



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS ORIOLE (MHC 55)
FPO AA 34092-1954

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5750
Ser 00/236
02 Jun 04

From: Commanding Officer, USS ORIOLE (MHC 55)
To: Director of Naval History

Subj: USS ORIOLE (MHC 55) COMMAND HISTORY FOR CALENDAR
YEAR 2003

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12H Command Histories

Encl: (1) Biography of Commanding Officer

1. Command Composition and Organization:

USS ORIOLE (MHC-55) UIC: 21936

Mission: Detection, classification and neutralization
of mines in coastal and harbor waters.

Immediate Senior Command: Commander, Mine Countermeasures
Squadron THREE, CAPT M. J. O'Moore, USN

Commanding Officer: LCDR Richard E. Dodson, Jr., USN

Permanent Homeport: Naval Station Ingleside, Texas

2. Chronology:

13	Jan-15	Jan	Supply Management Inspection Part I
20	Jan-24	Jan	Combat System Operational Sequencing System Validation
27	Jan-31	Jan	Supply Management Inspection Part II
27	Jan-07	Feb	Fleet Maintenance Availability
27	Feb		Underway Demonstration
03	Mar-14	Mar	HMER A II/C5RA/Small Arms Readiness Review
17	Mar-27	Mar	Final Evaluation Problem/SAR Certification/ATFP Exercise Solid Curtain
14	Apr-24	Apr	RONEX
19	May-30	May	High Visibility Port Visit to Mobile, AL
16	Jun-19	Jun	3M Certification
17	July		NATO Secret Control Inspection

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18 Aug-22 Aug Commence East Pac Deployment 2003-2004. Underway from Naval Station Ingleside, TX enroute Cozumel, MX for a port visit.

23 Aug-25 Aug Inport Cozumel, MX

26 Aug-01 Sep Underway from Cozumel, MX to Rodman, PN

1 Sep Transited the Panama Canal

1 Sep-04 Sep Inport Rodman, PN

4 Sep-23 Sep Underway from Rodman, PN to Naval Station San Diego, CA.

23 Sep-29 Sep Fleet Maintenance Availability

29 Sep-01 Oct Q-Route surveys SOCAL OPAREA (San Diego)
Q-Route surveys Los Angeles OPAREA
Port visit Port Hueneme, Ca

01 Nov-20 Nov Underway SOCAL OPAREA for John C Stennis Strike Group COMPTUEX 04-1

01 Nov Underway and MEDALEX

02 and 03 Nov Kingfisher Range

04 and 05 Nov Live MP2 shots (SWAT II/North part of San Clemente Island)

07 Nov MEDALEX with JCS/COR/SHR

08-11 Nov Minehunting off San Clemente Island (MTR I/II)

12-14 Nov Inport San Diego

15-20 Nov Minehunting/Recovery with Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit 1 in Silver Strand (area between Mexican border and South of Coronado.)

21 Nov-04 Dec Thanksgiving stand down and Fleet Maintenance Availability

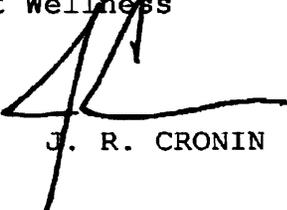
08 Dec-12 Dec Underway for FACDAR Range and Deep Water Acoustic surveys

13 Dec-31 Dec Inport San Diego, Ca (Christmas and New Years leave periods. Upkeep prior to return to homeport transit.)

3. Narrative for 2003: The year began with the Supply Management Inspection Part I, Combat System Operational Sequencing System Validation, Supply Management Inspection Part II, Underway Demonstration, HAMERA II, C5RA, Small Arms Readiness Review and culminating with the Final Evaluation Problem in March. Commander Mine Countermeasures Squadron Three Squadron Exercise (RONEX) was held for 14 - 24 Apr; ORIOLE performed very well having recently come out of the training cycle. Based on her outstanding performance in RONEX, ORIOLE did not participate in the follow-on Gulf of Mexico Exercise (GOMEX). Instead ORIOLE was assigned to participate in a COMLANTFLT High Priority port

visit to Mobile, AL. The crew was able to bring the Mine Force to Mobile and hosted over 200 tours for the general public. The crew was also able to participate in a community relations project helping with the restoration of LST 325. ORIOLE successfully completed a 3M (Maintenance, Material, and Management) Inspection as well as a NATO Secret Control Inspection as the final preparations for a six-month EASTPAC Deployment. ORIOLE, as part of Mine Warfare Readiness Group Four (MIWRG-4), commenced the first ever Coastal Mine Hunter (MHC) 6-month deployment August 18th. ORIOLE left Naval Station Ingleside, Texas enroute the west coast via the Panama Canal with a stop along the way in Cozumel, Mexico. A port visit to Rodman, Panama, to replenish food, fuel and stores was also conducted. On 23 September, ORIOLE reached San Diego, CA, and had a short Fleet Maintenance Availability before commencing Q-ROUTE Surveys of various west coast ports. After completing Q-ROUTE Surveys in the Los Angeles OPAREA, ORIOLE was able to enjoy a few days of liberty in Port Hueneme, CA, prior to surveying the approach to its harbor and returning to San Diego to prepare to participate in COMPTUEX for the JOHN C. STENNIS Carrier Strike Group. ORIOLE participated in the Kingfisher Range exercise as part of COMPTUEX 04-1. JOHN C. STENNIS Carrier Strike Group was very impressed with all MEDALEX's. On 07 Nov, ORIOLE had the opportunity to have three FA-18's lay six MK-62 mines that were to be detected and classified by ORIOLE, USS SHRIKE (MHC-62) and USS CORMORANT (MHC-57). The three ships found 9 out of 12 possible MK-62s in some of the most cluttered minehunting environment that any onboard had ever hunted in. They also located two MK-65 mines, two MK-82 General Purpose bombs and one 16-inch projectile casing.

4. Awards for CY 03: Maritime Warfare Excellence
Command and Control Excellence
Unit Wellness



J. R. CRONIN