promotion rates, nothing to date has sent the signal more strongly than having such a large number (triple the count from last year) of CPO selectees in one destroyer.

Weathering some years of low selection rates definitely made the promotion sweeter for some.

Operation Specialist 1st Class (SW) Raedel was especially exuberant, when he noted that, "Because it took so long to make chief, I will appreciate it more. It fosters the ideal that you should never forget where you came from."

Clearly you didn't have to be one of the selectees (Cryptologic Technician Administrative 1st Class Benton, Gunners Mate 1st Class (SW) Campbell, Gas Turbine System Technician Electrical 1st Class (SW) Casteneda, Storekeeper 1st Class (SW) Chavez, Sonar Technician Surface 1st Class (SW) Gonzales, GM1 (SW) Sanders, GM1 (SW) Stafford, Operations Specialist 1st Class (SW) Raedel, and GSE1 (SW) Wroten) to be excited about this year's CPO promotion list, or the prospects for continued across-the-board improvement in promotion opportunities.

GM2 Brion Greenn punctuated that thought. "The three GMC (selects) showed me how good leadership skills can help lead the way to a bigger and brighter future in the Navy."

USS O'Kane's hastily formed team is still working on gelling as a group, but a first step they decided on was a trip to the ship's barbershop for matching haircuts.

Uniforms should not be a problem, so all that is needed now is a little time in port to hit the practice field.

Although they haven't played their first game yet, scouting reports indicate that these nine professionals will make a team worth watching.

The entire crew of O'Kane wishes them every success in the coming seasons.

USS Reuben James gets to work in Singapore

By Lt. Leslie Hull-Ryde
CARAT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Singapore offers several options for visiting Sailors: cultural activities, a smorgasbord of foods and a variety of attractions.

When in port, some Sailors say they want to give back to the Lion City that gives so much to them when they've been on a ship for several months and are so far away from home.

While USS Reuben James (FFG 57), homeported in Pearl Harbor, was in town the first part of August, some members of the crew volunteered at the Grace Haven Centre for Children and Young Persons.

"I feel the children of the world are our futures, and anything we can do to help them is helping ourselves," says Chief Electronics Technician (SW) Brian E.

Stone of the ship.

The school provided the supplies the Sailors needed. And the Reuben James crew had enough manpower with almost 30 Sailors volunteering to paint hallways and lounges on two floors of one building.

"They helped us with things we were unable to do," says Capt. Maureen Kho, supervisor of the Salvation Army's facility. "It benefits the children because they interact with kids as well as do physical work."

Grace Haven provides a safe and secure home for more than 170 young offenders and children in need.

When in foreign ports, U.S. crews often work on community relations projects.

"I do COMREL to give something back to the countries that so graciously allow us to share in their culture," says Stone.

Senator Inoyue visits PHNSY & IMF



Mike Laley photo

Capt. Jeffrey Conners (center) watches, apprentice program member Lee Ballesteros-Hutchinson (left), of Shop 31, present Senator Daniel Inoyue (D-HI) with a PHNSY&IMF baseball cap, courtesy of the apprentices. Senator Inoyue toured the Pearl Harbor Naval Ship Yard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility facilities recently and met with more than 100 members of the apprentice program.

Apprenticeship program, a hidden gem

By JO3 McClain Shewman
COMSUBPAC PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Thanks to the United Services Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP), submariners discover how to receive recognition for skills gained while serving on active duty.

The USMAP program allows active duty Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen with completed formal training, to get accredited certification in their designated rating. Finishing the program could relate to starting a civilian job at a much higher rate of pay.

According to Ann Choi, director Navy College Office, the program has been around since the mid 70's and benefits the participants in more ways than one.

"Not everyone knows about this program. We want people to stay in and use their skills, but are also doing something for their second career," said Choi.

In certain cases, the USEMAP certificate can translate in to college credits. Although

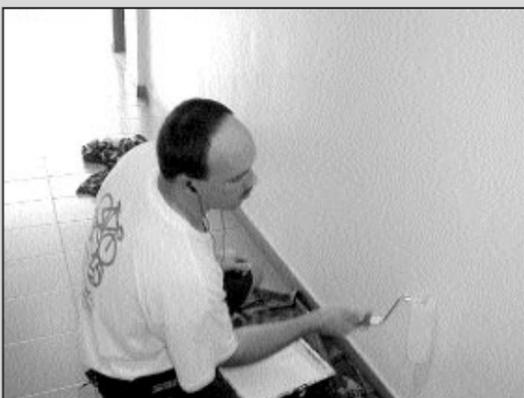
the program is open to all Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel, certain limitations do apply. Servicemembers must have a high school diploma or General Education Diploma (GED) and must have completed formal military rate training.

In a release written Aug. 4, "The program allows registered certification of a service member's military training and work experience to achieve recognition equal to a civilian counterpart." According to the release, there are 107 apprenticeable trades that have been approved by the Department of Labor.

USMAP is a combined program of the Department of Labor, U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard.

Applications can be picked up at the Navy College Office, Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Computers for online information or application use are available at the Navy College Office in building 679, or contact by phone at 473-4077.

For more information, visit www.cnet.navy.mil/nnaps.



U.S. Navy photo

Sailors from USS Reuben James (FFG 57) spruced up the Grace Haven facility in Singapore. The ship made a stop in Singapore during the annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training exercise (CARAT), which is a series of bilateral exercises designed to promote interoperability and goodwill throughout Southeast Asia.