

THE SEA SLICE



PHAN Adan Fabela photo

The Sea Slice has four separate pods below the surface. The two forward pods home the propulsion. The new ship design is an innovation of the Office of Naval Research.

Designed today for tomorrow's Navy

JO3 Tim Walsh
Staff Writer

The Office of Naval Research (ONR) is showing off a new ship with a new design geared toward small-combatant vessels. The Sea Slice recently invited local commercial and military media aboard for a tour and a ride in the waters around Oahu. Also touring the Sea Slice were two helmsmen from the USS Russell. The Sea Slice plans on doing the same along many West Coast ports.

The ship has a good reason to go on tour too. Although described as looking a lot like a NASCAR racer by Gary Jensen, Director of ONR's Greater Mid-Pacific Branch Office, Jensen reminds us that what separates the Sea Slice

from other ships is below the surface.

"It has a four-pod design," explains Jensen. "With two pods forward with propulsion and two pods aft the design and concept has several possible benefits."

Jensen continued to explain that with multiple pods with propulsion, a ship could lose power, for whatever reasons, of one pod but still be able to move quickly due to the others pods.

Another aspect of the pod design is the effect the pods have on the buoyancy of the ship.

"The next evolution with the design is moving from a pod to more of a wing-like design. The wing would give more of a static lift and also a dynamic lift. It wouldn't be a hydrofoil, but it would

lift the ship up a bit out of the water," said Jensen of where the pod design might take us.

Although though pleased with the results and proud of their accomplishment with the Sea Slice, Jensen concedes that ship designs will always have their short comings.

"All ship design is compromise between a great deal of factors. You'll have a very stable ship, but it will be slow. You'll have a really fast ship, but it won't have the firepower. You'll have a slow ship, but it is just a floating arsenal," explained Jensen.

Although limited by compromise, ONR and the Sea Slice show promise that our Navy's future will still be smooth sailing.



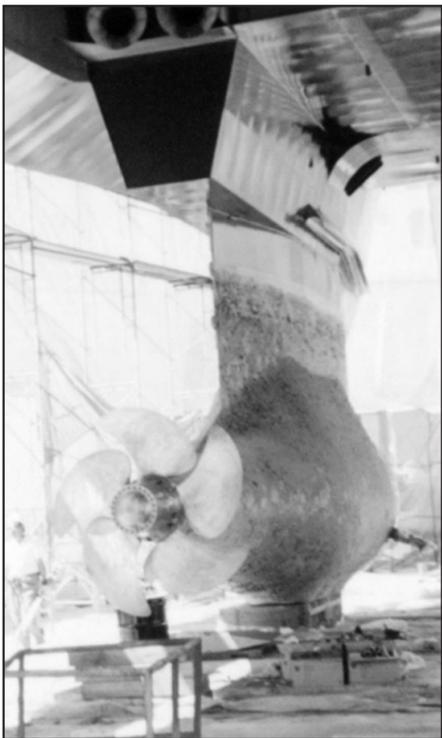
PHAN Adan Fabela photo

Like all ships, the Sea Slice can be more than transportation, it can be home. Here we take a look into the berthing.



PH3 Joshua Pritekel photo

Two master helmsmen from the USS Russell (DDG 59) inspect the Sea Slice's controls during a tour of the new-design ship.



Capt. 'Woody' Berzins photo

(Above) A look at one of the Sea Slice's forward pods that houses its propulsion.

(Right) A unique wake created by a unique ship. The view of Honolulu from the Sea Slice during the tour.



PHAN Adan Fabela photo