

FLEET Focus

O'Kane completes training exercise

By Lt. J.g. Jennifer Herron
USS O'Kane Public Affairs

It was another impressive first for the USS O'Kane (DDG 77). Although the newest ship in the Carl Vinson battle group, O'Kane proved that it was a worthy foe for any incoming threat from sea, air or land during pre-deployment battle group work ups.

In less than three weeks O'Kane transformed itself from a competent single-ship/local operations asset to a combat ready warfare platform.

With several undersea and anti-air warfare exercises, small boat attacks and constant flight quarters, O'Kane truly felt part of the fleet.

O'Kane's first Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX) proved to be one of its most successful underway periods since its commissioning.

Beginning with a battlegroup port break from Naval Station San Diego O'Kane knew it was in for a wild ride. Less than 10 minutes after exiting the harbor it was tasked with ready rigid hull inflatable boat and then charged on at 30 knots for almost an hour, striving to keep up with the fast-moving Carl Vinson.

With O'Kane's seamless integration into the battle group, they served as backup air defense co-

ordinator when the battle group's air defense commander was unable to complete the tasking. This opportunity gave O'Kane a chance to demonstrate the skills that it had been honing in the months leading up to the exercise.

During the three week long exercise, O'Kane took part in exercises covering every aspect of modern day naval warfare. Additionally it executed a complex, multi-ship standard missile shot resulting in a skin-to-skin intercept of a vandal target.

With only 10 days between the most recent submarine perspective commanding officer operations and Composite Training Unit Exercise there wasn't a live submarine in the Pacific that could hide from O'Kane.

In almost every undersea warfare exercise, O'Kane led the pack. It controlled SH-60B helicopters, racking up an impressive number of contact hours, and simulated torpedo attacks.

During the surface warfare events O'Kane proved to be more stealthy and deadly than anyone expected.

Its ability to vanish into the night, only to be spotted again after launching a full salvo of harpoons at the enemy country's ships, would surely have brought a tear to Adm. O'Kane's eye.

Some of the most impressive



Lt. J.g. Jennifer Herron photo

VBSS team (ET2 William Gaskins) boarding the USNS Shasta.

statistics from this exercise have nothing to do with how many missiles or five-inch rounds were fired or how many aircraft the O'Kane controlled. What is more impressive is the fact that this

was its first time in a battle group operation.

O'Kane jumped in each event feet-first with enthusiasm to learn and be part of the larger team.

From the first day until the final battle problem drew to a close, the crew maintained their momentum and dedicated themselves to living up to O'Kane's motto, "A Tradition of Honor."

Honolulu 'Warriors' return from WESTPAC deployment

By USS Honolulu Public Affairs

Honolulu's namesake submarine returned to Pearl Harbor March 6. The 150 embarked 'Warriors' arrived home following a six-month deployment to the Western Pacific (WESTPAC). As the ship approached the Submarine Base, the Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) Band and Celtic Pipe Band played while local hula dancers swayed elegantly on the pier.

Rear Adm. Albert H. Konetzni, Jr., Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, along with a large group of family, friends and shipmates, turned out to greet the submarine. Local organizations such as the Honolulu Sunset Rotary Club, Honolulu Navy League, the USS Missouri Association and Pearl Harbor Morale Welfare and Recreation were also on hand to greet the proud Warriors.

On deployment, the Warriors successfully completed several missions vital to national security, three multi-national exercises and two special warfare exercises. Every challenge was met with impressive results. Sailing more than 42,000 nautical miles, the Warriors made port calls between their busy schedules to Yokosuka and Sasebo, Japan; Chinhae, Korea; Singapore; Hong Kong; and Guam.

"We worked hard and were rewarded with good liberty ports," said Machinist Mate 3rd Class(SS) Joshua Inlow, Honolulu's Junior Sailor of the Year (JSOY). "We completed a lot of qualifications and the new guys are ready now to take over for all the guys who will be transferring. It was a good WESTPAC overall and everyone stuck together," added Inlow.

Shortly after leaving on deployment, the ship christened 35 Sailors into the realm of the 'Golden Dragon'. As Honolulu Sailors headed west for the seventh time, they paused to pay honor to America's prisoners of war and those still listed as missing in action. A few days later, her crew welcomed two new chief petty officers into the "goat locker."

In preparation for the multi-national exercise Foal Eagle, the submarine made a brief stopover in Chinhae, Korea. While there, Honolulu's officers and crew hosted Vice Adm. Song Keun Ho, Commander-in-Chief, Republic of Korea Fleet; Rear Adm. An Pyong Koo, Commander Submarine Flotilla Nine; Capt. Kim, Commander Submarine Squadron 91; and Capt. Kim, Commanding Officer, ROKS PARK WI.

While participating in Exercise Foal Eagle and Annuaex, the Honolulu crew demonstrated superiority in submarine warfighting and tactical proficiency. In the true Warrior fashion, they achieved outstanding results during both exercises.

"It (the deployment) was an exciting experience," said Sonar Technician Seaman Apprentice Jeremy Matthews. "A lot of pride comes with accomplishing a goal that not everybody can do. I'm doing something; being everything I can be - not only for me but for my country as well. After this I can call my self a Sailor and not a recruit or a student. I'm a real submariner now," said Matthews.

Following the exercise, Honolulu made

rest and replenishment, Honolulu set sail again to continue her remarkable record of operational excellence in the Western Pacific.

In January, the Warriors received news that they had been selected as the Submarine Squadron Three Battle 'E' Winner for 2000. Their tireless efforts over the past year resulted in the Warriors attaining the highest overall readiness to carry out wartime tasks.

Understandably proud of their contributions to Pacific Submarine Force readiness, they were recognized as having demonstrated the highest standards of a Honolulu Warrior.

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a port call to Sasebo, Japan where Commanding Officer, Cmdr. John M. Richardson hosted a rare press conference and tour of an American nuclear-powered submarine for Japanese media. During the brief visit, the crew took time out to build ohana and offer aloha to the local community. Eighteen Sailors went to the Hakujuo Nursing Home, Sasebo's oldest nursing home, and performed several hours of minor maintenance and custodial duties.

"It was good to see us do community service overseas. Professionally, the crew came together and progressed towards a common goal. It was good teamwork," said Electronics Technician Chief (SS) David Cundiff.

During the last months of the 2000, Honolulu successfully completed a second multi-national exercise and some special operations. She arrived in Yokosuka, Japan on Christmas Eve to celebrate Christmas and New Years with her sister ship, USS Louisville. After a few days of

portunity for the crew to demonstrate why we're the finest boat in the Squadron fleet," said Lt. J.g. Charles Talley. "I can personally say that it taught me more about what the Navy is all about and what it means to be a naval officer on a deployed warship. The liberty ports were great, but I am glad to be home," said Talley.

With less than two months left in the deployment, the Warriors made their first liberty call in Singapore. In addition to some rest and relaxation, the crew held true to their pledge of building ohana throughout the Pacific Rim. A dozen Sailors went to the Marie Stella Convent and School to perform several hours of landscaping duties. While at the 50-acre complex, they cleared undergrowth, trimmed trees and shrubs and cleaned up leaves from the yard and roofs.

Then sailing immediately onto Hong Kong, the Warriors hosted the deputy U.S. Consulate General and several other dignitaries and representatives of the local community and government.

Again, the Warriors demonstrated their concern for the local community by painting the Salvation Army Kwong Yu Primary School building. The building was being converted into an education and family development center to be used by the citizens of the Hong Kong Wanchai District.

Returning to sea, the Warriors set out once again, responding to national tasking. Demonstrating the submarine's ability under challenging conditions, Honolulu participated in a highly successful torpedo exercise and still another special operation. At the end of her operation she embarked Rear Adm. J. J. Krol, Jr., Commander Submarine Group Sevm. After arriving in Guam, Honolulu served as co-host for the newly reactivated Submarine Squadron 15.

With just a few days left in the deployment, the Warriors headed home. Departing Guam, Honolulu conducted one last deployment exercise with the Sailors of Seal Team One - an Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination. Just as they had done during the entire deployment, Honolulu Sailors made their last showing the best showing, obtaining the highest possible grade on the exhaustive inspection.

With an impressive array of operational achievements, and personal and professional accomplishments, Honolulu proudly came home to Pearl Harbor. Onboard retention exceeded 55 percent, one officer qualified for command, three officers and 18 enlisted Sailors qualified submarines, and 291 individual qualifications were completed. Three chief petty officers assigned were selected for Limited Duty Officer (LDO) and 18 junior personnel were selected for advancement. The crew was also awarded the CINCPACFLT Excellence Retention Award for 2000.

"I'm very proud of the achievements the Sailors on Honolulu have attained over the past six months while away from their families and friends," said Machinist Mate Senior Chief (SS) William Cramer.

Throughout the deployment, the men took time out to honor the brave submariners who had made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom and are still "on eternal patrol." In doing so, they live the legacy that "pride does runs deep, it's fast, and forever strong."

It is the same pride that keeps the Honolulu Warriors Maka 'Ala Mau - "always alert." Aloha and mahalo nui loa Warriors.

USS Honolulu hosts two 'Make A Wish' children and families

By J02 McClain Shewman
COMSUBPAC PUBLIC AFFAIRS

USS Honolulu (SSN 718) recently hosted two children, Brian Elsea and Dustin Gordon sponsored by the Make A Wish Foundation, an organization with the purpose of brightening the days of families whose members are being treated for cancer by making wishes come true.

"I feel fortunate that he gets this opportunity," said Charles Elsea of his son, Brian. "We've been through rough times and it's a break from the medical treatments. This [submarine tour] gives us a chance to get away from our day to day lives," added Charles.

Chief of the Boat, Master Chief Machinist's Mate William Cramer escorted the tour group consisting

of ten family members.

"Our crew loves doing these tours. They seem to be a bit more personal than the typical visitor tour - it means more," said Cramer.

"And also because we love showing off our ship. We're a family-oriented crew and we're proud of what we do.

"We're thrilled that people like Brian and Dustin have so much interest in submarines and our lives as submarine Sailors," added Cramer.

The group visited the control room, the sleeping quarters, the wardroom and were even allowed to crawl in the torpedo tubes of USS Honolulu. Dustin said his favorite part of the tour was the torpedo room.

"Since I can remember he's been interested in the military and

Navy ships," said Charles.

According to Charles, Brian used to build ships out of Lego's. The families also attended Polynesian Cultural Center, a luau, snorkeling and deep-sea fishing during their stay in Hawaii.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation grants the wishes of children with life-threatening illnesses and is the largest wish-granting organization in the world, with 81 chapters in the United States and its territories, and 22 international affiliates on five continents.

USS Honolulu (SSN 718) is a Pearl Harbor-based fast-attack submarine and is commanded by Cmdr. John Richardson. Honolulu is a member of Submarine Squadron Three.

Please visit <http://www.wish.org> and <http://www.csp.navy.mil> for more information.



J02 McClain Shewman photo

USS Honolulu's Chief of the Boat, Master Chief Machinist's Mate William Cramer, escorts a group of 'Make A Wish' children and families during a tour of the Honolulu.