



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS CURTS (FFG 38)
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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
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

1999

- Encl:
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 - (4) BZ Message (03DEC99) - RADM Barrett, USCG
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 - (11) Biography - CDR M. S. Welch, USN
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 - (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 SOCIAL OPAREA TYPE TRAINING (TYT)
15JAN INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA
23JAN U/W SOCIAL 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 SOCIAL OPAREA (NRT)
21FEB INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA
01MAR COMMENCE CART II
04MAR U/W SOCIAL OPAREA ISO COMMAND ASSESSMENT OF READINESS AND TRAINING PHASE II (CART II)
05MAR INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / COMPLETE CART II
20MAR U/W SOCIAL OPAREA (NRT)
21MAR INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA
23MAR U/W SOCIAL OPAREA FLIGHT DECK LANDING QUALIFICATIONS (DLQ'S)
26MAR INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA
05APR COMMENCE TAILORED SHIP TRAINING AVAILABILITY (TSTA A)
13APR U/W SOCIAL OPAREA ISO TSTA A
16APR INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA A
17APR U/W SOCIAL OPAREA (NRT) / CONTINUE TSTA A
18APR INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA A
20APR COMPLETE TSTA A
21APR U/W SOCIAL 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 SOCIAL OPAREA (NRT) / CONTINUE TSTA B
16MAY INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA B
18MAY U/W SOCIAL OPAREA ISO TSTA B
19MAY COMMENCE MISSILEX
20MAY COMPLETE MISSILEX
21MAY INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA B
25MAY U/W SOCIAL OPAREA ISO TSTA B
28MAY INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / CONTINUE TSTA B
01JUN U/W SOCIAL OPAREA ISO TSTA B
03JUN INPORT SAN DIEGO, CA / COMPLETE TSTA B
04JUN U/W SOCIAL 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) [REDACTED] 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 to 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 SMI 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 Monrovia 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 Infantil.

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.