DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
MCMROTCREW ALFA
UNIT 60529
FPO AE 09501-4501

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

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From: Commanding Officer, MCMROTCREW ALFA
To: Chief of Naval Personnel (Code N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1996

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

1. As required by reference (a), the following command history of the USS GLADIATOR (MCM 11) is submitted for the calendar year 1996.

2. Supporting documents attached.

M. J. ASHLEY
By direction

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USS GLADIATOR (MCM 11)

COMMAND HISTORY

1996

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-NAVSURFWARCEN COASTALSYSTA Panama City FL 191426ZNOV96/ BZ on the Recovery of a Remote Minehunting System (RMS) Submersible
-COMREGSUPPGRU Ingleside TX 141640ZNOV96/ BZ for 1996 Combined Federal Campaign Contributions
-COMINEWARCOM Corpus Christi TX/ 172015ZDEC96/ MCMROTCREW ALFA Mine Warfare Certification (MRC) Completed 06DEC 1996
-Photograph USS GLADIATOR (MCM 11)

SECTION ONE

Command Structure

COMNAVSURFLANT

VADM D. J. Katz

COMINEWARCOM

RADM D.R. Conley
COS: B.E. Dewey

COMCMRON ONE	COMCMRON TWO	COMREGSUPPGRU INGLESIDE, TX
CAPT J.A. Haggart	CAPT B.T. Van Belle	CAPT R.B. O'Donnell

The Mine Countermeasures Ship **GLADIATOR (MCM 11)** accommodates a crew of eight officers and 84 enlisted crew members. It belongs to the **AVENGER (MCM 1)** class, which is the largest wooden hulled ship class in the U.S. NAVY. The MCM class design incorporates modern mine countermeasures technology into a specially designed platform which includes low magnetic signature diesel engines, a precise electronic navigation system, a mine hunting and classification sonar, and a mine neutralization submersible vehicle. The MCM mission is to clear the bottom and water volume of mines in coastal and offshore areas. Production of the **GLADIATOR** is underscored by an extensive array of test for shock, noise, vibration and magnetic signature. The MCM fulfills an important role in the long-standing objective to maintain the nation's mine countermeasures capability.

The U.S. Navy MCM mission statement requires the following strategic factors be considered:

- Ability to deploy world-wide for multi-purpose missions.
- Ability to clear strategic U.S. or foreign ports and harbors of mines.
- Surveillance of U.S. and foreign coastlines.
- Neutralization of a variety of mine threats.
- Peacetime support activities.

U.S. Navy strategic considerations provide the basis for the following MCM mission requirements:

- Search, detect and neutralize moored and bottom mines.
- Sweep moored mines.
- Sweep floating mines by gunfire.
- Accompany deploying forces overseas.
- Permit breakout of U.S. Forces from CONUS ports.
- Provide navigational assistance to other fleet surface units.
- Conduct underwater surveys of ports and harbors.
- Perform collection of oceanographic and navigational data.

SECTION TWO

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Chronology for 1996

January 1996

01 - 07	Holiday Stand Down Period
10	Fast Cruise: BECCES/GQ/Zebra Checks
11 - 12	Underway OPPE Preps
16 - 17	Underway OPPE Preps
18	Fast Cruise: BECCES/GQ/Zebra Checks
19	COMSHORELANT Tour and Lunch
19 - 21	AMR & MMR Bilge Cleaning
23 - 25	OPPE (U/W portion 24 January 1996)
29 -31	Incline Experiment

February 1996

01 - 09	Compass (PQS Management) Program Training for all hands
02	Start Five Section Duty
03	Awards Ceremony
03	PN1(SW/AW) Selected as COMINEWARCOM Sailor of the Year
05 - 06	Sexual Harassment Training for all hands
08 - 09	Underway Enroute to Galveston, TX -Man Over Board Drill -Abandon Ship Drill -Sonar VDS Operations -BSP Cast
09	Arrive Galveston, TX as U.S. Navy representative for Mardi Gras
09 -19	Conduct Ship Tours while inport Galveston, TX
10	Honor Guard and Ship's Company March in Krewe of Brew Parade. Crew Members attend both the Coronation and Krewe of Thalazar Balls
12	GLADIATOR host VIP reception for Mayor of Galveston and representatives of the Navy League

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14 - 15	Safety Stand Down
15	GLADIATOR Wins Battle "E", Blue "E", Black "E", Red "E", and Green "E" Mission Area Awards
17	Honor Guard and Ship's Company March in Krewe of Momus Parade. Ship's Officers attend Momus Ball.
19 -21	Enroute to Ingleside, TX -Megger CL Cable -BECCES/GQ -CBR Washdown Operations Test
22	Pace II registration
26	HF Transmitter Test
27 - 29	Deck Inport MIW Training
29	Thirty Foreign Naval Attaché Visit From Washing, D.C.

March 1996

04 - 07	Underway in Corpus Christi, TX OPAREA for MIW Training -Megger CL Cable -Q-Routing -Mine Hunting -Sonar Conditions Checks -MNS Operations -SOMEST Test
11 - 15	Underway in Corpus Christi, TX OPAREA with ATG for TSTA II -MRCI Equipment Inventory Conducted -Mechanical Sweeping -Sonar Conditions Checks -Mine Hunting Training -MNS Operations -Combination Sweeping -SOMEST Test -Danning
18	Refuel Inport Ingleside, TX
18 -19	Small Arms Training at Firing Range
18 -21	Sonar Field Change
18 -22	Deck Inport MIW Training
22	Command Picnic

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18 -21	Sonar Field Change
18 -22	Deck Inport MIW Training
22	Command Picnic

22	Whites Inspection and Awards Ceremony
25 - 29	First Week of TSTA IV, Canceled During Search and Rescue Operation for a Downed T-44 Aircraft from NAS Corpus Christi. GLADIATOR functions as On Scene Commander and assists EOD divers and Aviation Mishap Board.

April 1996

01 -12	TSTA IV (GLADIATOR Becomes First Ship to Validate Mine Readiness Certification Inspection During Notional Training Period) -Sonar Conditions Checks -Mine Hunting -Combination Sweeping -Mechanical Sweeping (Double "O") -Q Routing -Danning -Small Boat Vectoring -Anti Mine Gunnery -BSP Casting -MNS Operations -SOMEST Test -MRT Demonstration
15	LTJG Yarbrough becomes the first MCM Supply Officer to Qualify Surface Warfare Supply Corps Officer (SWSCO)
23 -26	Underway in the Corpus Christi, TX OPAREA for Final Evaluation Problem (FEP)

May 1996

09	VADM Quast Arrives for Tour and Lunch
13	Start Planned Maintenance Availability at Peterson Builders Industries, Ingleside, TX
17	Command Picnic

June 1996

01 -30	Planned Maintenance Availability at Peterson Builders Industries, Ingleside, TX

July 1996

01 - 08	Planned Maintenance Availability at Peterson Builders Industries. GLADIATOR Becomes the First MCM to Complete a PMA Ahead of Schedule and Under Budget.
08	Space Turnover
09	Dock Trials
10	Sea Trials
15	Refueling
16 -17	Underway for PINS Groom, Combat Systems Training, and Engineering Training
17 -22	SLQ-48 Field Change Installation
18	Ammunition Onload
19	End of Yards Party and Celebration
22-24	Diesel Inspection
29 - 02 August	Underway in the Corpus Christi, TX OPAREA for MP-3 Operational Testing (New MNV Bomblet for the Exploitation of Moored Mines)

August 1996

07	Diving/Hull Inspection
09	Underway Enroute to New Orleans, LA
12 -19	Port Visit New Orleans, LA Moor Wolfenberg Park and Conduct Daily Ship Tours
19	Underway Enroute to Panama City, FL
22	Arrive Panama City, FL Begin SSQ-94 CIC MIW Operational Evaluation Testing with Coastal System Station
28	Conduct Use of Deadly Force and OOD Weapons Training

September 1996

06	Underway for Pensacola, FL Port Visit

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USS GLADIATOR 1996

1996 was an extraordinary year for GLADIATOR. Her performance throughout the year was exemplary. As the established pace setter in the class, she has amassed a record of numerous first in the MCM community.

The month of January was dedicated to preparing for GLADIATOR's Operational Propulsion Plant Examination. After completing the holiday stand down period, the crew worked arduously in the Engineering spaces. The Engineering Casualty Control Team and Damage Control Training Team, conducted numerous drills improving the operational performance of both the engineering watch sections and at sea fire party. GLADIATOR's hard work and in depth planning, resulted in best performance of any MCM on an OPPE. An unprecedented nine of fourteen administrative programs were graded "Excellent", with the remaining two programs receiving grades of "Satisfactory". Management programs were graded "Excellent", material condition "Good", training "Satisfactory", operations "Good", and fire fighting "Good". Both engineering watch teams satisfactorily completed 100% of their assigned drill taskings and the at sea fire party achieved a grade of "good" on the main space fire drill. The senior PEB member complimented the crew on their performance and stated, "This is the best MCM OPPE I have every been involved in." COMNAVSURFLANT RADM Katz sent an OPPE congratulatory message to an MCM, stating "I can think of no better way to start the new year than with such a stellar performance."

During the last week of January, GLADIATOR assisted Naval Sea Systems Command in an Incline experiment. The Incline experiment, consisted of the loading and off loading of large weights on GLADIATOR to access stability and buoyancy.

In February, the ship was chosen to represent the Navy at the City of Galveston's Mardi Gras celebration. The ship's honor guard and crew marched in two large parades, that were both televised. During the port visit the ship hosted over forty five hundred visitors. Besides the numerous official balls attended by the wardroom and crew, the ship played host to City of Galveston and Navy League VIP's. It was at this VIP reception onboard that the Honorable Mrs. Barbara Crews, Mayor of Galveston, presented the commanding officer with the keys to the city. Upon GLADIATOR's departure from Galveston, the crew conducted MIW training while enroute back to their homeport of Ingleside, TX in preparation for the start of the MCM notional training schedule. Upon arriving back in home port, GLADIATOR received short notice tasking that they would play host to thirty two foreign Naval Attaché visiting from Washington, D.C. The tour

presented the distinguished visitors an overview of MCM mission and appreciation for U.S. mine countermeasures capability.

Other note worthy events taking place in February includes, GLADIATOR winning the coveted Battle "E" for battle efficiency during the 1995 competitive cycle. Other mission area awards included; the Blue "E" for logistics management excellence, Red "E" for engineering excellence, Green "E" for command and control excellence, and the Black "E" for seamanship excellence. PN1 (SW/AW) Castle earned the distinction in February of being selected as the COMINEWARCOM Sailor of the Year. He represented the entire South Texas Surface Navy in Norfolk, VA at the Surface Atlantic Fleet Sailor of the Year competition.

The Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA II) began for GLADIATOR started during the month of March. Working with Afloat Training Group, Ingleside, TX the crew executed an aggressive training schedule. During the TSTA II process an equipment inventory was conducted. Underway training in the local operations area included; meggering the CL cable, Q-routing, mine hunting, sonar conditions checks, MNS operations, mechanical mine sweeping, influence mine sweeping, small boat vectoring and dan buoy evolution's. The TSTA II training period enabled the GLADIATOR to increase their proficiency in their primary mission area of MIW.

In addition to the training conducted during TSTA II, GLADIATOR conducted a sonar field change, continued to hold inport MIW training, held an awards ceremony and command picnic.

The latter part of the month of March had the GLADIATOR back underway, progressing from the TSTA II to TSTA IV training periods in the MCM notional training schedule. During the first day of TSTA IV, GLADIATOR responded to an emergency call by the Coast Guard for assistance in searching for missing Navy T-44 aircraft. In company with search aircraft and the USS Defender, a Search And Rescue (SAR) commenced. After hours of searching, only limited wreckage could be found. As the SAR progressing into the evening the search aircraft returned to NAS Corpus Christi and the decision to utilize the ship's sonar to located the submerged aircraft was made. DEFENDER was the first ship to discover the location of the submerged aircraft, GLADIATOR latter confirmed the location of the aircraft and assumed duties as on scene commander when the DEFENDER was called away by other commitments. Once the aircraft was located, the SAR ended and salvage efforts started. GLADIATOR spent the next four days assisting EOD divers and the Aviation Mishap Board in the recovery of the aircraft.

After the SAR and salvage efforts were completed for the T-44 aircraft, GLADIATOR restarted the TSTA IV training period. Although hampered by the loss of a week of the training the crew dedicated itself to training and improving their proficiency in MIW. Pursuing an aggressive training cycle, the crew continued practicing MIW evolution's in preparation for its Mine Readiness Certification Inspection (MRCI). The professional knowledge, team work, and proficiency of the GLADIATOR crew was at such a level that the ATG Ingleside, recommended that GLADIATOR attempt to validate MRCI during the notional training cycle during the last week of TSTA IV. GLADIATOR rose to occasion and became the first MCM to validate its MIW certification during the notional training cycle. GLADIATOR challenged along standing paradigm in the MCM community and proved that MRCI could be accomplished during the training period and that redundancy in inspections could be eliminated. By validating its MRCI in during TSTA IV, GLADIATOR paved the way for improving the training process.

In the week following TSTA IV and MRCI, GLADIATOR was once again setting firsts in the MCM community. LTJG [redacted] became the first MCM supply officer to qualify as a Surface Warfare Supply Corps Officer (SWSCO).

Just one week after TSTA IV, GLADIATOR found itself back underway pioneering the Final Evaluation Problem (FEP) as the graduation exercise for the MCM notional training cycle. GLADIATOR was the second MCM to attempt a FEP. The first MCM and ATG had numerous coordination problems with the first FEP, so GLADIATOR and ATG worked diligently preparing for FEP during the preceding week. The proof of concept for FEP was made dependent upon GLADIATOR's performance. A senior ATG rider from SURFLANT was assigned to evaluated ATG's, GLADIATOR's, and the viability of using FEP as a training tool in the MCM community. During a ninety six hour period, GLADIATOR was flexed to the limit of her ability. During the FEP, GLADIATOR proved her proficiency in engineering watch standing, damage control, MIW, and combat system evolution's. The senior rider from SURFLANT complimented ATG and GLADIATOR on their success and proof of concept. He also complimented the GLADIATOR crew for their high level of enthusiasm and professionalism. With the success realized during FEP, the concept was adopted for use by the entire MCM community.

From May to mid July the GLADIATOR entered Peterson Builders Industries, Ship Yard in Ingleside, TX for a Planned Maintenance Availability. From the beginning, the ship and shipyard strived to accomplish 100% of the assigned work and leave the shipyard ahead of schedule. Work to be accomplished included; PINS III upgrade,

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antenna maintenance, Nalfleet cooling change out on all main engines, conversion over to 2104 lube oil in engineering, rework 1A SSDG rotor, overhaul all main engines and SSDG's, overhaul of valves in MMR, relag AMR and MMR, SICAL, and resurfaced the main deck in PRC. By carefully monitoring Quality Assurance (QA) and established goals with rapid follow up and feedback, GLADIATOR was able to achieve her goal of leaving the shipyard early. On July 18, 1996 GLADIATOR set two first in the MCM community. She was the first MCM to complete a PMA early and was $24,000 under budget.

After leaving the yards, the ship returned to Naval Station Ingleside. While back at the Naval Station, GLADIATOR performed a diesel inspection just one week out of the yards. The five day inspection was accomplished in only three days, and all six of GLADIATOR's diesels were certified operational.

Because GLADIATOR had completed the PMA early, COMINEWARCOM selected GLADIATOR as the test platform for the new Mission Package 3 (MP-3). The MP-3 is an improved version of a bomblet for the Mine Neutralization Vehicle (MNV), to be used in the destruction of moored mines. During the two weeks of operational trials, GLADIATOR was required to launch its MNV, hook the MP-3 on to a mine mooring cable, recover the MNV, and then detonate the bomblet. Due to the proficiency of the CIC watch teams the training time allotted was reduced from five days to only two. The CIC watch teams worked with the test engineers performing operational test for MP-3 and developing operating procedures and doctrine. GLADIATOR was able to complete all eight demonstration missions, well under the allotted mission times. GLADIATOR's deck crew was also able to innovatively reduce rearming time from twenty minutes, to just under eight minutes. GLADIATOR completed the testing ahead of schedule, contributed to the establishment of MP-3 doctrine, and contributed to the MP-3's introduction into the fleet as a weapons system.

In August after completing MP-3 Operational Evaluation, GLADIATOR was once again assigned duties as a test platform. The next Operational Evaluation assigned to GLADIATOR, would be a new CIC MIW simulator, the SSQ-94. The installation and testing of the SSQ-94, would be accomplished in conjunction with Naval Sea Systems Command and Coastal Systems Station test engineers in Panama City, FL. Enroute to Panama City, FL the ship made a liberty port visit to New Orleans, LA. While inport in New Orleans, the ship hosted over 6,500 visitors while moored at Wolfenburg Park, just west of the French Quarter.

Upon arrival in Panama City, FL CIC personnel and test engineers worked side by

side on the installation of the SSQ-94 CIC MIW Simulator. The SSQ-94 simulator enabled MCM crews to train inport on their sonar displays, SLQ-48 Mine Neutralization Vehicle, and Precision Navigation System (PINS). Through the cooperative nature of the crew and test engineers operational testing progressed. Once the SSQ-94 CIC MIW simulator was installed, CIC personnel were indoctrinated and trained on the new system. Once training was completed, the crew members proficiency was measured prior to and after utilization of the simulator. The use of crew members as test subjects helped establish a base line for the effectiveness of the simulator and its value as a fleet training asset. After the operational testing was completed, GLADIATOR departed Panama City, FL enroute back to its homeport of Ingleside, TX. While participating in operational testing in Panama City, FL GLADIATOR made port calls to Pensacola, FL and Tampa, FL.

Back in Ingleside, TX the pace of scheduled evolutions did not slow. After just a week back in port, GLADIATOR was scheduled to participate in Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFX) 97-1. The JTFX encompassed two MCM, one MHC, and four MH-53E helicopters clearing an amphibious operation area. The area to be cleared was geo-translated from the Corpus Christi Operation Area, to an Operations Area in South Carolina where an Amphibious task group was conducting exercises.

Just four days after completing the JTFX, GLADIATOR was once again underway. In late October, the ship was schedule to serve as test platform for a new generation of sonar displays. Coastal Systems Station Panama City, FL had developed new TACT IV sonar displays for the SQQ-32 sonar system. The new displays added ease of operation, color, windows displays, and increased processing speed. Working closely with test engineers, the crew assisted in the removal of the old displays and the installation of the test displays. Most of the month of November was spent underway, testing the new displays in both shall and deep water environments. Many software faults were identified and corrected in the testing. Also during the display testing, an operational test was conducted on a new Battle Space Profiler (BSP) winch and the "Metal" environmental evaluation program. The success of the testing, enabled the test engineers and crew to complete operational testing ten days early. The early completion of testing, insured that GLADIATOR was able to return to homeport in time to enjoy Thanksgiving with their families.

While enroute to Ingleside the crew engaged in numerous engineering training evolutions and MIW training on the 6H combination sweep. After the Thanksgiving brake, GLADIATOR was again underway to demonstrate the 6H combination for

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INSGRU. The 6H combination, which had been scheduled back in may during TSTA IV, had to be delayed due to a moratorium on pulsing with the ship mine sweeping gas turbine generator. With the pending deployment for MCMROTCREW ALFA, in January of 1997, the requirement for pulsing was waved by INSGRU and GLADIATOR was required to demonstrate streaming of the sweep and connection to a power source. The demonstration for INSGRU was accomplished with success and GLADIATOR crew achieved its last pre-deployment certification

Returning to port on Friday, the crew prepared to turnover the ship the following week. During the week of 9 to 13 December MCMROTCREW FOXTROT, relieved MCMROTCREW ALFA assuming responsibility for GLADIATOR. The following week GLADIATOR began its holiday leave stand down period for Christmas.