

Bravo Zulu

Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit ONE

Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medal
BMC(SW/DV) Jeffrey T. Sampson

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal
MM2(SS) Christopher L. Juelsgaard
BM2(SW) David S. Manley
EM2(DV) Chad L. Miller
BM2(DV) Jason B. Tangalin

Senior Sea Sailor of the Quarter/Letter of Commendation
HT1(SW) Larry S. Lorenz

Senior Shore Sailor of the Quarter/Letter of Commendation
CM2(SCW) Russell C. Meyers

Junior Sea Sailor of the Quarter/Letter of Commendation
IC3(SW/DV) Warren R. Ross

Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit 6

Meritorious Service Medal
Lt. David F. Hoel

Humanitarian Service Medal
Lt. Cmdr. Laurel A. May
Lt. David F. Hoel

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal
HM2 Robert L. Ramirez

Humanitarian Service Medal
HMC(AW/FMF) Michael Duran

Commander Submarine Forces Pacific

Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medal
MSC Kenneth J. Huddleston

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal
CM2 Benjamin M. Vezina
BU2 William J. Chielewski
OS2 Shawn M. Bollinger
MS2 Ernie B. Scheer
EN1 Juna C. Herrera
GSM1 Christopher HM. Nicasio
BM1 David L. Zettlemoyer
BM3 Henry T. Torres
SN Sean M. Reese

Flag Letter of Commendation
MS1 Gerardo Dela Paz

Good Conduct Medal
ST3 Tabitha S. Conatser
BM3 John E. Mullikin
BM3 Henry T. Torres

Senior Sailor of the Year
CM1 Joseph L. Noonan

Junior Sailor of the Year
MS2 Brett S. Draper

Blue Jacket of the Year
SN Diana R. Moning

Senior Sailor of the Quarter
MS1 Clayton E. White

Junior Sailor of the Quarter
BM3 Robert M. Baumgarten



USS Russell conducts sea trials

By Lt. j.g. Orrin Johnson
USS RUSSELL

USS Russell (DDG 59) got underway under its own power Nov. 23 for the first time in almost three months to conduct sea trials. The destroyer had been in Dry Dock 4 since the end of September as part of a periodic availability before beginning its training cycle once again. The sea trials are a vital part of the process.

While the ship was dry, many modifications and improvements were made. Russell was the final ship of her class to have its two vapor compressor distiller units replaced with more efficient reverse osmosis units.

The ship was also outfitted with a "stern flap," a piece of metal that resembles a diving platform welded on to the stern. The flap is projected to pay for itself in less than two years due to the vast improvement it creates in fuel efficiency.

In addition to new equipment, a great deal of work was done on existing systems. Fuel tanks were stripped and cleaned, countless spaces were given fresh coats of paint, and new AEGIS programs were installed.

There were countless, smaller jobs that together, resulted in a complex package of projects that were completed on an abbreviated schedule.



Lt.j.g. Orrin Johnson photo

USS Russell (DDG 59) sits in Dry Dock 4. Russell got underway recently after almost three months to conduct sea trials. The destroyer had been in dry dock since the end of September as part of a periodic availability before beginning its training cycle once again.

Despite that schedule, the ship got underway on time. After a "rust-shaking" fast cruise the day before, the crew performed an event free transit out of the channel.

Many events were scheduled, which

required a flexible mindset. The mission behind the sea trials - testing the ship's worthiness to be underway - changed constantly as different emergent issues arose from repairs, but each problem was solved by Russell's capable Sailors.

Fletcher prepares for change of command

By Ens. Malia Spofford
USS FLETCHER

It is midday in the Arabian Gulf and USS Fletcher (DD 992) is on patrol just miles away from Iran and Iraq. On the smooth green waters, fishing dhows trail their nets, dolphins play in the ship's wake, and the fires from oil refineries ceaselessly burn.

The Boatswainmate of the Watch strikes four bells in the pilothouse as a helicopter touches down on Fletcher's flight deck.

"Cmdr. Dell W. Epperson, arriving..." This is a face the crew hasn't seen before—but will soon learn to respect as that of their new commanding officer.

At the halfway point of an intense WESTPAC deployment, Fletcher is getting ready to welcome aboard Cmdr. Dell W. Epperson, and bid farewell to current Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Christopher D. Noble.

The awesome responsibility of leading the preparation

and sustenance of Fletcher's crew and material is about to be transferred to fresh hands.

Fletcher departed Pearl Harbor for her Western Pacific deployment at the end of August, and has been conducting Marine Interdiction Operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf since September, achieving record numbers of United Nations inspections in support of the Oil for Food program.

Along with other ships and aircraft of the Abraham Lincoln battle group, Fletcher has been an adamant and effective presence in the Gulf, protecting American interests in this vital, yet unstable part of the world.

Cmdr. Noble took command in May 1999, leading Fletcher through a rigorous workup and training cycle, including a drydock period, Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX), and Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2000.

He has emphasized technological innovation through-

out his tour, and has striven to set his crew up for success by demanding thorough training and safety of operations.

Bringing rare technical expertise and progressive organizational theory to the Fletcher, Noble has inspired his subordinates to manage the inherent challenges and dangers of deployment in the Gulf.

His insistence on Quality of Service has brought numerous improvements to the lives of Fletcher Sailors, as well as high rates of promotion and qualification.

Commander Noble has served in the Navy for 26 years, working his way from Electronics Technician to the ranks of commanding officer.

His next assignment will be at the Pentagon where he will serve as Surface Warfare Analyst for the Chief of Naval Operations. According to Noble, he sincerely hopes this will not be his last command at sea tour, and he will miss the crew of Fletcher and shipboard life deeply.

Commander Epperson comes to Fletcher from the staff of Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces Europe where he served as the Warfare Requirements Officer/CINC Liaison from January 1999 through June 2000. He has served on a variety of surface ships, including destroyers, cruisers and an aircraft carrier.

His ashore billets include numerous joint tours. He received his Masters of Science degree in Strategic Intelligence from the Defense Intelligence College, Washington D.C.

On his most recent afloat tour, Epperson served as Executive Officer of Paul Hamilton (DDG 60), also a part of the Abraham Lincoln Battlegroup.

During his career, Epperson has made five Western Pacific deployments; his sixth WESTPAC will be as commanding officer of Fletcher.

The Change of Command will take place Nov. 30, on-board USS Fletcher.

HM2 Ramirez chosen as SOQ for NEPMU 6

By Lt. Diedra Ramos
NEPMU 6

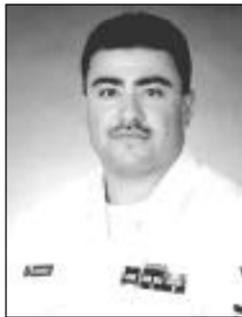
The Sailor of the Quarter (SOQ), third quarter 2000, for Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit 6 (NEPMU6), Pearl Harbor is Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Robert R. Ramirez.

Ramirez is from Glendale, Ariz., joined the Navy in August 1989 and is currently assigned as an Advanced Laboratory Technician in the Microbiology Department.

Ramirez believes "you always have to have a positive mental attitude to accomplish tasks, regardless of how tedious or difficult it may be. This is how I view all my responsibilities, assigned or assumed, I give it my all."

Since Ramirez' arrival to NEPMU6 in February, he has been involved in a couple of high profile projects. In August, he was called upon by the State Health Department and FBI in response to a bio-terrorist threat. He spent more than seven off-duty hours analyzing unknown specimens and determined it was not threatening, diffusing the situation.

During this quarter he deployed for two weeks to



HM2 Robert R. Ramirez

Vladivostok, Russia for the Ecology Project 2000. This Joint Task Force project aimed at conducting health assessments of several areas in and around Vladivostok, where the Department of Health (DOH) believed the population was at a high risk from environmental exposures.

Ramirez trained three Russian DOH personnel on the proper use and care of specialized equipment to detect heavy metals in water and helped translate procedures for nine different metal test kits to include Iron (Ferrous), Manganese, Molybdenum, Cobalt, Nickel, Zinc, Copper, Lead, and Chromium.

In addition, he worked over 12 hours a day personally testing 65 different samples for more than 460 tests. This helped identify potentially harmful heavy metal exposure in their local water supply.

He also taught the microbiology portion of the Food Service Supervisor/Manager Course for nine students.

His collateral duties include member, NEPMU6 Mobile Medical Augmentation Readiness Team, Naval Station Navy Ball Committee, and Command Awards Board.

His personal awards include three Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals and three Good Conduct Medals. Ramirez states he is "very honored and proud to represent NEPMU6 as SOQ." He suggests for others seeking SOQ, "be a complete Sailor, do more than just your job, participate in command and community activities, and continuously strive for professional development. And by exhibiting the Navy's Core Values in all that you do (on & off duty), you end up emulating those values and separating yourself for the pack."

Holiday spirit is alive and well on Paul Hamilton

By Lt. Lane Ogawa
USS PAUL HAMILTON

USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60) is in the third month of a six-month Arabian Gulf deployment as part of the Abraham Lincoln battle group. The assignment to operations at the tip of the spear in the Arabian Gulf is what the crew of 320 officers and enlisted men has been training to do for over a year and a half.

Many crewmembers feel a great sense of pride at the opportunity to serve in this important mission. "Its great to be a part of real operations and helping to implement foreign policy," said Fire Controlman 2nd Class Timothy Hicks.

While the crew is excited to do their duty, many also have left their beloved friends and family behind.

"I know our actions may very well ensure the stability of the region and ultimately help the economy and well being of the United States and all our friends and families," added Lt. j.g. Sean Grunwell.

"Operations in the Arabian Gulf support our nation's vital interest and support our engagement strategy with our partners in the region."

For the past several months, Paul Hamilton has been on station in the northern Arabian Gulf conducting maritime interception operations (MIO) in support of United Nations

sanctions against Iraq. "Our captain told us that operations in the fifth fleet would be dynamic and ever changing," said Fire Controlman 3rd Class Joshua Haberman. "He was definitely right, we are always changing our plans to meet operational commitments."

Operations Specialist 1st Class Todd Stover added, "Although they require a lot of flexibility, real world operations are why I joined the navy and what keeps me motivated. This is the real stuff and what makes me proud to be a member of the United States Navy."

"Deployments are tough on a family," said Command Master Chief Phillip Moore. "But we have a strong family network and email has been great."

"My wife and I promised to email each other every day," said Fire Controlman 3rd Class Jeremy Alderete. "I miss her a lot, but we are really excited about our reunion next year."

Paul Hamilton crewmembers feel a great sense of joy in providing for the defense of their country as the holiday season arrives. The holiday spirit is alive and well as Interior Communications Fireman Sean Joker stated, "I hope my friends like the gifts I got them. I can't wait until Christmas!"

Paul Hamilton is the tenth in the series of multi-warfare capable Arleigh Burke class destroyers that provide air, surface, and subsurface defense for high value units, and strike capability with the tomahawk cruise missile.