



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS CHAMPION (MCM-4)
FPO AA 34090-1924

Rec 10/11/2/99
W/10 disk

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5750
MCM-4
6 Oct 99

From: Commanding Officer, USS CHAMPION (MCM-4)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1998

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5720.12G

Encl: (1) USS CHAMPION (MCM-4) 1998 Chronological Command History

1. Per reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted for Department of the Navy archives.

J. G. WALKER

USS CHAMPION (MCM-4) 1998 CHRONOLOGICAL COMMAND HISTORY

January 1 – March 27 – Docking Phased Maintenance Availability in drydock at Gulf Copper Marine Shipyard Ingleside, TX. LCDR John G. Walker is Commanding Officer. LCDR Curt W. Steigers is Executive Officer.

January 1 – SQQ-32 Sonar Backfit (S/A 048K), Underwater Hull Repairs, Fairwater Mods, Shaft Replacement, Sea Valve Inspection and Repair, Rudder Repair, Bowthruster Jet Pump Repairs, Bowthruster Omniphase installation, MMTG Changeout and 1B SSDG Rotor Repairs in progress. Mini-Dama (S/A 184K) and OTCIXS (S/A 185K) testing in progress.

January 5 – 723 Electronic Governors installation begins.

January 8 – Lightning Protection Mods (S/A 174D) complete.

January 15 – Fairwater Mods complete.

January 19 – MACHALT 466 Seawater cooling piping installation begins.

January 22 – Rudder repairs and Woodward 723 Electronic Governor installation complete. Testing of Woodward 723 Electronic Governor and NR1 400HZ MG Set in progress.

February 5 – Underwater Hull Repairs, Bow Thruster jet Pump inspection and repair, Shaft and Shaft Bearing inspection and installation and MMTG changeout complete. MMTG testing and 2 SSDG cleaning in progress. Mini-Dama and OTCIXS System Operational Validation Test (SOVT) in progress.

February 9 – Undock from Gulf Copper Marine Shipyard Ingleside, TX and moor at Southwestern Marine Shipyard Ingleside, TX. Discovery of 1B SSDG misalignment and probable extension of CNO end date.

February 11 – PINS (V)4 (S/A 108K) and SSQ-94 (S/A 005K) installations begin.

February 12 – 2 SSDG cleaning complete.

February 19 – Request for extension of contract end date submitted by Supervisor of Shipbuilding, New Orleans detachment Ingleside, TX. Bow Thruster Jet Pump alignment, Underwater Hull Cleaning and Painting complete. 2 SSDG, MMTG, and Bow Thruster awaiting optest upon completion of 1B SSDG repairs.

February 20 – Revised CNO end date of March 27th approved.

February 23 – Mini-Dama installation complete.

February 26 – 1B SSDG Corrective Foundation Repairs complete; reassembly of engine in progress. PINS (V)4 and SSQ-94 installations complete.

March 3 – Crew moves aboard ship.

March 13 – SQQ-32 Sonar System lit off. Initial Light-Off (ILO) testing in progress.

March 18 – Successfully completed Immediate Superior-in-Command (ISIC) Light-Off Assessment.

March 26 – SQQ-32 ILO testing complete.

March 27 – Availability at Southwestern Marine Shipyard Ingleside, TX completed.

April 1 – Sea Trials satisfactorily completed in Corpus Christi Oparea.

April 6-8 – Underway for MIW LTT in Corpus Christi Oparea.

April 9-12 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for CART II preps.

April 13-15 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for CART II inport.

April 16-17 – Underway for CART II in CCOA.

April 18-May 3 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

April 20 – SPA-25G, Navy Order Wire and flexible fuel oil return line (Isotta-Frachini engines) installations commence.

April 27 – Navy Order Wire install completed.

April 29 – SPA-25G and flexible fuel oil return line installations completed.

May 4 -8 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for TSTA I DASMN IPT.

May 9-10 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

May 11-12 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for TSTA I Engineering Training Group (ETG).

May 13 – Underway for TSTA I ETG in CCOA.

May 14-15 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for TSTA I ETG.

May 16-17 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for NRT IPT.

May 18-24 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

May 25 – Holiday routine for President's Day.

May 26-28 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for TSTA I ETG.

May 29 – Underway for TSTA I ETG in CCOA.

May 30-31 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

June 1-5 – Underway for TSTA I MIW/LTT in CCOA.

June 6-7 – Underway for NRT in CCOA.

June 8-12 – Underway for TSTA I MIW in CCOA.

June 13-14 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

June 15-19 – Underway for TSTA II MIW in CCOA.

June 20-21 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

June 22-24 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for TSTA II ETG.

June 25-26 – Underway for TSTA II ETG in CCOA.

June 27-July 5 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep

July 6 – Underway for minelaying ops in support of GOMEX 98-3 in CCOA.

July 7 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for ISIC navigation admin evaluation.

July 8 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

July 9-10 – Underway for ISIC navigation evaluation and TSTA IV minehunting training

July 11-12 – Underway for NRT in CCOA.

July 13-14 – Underway for TSTA IV MIW in CCOA.

July 14-20 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep and sweep gear repairs.

July 21-24 – Underway for TSTA IV MIW in CCOA.

July 25-August 3 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep and ECERT preps.

August 4-5 – Underway for ECERT in CCOA.

August 6-7 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

August 8-9 – Underway for NRT in CCOA.

August 10-11 – Underway for TSTA IV MIW in CCOA.

August 12-16 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

August 17 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for TSTA I DASMN IPT.

August 18-21 – Underway for TSTA I DASMN in CCOA.

August 22-23 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

August 24-26 – Underway for TSTA II DASMN in CCOA.

August 27-30 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

August 31-September 20 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for Restricted Availability (RAV).

August 31 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for hull cleaning. SLQ-48 field changes (1VBTF, 3VHS, 6VHS, 6UCHS, 18VEH), ASSF mods (S/A 36K DC Breakers, S/A 37K), and SSN-2 PINS mod (SW001) commence.

September 9 – SSN-2 PINS mod completed.

September 18 – SLQ-48 Field changes and ASSF mods completed.

September 21 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for TSTA III inport.

September 22-25 – Underway for TSTA III in CCOA.

September 26-27 – Underway for NRT/minelaying operations in support of CV-65 FLEETEX.

September 28-30 – Underway for Final Evaluation Period (FEP) in CCOA.

October 1-5 – Underway for CV-65 FLEETEX mine recovery.

October 6-25 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for RAV.

October 6 – INMARSAT installation commences.

October 9 – Battle Space Profiler (BSP) installation commences.

October 10-11 – NRT inport.

October 13-23 – SISCAL visit.

October 20 – INMARSAT installation complete.

October 21 – Communications Readiness Certification (CRC) successfully completed.

October 22 – BSP installation complete.

October 26-27 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for Safety Survey, PRT, and upkeep.

October 28 – Underway for Dependent Cruise in CCOA.

October 29 – Underway for minehunting training.

October 30-November 1 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

November 2-8 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for RONEX 99-1 IPT and upkeep.

November 9-13 – Underway for RONEX 99-1 in CCOA.

November 14-15 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

November 16-27 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for RAV.

November 16 – S/A 255K MP3, SQQ-32 FC 38 & 51, and Diesel Inspection commence.

November 18 – OHSAT completed.

November 23 – Environmental Survey completed.

November 24 – SQQ-32 FC 38 & 51 completed.

November 27 – S/A 255K MP3 completed.

November 28-29 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for upkeep.

November 30-December 11 – Inport Ingleside Naval Station for TARGET/CSRR.

December 5 – CHAMPION Christmas Party at Corpus Christi Holiday Inn

December 8 – Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection (SESI) completed.

December 12-13 – Underway for NRT in CCOA.

December 14-31- Inport Ingleside Naval Station for RAV.

December 14 – S/A 240K Sonar Maint Hatch, AMOT MPDE lube oil monitor, ISS digital tensionmeter installation commences.

December 18-31 – Holiday Standown.

USS CHAMPION 1998 NARRATIVE HISTORY

USS CHAMPION (MCM-4) began the new year in Gulf Copper Marine drydock in Ingleside, TX, remaining there through February 9th. 1998 began amidst an extensive Docking Phased Maintenance Availability (DPMA) characterized by numerous intrusive combat systems and engineering repairs and installations. In Combat Systems, ongoing work included the SQQ-32 Sonar backfit (S/A 048K), Mini-Demand Access Multiplexing (DAMA) installation (S/A 184K) and Officer-in-Tactical Control Information Exchange System (OTCIXS) (S/A 185K) installation. In Engineering, ongoing work included an MMGTG changeout, Bow Thruster Omniphase installation, Bow Thruster Jet Pump repairs, 1B SSDG Rotor repairs, shaft replacement, rudder repairs, sea valve inspection and repair, underwater hull repairs and fairwater mods. With many installations and various bid specifications yet to be accomplished, it was apparent that the DPMA would be busy to the very end. With a Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) end date of March 13th, CHAMPION expected to begin the 1998 Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) cycle in early April. Upon completion of the training cycle, CHAMPION was to accomplish a Mediterranean deployment as a member of INCHON TASK GROUP 99-1. LCDR John G. Walker was CHAMPION's Commanding Officer for the entirety of 1998. LCDR Curt W. Steigers was CHAMPION's Executive Officer through July 31st, at which time LCDR Edward C. Olshaw relieved him as Executive Officer for the remainder of 1998.

CHAMPION began January with concern over DPMA progress, specifically in the area of the SQQ-32 Sonar Backfit. Already behind schedule with 36% time expended and only 25% progress, manpower significantly waned on January 12th, when USS AVENGER (MCM-1) arrived at Southwest Marine Shipyard (SWM) for their SQQ-32 Sonar Backfit. Sharing contractors with AVENGER, CHAMPION voiced concern that SWM's manpower levels needed to be increased due to work lost in the ramping up for AVENGER's PMA. SWM stated the manpower pool in area would be sufficient for both ships. By the end of January, the install was still behind schedule with only a month left in the availability. This was but one of many hang-ups that eventually pulled the ship behind schedule.

Other work that occurred in January included completion of Lightning Protection modifications (S/A 174D), Fairwater modifications, rudder repairs, and installation of the Woodward 723 Electronic Governor. MACHALT 466, the seawater cooling piping installation, began on January 19th. Testing of the Woodward 723 Electronic Governor and NR1 400HZ MG Set were also in progress at this time.

February began with Southwest Marine submitting a new schedule for completion of S/A 048K that allowed for two weeks of testing and a completion date of March 7th. This schedule appeared to be optimistic due to limited manpower that could not support two shifts of work. CHAMPION did meet its undocking date of February 9th, when she moved to SWM for completion of the DPMA. By meeting this date, SWM shifted effort away from many other critical path items, placing the CNO end date of March 13th in jeopardy. While aligning the 1B SSDG generator to the engine section, the contractor discovered that the engine was 150 thousands lower than the generator. This occurred in December of 1997 when a Ship Intermediate Maintenance Activity (SIMA) subcontractor machined the mounting chocks to less than the minimum acceptable limit. All parties agreed that the only acceptable solution was to replace the bad chocks to raise the engine. This caused the DPMA to lag behind schedule even further. Problems with Bowthruster seepage and bad seals in NR1 MPAC also contributed to loss of manpower in critical areas. As a result of these significant problems, the Supervisor of Shipbuilding (SUPSHIP), New Orleans detachment Ingleside, requested an extension of contract end date. CHAMPION obtained a revised CNO end date of March 27th.

February saw completion of Underwater Hull Repairs, Bow Thruster Jet Pump inspection and repairs, shaft and shaft bearing inspection and installation, MMTG changeout, Precise Integrated Navigation System (PINS) (V) 4 installation, SSQ-94 onboard trainer installation, OTCIXS installation, and Mini-Dama installation. Operational tests on 2 SSDG, MMGTG, and the Bow Thruster awaited completion of repairs to 1B SSDG.

At the beginning of March, the S/A 048K moved to the right again as the March 2nd initial light-off (ILO) was not realized. SWM hired workers from SWM San Diego to ensure that the new ILO date of March 9th was not compromised as previous dates had been. CHAMPION's concern at this point was that the new ILO date supported only 10 days, vice 14 days, of system testing. Actual ILO for the SQQ-32 Sonar System occurred on March 13th, four days behind schedule. CHAMPION successfully completed the Immediate Superior-in-Command (ISIC) Light-Off Assessment (LOA) on March 18th after working long hours completing repairs/reassembly of 1B SSDG

and testing other essential equipment. CHAMPION completed dock trials on March 25th, and all testing of the problematic S/A 048K by March 26th. DPMA at SWM was completed on March 27th.

The next major milestone for CHAMPION was Sea Trials, completed on April 1st. After returning to port for an upkeep period through April 5th, CHAMPION was underway for a mine warfare (MIW) LTT from the April 6th through April 8th. During this training period focus was placed on exercising the sonar watchteams while operating the SQQ-32 sonar and SLQ-48 mine neutralization vehicle (MNV). Upon completion of this underway period, CHAMPION spent April 9th-12th preparing for the Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART) II. April 13th-15th saw the completion of the inport phase, with CART II underway occurring April 16th-17th. CHAMPION, although severely limited in time allotted for training, successfully completed all phases of CART II.

CHAMPION spent April 18th through May 3rd in an availability status receiving multiple engineering and combat systems installations. On April 20th, the SPA-25G radar repeater, Navy Order Wire, and flexible fuel oil return line installations commenced. CHAMPION completed the Navy Order Wire installation on April 27th, and the SPA-25G and flexible fuel oil return line installations on April 29th. During this availability, CHAMPION trained to prepare for the Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) Damage Control, Seamanship and Navigation (DASMN) I inport assessment. TSTA I DASMN inport, completed May 4th-8th, provided an opportunity for CHAMPION's training teams to exercise every watchstander while operating the majority of the ship's systems.

Upon successful completion of TSTA I DASMN inport, CHAMPION spent a weekend in upkeep, commencing TSTA I Engineering Training Group (ETG) on May 10th. The first two days of TSTA I ETG saw initial reviews of CHAMPION's safety programs (heat stress, hearing conservation, electrical safety and tag-out). CHAMPION was underway on May 13th for focused training on engineering tasks and drills. CHAMPION returned to port May 14th-15th for continuation of program reviews and commencement of maintenance reviews. CHAMPION spent May 16th-25th inport in upkeep status, successfully completing TSTA I ETG May 26th-29th (underway 29th) after demonstrating effective programs, maintenance practices and plant operation. After a weekend inport, CHAMPION was ready to start the mine warfare portion of the basic phase training cycle. June 1st marked the beginning of TSTA I MIW for CHAMPION. After a day of inport training, CHAMPION was underway June 2nd-5th for Q-route, minehunting, and mine neutralization training. Sonar conditions checks, driving mined area tracks, and hovering the ship were the emphasis during this training period. CHAMPION then spent June 6th-7th underway for a Naval Reserve Training (NRT) weekend, embarking reservists and continuing minehunting training. CHAMPION continued TSTA I MIW June 8th-12th, validating the mine neutralization portion after only three flights on mine shapes. After a weekend inport from June 13th-14th, CHAMPION spent another week in the Corpus Christi Oparea finishing up TSTA II minesweeping requirements.

With TSTA II MIW completed, CHAMPION shifted gears and commenced TSTA II ETG June 22nd inport Ingleside, Texas. After three days of administrative, organizational, and material reviews, CHAMPION was underway June 25th for two days of underway Basic Engineering Casualty Control Evolutions (BECCE's). After two consecutive days of underway engineering training, the stage was set for successful accomplishment of the Engineering Certification (ECERT) scheduled for August.

After spending June 27th-July 5th inport in an upkeep status, CHAMPION was underway on July 6th to conduct minelaying operations in support of GOMEX 98-3. After laying 24 mines, CHAMPION returned to Ingleside for the ISIC navigation administrative evaluation on July 7th. CHAMPION scored a combined 93.6% on the administrative portion, and went on to score an outstanding 93% on the underway portion July 9th. After transferring COMCMRON TWO, CHAMPION's ISIC, to pier alpha after the navigation evaluation, CHAMPION was underway again to commence TSTA IV MIW. The focus during the July 9th-10th period was advanced level planning and execution of minehunting operations and Q-routes. CHAMPION validated TSTA IV minehunting requirements during this period. After returning to port the evening of the 10th, CHAMPION was underway on the July 11th for an NRT weekend. CHAMPION completed extensive minehunting, mine neutralization, and Q-route training during this period.

TSTA IV MIW continued the week of July 12th. Minesweeping training was the focus, with validation of mechanical sweeping occurring during this week. Combination influence sweeps were streamed but not validated due to several challenging equipment casualties to the Acoustic Power Cable, CL-3 Cable, and SLQ-37 power supply. CHAMPION returned to Ingleside on July 14th to effect necessary repairs to this gear and continue on with TSTA IV minesweeping training. By July 20th, CHAMPION was ready to press on with minesweeping training. While underway July 21st-24th, CHAMPION became the first MCM in CY 98 to pulse the magnetic cable. CHAMPION validated all TSTA IV minesweeping requirements during this period with the exception of the most complex sweep, the FA2A, which could not be completed due to ATG scheduling issues.

CHAMPION spent July 25th-August 3rd inport in preparation for ECERT. Completing thorough program reviews and material checks while running numerous inport BECCE sets, CHAMPION's engineering team was more than ready for the Propulsion Examining Board (PEB). After program reviews, material checks, and two sets of BECCE's on August 4th, CHAMPION earned an overall grade of effective on the ECERT. With engineering excellence achieved, CHAMPION spent August 5th-7th inport in preparation for the remainder of the training cycle.

After an NRT weekend August 7th-8th, CHAMPION set sail to accomplish the FA2A combination influence sweep. Returning to port after completion of TSTA IV MIW on the afternoon of August 10th, CHAMPION remained inport through August 16th for some well-deserved crew rest. TSTA I Damage Control, Seamanship and Navigation (DASMN) commenced August 17th, with an inport brief and duty section drill day. CHAMPION was underway August 18th-21st to accomplish the underway portion of TSTA I DASMN, training in all areas at the basic level with minimal ATG assistance. After validating TSTA I DASMN and spending a weekend inport, CHAMPION was underway again on August 24th for TSTA II DASMN. Normally accomplished in a five-day period, CHAMPION completed all training objectives in three days, returning to port on August 26th.

Upon completion of an upkeep period August 27th-30th, CHAMPION commenced a Restricted Availability (RAV) period on August 31st. During this period CHAMPION received SLQ-48 field changes (1VBTF, 3VHS, 6VHS, 6 UCHS, 18VEH), ASSF modifications (Shipalts 36K/37K DC Breakers), and an SSN-2 PINS (V) 4 modification (SW001). Also during this period CHAMPION had her hull cleaned and prepared for TSTA III and the Final Evaluation Problem.

CHAMPION completed her three-week RAV on September 20th. TSTA III commenced September 21st, with the first day spent inport for drill briefs and program reviews. During an underway period from September 22nd-25th, CHAMPION completed TSTA III as training teams were integrated for the first time during the training cycle. Advanced scenarios encompassing Damage Control, Combat Systems, Navigation, Seamanship, and Engineering Drills were enhanced for further demonstration during the Final Evaluation Problem. CHAMPION was underway once again on September 26th for an NRT weekend and GULF OF MEXICO EXERCISE (GOMEX) 98-3 minelaying services. After laying 21 mines in support of the exercise, CHAMPION steamed through the night and returned to port on the morning of September 27th.

The next significant milestone for CHAMPION was completion of the Final Evaluation Problem (FEP). Underway September 28th, FEP was successfully completed by September 30th. Marking the end of the basic phase of the training cycle, CHAMPION displayed an integration of the skills acquired throughout the course of training conducted in the Corpus Christi Oparea. ATG was especially impressed with CHAMPION's damage control training, stating, "The topside damage package which included pipe patching, shoring, class alpha fire, medical response team and included pre-damage ROE play and an actual engineering casualty was one of the better executed scenarios seen to date." The CIC team was also commended, with ATG surmising, "The CIC team did an outstanding job with off ship reporting ensuring the warfare commander was kept appraised of the current tactical situation." A complete success, CHAMPION realized the reward for the arduous training conducted in during the basic phase of the training cycle.

After returning to port September 30th, CHAMPION received tasking to get underway the morning of October 1st to assist in mine recovery in conjunction with the CV-65 Joint Tactical Fleet Exercise. CHAMPION spent the next five days recovering mines in coordination with four Explosive Ordnance Detachments. Environmental conditions were challenging as the Sea State was 3 or greater for the majority of the exercise. Nonetheless, CHAMPION recovered the majority of exercise mines while the remainder were marked for future recovery. Upon completion of this tasking, CHAMPION returned to port for a three-week RAV.

During the October 6th-25th RAV period, CHAMPION saw the installation of two vital systems. The Battle Space Profiler (BSP), which predicts sonar conditions, was installed October 9th-22nd. INMARSAT-M, a satellite tele-communications system, was installed October 6th-20th. Also occurring during this period was a System Calibration (SISCAL) visit. On October 21st, CHAMPION completed the first Communications Readiness Certification in the mine force, scoring an outstanding 93%. On October 26th, the Naval Safety Center from Norfolk, VA conducted a safety survey onboard CHAMPION. After a thorough review of all programs, the survey team evaluated CHAMPION as "one of the best ships we've seen in recent memory." CHAMPION earned the prestigious Commander, Surface Force Atlantic Safety Award as a result of the crew's exceptional efforts.

After spending October 27th inport, CHAMPION was underway for a dependent cruise on the 28th. More than forty dependents embarked for a transit up and down the Corpus Christi Ship Channel, as well as engine performance testing in the Corpus Christi Oparea. After disembarking dependents and a night inport, CHAMPION was underway again on the 29th to conduct minesweep proficiency training. Upon completion of "Double O" mechanical minesweep training, CHAMPION returned to port on the afternoon of the 30th for an upkeep period through November 1st.

November 2nd marked the beginning of the inport phase of Squadron Exercise (RONEX) 99-1. During this inport phase training was held on message drafting, engineering programs and operations, astern refueling, and task group communications. With the inport phase concluded on November 7th, CHAMPION spent the weekend inport in preparation for the underway phase. On November 10th CHAMPION was underway for RONEX 99-1, conducting R/T drills, tactical maneuvering, towing, and night steaming evolutions the first day. November 11th marked the beginning of minehunting tasking for all ships involved in the exercise. From November 11th-13th, CHAMPION successfully completed her portion of minehunting tasking, successfully acquiring 75% of the mines in the tasking area despite challenging winds and seas. RONEX 99-1, an intermediate level exercise in the interdeployment training cycle, was the first step towards total integration of the mineforce to be deployed in the Mediterranean from February-July of 1999.

Upon completion of RONEX 99-1, CHAMPION returned to port for a two-week RAV. During the RAV, which lasted through November 30th, CHAMPION received S/A 255K (Mission Package 3 for the SLQ-48), SQQ-32 Field Changes 38 & 51, and the commencement of a diesel engine inspection. Additionally, an OHSAT assist visit took place on November 18th and an Environmental Survey occurred on November 23rd.

With the RAV completed on November 30th, next on CHAMPION's schedule was a two-week TARGET/Combat System Readiness Review (CSRR). During this assist visit, technicians from Fleet Technical Support Center, Atlantic conducted maintenance and performance checks on the majority of CHAMPION's engineering, combat systems, and communications equipment. Although conducted in conjunction with USS DEVASTATOR (MCM-6), the assist visit proved to be a highly effective pre-deployment groom for CHAMPION. Also in this period, CHAMPION earned an outstanding evaluation during a Ship's Explosive Safety Inspection (SESI) conducted on December 8th.

Upon completion of the TARGET/CSRR assist visit on December 11th, CHAMPION was underway for an NRT weekend. Training during the weekend included mine hunting and night steaming. CHAMPION returned to port the morning of December 13th for a three-week RAV and holiday standdown period. S/A 240K (SQQ-32 Sonar Maintenance Hatch), AMOT MPDE lube oil monitor installation, and the ISS digital tensionmeter installation commenced during the December RAV, continuing through December 31st. Reflecting on the year that had passed, the crewmembers aboard CHAMPION were satisfied with their extensive accomplishments and their clear breakout among the units in the mine warfare community.