



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS ORIOLE (MHC-55)
FPO AA 34092-1954

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

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28 Feb 02

From: Commanding Officer, USS ORIOLE (MHC 55)

To: Director of Naval History (N09BH)

Subj: USS ORIOLE (MHC 55) COMMAND HISTORY FOR CALENDAR
YEAR 2001

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G Command Histories

Encl: (1) Biography of Commanding Officer
(2) USS ORIOLE msg dtg 251400Z May 02, Quicklook
Report for USS ORIOLE (MHC 55) Material
Inspection
(3) COMCMRON THREE msg dtg 161900Z Nov 02, USS
ORIOLE Underway Demonstration Results
(4) COMCMRON THREE msg dtg 192140Z Dec 02, USS
ORIOLE Navigation Evaluation

1. Command Composition and Organization:

Mission: The detection, classification and neutralization
of mine-like objects in coastal and harbor waters.

Immediate Senior Command: Commander, Mine Countermeasures
Squadron THREE, Captain G. J. Cornish, USN

Commanding Officer: LCDR Jonathan Christian, USN

Permanent Homeport: Naval Station Ingleside, Texas

2. Chronology:

January:

11	U/W for INSURV Rehearsal
15-26	FMAV
22-26	Supply Management Assessment
23	SISCAL Visit
25	Visit by RADM Foley, COMNAVSURFLANT
30	U/W for Engineering/Mine Warfare Training

February:

01-02 U/W for Engineering Training
09 Visit by RADM Betancourt, COMINWARCOM
28 U/W for Engineering Training

March:

13-14 Inport Engineering Training with ATG
15 U/W Governor Groom/INSURV Rehearsal
20-21 U/W for Minehunting
26-29 SEMAT II/C5RA
26-31 FMAV

April:

06 Apr FMAV
09-13 Supply Management Inspection
26 Safety Stand Down

May:

01 MIREM
11 U/W for INSURV Rehearsal
15 U/W for INSURV Rehearsal
21-24 INSURV
22 U/W for INSURV

June:

03-06 U/W for Mine Warfare Training
08-14 U/W for Mine Warfare Training (GOMEX-01)
17-21 U/W for Mine Warfare Training (MIREM-17)

July:

01-14 Diesel Engine Inspection
20 U/W enroute to Gulf Copper Dry Dock
20-27 Dry Dock for removal of Port VSP
27 U/W enroute to Naval Station Ingleside, TX
30-31 TSTA II DASMN

August:

07-08 U/W for TSTA II DASMN
21-23 U/W for TSTA II DASMN
27-29 U/W for TSTA III

September:

18-20 Final Evaluation Problem

October:

18 U/W enroute to Gulf Copper Shipyard
19 Rescue and Assistance to USS INCHON (MCS 12)
during main space fire
19-24 Dry Dock for installation of Port VSP
24 Departure from Dry Dock
25 U/W enroute Naval Station Ingleside, TX
30-31 U/W for Sea Trials/Engineering Training

November:

01 U/W for Engineering Training
06-07 U/W for Engineering Certification Rehearsal
15 U/W for Engineering Certification
20 SAR Certification
28 EMR Ranging

December:

10-17 Holiday Leave and Upkeep
18 U/W for Navigation Evaluation
19-25 Holiday Leave and Upkeep
27-31 U/W enroute Key West, FL
31 Inport, Key West, FL

4. Narrative: Continuous improvement has been ORIOLE's battle cry throughout 2001. ORIOLE began the year facing a multitude of challenging inspections, and therefore the majority of January and February were spent conducting engineering training and rehearsing for the visit by the Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV). The Immediate Superior in Command, COMCMRON THREE, conducted a Supply Management Assessment from 22-26 January. Additionally, the ship hosted two Admiral's visits, one by RADM Foley, COMNAVSURFLANT, on 25 January, and the other by RADM Betancourt, COMINWARCOM, on 09 February.

In March, ORIOLE continued with engineering and mine warfare training, and equipment maintenance, including a governor groom for both Main Propulsion Diesel Engines conducted on 15 March. A C5RA inspection was held 26-29 March. The outstanding results exemplified ORIOLE's marked increase in Combat Systems readiness. Mr. Larry Law, the senior C5RA inspector, remarked "I have conducted C5RA's on the majority of the ships here at Ingleside, and USS ORIOLE is by far the best maintained ship I have ever seen."

A Supply Management Inspection was completed five weeks early on 13 April, and was evaluated as "satisfactory" in

all areas. On 23 April, ORIOLE sustained a major casualty to the port Voith Schneider Propeller (VSP) when the bearing seized. This limited the ship to one VSP for the next seven months. The ship then entered a rigorous workup in preparation of the INSURV visit. After five years of commissioned service, ORIOLE completed her first Congressionally-mandated INSURV from 21-24 May. The results were outstanding, and ORIOLE's INSURV was praised as the "best in the Mine Force in recent years" by COMCMRON THREE.

The month of June was mainly spent conducting mine warfare training, including participation in Gulf of Mexico Advanced Phase Exercise (GOMEX-01) 08-14 June. Despite not having the benefit of previous underway operations with Mine Warfare Readiness Group FOUR (MIWRG-4), ORIOLE was the only ship to successfully prosecute a bottom mine shape during GOMEX-01. The following week, 17-21 June, ORIOLE Sailors overcame the challenge operating on only one VSP and with a degraded Multi-Purpose Crane to successfully neutralize a moored mine shape during the MIREM-17 exercise.

On 20 July, ORIOLE transited to Gulf Copper Dry Dock for removal of the port VSP. The VSP was subsequently shipped to Germany for repair and refurbishment. A watertight patch and concrete ballast were installed in place of the VSP in order to allow continued operations and pre-deployment work-ups. ORIOLE returned to Naval Station Ingleside on 27 July, then immediately began the second phase of the Tailored Ship Training Availability (TSTA II). ORIOLE's training teams spent the month of August training the crew in engineering operations, combat operations, and damage control. From 18-20 September, ORIOLE's crew proved the knowledge they had gained by successfully completing the Final Evaluation Problem.

On 18 October ORIOLE transited to Gulf Copper Shipyard, and was placed in dry dock for reinstallation of the port VSP on 19 October. On the evening of 19 October, after being placed in dry dock, ORIOLE responded to a call for assistance from USS INCHON (MCS 12), which had experienced a major fuel fire in an engine room. ORIOLE's Rescue and Assistance team, along with the Independent Duty Corpsman, provided firefighting reliefs, medical treatment, and logistic support to INCHON throughout the night.

From 19-23 October, the temporary watertight patch and concrete ballast were removed from ORIOLE, and the port VSP installed. ORIOLE was refloated on 24 October, and returned to Naval Station Ingleside the following day. Sea trials were conducted in the Corpus Christi OPAREA on 30 October, and subsequent engineering training conducted through 01 November.

On 15 November, ORIOLE conducted a flawless Engineering Certification, graded by the ATGLANT N43 Team. ORIOLE completed Underway Demonstration in under 3 hours with 100% of all drills graded satisfactory. ORIOLE conducted Electromagnetic Ranging (EMR) measurements on 28 November, and passed a Navigation Evaluation held by COMCMRON THREE on 18 December. A holiday leave and upkeep period was held 10-25 December.

ORIOLE departed Ingleside TX on 27 December 2001 in accordance with the scheduled MIWRG-4 deployment to the East Coast. MIWRG-4 was scheduled for participation in the Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX 02-1) for the JOHN F. KENNEDY Carrier Battle Group and WASP Amphibious Readiness Group. ORIOLE arrived in Key West, FL on 31 December, ringing in the New Year with the ship's first port visit in nearly two years.

4. Command Awards:

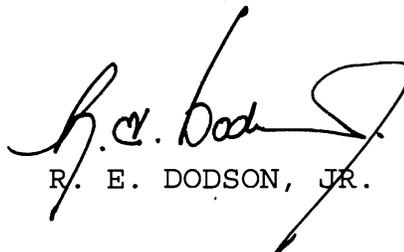
COMNAVSURFLANT Ship Safety Award

Unit Wellness Award

Maritime Warfare Excellence Award (sixth consecutive)

Command and Control Excellence Award (third consecutive)

Engineering Survivability Excellence Award (sixth consecutive)



R. E. DODSON, JR.