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

Subj: USS CURTS (FFG 38) 1999 COMMAND HISTORY

1999

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) BZ Message (03DEC99) - RADM Barrett, USCG
(5) BZ Message (09DEC99) - ADM Fargo, USN
(6) BZ Message (14DEC99) - RADM Barrett, USCG
(7) PAO Article (04MAY99) - USS CURTS Change of Command
(8) PAO Article (01SEP99) - USS CURTS Visits Guatemala for "Project Handclasp"
(9) PAO Article (30DEC99)- USS CURTS Sailors are Y2K Compliant
(10) Biography - ADM M. E. Curts, USN
(11) Biography - CDR M. S. Welch, USN
(12) Biography - CDR J. W. Riley III, USN
(13) Retirement Ceremony Program - GSMC(SW) R. A. Van Wey, USN
(14) Change of Command Program
(15) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
(16) "38" Special Family Gram - Counter Drug Operations 1999-2000

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (16) are submitted as the 1999 Command History for USS CURTS (FFG-38).

J. W. RILEY III

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), anti-air warfare (AAW), 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. CURTS was homeported in San Diego, California throughout 1999. Her immediate superior in the administrative chain of command was Commander, Destroyer Squadron ONE. CURTS operated under Commander, U.S. Third Fleet, until 14 August, when she chopped to the tactical control of Director, Joint Inter-Agency Task Force East (JIATF EAST) homeported Key West, Florida for the remainder of the year conducting Counter-Drug Operations in the Eastern Pacific and Caribbean Sea. CURTS Operational Commander during the deployment was Commander, Task Force 40 (CTF 40) whose Administrative Title was Commander, Western Hemisphere Group homeported Mayport, Florida.

CHRONOLOGY

01JAN	CONTINUE HOLIDAY LEAVE
11JAN	COMPLETE HOLIDAY LEAVE
13JAN	U/W SOCAL OPAREA TYPE TRAINING (TYT)
15JAN	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA
23JAN	U/W SOCAL OPAREA NAVAL RESERVE TRAINING (NRT)
24JAN	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA
25JAN	DEPART SAN DIEGO, CA / ENROUTE PUERTO VALLARTA, MX
29JAN	ARRIVE PUERTO VALLARTA, MX (PORT VISIT)
02FEB	DEPART PUERTO VALLARTA, MX / ENROUTE SAN DIEGO, CA
05FEB	ARRIVE SAN DIEGO, CA
19FEB	RETIREMENT CEREMONY - GSMC(SW) R. A. VAN WEY
20FEB	U/W SOCAL OPAREA (NRT)
21FEB	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA
01MAR	COMMENCE CART II
04MAR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO COMMAND ASSESSMENT OF READINESSS AND TRAINING PHASE II (CART II)
05MAR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / COMPLETE CART II
20MAR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA (NRT)
21MAR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA
23MAR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA FLIGHT DECK LANDING QUALIFICATIONS (DLQ'S)
26MAR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA
05APR	COMMENCE TAILORED SHIP TRAINING AVAILABILITY (TSTA A)
13APR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO TSTA A
16APR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA A
17APR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA (NRT) / CONTINUE TSTA A
18APR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA A
20APR	COMPLETE TSTA A
21APR	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO E-QUAL
21APR	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / COMPLETE E-QUAL
30APR	CHANGE OF COMMAND - CDR J.W. RILEY III RELIEVES CDR M.S. WELCH AS COMMANDING OFFICER OF USS CURTS (FFG-38)
10MAY	COMMENCE TSTA B
15MAY	U/W SOCAL OPAREA (NRT) / CONTINUE TSTA B
16MAY	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA B
18MAY	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO TSTA B
19MAY	COMMENCE MISSILEX
20MAY	COMPLETE MISSILEX
21MAY	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA B
25MAY	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO TSTA B
28MAY	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA B
01JUN	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO TSTA B
03JUN	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / COMPLETE TSTA B
04JUN	U/W SOCAL OPAREA ISO FINAL EVALUATION PROBLEM (FEP)
06JUN	INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / COMPLETE FEP
07JUN	COMMENCE LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT (LMA)
09JUN	COMMENCE COMBATS SYSTEMS READINESS REVIEW (CSRR)
11JUN	COMPLETE LMA
18JUN	COMPLETE CSRR
18JUN	COMMAND PICNIC
21JUN	DEPART SAN DIEGO, CA / ENROUTE PORT HUENEME
21JUN	ARRIVE PORT HUENEME / COMMENCE COMBAT SYSTEMS GROOM
24JUN	COMPLETE COMBAT SYSTEMS GROOM

25JUN	DEPART PORT HUENEME / ENROUTE SAN DIEGO, CA
25JUN	ARRIVE SAN DIEGO, CA
26JUN	COMMENCE NRT
27JUN	COMPLETE NRT
02JUL	U/W (FAMILY DAY CRUISE)
02JUL	COMMENCE PRE OVERSEAS MOVEMENT (POM)
06JUL	COMMENCE PRE-DEPLOYMENT CONFERENCE
09JUL	COMPLETE PRE-DEPLOYMENT CONFERENCE
17JUL	COMMENCE NRT
18JUL	COMPLETE NRT
02AUG	COMPLETE POM
02AUG	FAST CRUISE
03AUG	SEA TRIALS
07AUG	COMMENCE NRT
08AUG	COMPLETE NRT
09AUG	DEPART SAN DIEGO, CA / ENROUTE PUERTO QUETZAL, GT
14AUG	CHOP TO JIATF EAST
15AUG	ARRIVE PUERTO QUETZAL, GT (PORT VISIT)
19AUG	DEPART PUERTO QUETZAL, GT / COMMENCE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
27AUG	ARRIVE RODMAN, PM (PORT VISIT)
30AUG	DEPART RODMAN, PM / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
08SEP	ARRIVE RODMAN, PM (PORT VISIT)
12SEP	DEPART RODMAN, PM / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
21SEP	ARRIVE RODMAN, PM (PORT VISIT)
23SEP	DEPART RODMAN, PM / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
02OCT	ARRIVE RODMAN, PM (PORT VISIT)
04OCT	DEPART RODMAN, PM / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
07OCT	ARRIVE RODMAN, PM (BSF)
08OCT	COMMENCE PANAMA CANAL TRANSIT NORTH
09OCT	COMPLETE PANAMA CANAL TRANSIT NORTH / ENROUTE SAN ANDRES ISLAND, CO
10OCT	ARRIVE SAN ANDRES ISLAND, CO (PORT VISIT)
12OCT	DEPART SAN ANDRES ISLAND, CO / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
18OCT	ARRIVE ARUBA, N.A. (PORT VISIT)
21OCT	DEPART ARUBA, N.A. / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
29OCT	ARRIVE KEY WEST, FL (PORT VISIT)
30OCT	DEPART KEY WEST, FL (PORT VISIT) / ENROUTE MAYPORT, FL
31OCT	ARRIVE MAYPORT, FL
01NOV	COMMENCE MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY
05NOV	COMPLETE MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY
08NOV	DEPART MAYPORT, FL / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
29NOV	ARRIVE CARTAGENA, CO (PORT VISIT)
02DEC	DEPART CARTAGENA, CO / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
07DEC	ARRIVE COLON, PM (BSF)
08DEC	DEPART COLON, PM / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
15DEC	ARRIVE NAVAL STATION ROOSEVELT ROADS, PR (PORT VISIT)
17DEC	DEPART NAVAL STATION ROOSEVELT ROADS, PR / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
23DEC	ARRIVE SAINT THOMAS, USVI (PORT VISIT)
26DEC	DEPART SAINT THOMAS, USVI / CONTINUE COUNTER-DRUG OPERATIONS
30DEC	ARRIVE KEY WEST, FL (PORT VISIT)

NARRATIVE

A. JANUARY

1. CURTS' officers and crew return from holiday stand-down on the 11th, and immediately focus themselves on preparing for the upcoming interdeployment training cycle.

2. CURTS participates in an NRT Weekend on the 23rd and 24th.

3. From the 25th to the 28th, CURTS conducts various drills and training evolutions while in transit to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico from San Diego, California for a four day port visit.

B. FEBRUARY

1. From the 2nd to the 5th, CURTS once again conducts various drills and training evolutions in preparation for the upcoming training cycle while in transit to San Diego, California from Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

2. GSMC(SW) Ronald A. Van Wey retires from the U.S. Navy after 20 years of faithful and dedicated service. The ceremony is held onboard CURTS on the 19th.

3. CURTS participates in an NRT Weekend on the 20th and 21st, which includes an UNREP and DLQ's.

C. MARCH

1. After much preparation during the previous two months, CURTS commences CART II on the 1st with the goal of obtaining FEP status in every area.

2. CURTS, while getting underway on the 2nd, experiences loss of Controllable Pitch Propeller (CPP) system causing collision with quay wall.

3. CURTS completes CART II on the 5th.

4. CURTS participates in an NRT Weekend on the 20th and 21st, which includes two guests from the Leaders-to-Sea Program.

5. From the 23rd to the 26th, CURTS is underway for DLQ's.

D. APRIL

1. CURTS commences TSTA A on the 5th.

2. CURTS performs an UNREP on the 15th.

3. CURTS participates in an NRT Weekend on the 17th and 18th, which includes DLQ's.

3. CURTS completes TSTA A on the 20th, and successfully completed E-Qual on the 21st.

4. CDR John W. Riley III relieves CDR Mark S. Welch as Commanding Officer of USS CURTS (FFG-38) on the 30th, with guest speaker Captain Barry L. Morgan, Commander, Destroyer Squadron ONE.

E. MAY

1. CURTS commences TSTA B on the 10th.

2. CURTS participates in an NRT Weekend on the 15th and 16th, which includes a DTE Exercise and DLQ's. REXTORP material operation was successful. Placement evaluated excellent. ATG: "The ship is able o effectively track and attack."

3. CURTS conducts an ammunition onload on the 17th, moors to a buoy and utilizes the REWS range on the 18th, performs a missile exercise on the 19th and 20th, and does an UNREP on the 21st. CURTS entered the Combat Systems portion of TSTA II. During a SM1 telemetry shot in the SOCAL OPAREA, CURTS achieved a skin-to-skin hit on the inbound drone. CURTS' first skin-to-skin missile engagement since 1996.

4. CURTS performs a gun shoot on the 26th and 27th.

F. JUNE

1. CURTS completes TSTA B on the 3rd, and successfully completes FEP from the 4th to the 6th.

2. CURTS successfully completes SMI from the 7th to the 11th, and CSRR from the 9th to the 18th.

3. USS CURTS (FFG-38) Command Picnic takes place on the 18th.

4. CURTS undergoes a Combat Systems Groom in Port Hueneme from the 21st to the 24th. The groom provided invaluable training and corrected discrepancies which could have cost thousands of dollars and months of delay to repair once on deployment. The Port Hueneme technicians and CURTS crew worked side by side to thoroughly groom the systems. The final Port Hueneme reported stated, "Crew very professional, competent and well informed. They exhibit a substantial pride in their system and job."

5. CURTS participates in an Inport NRT Weekend on the 26th and 27th.

G. JULY

1. CURTS gets underway for a Family Day Cruise on the 2nd, and commences POM.

H. AUGUST

1. CURTS completes POM and conducts a Fast Cruise on the 2nd, and perform Sea Trials on the 3rd.

2. CURTS departs San Diego, CA on the 9th for a six month Counter-Drug Operations Deployment.

3. CURTS is in transit from the 9th to the 14th, when she chops to tactical control of JIATF East and commences Counter-Drug Operations.

4. From the 15th to the 18th, CURTS conducts a port visit in Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala. While in Puerto Quetzal, CURTS participates in Project Handclasp by distributing clothing, hygenic items, toys, and other household items to the poverty stricken village of Santo Tomas.

5. CURTS was credited with disrupting the trafficking of 2000 kilograms of cocaine after conducting a two-hour high speed chase of the Colombian "go-fast" Maribel. CURTS sunk the vessel as a hazard to navigation and salvaged five 200 horsepower Yamaha engines and a HF transceiver, of which over 100 drug coordination frequencies were extracted. CURTS conducts a port visit in Rodman, Panama from the 27th to the 29th.

I. SEPTEMBER

1. From the 8th to the 11th, CURTS conducts a port visit in Rodman, Panama.

2. CURTS boarded the Ecuadorian flagged Diosa Del Mar and found 129 illegal migrants bound for the United States. Under the TACON of Coast Guard District Eleven, CURTS escorted the vessel back to Ecuador while providing food and medical attention for the migrants. CURTS superior performance was recognized by VADM H. Collins, USCG: "Again, I am very pleased with how well you prosecuted this case, and the professional manner in which you transferred custody of the migrants to the Ecuadorian Navy. I look forward to working with you again." CURTS conducts a port visit in Rodman, Panama on the 21st and 22nd.

J. OCTOBER

1. On the 2nd and 3rd, CURTS conducts a port visit in Rodman, Panama.

2. CURTS conducts a BSF in Rodman, Panama on the 7th, and transits the Panama Canal north on the 8th and 9th.

3. On the 10th and 11th, CURTS conducts a port visit in San Andres Island, Colombia.

4. CURTS conducts a port visit in Aruba, N.A. from the 25th to the 28th.

5. On the 29th, CURTS conducts a port visit in Key West, Florida, turning over the five 200 horsepower Yamaha engines to JIATF EAST for acoustic analysis.

6. CURTS conducts a maintenance port visit in Mayport, Florida from the 31st to the 7th of November.

K. NOVEMBER

1. CURTS seizes or assists in the seizure of over 3 metric tons of cocaine and the arrest of six traffickers in a six day period, and assists in the prosecution of two air smuggling events. She acts as the commander of a successful multi-national, multi-service maritime action group and responds to a life and death situation aboard Monrovian Tanker Volga in the Central Caribbean. Upon learning of the situation, and despite nearly non-existent communications with the stricken vessel, CURTS launched her Battlecat, obtained critical information and took action that saved the lives of two Volga crewmembers.

2. CURTS conducts a port visit in Cartagena, Colombia from the 29th to the 1st of December. While in Cartagena, CURTS participates in Project Handclasp by distributing medical supplies to the local Hospital Infintil.

L. DECEMBER

1. On the 7th, CURTS conducts a BSF in Colon, Panama.

2. CURTS conducts a port visit in Naval Station Roosevelt Roads on the 15th and 16th.

3. From the 23rd to the 25th, CURTS conducts a port visit in Saint Thomas, USVI.

2. CURTS commences a port visit in Key West, Florida on the 30th and remains there through the end of the year.