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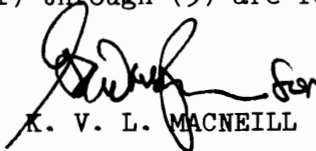
From: Commanding Officer, USS FLORIDA (SSBN 728)(GOLD)
To: Director of Naval History, Washington Navy Yard (OP-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1988

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

Encl: (1) Command History and Narrative
(2) Biography of CAPT Kent V. L. MacNeill
(3) Biography of CAPT Lyle D. Meier
(4) USS FLORIDA (SSBN 728)(BLUE) Sailing List
(5) USS FLORIDA (SSBN 728)(GOLD) Sailing List

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (5) are forwarded.


K. V. L. MACNEILL

COMMAND HISTORY

a. Command Composition and Organization. The ship's mission is to remain submerged and undetected and serve as a strategic nuclear deterrent. The ship's parent command is Submarine Squadron 17 and the ship is homeported at Naval Submarine Base, Bangor, WA. Two crews, Blue and Gold, alternate manning of the ship on approximately 110 day cycles; when not manning the ship, the "off-crew" is under the administrative command of Commander, Submarine Group 9.

b. Chronology

8 January FLORIDA arrives at Bangor, WA, completing Patrol 14

11 January Blue Crew relieves Gold Crew and begins Refit 15.

14-15 January FLORIDA participates in short notice Navy Technical Proficiency Inspection with satisfactory results following outstanding performance on all phases of the examination.

2 February FLORIDA underway for Patrol 15.

7-9 April FLORIDA returns to Bangor WA for diesel engine evaluation following discovery of corrosion and rust in the scavenging air blower following cleaning and inspection of the diesel engine. FLORIDA gets underway for a Tactical Readiness Evaluation.

12 April FLORIDA moors at Explosive Handling Wharf, Naval Submarine Base, Bangor, WA to complete Patrol 15. Tactical Readiness Evaluation results are Above Average.

13-14 April FLORIDA undergoes Joint Service Defense Nuclear Surety Inspection; results are Satisfactory.

17 April Gold Crew relieves Blue Crew, begins Refit 16.

12 May FLORIDA departs on Patrol 16.

18-23 May FLORIDA arrives in Long Beach, California, to load sound trial equipment. FLORIDA departs for sound trials at Santa Cruz Acoustic Range Facility (SCARF).

7 June FLORIDA returns to Long Beach to off load sound trial equipment and departs for the remainder of Patrol 16.

19-21 July FLORIDA conducts Tactical Readiness Evaluation; results are Above Average.

22 July FLORIDA returns to Bangor, Washington, completing Patrol 16.

23-24 July FLORIDA conducts Nuclear Technical Proficiency Inspection; results are Satisfactory. Performance in all phases of the examination are judged Outstanding.

27 July Blue Crew relieves Gold Crew. Refit 17 Begins.

22 August FLORIDA underway for Patrol 17.

20 September Captain Kent V. L. MacNeill relieves Captain Peter M. Galbraith as Commanding Officer of USS FLORIDA (SSBN 728)(GOLD) at Naval Submarine Base.

Chronology cont'd

1 October FLORIDA receives Commander, Submarine Squadron 17 Battle Efficiency "E" for fiscal year 1988. FLORIDA Gold Crew also receives Damage Control "DC" and Strategic Weapons "S".

1-2 November FLORIDA Blue passes their portion of a Supply Management Inspection.

1-3 November FLORIDA undergoes an Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination, receiving an overall grade of Excellent.

3 November FLORIDA successfully completes Patrol 17, returns to Bangor, Washington.

6 November Gold Crew relieves Blue Crew; Refit 18 begins.

22 November FLORIDA undergoes a Supply Management Inspection and receives a grade of Satisfactory.

28 November FLORIDA underway for Patrol 18.

16 December Captain Lyle D. Meier relieves Captain Robert J. Labrecque as Commanding Officer USS FLORIDA (SSBN 728)(BLUE) at Naval Submarine Base, Bangor Washington.

c. Narrative

Following an arduous patrol which included the Christmas holidays, FLORIDA arrived at Bangor, Washington on 7 January for refit and exchange of command. The Blue Crew relieved the Gold Crew on 11 January and began Refit 15, but shortly after assuming the watch, FLORIDA Blue received word that they would soon have a short notice Navy Technical Proficiency Inspection. The crew rose to the challenge and displayed superb damage control organization, with an overall grade of satisfactory and all individual areas evaluated as Outstanding.

FLORIDA departed Bangor for Patrol 15 on 2 February after a Refit of 34,235 man-hours. While this was not an exceptionally eventful patrol, much was accomplished as numerous personnel completed watchstation and ship qualifications, while preparations were made for the upcoming Tactical Readiness Evaluation. An inspection of the diesel engine in early April revealed rust and corrosion in the scavenging air blower. The ship returned to port on 7 April for cleaning the diesel and subsequent testing. The diesel was evaluated fit for emergency use, and the ship returned to sea on 9 April with the Tactical Readiness Evaluation Team on board.

The ship performed well with damage control efforts and basic submarining as the bright areas. Commander, Submarine Squadron 17, Captain Gray, rode for observation and Commander Woodman, Submarine Group 9 Training Officer, served as head inspector. Following the inspection, FLORIDA returned to Bangor, completing her fifteenth deterrent patrol on 12 April, but not the last of her inspections. On 13-14 April, FLORIDA played host to the Defense Nuclear Surety Inspection team, headed by Colonel Donald R. Armstrong, USA. This inspection found FLORIDA Outstanding or Excellent in all areas, with an overall grade of Satisfactory.

Ending the patrol on a positive note, Captain Labrecque and the Blue Crew turned over to Captain Galbraith and the Gold Crew on 17 April. Both crews put forth a tireless effort to complete Refit 16 and get the ship ready for patrol, exerting 34,396 man-hours for the refit.

FLORIDA departed for Patrol 16 on 12 May and transited to Long Beach, California, where the crew enjoyed a four day visit to Southern California's many attractions. Extensive sound trial equipment was on-loaded, and the ship departed on 23 May for Santa Cruz Acoustic Range Facility. While off the Southern California coast, the FLORIDA executed a TRIDENT submarine first: A vertical replenishment was carried out using a UH-46 Sea Knight helicopter from the USS RALEIGH. FLORIDA returned to Long Beach on 7 June long enough to off-load the special acoustic equipment, then continued with the remainder of patrol.

FLORIDA underwent a Tactical Readiness Evaluation 19-21 July, which was monitored by a COMSUBPAC representative. The results were Above Average overall, with especially strong showings in Strategic Weapons, Damage Control, and Communications. The ship returned to Bangor on 22 July, successfully completing her sixteenth deterrent patrol. A Nuclear Technical Proficiency Inspection followed, and the ship achieved Outstanding results with the Weapons Department again shining brightly.

c. Narrative cont'd

The Blue Crew relieved the Gold Crew on 27 July under sunny skies and with FLORIDA already in Delta Drydock; Refit 17 was well underway.

With the boat just past the halfway point of her overhaul cycle, Refit 17 was a maintenance period of significant proportions, but as usual, both crews vigorously worked to finish the refit on time. A total of 55,003 man-hours were expended.

In another familiar role, FLORIDA played host to Department of Energy Official, Mr. Michael J. Lawrence, Director, Hanford Reservation. Mr. Lawrence toured the boat on 19 August during post-refit trials in a unique opportunity for a civilian nuclear power expert to view the Navy's nuclear power programs first hand.

Refit complete, FLORIDA cast off all lines on 22 August to debark on Patrol 17. The crew remained busy throughout the period, as the boat made rigorous preparations for the upcoming Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination (ORSE) and Supply Management Inspection (SMI). In the meantime, at Naval Submarine Base, Bangor, CAPT Kent V. L. MacNeill relieved CAPT Peter M. Galbraith as Commanding Officer on 20 September.

October brought good news as FLORIDA learned that she had been awarded the Commander, Submarine Squadron 17 Battle Efficiency "E" for her outstanding efforts during fiscal year 1988. In addition, the officers and crew learned that CAPT Lebreque was making his last patrol before departing to assume command of the newly formed Submarine Squadron 20 in King's Bay, GA.

Hard work continued to pay off as the patrol ended. The SMI inspection resulted in a Satisfactory grade, and the Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination rated FLORIDA as Excellent. With deep pride and satisfaction, FLORIDA returned to Bangor on 3 November. The Blue Crew was relieved by the Gold Crew three days later.

Refit 18 started in earnest, with the major work including replacement of the ship's service turbine generator pole pieces and subsequent microbalancing. There were 35,580 man-hours in this refit. During Bay Trials, the Gold crew completed their Food Service portion of the Supply Management Inspection, evaluated Satisfactory overall, receiving grades of Outstanding in nearly every category. The competition for the next Battle "E" had started well for FLORIDA!

FLORIDA departed Bangor for Patrol 18 on 28 November, with RADM Davis, COMSUBGRU NINE, embarked for the first three days. While the ship was at sea, CAPT Lyle D. Meier relieved CAPT Labrecque as Commanding Officer of the Blue Crew on 16 December. A winter patrol in the North Pacific meant missing the Christmas holidays with loved ones again; and FLORIDA began the new year executing her primary mission, undetected and alert acting as the nations most survivable strategic nuclear deterrence.