

WE BUILD • WE FIGHT

SEABEE

UNITED STATES NAVY | SUMMER 2011

UCT 'Bees

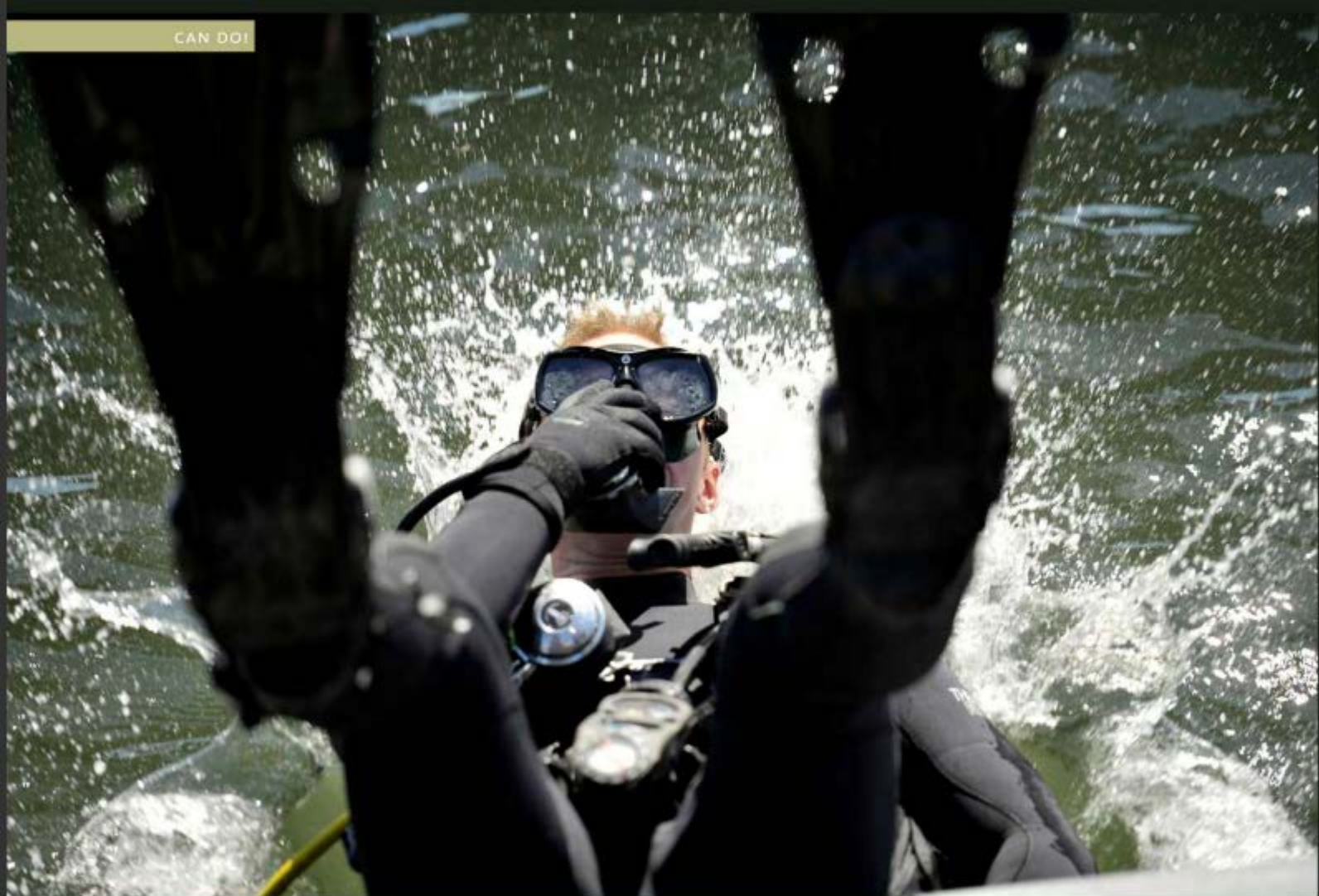
We Build, We Fight, We Dive

ALSO INSIDE:

Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief
Following Tsunami in Japan

Seabee Capabilities Increase
Freedom of Movement in Afghanistan

Shields, Stethem, Combs and Moreell Awards



BUSHCROWD:
Stephen Gladson,
UCT 1, enters the
water using the rear
of the boat. Dive
Expeditionary
Base-Little Creek-
Fort Story, Va.
Photo by MCYS/CW/
Gregory K. Jucke



025830CW/1 Jacob Scarlett, with the water, carrying a freshly cut steel pile from 8L230CW/1 Joseph Hernandez back to the surface. Both assigned to UCT 1, Joint Expeditionary Force, 13th Coast Fleet Group, 9th Fleet, 2011.

For the Seabees of the Naval Construction Force's Underwater Construction Teams (UCTs), the work is not always below the surface. These elite Sailors begin with standard construction rates and become expert 'Bees on both land and sea through rigorous training and exacting qualifications. Most recently, UCTs were called on to assist with salvage recovery missions following the 8.9-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami in Japan, March 11.

We Build, We Fight

We
Dive



By MC2(SCW) Gregory N. Juday,
Expeditionary Combat Camera

We Build, We Fight

We Dive

Staring straight ahead with a look of concentration, he leans back and splashes into the 54-degree water of the Chesapeake Bay, fins disappearing into the murky water below.

A hand rises from the water as a mask and regulator follow. "Diver on surface, diver okay," says Builder 2nd Class (SCW/DV) Joe Hawthorne, Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1.

BU2 Hawthorne dives underwater inspecting damage to a pier, coming up periodically to give reports to the dive supervisor.

After 46 minutes in the water he is pulled into the boat, the cold wind hitting his wet skin. The dive supervisor looks at him as he gives the hand signal for okay.

Being in 54-degree water with SCUBA jugs, a wet suit and fins fixing damage to a pier is one of many aspects that differentiates UCTs from the rest of the Naval Construction Force (NCF). UCT divers are a tight-knit group – a family that works together to accomplish the mission – no matter how hard the task.

Seabees assigned to UCTs begin their careers in battalions, learning their rate and earning their Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) qualification.

"It is a hard process to become a member of the team," said Seeborke 2nd Class Jacob Scarkeu, UCT 1. "You have to research and find out the requirements, put a package together, get screened and perform a physical fitness test. It's easy to get discouraged."

(Continued on page 4)



BU2 (SCW/DV) Joe Hawthorne, UCT 1, inspects the 18th century of the rocky Scott Island, Va. reefers assigned to UCTs look at their duties in detail and, starting their role and earning their Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) qualification.
Photo: MC2(SCW) Gregory N. Juday

(Continued from page 6)

Once the screening process is complete, Seabees are assigned to a UCT to prepare them for dive school or they go directly to dive school.

"I didn't make it through dive school the first time," said Steelworker 2nd Class Frank Tamarez, UCT 1. "When I got accepted again, I prepared with UCT 1 for six months. I am grateful for that preparation, and it definitely made some of the rigors of dive school easier."

Students must be prepared mentally and physically for the transition to Seabee diver. Dive school is a constant challenge, forcing one to find out how comfortable he or she is in the water, and how hard he or she is willing to study the material taught each day.

"You have to be prepared to study," said SW3 Scarlett. "If you go out partying and try to skate by, you will fail."

Being comfortable in the water is a new experience for some. According to SW2 Tamarez, he had never been in the water before dive school, with the exception of playing at the beach.

"I will never forget my first dive," said Tamarez. "Splashing in the first time, coming up and reporting to the dive supervisor, 'dive okay' is an experience I will never forget."

Diving is not the only task separating the UCTs from the rest of the NCE. UCTs are also known for precision demolition and small unit camouflage.

"I love diving and blowing stuff up," said BU2 Hawthorne. "But it is the unity and brotherhood of the team that keeps me here."

UCT 1 consists of 70 personnel comprising three detachments of 12-15 Seabees working together to accomplish the mission.

Being Seabees, divers are expected not only to know their job as a steelworker, construction mechanic, builder, construction electrician, engineering aide, utilitiesman or equipment operator. They also need to know their job as an underwater construction diver.

"At UCT we not only need to know our rate, but we all have to know our job in the water as well," said Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Brandon Burrow, UCT 1. "In the water, as second-class divers, we are workers. We do everything from inspecting to repairing to maintaining structures."

While in the teams, divers constantly work on their diving qualifications, making each individual a true asset to the team.

"We are constantly learning and training to be better at our jobs," said Hawthorne. "Challenging ourselves and each other to become a first-class diver, inside tender or dive supervisor qualified."

Those in battalions thinking of taking on the challenge of UCT need to be prepared to work hard, according to Hawthorne.

"The people we have here are the hardest workers in the NCF. They want to be at UCT and want to be in the Navy," he said. "We know that we're top-notch and we won't stop until the job is done."

Only part of the new challenges ahead include diving maintenance checks on equipment, setting up dive stations, tearing down the work site and doing maintenance after the dive.

"If you want to come to UCT, you'd better be comfortable in the water because that is your workspace," said Builder 3rd Class Stephen Graddon, UCT 1. "Be prepared to get cold and wet, and work harder than you have ever worked before!"

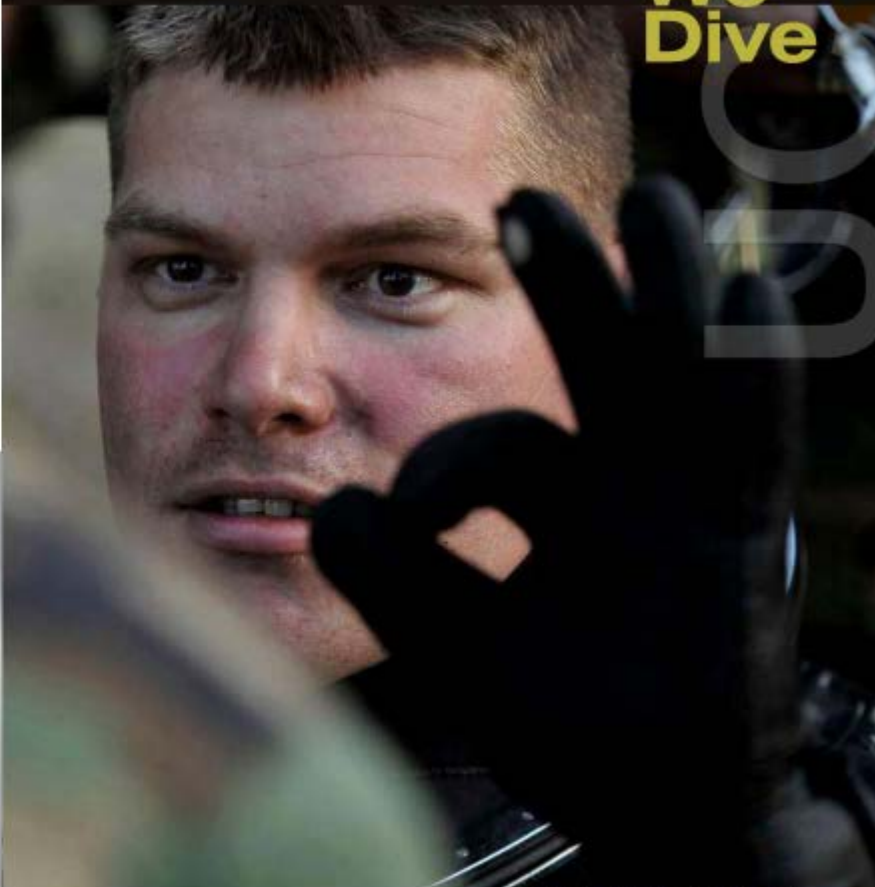


For outstanding contribution to the summer 2011 issue, Seabee Magazine congratulates PFC(SW) Gregory N. Juckby, Expeditionary Combat Camera, for our cover feature. Through powerful imagery and compelling prose, MCO Juckby captured both the technical expertise and purposeful unity of the UCT divers, Hooyah Deep Sea and Gan Dol.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Jacob
Brewer, UCT 1,
provides area security
with a M249 machine gun.
Joint Expeditionary Base
Little Creek-Fort Story, Va.
Photo by MCO Juckby
Gregory N. Juckby



PHOTOGRAPHY: Joseph Hawthorne, UCT 1, gives the hand signal for okay to the dive supervisor upon completion of the hand fall dive. Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Va.
Photo by MCO Juckby Gregory N. Juckby



We Build, We Fight

We Dive

More on becoming a UCT diver, p. 27.

RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

Underwater Construction Teams



BE PART OF AN ELITE
"CAN DO" UNIT. BE A
SEABEE DIVER

www.facebook.com/seabee_diver

DIVER RECRUITING

Seabee divers are trained to be Underwater Construction Technicians (UCTs). The U.S. Navy is looking for Seabees with at least one tour where they have been able to develop construction skills. Both male and female Seabees, as well as hospital corpsmen who want the Diving Medical Technician NEC 8493, may apply. During periods of low manning, the program may also accept well-qualified candidates directly from "A" school.

TRAINING

Seabees start their training with UCT Basic School in Panama City, Fla. This physically demanding course covers basic diving principles and applications, followed by underwater construction and demolition-handling techniques.

This course is followed up with Advanced UCT School which awards the NEC 5931. After years of successful performance, a skilled Seabee chief may apply for the coveted position of Master Diver. Successful completion of the course merits award of the NEC 5932. After a few years of solid performance in the UCTs, advanced diver training is available.

The UCTs have an intense training program. Topics include military weapons and tactics, diver refresher, physical fitness and specialized training to meet the requirements of a particular project.

DUTY LOCATIONS

Sea duty assignments are with the UCTs in Little Creek, Va., and Port Huamame, Calif. These commands send duty throughout the world, including the Arctic locale, Puerto Rico, Latvia, Iceland, Bermuda, Iraq and numerous other locations throughout the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

HOW TO APPLY

Prerequisites:

- 30 years old or less upon admission to UCT Basic School
- E-6 or below in a Seabee or corpsman rating
- Minimum of 3.0 performance-evaluation average for prior two years and positive recommendation from commanding officer
- No NJP within 12 months of application
- Eligible for a secret security clearance
- Minimum ASVAB scores:
 - o Mechanical Comprehension: 50
 - o AR + (*) = 104

(*1 For ASVAB 5, 6, 7 and 9K score; (*) for ASVAB 8, 9, 10 and 11 score)

- Minimum of 36 months obligated service as of class graduation date from dive school

There is also a medical exam and physical fitness test, as well as other qualifications. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/seabee_diver.

References: Naval Military Personnel Manual 1410280, Enlisted Transfer Manual 9.10

HOOYAH DEEP SEA!

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WE DIVE!**