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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS CURTS (FFG 38)
FPO AP 96662-1493

Rec'd 3/31/96

DECLASSIFIED

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5750
Ser FFG38/076
11 MAR 1996

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OPNAVINST 5513.16 SERIES
DATE: 10 Nov 2005

[redacted]

From: Commanding Officer, USS CURTS (FFG 38)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC 20374-0571

Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38) (U)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

1. (U) In accordance with reference (a), the Command History of USS CURTS (FFG 38) is hereby submitted.

2. (U) Command composition and organization.

a. (U) Command Mission. USS CURTS is a Guided Missile Frigate of the Oliver Hazard Perry Class. With current upgrades, the ship is capable of battle group support in undersea warfare (USW), air warfare (AW) and surface warfare (SUW). To aid in her mission, she carries the SH-60B Anti-Submarine Helicopter, the SQS-56 Sonar/SQR-19 Towed Array and ship launched torpedoes. To protect against air and surface threats, CURTS is armed with the Standard Surface-to-Air Missiles (SM-1) and the Otto-Melara 76 mm gun. For close-in defense, CURTS carries the Vulcan Phalanx 20mm Close-In Weapons System (CIWS).

b. (U) Organizational Structure. CURTS reports to Commander, Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN for administrative matters. Operationally, CURTS operates under a varying chain-of-command, depending upon her mission. In 1995, CURTS reported to the following operational commanders during the dates listed:

01 Jan-14 Apr 1995-	CTG 75.2 CTF 75	16 Oct-19 Oct 1995-	CTG 58.5 CTF 58
15 Apr-01 Jun 1995-	CTG 70.1 CTF 70	20 Oct-11 Nov 1995-	CTG 70.1 CTF 70
02 Jun-18 Aug 1995-	CTG 75.2 CTF 75	12 Nov-17 Nov 1995-	CTG 800.2 CTF 800
19 Aug-03 Sep 1995-	CTG 70.1 CTF 70	18 Nov-31 Dec 1995-	CTG 75.2 CTF 75

Classified by: CO, USS CURTS
Declassify on: OADR

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Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38) (U)

04 Sep-15 Oct 1995- CTG 50.3
CTF 50

3. (U) Chronology.

03 JAN 95 COMMENCE SELECTED RESTRICTED AVAILABILITY NUMBER SIX. MAJOR COMPONENTS SCHEDULED FOR REPAIR/UPGRADE ARE THE MK 92 FIRE CONTROL SYSTEM, 1A/1B GAS TURBINE ENGINE INTAKES, AND A COMPLETE OVERHAUL OF CREW'S COMPLEX TWO.

11 JAN 95 VADM ARCHIE CLEMINS, COMMANDER, U.S. SEVENTH FLEET VISITS CURTS TO EXAMINE WORK TO BE ACCOMPLISHED DURING SRA-6.

15 MAR 95 CURTS LEARNS OF SELECTION AS COMMANDER, DESTROYER SQUADRON FIFTEEN BATTLE "E" WINNER FOR 1994.

23 MAR 95 CURTS COMPLETES SRA-6 UNDER BUDGET AND AHEAD OF SCHEDULE. U/W FOR OVERNIGHT SHAKEDOWN CRUISE IN SAGAMI-WAN.

24 MAR 95 ARR INPT YOKOSUKA. CONTINUE WORK ON ITEMS IDENTIFIED DURING SHAKEDOWN CRUISE.

28 MAR 95 U/W TO OPERATING AREA R-116, APPROXIMATELY 150 NM OFF THE COAST OF HONSHU, JAPAN. TRACKING RUNS WITH LEAR AIR SERVICES PROVIDED BY CIVILIAN CONTRACTORS DEMONSTRATE MK 92 FIRE CONTROL SYSTEM IS FULLY OPERATIONAL. TACAN CERTIFICATION COMPLETED SATISFACTORILY.

30 MAR 95 ARR INPT YOKOSUKA.

01 APR 95 U/W FOR FAMILY DAY AND FINAL POST-SRA SHAKEDOWN. CURTS DEMONSTRATES A SATISFACTORY FULL POWER RUN. RETURN TO PORT, YOKOSUKA, LATE AFTERNOON.

09 APR 95 EMBARK ONE SH-60B HELICOPTER AND DETACHMENT SIX FROM HSL-51, NAVAL AIR FACILITY, ATSUGI.

10 APR 95 U/W FOR SPRING TRAINING WITH INDEPENDENCE BATTLE GROUP (IBG), EN ROUTE HONG KONG. EMBARK 17 PERSONNEL FROM DESTROYER SQUADRON FIFTEEN (CDS-15) AND AFLOAT TRAINING GROUP (ATG), WESTERN PACIFIC FOR TOTAL SHIP TRAINING AVAILABILITY PHASE TWO (TSTA II).

16 APR 95 CURTS COMPLETES TSTA II. DEBARK PERSONNEL FROM CDS-15 AND ATG TO USS INDEPENDENCE (CV 62) AND USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53) VIA HELICOPTER.

17 APR 95 CURTS SUCCESSFULLY FIRES SM-1 MISSILE, AND CONDUCTS DRY RUN OF HARPOON LAUNCH.

18 APR 95 CURTS LAUNCHES HARPOON MISSILE, DESTROYING SURFACE TARGET. CURTS ALSO SUCCESSFULLY FIRES EXERCISE TORPEDO USING SVTT.

Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38) (U)

20 APR 95 CURTS COORDINATES ATTACK ON ELEMENTS OF IBG AS PART OF TRANSITEX 95.

22 APR 95 REFUEL AT SEA (RAS) WITH USNS GUADALUPE.

23 APR 95 ARR INPT HONG KONG. ANCHOR IN HONG KONG BAY, ANCHORAGE A-50.

28 APR 95 U/W FROM HONG KONG WITH IBG.

29 APR 95 CONDUCT CLOSE APPROACH WITH INDEPENDENCE. CURTS, USS FIFE (DD 991) AND USS NEW YORK CITY (SSN 696) DETACH IBG WITH CURTS AS OTC EN ROUTE KUANTAN BAY, MALAYSIA FOR JOINT EXERCISE MEKAR 95.

30 APR 95 CONDUCT QUICKDRAW FIRING EXERCISE.

01 MAY 95 1400 CURTS UNABLE TO START 1A GAS TURBINE ENGINE (GTE). TECHNICIANS DISCOVER GROUND IN STARTER ONE HOUR PRIOR TO SCHEDULED RAS WITH USNS GUADALUPE. STARTER REPLACED AND TWO ENGINES SAFELY ON LINE FOR RAS.
1600 SET EMERGENCY FLIGHT QUARTERS FOR LANDING OF HELLFIRE 06, EMBARKED ON FIFE. CURTS RECOVERS HELICOPTER AND DET FOUR QUICKLY REPAIRS AND RETURNS HELLFIRE 06 TO WORKING ORDER.

02 MAY 95 ARR INPT KUANTAN BAY, MALAYSIA. PLANNING CONFERENCE FOR MEKAR 95 HELD AT MALAYSIAN NAVAL FACILITY.

03 MAY 95 U/W FOR MEKAR 95. CONDUCT ASW FAMILIARIZATION WITH TWO UNITS OF MALAYSIAN NAVY.

04 MAY 95 CONDUCT ACTIVE AND PASSIVE ASW TRACKING EXERCISES, AS WELL AS A NIGHTTIME OVER-THE-HORIZON TARGETING EXERCISE.

05 MAY 95 AW EXERCISE FIRING AT TOWED SLEEVE PROVIDED BY CIVILIAN LEAR JET SERVICES. CURTS FIRES 10 ROUNDS.

06 MAY 95 COMPLETE MEKAR 95.

07 MAY 95 ANCHOR TIOMAN ISLAND, MALAYSIA, FOR PERSONNEL TRANSFER AND EXERCISE DEBRIEF. U/W 1200 FOR PATTAYA BEACH, THAILAND.

08 MAY 95 RAS WITH GUADALUPE.

09 MAY 95 ARR INPT PATTAYA BEACH, THAILAND.

12 MAY 95 U/W FROM PATTAYA BEACH, THAILAND WITH FIFE, NEW YORK CITY AND UNITS OF ROYAL THAI NAVY FOR SEA EAGLE 95.

15 MAY 95 ANCHOR SATTAHIP, THAILAND FOR EXERCISE DEBRIEF. HELLFIRE 07, CURTS EMBARKED HELICOPTER, GROUNDED DUE TO LOSS OF BACKUP BATTERY.

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Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38) (U)

16 MAY 95 FIFE AND NEW YORK CITY DETACH AND REJOIN IBG. CURTS EMBARKS MEMBERS OF ATG AND CDS-15 FOR TSTA III. U/W FOR SUBIC BAY, REPUBLIC OF PHILIPPINES.

18 MAY 95 RAS/VERTREP WITH GUADALUPE. RECEIVED REPAIR PARTS FOR SH-60B HELICOPTER GROUNDED DUE TO LOSS OF BACKUP BATTERY. COMMENCE TSTA III.

22 MAY 95 CO'S COMMENTS FROM OPSUM 220800Z MAY 96:
TSTA III
TWO GQ'S A DAY
ON THE WAY TO SUBIC BAY

24 MAY 95 CURTS COMPLETES TSTA III.

26 MAY 95 ARR INPT SUBIC BAY, REPUBLIC OF PHILIPPINES. CURTS IS THE FIRST U.S. NAVY WARSHIP TO RETURN TO SUBIC BAY SINCE THE BASE CLOSURE IN 1992. A CROWD OF OVER 200 GREETS THE SHIP, ALONG WITH COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES, MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL MEDIA AND THE SEVENTH FLEET PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER.

29 MAY 95 U/W FROM SUBIC BAY, EN ROUTE YOKOSUKA. ATG REMAINS EMBARKED TO CONDUCT FINAL EVALUATION PROBLEM (FEP), THE LAST OF THE PRE-DEPLOYMENT WORK-UPS.

01 JUN 95 CURTS COMPLETES FEP.

02 JUN 95 ARR INPT YOKOSUKA LATE NIGHT.

03 JUN 95 DEBARK HSL-51 DET SIX.

07 JUN 95 U/W TO SAGAMI-WAN FOR ENGINEERING ASSIST VISIT FROM CDS-15 AND ATG. ENGINEERING CASUALTY CONTROL AND DAMAGE CONTROL TRAINING TEAM EXERCISES CONDUCTED BTWN 07-09 JUN 95.

09 JUN 95 ARR INPT YOKOSUKA.

10 JUL 95 EMBARK TWO HELICOPTERS AND DETACHMENT FOUR FROM HSL-51, NAVAL AIR FACILITY, ATSUGI, IN PREPARATION FOR SHAREM 112 WITH ELEMENTS OF THE KOREAN NAVY.

11 JUL 95 U/W FROM YOKOSUKA EN ROUTE CHINHAE, KOREA. EMBARKED ENGINEERING ASSIST TEAM FROM CDS-15 AND ATG FOR OPERATIONAL PROPULSION PLANT EXAMINATION (OPPE) PREPARATIONS.

13 JUL 95 ARR INPT CHINHAE, KOREA. CONDUCT BRIEF FOR SHAREM 112, A JOINT USW EXERCISE INVOLVING FIFE, USS TUNNY (SSN 682) AND ELEMENTS OF THE SOUTH KOREAN NAVY.

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Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38) (U)

14 JUL 95 U/W ENROUTE OPERATING AREA FOR SHAREM 112 IN YELLOW SEA. CONDUCT ACTIVE/PASSIVE SEARCHES FOR SUBMARINE CONTACTS, AS WELL AS ECC AND DC DRILLS IN PREPARATION FOR OPPE.

18 JUL 95 SHAREM 112 TERMINATES PREMATURELY DUE TO APPROACHING TYPHOON. CURTS HEADS TO SASEBO IN ORDER TO REFUEL, POSSIBLY TO WEATHER OUT THE STORM.

20 JUL 95 ANCHOR SASEBO. CURTS REFUELS AND DETERMINES TO RUN AHEAD OF THE TYPHOON TO THE SOUTHWEST. U/W EN ROUTE YOKOSUKA.

22 JUL 95 STORM STEERS WEST, SLAMS INTO KOREA. CURTS CONTINUES SAFELY HOME, CONDUCTS ECC AND DC DRILLS IN PREPARATION FOR OPPE.

24 JUL 95 ARR INPT YOKOSUKA. DEBARK HSL-51 DET FOUR.

01 AUG 95 PROPULSION EXAMINING BOARD (PEB) ARRIVES TO CONDUCT OPPE.

02 AUG 95 PEB CONDUCTS COLD CHECKS UNTIL EARLY AFTERNOON. U/W EN ROUTE SAGAMI-WAN FOR ECC AND DC DRILL ASSESSMENT EVENING.

03 AUG 95 CONDUCT ECC DRILLS AND MAIN SPACE FIRE DRILL. PEB ASSESSES CURTS ENGINEERING PLANT MATERIAL AND TRAINING READINESS AS SATISFACTORY.

04 AUG 95 ARR INPT YOKOSUKA. DEBARK PEB.

18 AUG 95 EMBARK ONE SH-60B HELICOPTER AND DETACHMENT 8C FROM HSL-49, NAVAL AIR FACILITY, SAN DIEGO.

19 AUG 95 U/W FOR NAVCENT DEPLOYMENT WITH IBG.

20 AUG 95 CURTS CONDUCTS CIWS FIRING EXERCISE; DESTROYS TOWED SLEEVE ON FIRST RUN.

28 AUG 95 RAS WITH USNS MARS (AFS-1).

29 AUG 95 ESCORT USS CHICAGO (SSN 721) THROUGH STRAITS OF MALACCA.

01 SEP 95 CURTS PARTICIPATES IN STRAITS OF HORMUZ TRANSIT REHEARSAL.

04 SEP 95 INCHOP TO FIFTH FLEET.

07 SEP 95 TRANSIT STRAITS OF HORMUZ. CONDUCT ON STATION TURNOVER AND PHOTO EXERCISE WITH ABRAHAM LINCOLN BATTLE GROUP BEFORE CURTS AND IBG ASSUME DUTIES UNDER FIFTH FLEET. HSL-49 DET 8C EXCHANGES CURTS' EMBARKED HELICOPTER, RED STINGER 107, FOR TWO AIRCRAFT FROM DETACHMENT EMBARKED ON BOARD USS MERRILL (DD 976).

09 SEP 95 ARR INPT BAHRAIN.

DECLASSIFIED

Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38) (U)

14 SEP 95 U/W EN ROUTE NORTHERN ARABIAN GULF TO CONDUCT MARITIME INTERDICTION OPERATIONS.

15 SEP 95 (C) ARR ON STATION IN NORTHERN ARABIAN GULF. CONDUCTED ONE QUERY ON MERCHANT SHIPPING IN VICINITY OF IRAQ, WHILE HELICOPTER ALSO CONDUCTED ONE QUERY. PATROLLED AREA BETWEEN OIL PLATFORMS MABOT AND KAAOT, DESIGNATED MA-1, WITHOUT NOTING ANY UNUSUAL TRAFFIC EXITING OR ENTERING IRAQI PORTS.

19 SEP 95 EMBARKED HELO CONDUCTS QUERY OF MERCHANT VESSEL.

20 SEP 95 (C) CURTS QUERIES M/V AL SHAKEEL AND ESCORTS HER TO BOARDING AREA FURTHER SOUTH. THE SUBSEQUENT BOARDING CONDUCTED BY USS FIFE REVEALS AL SHAKEEL IS LADEN WITH CONTRABAND GOODS.
(C) CURTS RETURNS TO POSITION AND QUERIES M/V DELPHI. XJ ORDERS CURTS TO BOARD DELPHI. A COAST GUARD LEGAL DETACHMENT IS HELICOPTERED ON BOARD CURTS, AND THE VISIT, BOARD, SEARCH AND SEIZURE TEAM CONDUCTS A ROUTINE BOARDING. NO CONTRABAND DISCOVERED, ALTHOUGH THE TEAM DOES OBSERVE THE CREW OF DELPHI DUMP SEVERAL AUTOMOBILE TIRES OVERBOARD BEFORE THEY CAN GET TO THE VESSEL.

22 SEP 95 EN ROUTE BAHRAIN.

23 SEP 95 ARR INPT BAHRAIN.

26 SEP 95 U/W EN ROUTE NORTHERN ARABIAN GULF.

27 SEP 95 (C) ARR ON STATION IN NORTHERN ARABIAN GULF FOR MARITIME INTERCEPT OPERATIONS. HELICOPTER CONDUCTS ONE QUERY. CURTS REPORTS A CRANE IN THE VICINITY OF MABOT AND KAAOT.

28 SEP 95 (C) CURTS QUERIES A PAIR OF IRANIAN-FLAGGED VESSELS, THE TUG "MADITEL" AND TOW "HAMIS." XJ CLEARS BOTH VESSELS. TRAFFIC APPEARS LIGHT ON STATION NEAR MABOT AND KAAOT.

29 SEP 95 (C) CURTS REPORTS CRANE WEST OF MABOT AND KAAOT ERECTING A PLATFORM OF SOME SORT. NO QUERIES/BOARDINGS CONDUCTED. CDR (SEL) BRIAN D. QUERRY RELIEVED AS EXECUTIVE OFFICER BY LCDR RICHARD J. SHY.

04 OCT 95 (C) CURTS OBSERVES SMALL UTILITY VESSEL, POSSIBLY M/V MINA AL BAKR ALONGSIDE FLOATING CRANE IN THE MORNING. NO MERCHANT SHIPPING TO REPORT.

05 OCT 95 (C) CURTS RECEIVES STORES THROUGH VERTREP WITH USNS SAN JOSE. FLOATING CRANE MOVED TO POSITION DIRECTLY BETWEEN MABOT AND KAAOT OIL PLATFORMS. HELICOPTER QUERIES ONE IRANIAN FLAGGED VESSEL.

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Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38) (U)

06 OCT 95 (C) RADM J.O. ELLIS, CTF 50, VISITS FOR AWARDS CEREMONY AND ADMIRAL'S CALL ON FLIGHT DECK. FLOATING CRANE REMAINS STATIONARY BETWEEN MABOT AND KAAOT.

07 OCT 95 (C) CURTS DETECTS ESM CORRESPONDING TO M/V AL NOURS, A SUSPECTED VIOLATOR OF U.N. SANCTIONS IMPOSED ON IRAQ. RED STINGER 111, ONE OF CURTS' TWO EMBARKED HELICOPTERS, CORRELATES DATA WITH SIGHTING. THE VESSEL REMAINS IN IRANIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS, HOWEVER, AND IS IMPOSSIBLE TO INTERCEPT. CURTS POSITIONS HERSELF TO DETECT AL NOURS IF SHE CHOOSES TO LEAVE IRANIAN WATERS.

08 OCT 95 (C) CONTINUE SEARCH FOR M/V AL NOURS AFTER RAS WITH GUADALUPE.

09 OCT 95 ARR INPT BAHRAIN. CURTS RETURNS TO BAHRAIN FOR REMOVAL OF MAST-MOUNTED SIGHT.

10 OCT 95 U/W FROM BAHRAIN, EN ROUTE MUSCAT, OMAN.

11 OCT 95 ARR INPT MUSCAT, OMAN.

15 OCT 95 U/W FROM MUSCAT, OMAN EN ROUTE PHUKET, THAILAND.

18 OCT 95 - VERTREP WITH SAN JOSE.
- EOD TEAM HELICOPTERED ABOARD AS PART OF A INTEGRATED TRAINING TEAM SCENARIO INVOLVING A SIMULATED UNEXPLODED MISSILE.
- WHILE TRANSITING THROUGH THE INDIAN OCEAN, 300 MILES WEST OF INDIA, RED STINGER 112 DISCOVERS 10 SEA TURTLES ENTANGLED IN AN ABANDONED FISHING NET. CURTS ALTERS COURSE TO RENDER ASSISTANCE TO THE STRANDED SEA CREATURES. A RESCUE TEAM OF FIVE CUTS THE TURTLES LOOSE. THE STORY DRAWS NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ATTENTION, WITH COVERAGE BY CNN, NBC NIGHTLY NEWS AND THE BBC.

19 OCT 95 (C) CURTS CONDUCTS FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION OPERATIONS, CONDUCTING EXERCISES IN SEAS CLAIMED BY INDIA AND SRI LANKA AS HISTORIC WATERS. ONE PROBABLE INDIAN COAST GUARD UNIT OBSERVED APPROXIMATELY 7 NM AWAY, BUT DID NOT APPROACH CLOSER. CURTS CONDUCTED MAN OVERBOARD DRILLS AND SH-60B OPERATIONS.

22 OCT 95 RAS WITH GUADALUPE. CURTS ALSO CONDUCTS A LIGHTLINE TRANSFER. CURTS DETACHES IBG FOR INDEPENDENT TRANSIT TO PHUKET, THAILAND.

23 OCT 95 CURTS FIRES 76 MM AND CIWS.

24 OCT 95 ANCHOR PHUKET, THAILAND.

28 OCT 95 U/W FROM PHUKET, EN ROUTE YOKOSUKA.

29 OCT 95 CURTS TRANSITS STRAITS OF MALACCA, WHILE TRACKING COURSE OF TWO TYPHOONS IN WESTERN PACIFIC WHICH THREATEN TO STRIKE ALONG CURTS' POSITION OF INTENDED MOVEMENT.

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30 OCT 95 RAS WITH USNS JOHN ERICSSON (TAO 194). IN ORDER TO ALLOW TYPHOONS TO PASS NORTH, CURTS STOPS ALL ENGINES AND PERFORMS TOPSIDE MAINTENANCE.

31 OCT 95 CURTS DIVERTS EAST TO TRANSIT BALABAC STRAIT, THROUGH SULU SEA, SURIGAO STRAIT AND INTO PHILIPPINE SEA IN ORDER TO AVOID IMPENDING TYPHOONS. RENDEZVOUS WITH THE IBG DELAYED UNTIL WEATHER CLEARS.

01 NOV 95 RAS WITH JOHN ERICSSON. CURTS ENCOUNTERS HEAVY SEAS WHICH PREVENT ANY ACTION OTHER THAN TRANSIT.

03 NOV 95 RAS WITH JOHN ERICSSON.

05 NOV 95 CURTS MAKES RENDEZVOUS WITH IBG AND ASSUMES "AN" FOR ANNUALEX 07G, A MAJOR JOINT EXERCISE WITH ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE MARITIME SELF DEFENSE FORCE. VADM CLEMINS, COMMANDER, SEVENTH FLEET, VISITS CURTS TO MEET WITH CO AND CREW.

08 NOV 95 ARR INPT YOKOSUKA.

12 NOV 95 U/W FROM YOKOSUKA IN SUPPORT OF ANNUALEX 07G.

14 NOV 95 CURTS PARTICIPATES IN COMBINED BATTLE FORCE OPERATIONS WITH ELEMENTS OF U.S. SEVENTH FLEET AND JMSDF.

17 NOV 95 CURTS CONDUCTS OPPOSED TRANSIT SOUTH AGAINST ORANGE FORCES. "HOSTILITIES" CEASE AT APPROXIMATELY 1200I FOR PHOTO EXERCISE AND CONCLUSION OF ANNUALEX 07G. CURTS RECEIVES RAS WITH GUADALUPE PRIOR TO RETURNING TO PORT.

18 NOV 95 ARR INPT YOKOSUKA. CURTS BEGINS LEAVE AND UPKEEP PERIOD.

19 NOV 95 DEBARK HSL-49 DET 8C.

13 DEC 95 CREW GATHERS AT YOKOSUKA OFFICERS CLUB TO CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS AND THE CONCLUSION OF ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR USS CURTS.

4. (U) Narrative. The following is a month-by-month narrative of calendar year 1995.

a. (U) January-March. CURTS entered her sixth Selected Restricted Availability (SRA) on 3 January 1995. Japanese good luck decorations, kadomatsu, given to CURTS by her sister ship JDS Tachikaze still flanked the brow as CURTS began extensive repairs to her Mark 92 Fire Control System. The SRA provided CURTS the opportunity to renovate one of her three crew's berthing complexes, and completely overhaul the intakes to her gas turbine engines.

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In early January, VADM Archie Clemins, Commander, U.S. Seventh Fleet, visited the ship to inspect the work being done. "I wish you well and look forward to visiting when you are done," VADM Clemins told the crew. Taking his words to heart, the crew of CURTS and the workers of Naval Ship Repair Facility Yokosuka completed the availability under budget and ahead of schedule, officially finishing 23 March 1995. CURTS Sailors also received word in mid-March that they had won the Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN Battle Efficiency Award. Two brief shakedown runs in late March confirmed that CURTS was ready to return to sea.

b. (U) April. The crew of CURTS invited friends and family members to join them for a Family Day Cruise on 1 April 1995. Guests enjoyed not only tours, displays and music and a barbecue on the flight deck, but also experienced a full power demonstration, as CURTS completed the last of her post-availability checks. Nine days later, the crew of over 200 men -- along with an embarked SH-60B helicopter and Detachment Six from HSL-51, Naval Air Facility, Atsugi -- left Yokosuka for Spring Training with the INDEPENDENCE Battle Group.

CURTS immediately began Total Ship's Training Availability Phase II (TSTA II), a training assist visit from members of Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN and Afloat Training Group (ATG), Western Pacific. After six days of combat systems, seamanship, engineering and damage control drills, CURTS completed TSTA II and delivered the assist team to USS INDEPENDENCE (CV 62) and USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53).

On 17 April 1995, CURTS tested the work performed in the yards. The Mark 92 Fire Control System demonstrated the ability to detect and track an air target, and CURTS successfully launched an SM-1 Standard Missile. The very next day, CURTS fired a HARPOON missile, destroying a surface target approximately 50 nm away. The test of SUW, AW and USW weapons was complete when CURTS launched an exercise torpedo from her own SVTT system only a couple of hours later.

CURTS' ability to fire weapons proven, the crew of CURTS set out to prove that they could fight the ship effectively. Steaming ahead of the INDEPENDENCE battle group and using her small size, CURTS coordinated air and surface assets in an attack on the carrier and escorts as they steamed past the frigate. The crew was tired, proud and happy when they arrived at anchorage in Hong Kong on 23 April 1995.

After five days of liberty, CURTS escorted the INDEPENDENCE out of Hong Kong on 28 April 1995. The crew received a rare show when the INDEPENDENCE invited them to conduct a close approach on 29 April 1995, viewing catapult launches and trap landings from a distance of less than 1000 yards. CURTS, USS FIFE (DD 991) and USS NEW YORK CITY (SSN 696) detached from the carrier battle group that day to continue south for MEKAR 95, a joint exercise with the Malaysian Navy.

e. (U) May. There are days that test the mettle of ships. 1 May 1995 found the engineers aboard CURTS frantically searching for the cause of a

malfunction in the control circuitry for 1A gas turbine engine from the early hours of the morning, trying to place the engine back on-line before a scheduled refueling-at-sea (RAS). Just a short time before the RAS, a team of electronics experts discovered a ground in the engine's starter. 1A gas turbine engine roared to life in time for the RAS.

Just a short while after refueling, CURTS crewmembers were surprised to hear the call to emergency flight quarters. Hellfire 06, embarked aboard FIFE, was experiencing problems and needed to make an immediate landing. Within five minutes, CURTS was ready to receive the damaged aircraft. Hellfire 06 landed safely on CURTS' flight deck; Detachment Six maintenance men had the helicopter airborne shortly thereafter.

CURTS arrived in Kuantan Bay, Malaysia the following morning. After a brief planning conference, the U.S. ships departed the port early on 3 May 1995 with two units of the Malaysian Navy. The ships practiced USW, SUW and AW tactics, as well as firing at a towed sleeve provided by a Lear jet, for the next three days. The CURTS crew also drilled for the upcoming TSTA III and FEP assessment during the quiet hours. CURTS and FIFE anchored off Tioman Island, Malaysia on the morning of 7 May 1995 to return personnel and conduct an exercise debrief.

CURTS dropped anchor in Pattaya Beach, Thailand on 9 May 1995 for a few days of rest and liberty. Underway on 12 May 1995, CURTS served as Officer in Charge of Exercise (OCE) Sea Eagle 1995, a joint effort with FIFE, NEW YORK CITY and units of the Royal Thai Navy. The ships returned to Sattahip, Thailand on 15 May 1995. FIFE and NEW YORK CITY returned to the INDEPENDENCE battle group, while CURTS embarked a training assist team and steamed toward Subic Bay, Republic of Philippines.

CURTS completed TSTA III on 24 May 1995, and arrived in Subic Bay two days later. A crowd of over 200 people, including local dignitaries and members of the press, greeted CURTS as she tied up at the Subic Bay Freeport--the first U.S. warship to visit the former Navy base since the American military withdrawal in 1992.

The training assist team remained with CURTS, and began the Final Evaluation Problem (FEP) -- the final stage of pre-deployment work-ups--as soon as the ship got underway on 29 May 1995.

f. (U) June. FEP ended on the first day of June. Eager to return home, the crew of CURTS braved a nighttime landing at Yokosuka Naval Station on 2 June 1995. Less than a week later, the ship was underway again, this time preparing for the Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE). With an engineering assist team embarked, CURTS conducted engineering and damage control training drills for three days before returning to port for a month long upkeep period.

g. (U) July. A second helicopter detachment, HSL-51 Detachment Four, arrived aboard CURTS on 10 July 1995, bringing two SH-60B helicopters in

support of SHAREM 112, a joint USW exercise with the South Korean Navy. The ship also carried an engineering assist team, and drilled at every spare opportunity between Yokosuka and Chinhae, South Korea.

CURTS, FIFE and USS TUNNY (SSN 682) practiced USW with elements of the South Korean fleet for five days in less than ideal conditions before a threatening typhoon cancelled the exercise altogether. Racing ahead of the storm, CURTS pulled into Sasebo on 20 July 1995 to quickly refuel and return to sea. The typhoon, meanwhile, tracked to the west, leaving the ship unscathed. After a few more days of engineering and damage control drills, CURTS arrived in Yokosuka on 24 July 1995.

h. (U) August. The Propulsion Examining Board (PEB) embarked CURTS on 1 August 1995 for the purpose of administering the Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE). Beginning early the next morning with cold checks, PEB certified CURTS safe to get underway that afternoon. CURTS demonstrated engineering casualty control and damage control drills for PEB, and received a 'satisfactory' grade overall.

After a short respite, the crew of CURTS deployed to the Arabian Gulf with the INDEPENDENCE battle group on 19 August 1995. A third helicopter detachment, Detachment 8C from HSL-49, Naval Air Facility, San Diego, joined CURTS for the deployment. With the ABRAHAM LINCOLN urgently requiring relief in the Middle East, CURTS and the rest of the carrier battle group proceeded at high speed. CURTS slowed briefly only to escort USS CHICAGO (SSN 721) through the Straits of Malacca.

i. (C) September. CURTS "inchopped" to Fifth Fleet on 4 September 1995. Three days later, the INDEPENDENCE battle group transited through the Straits of Hormuz without incident. The two battle groups conducted an on- station turnover inside the Gulf before LINCOLN continued home and the INDEPENDENCE battle group proceeded west. CURTS traded her one helicopter to USS MERRILL (DD 976) for the other ship's two aircraft.

After a brief port visit in Bahrain, CURTS sailed north to the Northern Arabian Gulf, where she took station as the northernmost ship for Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO), enforcing U.N. sanctions against Iraq. Patiently watching merchant traffic flow into and out of the renegade country, CURTS queried and diverted the AL SHAKEEL on 20 September 1995. A boarding party from FIFE discovered a load of contraband goods aboard the vessel.

Meanwhile, CURTS' own Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) team inspected the cargo of DELPHI, a vessel bound for Iraq. Though the team discovered no contraband, they did observe DELPHI's crew tossing automobile tires in the water shortly before the team's arrival.

j. (C) October. After another brief visit to Bahrain, CURTS returned to the Northern Arabian Gulf for continued interdiction operations. The crew tracked the progress of a small floating crane in Iraqi territorial waters for several days, and occasionally queried a passing merchant ship.

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Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38) (U)

A visit from RADM J.O. Ellis, CTF FIVE ZERO, proved a welcome opportunity for the crew to learn more about events in the Arabian Gulf.

On 07 October 1995, CURTS detected ESM corresponding to that of AL NOURS, a known sanctions violator. Red Stinger 111, one of CURTS' two embarked helicopters, correlated the data with a sighting. Perhaps aware of the U.S. Navy warship stalking it, AL NOURS remained close in Iranian territorial waters and refused to come near CURTS.

CURTS completed her duty on 9 October 1995, and departed Bahrain for Muscat, Oman the next day. The crew rested and recovered from the NAVCENT deployment in a swimming pool and club provided by the U.S. Embassy, and then continued on toward Phuket, Thailand.

While on a routine patrol mission on 18 October 1995, Red Stinger 112 noticed several sea turtles entangled in a fishing net approximately 60 miles south of CURTS' position. The ship altered course to render assistance to the turtles, some 300 miles off the coast of India. A team of five rescuers freed ten turtles, drawing the attention of the national and international media. Stories of the rescue were broadcast on CNN, NBC Nightly News and the BBC.

CURTS conducted Freedom of Navigation Operations in seas claimed by India and Sri Lanka as historical waters the next day, asserting the right of all seagoing vessels to operate in international waters. On 24 October 1995, CURTS anchored in Phuket, Thailand, and the crew received a well-deserved rest.

While the crew enjoyed liberty, two typhoons gathered strength in the Western Pacific. By the time CURTS transited the Straits of Malacca on 29 October 1995, both storms threatened to strike along the ships' track home. After trying to slow and let the storms pass, CURTS was forced to turn east, passing through the Balabac Strait, the Sulu Sea and Surigao Straits into the Philippine Sea in order to safely rendezvous with the INDEPENDENCE. Fortunately, USNS JOHN ERICSSON (TAO 194) provided CURTS with plenty of fuel for the transit.

k. (U) November. CURTS reached the INDEPENDENCE battle group on 5 November 1995, just in time to serve as "AN" for ANNUALEX 07G, a major joint exercise with the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF). CURTS remained on station for two days, and returned to Yokosuka on 8 November 1995. The crew and ship were back on station for ANNUALEX only four days later, and proved a formidable foe during an opposed transit on 17 November 1995. CURTS returned to Yokosuka the following day, and ship and crew enjoyed a hard-earned break.

l. (U) December. December was spent in a leave and upkeep period. CURTS Sailors gathered at the Yokosuka Officers Club on 13 December 1995 to celebrate the holidays and the conclusion of one of the most successful years in the history of USS CURTS.

T. A. DELERY

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