DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS CURTS (FFG 38)
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From: Commanding Officer, USS CURTS (FFG 38)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH)

1998

SUBJ: 1998 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS CURTS (FFG 38)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Biography ADM M. E. Curts
(5) Biography CDR M. S. Welch
(6) PAO Article – USS CURTS Rescues Tug
(7) PAO Article – USS CURTS Receives Golden Anchor Award
(8) PAO Article – CURTS Heads South
(9) PAO Article – USS CURTS Delivers Goods to the Needy in Ecuador
(10) PAO Article – USS CURTS Heads to South America
(11) PAO Article – USS CURTS (FFG 38) Returns to San Diego
(12) Battle Efficiency/Command Excellence Award Input
(13) Welcome Aboard Program
(14) Retirement Ceremony for CWO3 M. Harris Program
(15) Program for USS CURTS Christmas Party
(16) Photograph of ADM M. E. Curts
(17) Photographs of USS CURTS

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (12) are hereby submitted as the 1998 Command History for USS CURTS (FFG 38).

M S Welch
M. S. WELCH
CDR USN

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. Command Mission. USS CURTS (FFG 38) 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 two SH-60B Anti-Submarine Helicopters, the SQS-56 Sonar/SQR-19 Towed Array and MK 46 Ship Launched Torpedoes. To protect against air and surface threats, CURTS is armed with the Standard Surface-to-Air Missile (SM1) and the Otto-Melara 76mm gun. For close-in defense, CURTS carries the Vulcan Phalanx 20mm Close-In Weapons System (CIWS).

2. Organizational Structure. In 1998, CURTS was homeported in San Diego, California. Her immediate superior in the chain of command was Commander, Destroyer Squadron One. She was the only active duty frigate in Destroyer Squadron One until 01 October 1998. On that date, CURTS became a member of the Naval Reserve Fleet. In 1998, CURTS reported to the following operational commanders during the dates listed:

01JAN	11MAR	CTU 015.0.8
11MAR	17MAY	CTU 035.0.8
18MAY	14JUN	CTF 28
15JUN	26JUN	CTG 28.3
27JUN	05JUL	CTU 28.2.1
06JUL	16JUL	CTU 035.0.8
17JUL	22JUL	CTF 173
23JUL		CTF 179
24JUL	30JUL	CTG 179.1
31JUL	18 SEP	CTU 035.0.8
19SEP	20SEP	CTG 035.12
21SEP	16OCT	CTU 035.0.8
17OCT	18OCT	CTG 035.12
19OCT	20NOV	CTU 035.0.8
21NOV	22NOV	CTG 035.12
23NOV	11DEC	CTU 035.0.8
12DEC	13DEC	CTG 035.12
14DEC	31DEC	CTU 035.0.8

Chronology 1998 For USS CURTS (FFG 38)

01JAN	HOLIDAY LEAVE CONTINUES
05JAN	COMMENCE ASIR
09JAN	COMPLETE ASIR
10JAN	HOLIDAY LEAVE ENDS
12JAN	COMMENCE TSTA I
20JAN	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO TSTA I
23JAN	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA, CONTINUING TSTA I
27JAN	U/W SOCAL OPAREA, CONTINUING TSTA I
30JAN	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA, COMPLETED TSTA I
02FEB	COMMENCE COMBAT SYSTEMS READINESS REVIEW
18FEB	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO CSRR
18FEB	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA, COMPLETED CSRR
24FEB	COMMENCE TSTA II
03MAR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO TSTA II
07MAR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA CONTINUING TSTA II
09MAR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA CONTINUING TSTA II
13MAR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA CONTINUING TSTA II
17MAR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA CONTINUING TSTA II
21MAR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA COMPLETED TSTA II
24MAR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO ECERT
26MAR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA COMPLETED ECERT
30MAR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO TSTA III
04APR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA COMPLETED TSTA II
08APR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO FEP
11APR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA COMPLETED FEP
08MAY	U/W FOR DEPENDENTS CRUISE
11MAY	DEPART SAN DIEGO ENROUTE PUERTO VALLARTA, MEXICO
14MAY	ARR PUERTO VALLARTA BRIEF STOP FOR FUEL
15MAY	DEPART PUERTO VALLARTA ENROUTE RODMAN, PANAMA
21MAY	ARRIVE RODMAN BRIEF STOP FOR FUEL
22MAY	DEPART RODMAN ENROUTE SALINAS, ECUADOR
25MAY	ARRIVE SALINAS, ATTEND PASSEX CONFERENCE, HOST RECEPTION ONBOARD
26MAY	U/W FROM SALINAS, COMMENCE PASSEX WITH ECUADORIAN NAVY
27MAY	COMPLETE PASSEX WITH ECUADORIAN NAVY
27MAY	ARRIVE SALINAS
30MAY	DEPART SALINAS ENROUTE CALLAO, PERU
01JUN	ARRIVE CALLAO, ATTEND PASSEX CONFERENCE
02JUN	U/W FROM CALLAO, COMMENCE PASSEX WITH PERUVIAN NAVY
03JUN	COMPLETE PASSEX WITH PERUVIAN NAVY
03JUN	ARRIVE CALLAO

04JUN	HOST RECEPTION ONBOARD
06JUN	DEPART CALLAO, ENROUTE VALPARAISO, CHILE
09JUN	ARRIVE VALPARAISO, ATTEND TEAMWORK SOUTH 98 CONFERENCE
10JUN	EMBARK COMMANDER, DESTROYER SQUADRON FIVE
13JUN	U/W FROM VALPARAISO, COMMENCE TEAMWORK SOUTH 98
15JUN	ARRIVE ANTOFAGASTA, CHILE, BRIEF STOP FOR FUEL, DISEMBARK CDS 5
16JUN	U/W FROM ANTOFAGASTA, CONTINUE TEAMWORK SOUTH 98
17JUN	ANCHOR OVERNIGHT MEJILLONES, CHILE
18JUN	U/W FROM MEJILLONES
19JUN	ARRIVE IQUIQUE, CHILE
22JUN	U/W FROM IQUIQUE
23JUN	ANCHOR OVERNIGHT MEJILLONES
24JUN	U/W FROM MEJILLONES, CHILE
26JUN	ARRIVE ANTOFAGASTA, COMPLETE TEAMWORK SOUTH 98
27JUN	DEPART ANTOFAGASTA, CHILE ENROUTE RODMAN, PANAMA
01JUL	ARRIVE RODMAN, PANAMA
04JUL	DEPART RODMAN, PANAMA ENROUTE PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII AND RIMPAC 98
17JUL	ARRIVE PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII ATTEND RIMPAC 98 CONFERENCE
18JUL	DEPART PEARL HARBOR, PARTICIPATE AS BLUE FORCES
21JUL	ARRIVE PEARL HARBOR, ATTEND RIMPAC 98 CONFERENCE
23JUL	U/W FROM PEARL HARBOR, PARTICIPATE AS ORANGE FORCES
01AUG	ARRIVE PEARL HARBOR, COMPLETE RIMPAC 98
05AUG	U/W FROM PEARL HARBOR, ENROUTE LAHAINA, MAUI
05AUG	ARRIVE LAHAINA
10AUG	DEPART LAHAINA ENROUTE PEARL HARBOR
10AUG	ARRIVE PEARL HARBOR
12AUG	DEPART PEARL HARBOR ENROUTE SAN DIEGO WITH TIGERS
18AUG	ARRIVE SAN DIEGO
19AUG	COMMENCE POST DEPLOYMENT STAND-DOWN
07SEP	END STAND-DOWN
09SEP	U/W FOR TYPE TRAINING
10SEP	IPT SAN DIEGO
18SEP	COMMENCE MID-CYCLE ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT (MCA)
19-20SEP	U/W FOR NAVAL RESERVE TRAINING WEEKEND
20SEP	COMPLETE MCA
30SEP	TRANSFER TO NAVAL RESERVE FLEET
04OCT	DEPART SAN DIEGO ENROUTE NANOOSE HARBOUR, BRITISH COLUMBIA
07OCT	ARRIVE NANOOSE HARBOUR, BRIEF CNO PROJECT
08OCT	PARTICIPATE IN CNO PROJECT

09OCT	DEPART NANOOSE HARBOUR ENROUTE VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA
09OCT	ARRIVE VANCOUVER
13OCT	DEPART VANCOUVER ENROUTE SAN DIEGO
16OCT	ARRIVE SAN DIEGO
17-18OCT	U/W FOR NRT WEEKEND
03NOV	U/W FOR TYPE TRAINING
09NOV	COMMENCE INSURV
10NOV	U/W FOR UNDERWAY MATERIAL INSPECTION
13NOV	COMPLETE INSURV
21-22NOV	U/W FOR NRT WEEKEND
08-09DEC	U/W FOR TYPE TRAINING
12-13DEC	U/W FOR NRT WEEKEND
16DEC	SHIP'S CHRISTMAS PARTY, NAS NORTH ISLAND
19DEC	COMMENCE HOLIDAY STAND-DOWN FIRST LEAVE BLOCK
30DEC	TURNOVER DAY
31DEC	COMMENCE HOLIDAY STAND-DOWN SECOND LEAVE BLOCK

Narrative

a. January.

(1) Prior to the completion of Holiday Stand-down, CURTS completed ASIR.

(2) On 12 January, CURTS commenced the training cycle.

b. February

(1) CURTS conducted Combat Systems Readiness Review from 02-18 February.

c. March

(1) CURTS commenced TSTA II and spent only four workdays inport during the month of March.

d. April

(1) CURTS completed FEP.

(2) Commenced POM.

e. May

(1) Senior Chief Boatswain's Mate Robert S. Briggs, after 20 years of faithful and dedicated naval service, retired in a ceremony held onboard CURTS on 07 May.

(2) On 08 May, CURTS conducted a Dependents Cruise for the crew and their family members.

(3) CURTS departed San Diego, CA on 11 May for a three month deployment to South America for bilateral exercises and Teamwork South 98, finishing the deployment in Hawaii for RIMPAC 98.

(4) CURTS conducted brief stop for fuel in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

(5) CURTS conducted Bi-Lateral Passex with Ecudorian Navy and hosted reception onboard.

f. June

(1) CURTS conducted Bi-Lateral Passex with Peruvian Navy and hosted reception onboard.

(2) CURTS conducted Bi-Lateral Passex with HMS MONTROSE enroute Valparaiso, Chile for Teamwork South 98.

(3) CURTS conducted Tri-Lateral exercises with the Chilean Navy and Air Force, the British ship HMS MONTROSE, and other air units of the U.S. Navy during Teamwork South 98.

g. July

(1) CURTS participated in RIMPAC 98 as a member of both Blue and Orange forces.

h. August

(1) CURTS conducted a port visit to Lahaina on the island of Maui.

(2) CURTS hosted a Tiger Cruise from Pearl Harbor enroute San Diego.

(3) On 18 August, CURTS returned to homeport and commenced a three week stand-down.

i. September

(1) CURTS participated in its first Naval Reserve Training Weekend on 19-20 September.

j. October

(1) CURTS transferred to the Naval Reserve Fleet on 01 October.

(2) CURTS participated in a CNO project in Nanoose Harbour, British Columbia to evaluate a variant of the MK48 torpedo. Upon completion of the trials, CURTS conducted a port visit to Vancouver, British Columbia.

(2) Upon returning to San Diego, CURTS participated in an NRT Weekend, 17-18 October.

k. November

(1) In accordance with Congressional mandates, CURTS conducted INSURV including an Underway Material Inspection to evaluate the condition of the ship during 09-13 November.

(2) Chief Electrician's Mate Scottie Harris, after 20 years of faithful and dedicated naval service, retired in a ceremony held onboard CURTS on 17 November.

(3) CWO3 Manuel L. Harris, after 30 years of faithful and dedicated naval service, retired in a ceremony held onboard CURTS on 20 November.

(4) CURTS participated in an NRT Weekend, 21-22 November.

l. December

(1) CURTS operated in SOCAL Oparea for Type Training on 08-09 December.

(2) CURTS participated in an NRT Weekend 12-13 December.

(3) CURTS held its annual Holiday Party at NAS North Island's Island Club in the Trident Room on 16 December.

(4) CURTS commenced Holiday Stand-down on 19 December.

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Ser FFG38/8351-01
17 DEC 98

From: Commanding Officer, USS CURTS (FFG 38)
To: Commander, Destroyer Squadron One

Subj: BATTLE EFFICIENCY/COMMAND EXCELLENCE AWARD INPUT

Ref: (a) COMNAVSURFPACINST 3502.2C

Encl: (1) Battle Efficiency/Command Excellence Input

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted for the Battle Efficiency/Command Excellence cycle from 1 January through 31 December 1998.

2. Summary.

In 1998, USS CURTS was characterized as a "can-do" ship and completed a compressed training cycle, an ISE deployment that included PASSEX's with the Ecuadorian and Peruvian Navies and two major multi-national exercises in TEAMWORK SOUTH 98 and RIMPAC98, experienced a 50% crew turnover in two months, and transferred to the Naval Reserve Force. Excellence has been CURTS' watchword throughout the year as the ship exceeded the requirements for all command excellence mission area awards, and received numerous commendations during both the training cycle and the recent deployment.

The year began on a high note in January, as CURTS completed Aviation Facilities Certification (ASIR) and her Aviation Readiness Exam (ARE) with superior results. ARE inspectors commented that the administrative and training programs were "the best that they had seen", and that the attitude and cooperation of the crew were outstanding. The month of February was spent in the TSTA1 training phase with a concentration on ECERT and CMTQ preparations.

In March, CURTS spent only four workdays inport. The crew completed ECERT only 7 months after a 60% crew turnover in engineering, the ship's third successful engineering inspection in 14 months. The TSTA2 phase saw CURTS execute all combat systems live firing exercises with great success. Specifically, ATGPAC trainers commented on the operator's exceptional performance during the air gunnery training. The basic training cycle culminated in FEP on 10 April. ATGPAC observers noted the complexity of the ship's drill package, the positive attitude of the crew, and commended the ship for her outstanding performance in completing the basic phase in only three months.

Following a brief POM period, CURTS began an ISE deployment by departing San Diego on 11 May. Enroute to exercise TEAMWORK SOUTH 98, the ship conducted PASSEX's with the Ecuadorian and Peruvian Navies. The PASSEX's afforded much needed multi-ship training before commencing the major multi-national exercise in Chile. While in Salinas, Ecuador the crew participated in PROJECT HANDCLASP, distributing several thousand dollars worth of food and merchandise to destitute citizens. Throughout the PASSEX's, CURTS enjoyed the opportunity to operate with some of the most capable conventional submarine forces in the world. In addition, CURTS hosted receptions in both nations fostering the spirit of cooperation and camaraderie among naval forces of the Western Hemisphere. COMWESTHEMGRU commended the ship on her performance during this, the first phase of her deployment.

On the ninth of June, CURTS arrived in Valparaiso, Chile, commencing the centerpiece exercise of the deployment, TEAMWORK SOUTH 98. The exercise lasted from 15-26 June and included forces from The United States, Chile, Canada, and Great Britain. From an operational perspective, it was the most challenging event of the year with CURTS performing as RED CROWN and air safety cell for the entire exercise while taking on such formidable adversaries as the Chilean Air Force and Missile Patrol Boat Squadron in two weeks of at sea training. The event proved a great operational success. CURTS was commended for superior performance by COMDESRON FIVE, COMWESTHEMGRU, and COMTHIRDFLT, as well as Chilean Naval Officials.

From TEAMWORK SOUTH, CURTS traveled over 6000 miles to participate as OPFOR in RIMPAC 98. Again, CURTS was distinguished operationally by "sinking" six ships of the BLUE FORCES, and "downing" numerous BLUE aircraft over a three day period. OPFOR was so successful, in fact, COMTHIRDFLT ordered OPFOR surface assets into port two days early so that BLUE forces could complete their training objectives. The ship was again commended by COMDESRON FIVE and COMTHIRDFLT on her superior performance.

On 18 August, CURTS returned home to Pier One, NAVSTA San Diego. After post-deployment standdown, the ship completed a Mid-Cycle Engineering Assessment in September, the fourth successful engineering assessment in eighteen months. On 30 September CURTS joined the Naval Reserve Force. In November, CURTS completed a visit from the Board of Inspection and Survey, and is now preparing for the spring training cycle.

As in 1997, this year has been characterized by tremendous change. CURTS started the year with a new crew after the 1997 homeport change, and by June was conducting multi-national training in the Southeast Pacific. Now, at the end of the year, CURTS begins the whole process again with yet another largely new crew, the third crew in as many years. Throughout these changes however, the ship has consistently surpassed all her operational challenges, making excellence the norm.

M. S. WELCH

USS CURTS (FFG 38)
MAJOR EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY
1998

05 JAN - 09 JAN	ASIR, SAN DIEGO
12 JAN - 30 JAN	TSTA1, SAN DIEGO (SOCAL)
02 FEB - 13 FEB	COMBAT SYSTEMS READINESS REVIEW (CSRR), SAN DIEGO
24 FEB - 20 MAR	TSTA2, SAN DIEGO (SOCAL)
24 MAR - 25 MAR	ECERT, SAN DIEGO (SOCAL)
08 APR - 10 APR	FEP, SOCAL
13 APR - 17 APR	LMA, SAN DIEGO
25 MAY - 29 MAY	ECUADOR PASSEX, VICINITY SALINAS, ECUADOR
01 JUN - 05 JUN	PERU PASSEX, VICINITY LIMA, PERU
09 JUN - 12 JUN	VISIT, VALPARAISO, CHILE
13 JUN - 14 JUN	ROYAL NAVY PASSEX, ENROUTE ANTOFAGASTA, CHILE
15 JUN - 26 JUN	EXERCISE TEAMWORK SOUTH 98, CHILEAN COAST
17 JUL - 02 AUG	EXERCISE RIMPAC 98, HAWAIIAN OPAREA
12 AUG - 18 AUG	TIGER CRUISE, ENROUTE SAN DIEGO
18 SEP - 20 SEP	MID-CYCLE ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT, SAN DIEGO (SOCAL)
30 SEP - 30 SEP	TRANSFER TO THE NAVAL RESERVE FORCE
08 OCT - 08 OCT	CNO PROJECT (MK 48 ADCAP TESTING) NANOOSE BAY, BC
09 OCT - 13 OCT	VISIT, VANCOUVER, BC
09 NOV - 13 NOV	INSURV, SAN DIEGO

USS CURTS (FFG 38)
COMMAND EXCELLENCE AWARD INPUTS
1998

Maritime Warfare

- Currently maintain an M-1 training status in USW, SUW, and AW (capped at M-2 due to non availability of supersonic target).

- Executed two successful MK-46 engagements on the SOAR/SCORE range. The second training period was characterized as "the best prosecution in years" by range officials.

- Aviation certification remained current. Completed over 300 incident free flight hours during TEAMWORK SOUTH 98 deployment. Deployed with a two plane detachment, maintaining constant state of aviation readiness.

- Completed Aviation Facilities Certification and Aviation Readiness Examination (ARE). Singled out by ARE inspectors as having the best administration and training programs they had seen on the waterfront.

- Completed SAR Swimmer Certification. Again singled out by inspectors as having the best administration and training program on the waterfront.

- During TEAMWORK SOUTH 98, commended by COMDESRON FIVE, COMWESTHEMGRU, and COMTHIRDFLT for outstanding performance in Maritime Warfare, and as RED CROWN and air safety cell.

- Commended by COMDESRON FIVE and COMTHIRDFLT for outstanding performance as OPFOR during RIMPAC 98.

Command and Control

- Completed CMS assist and CMS inspection. COMDESRON ONE inspector commented on the superior administration of CURTS' account.

- No loss of CMS material, loss of CMS accountability or CMS incident.

- Flawless emergency action message response. Properly responded to two of two exercise BEARDIRON messages. Successfully participated in exercise POLOHAT 98-1 (Strategic Phase) and POLOHAT 98-3 (Strategic and Theater Phase).

- Completed navigation check ride with outstanding results. COMDESRON ONE inspector reported "no discrepancies".

- Completed three month deployment maintaining 100% communications connectivity. Other ships in company, with more capable communications suites, frequently used CURTS as a communications check platform.

Engineering/Survivability

- Completed Engineering Certification six months after a 43% engineering department personnel turnover.

- Completed a successful mid-cycle assessment one month after returning from deployment. This was the fourth successful major engineering inspection for the ship in 15 months.

- Steamed in excess of 30000 NM. Met all operational commitments without a major engineering casualty.

- All engineering material and administrative inspections remain current.

Logistics

- Maintaining M-1 training levels in NCO-M and FSO.

- Received "Blue-E" Logistics Management Assessment 13-17 April.

- Qualified for "SURFPAC Top Financial Performer" for third year in a row.

- Based on outstanding LMA results in Ship's Store management and accountability, selected as a semi-finalist for the "CY98 NEXCOM Ship's Store Best Sales and Service Award".

- Received BZ from COMNAVSURFPAC for outstanding PUK Management. The inventory was returned at the completion of cruise with 100% accuracy.

- Annual surprise DAO Audit of Disbursing, Pay Record Audit and JUMPS inspection graded as satisfactory.

- Completed Medical and Dental Readiness Evaluations achieving C-1 rating.

- Industrial Hygiene survey graded as outstanding.

- Recognized by COMDESRON FIVE and COMWESTHEMGRU for holding outstanding receptions for foreign dignitaries in Salinas, EC, Lima, PE, Valparaiso, CI, and Antofagasta, CI.

- HAZMAT program singled out by INSURV NAVOSH inspectors as "best on waterfront". Paint locker was photographed to serve as an example to other ships undergoing the same assessment.

- Completed a three month ISE deployment with little external logistics support. Foresight and proactive logistics planning enabled departure and return from deployment CASREP free.

General

- Conducted PROJECT HANDCLASP in Salinas, Ecuador.

- Participant in HANDS ON SAN DIEGO 98.