



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
USS FLORIDA (SSBN 728)  
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From: Commanding Officer, USS FLORIDA (SSBN 728)(BLUE)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington, DC 20374

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1985

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C

Encl: (1) Command History for 1985

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded in accordance with reference (a).

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D. M. Lachata".

D. M. LACHATA

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Command History Update

Throughout the month of January, while friends and relatives back home in Washington state withstood one of the worst winters in that areas history, the crew members of the USS FLORIDA (BLUE) were on patrol making preparations for their upcoming Tactical Readiness Evaluation (TRE), and Navy Technical Proficiency Inspection (NTPI).

Most of the month the ship maintained an alert status. Included within the month were the traditional Halfway Night as well as several nights where special "meals" prepared by the Chief's Quarters and the Wardroom were served. As in the previous patrol the officer's night meal was again interrupted by an externally scheduled Weapons System Readiness Test.

Preparation for both inspections went well. During the period of 7 through 10 February, the inspections were completed with satisfactory evaluations in both the TRE and NTPI. During that time frame the ship had both CAPT W. G. Lange, Commander, Submarine Group 9 and CAPT J. M. Barr, Commander, Submarine Squadron 17 embarked.

With both inspections behind them the FLORIDA (BLUE) crew headed home to Bangor on 11 February 1985 for reunions and celebrations after their 75 day patrol. They were warmly greeted by loved ones and friends in sharp contrast to the cold, windy and snowing weather conditions that existed.

On 15 February after the traditional four day turnover period the BLUE crew again gave control of the ship to the GOLD crew commanded by CAPT Robert W. Boyce, USN. Both crews worked well together during refit #4 with the BLUE crew aiding the GOLD to prepare them for their upcoming patrol.

After a short leave period the BLUE crew began the standard eight week off-crew training period. The crew performed well in scheduled schools and trainers at Trident Training Facility and once again on 23 May regained control of the ship from the GOLD crew.

Refit #5 lay ahead of the BLUE crew and was somewhat more difficult than in the past as the ship entered drydock for the first time at Bangor. Not since PSA had the FLORIDA been in drydock and many of the crewmembers had never had the opportunity previously to participate in such a refit. With GOLD crew and TRF support the refit was completed on schedule.

Before she began Dabob Bay trials, the FLORIDA was toured on 6 June 1985, by his excellency Koichi Kato, the Japanese Defense Minister and a contingent of other Japanese dignitaries as well RADM Holland, USN, Commander, Submarine Group 5. The tour on FLORIDA was the highlight of their West Coast military installations tour.

Dabob Bay trials were completed in only one day with the ship performing the necessary evolutions and maneuvers to verify the ship's seaworthiness and the crew's preparedness to begin patrol number 5.

Finally on 15 June the FLORIDA began her mod-alert with several visitors and guests onboard as well as six midshipmen sailing for their summer cruise. Among those onboard were CAPT W. G. Lange, Commander, Submarine Group 9 and CAPT J. M. Barr, Commander, Submarine Squadron 17. After the personnel transfer and the disembarking of Captain's Lange and Barr, FLORIDA began patrol #5.

Patrol #5 was a standard patrol supporting the nation's strategic deterrent policy. It was a successful patrol with the normal recreational events also being conducted, including Halfway Night with its customary shows, a lip sync contest, and a pie throwing raffle (which included CAPT Lachata as a recipient).

Preparations for an Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination continued at a somewhat accelerated pace as the patrol was only 62 days long. The ORSE Team embarked 14 August at Port Angeles, Washington.

After successful completion of the ORSE, the FLORIDA returned to port on 16 August 1985. It was a beautiful day as crewmembers were greeted enthusiastically by their wives, friends and families. Three days later, turnover was complete, the GOLD crew took the boat and refit #6 was in full swing. Both crews worked feverishly to prepare the boat for the GOLD crew's patrol. Following refit #6 and FLORIDA's departure, the BLUE crew began a leave period on 5 September.

On 17 September, the crew members returned to Bangor well-rested and ready to take on the challenges of the off-crew training period. Personnel attended various schools and trainers at the Trident Training Facility as well as the routine training lectures at the Off Crew Administration Building.

Much of the training was directed towards operational tactics in preparation for a MK 48 Torpedo Proficiency Inspection which took place in Hawaii from 6 through 12 October. The Command and Control Team flew to Hawaii during this period and met the FLORIDA and the GOLD crew. The BLUE crew Command and Control Team then successfully demonstrated their ability to deploy MK 48 Torpedoes against a variety of targets. The schedule also allowed teammembers a few days of outstanding liberty on the beautiful island of Oahu. The liberty was definitely enjoyed. BLUE crew took command of FLORIDA again on 19 November.

Refit #7 went well with the GOLD crew supporting the BLUE crew in getting the FLORIDA ready to once again resume her mission on her 7th patrol. The weather was the only problem as it was very cold and Bangor received a lot of snow throughout the refit.

On Friday the 13th of December, the BLUE crew took FLORIDA to sea again after completing two days of Dabob Bay trials. The first month or so of the patrol was alert time for FLORIDA, but the crew concentrated on making preparations for the final phases of the Tactical Readiness Evaluation, a Submarine Squadron 17 Engineering Department Evaluation and a Navy Technical Proficiency Inspection which would all take place in the beginning of 1986. With these three inspections upcoming, the FLORIDA would have a good opportunity to show her abilities in all areas of submarining. The Christmas festivities provided a welcome relief with a special meal, presents delivered by Santa Claus himself, Christmas Carolers, and a video cassette from the crew's wives. 1985 ended rather quietly aboard the FLORIDA with the ship in an alert status and looking forward to 1986.