

# USS MITSCHER (DDG 57)

## COMMAND HISTORY

01 January - 31 December 1995



## **COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION**

**USS MITSCHER (DDG 57)**

**Primary Missions:** Air, Surface, and Undersea Warfare.

**Secondary Mission:** Strike Warfare

**Immediate Senior:** Commander, Destroyer Squadron TWO (01 JAN - 01 SEP); Commander, Destroyer

**Squadron TWO ZERO (01 SEP -Present )**

**Commanding Officer:** CDR Roy J. Balaconis

**Homeport:** Norfolk, VA

## CHRONOLOGY

### January:

- 01-04: Holiday Leave/Upkeep—Inport (IPT) Norfolk
- 05-08: IPT Norfolk
- 09-18: U/W Jacksonville Oparea—Plane Guard for USS AMERICA (CV 66)
- 14: UNREP with USNS JOHN LENTHALL (TAO 189)  
Reenlistment—OSC(SW) [REDACTED]/FCC(SW) [REDACTED]
- 16: UNREP with JOHN LENTHALL
- 17: UNREP with JOHN LENTHALL
- 18-19: Port Visit: Key West, FL
- 19-21: U/W Jax Oparea—Plane Guard for Uss AMERICA (CV 66)
- 21-23: Enroute to NWS Charleston
- 23: IPT Charleston—Ammunition onload
- 24-26: U/W enroute Nassau, Bahamas
- 26-30: IPT Nassau—first foreign port call
- 30-31: U/W enroute Norfolk, VA

### February:

- 01-03: U/W enroute Norfolk, VA
- 02: UNREP USS Kalamazoo (AOR 6)
- 03-06: Upkeep IPT Norfolk
- 06-21: CSSQT IPT
- 18: Ship's party - Omni Hotel
- 21-25: U/W enroute Port Canaveral, FL
- 22: UNREP SQT with USNS BUTTE (AE 27)
- 23: UNREP SQT with BUTTE
- 25-28: IPT Port Canaveral

### March:

- 01-08: U/W AUTEC range—Comex U/W CSSQT
- 09-13: IPT NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads
- 13-15: U/W AFWTF UTR—coordinated USW with USS Boone
- 16-18: U/W PROA
- 18-20: Port Visit: St. Martin
- 20: U/W Enroute NAVSTA RR
- 21: IPT NAVSTA RR for ammunition/stores
- 22-23: U/W SPROA for NGFS qualification
- 24-26: U/W PROA
- 26-29: IPT NAVSTA RR
- 30: U/W PROA—Missilex, Reenlistment of GSEC(SW) Nowicki
- 31: Missilex

### April:

- 01: Missilex
- 01-05: Enroute Norfolk, VA
- 04: UNREP with USS Platte (AO 186)
- 05: IPT Norfolk
- 06-10: Guided Tour: 43 Air War College Personnel
- 10-15: U/W enroute Boston, MA

11-12: Vandalex—Vacapes—Finex U/W CSSQT  
15-17: Port Visit: Boston—Patriot Days Celebration  
17-20: U/W enroute Norfolk, VA  
20-25: IPT Norfolk  
25: U/W for Final Contract Trials  
26-30: IPT Norfolk—IMAV

May:

01-15: IPT Norfolk—IMAV  
01: COMCARGRU TWO on board  
Aegis Tour: MGEN Byron USMC  
02: COMDESRON TWO ZERO on board  
08: Reenlistment: RM1 [REDACTED]  
15: Royal Saudi Arabian Naval Forces Assessment Team on board for tour  
16-18: Mock Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE )  
17-18: U/W Vacapes  
18: UNREP with JOHN LENTHALL  
19-23: IPT Norfolk  
23-24: U/W Vacapes—Mock OPPE  
24-31: IPT Norfolk  
31: U/W Vacapes—OPPE

June:

01: U/W Vacapes--OPPE  
02-09: IPT Norfolk  
Reenlistment PN3 [REDACTED]  
03-25: Midshipmen on board for summer training  
09: U/W enroute Nauticus  
10-12: IPT Nauticus  
Retirement ceremony: CDR [REDACTED]  
12: U/W enroute NWS Yorktown for ammunition offload  
13: U/W enroute Norfolk  
14: Dependents arrive on board for Tiger Cruise I  
14-16: U/W Enroute Nassau, Bahamas  
17-20: Port Visit: Nassau  
20-23: U/W Enroute Pensacola, FL  
23-25: Port Visit: Pensacola  
25: U/W enroute Pascagoula, MS for Post-shakedown availability (PSA)  
26-30: IPT Pascagoula--PSA  
27: Crew moves to Lakeside barracks

July:

01-31: IPT Pascagoula--PSA  
28: SWO Board for Lt(jg) [REDACTED]  
31: LT [REDACTED] reported on board to assume duties as Fire Control Officer

August:

01-31: IPT Pascagoula--PSA  
06: SWO Board for LT(jg) [REDACTED]  
11: MITSCHER enters drydock

- 23: ENS ██████ reported on board to assume duties as Communications Officer
- 28: LT ██████ reported on board to assume duties as Chief Engineer
- 29: MITSCHER leaves drydock

September:

- 01-26: IPT Pascagoula--PSA
- 08: SWO Board for LT(jg) ██████
- 26: U/W for sea trials
- 27: IPT Pascagoula--PSA
- 28: Reenlistment for FC1 ██████
- 29: Reenlistment for FC1(SW) ██████
- 30: IPT Pascagoula--PSA

October:

- 01: IPT Pascagoula--PSA
- 02: PSA complete
- 03-06: U/W enroute Norfolk, VA
- 04: LCDR Daugherty relieved LCDR O'Connor as Executive Officer
- 06: ITT Drill--Battle of Baja
- 07-11: Upkeep IPT Norfolk
- 12: U/W enroute Nauticus
- 13-15: Visit Ship for Navy Birthday
- 16: U/W enroute Norfolk
- 17: IPT Norfolk
- 18-20: CART II
- 21-22: IPT Norfolk--Visit Ship
- 23: U/W enroute Craney Island, VA
- 23-27: IPT Craney Island--Deperming
- 27: U/W enroute Norfolk, VA
- 28-31: IPT Upkeep Norfolk

November:

- 01-03: U/W enroute NAVSTA RR--Combat System LTT
- 04-05: IPT NAVSTA RR
- 04: ENS ██████ reported on board to assume duties as Main Propulsion Division Officer
- 06-07: U/W PROA--NGFS/GUNEX/CIWS
- 07: IPT NSRR
- 08-10: U/W PROA--USN/FGN Missilex
- 11-14: Port Visit--St Maarten
- 15: U/W enroute St Eustatius
- 15-16: Port Visit--St Eustatius
- 17-19: U/W enroute Norfolk, VA
- 19-27: IPT Norfolk
- 20: ENS ██████ reported on board to assume duties as Assistant CIC Officer
- 27-31: LMA
- 27: LT ██████ reported on board to assume duties as Supply Officer

December:

- 01: LMA  
Christmas Party--Omni Hotel

02-10: IPT Upkeep Norfolk  
11-14: U/W TSTA III/ITT  
15: IPT Upkeep Norfolk  
16-31: IPT Norfolk--Holiday Standown  
18: ENS [REDACTED] reported on board to assume duties as Strike Warfare Officer  
19: ENS [REDACTED] reported on board to assume duties as Auxiliaries Officer

## NARRATIVE

1995 proved to be a very challenging and rewarding year for "La Familia," as the crew of the USS MITSCHER (DDG 57) is known. From Logistics Management Assessment to a USN/FGN Missile exercise, MITSCHER continually demonstrated its technical prowess, versatility, teamwork, professionalism and winning spirit. As a result of all the hard work that the officers and crew put forth during 1995 MITSCHER earned the Battle Efficiency award, or Battle "E" and all four command excellence awards.

In accomplishing this goal the ship also provided valuable inputs into the testing of various emergent weapons and communications systems as a test platform for the Temporary Surface Cryptologic Support Installation (TSCSI), the AN/SQQ-89 (V)6 Adjunct Subsystem, and the CNO Advanced Degaussing Project.

MITSCHER also set new standards and assisted in developing new tactics in several areas. MITSCHER recorded 11 missile hits in 11 SM-2 live-firing exercises, a record unmatched in the U.S. Navy. This distinction included the first-ever U.S. Navy engagement of a German Kormoran missile. MITSCHER also recorded the highest altitude surface-to-air intercept in U.S. Navy history. MITSCHER's electronic warfare team also developed an ECP that reorganized the ARLEIGH BURKE (DDG 51) class EW suite to improve its tactical effectiveness. This ECP was installed on MITSCHER during PSA and will be installed on the entire class of ships. MITSCHER was also selected as the only fleet participant in a CNO-directed GWS improvement program seminar in June in Washington, D.C.

MITSCHER also led the way in Strike Warfare as the only firing platform in the Navy equipped with the Mission Distribution System (MDS). This system enabled the MITSCHER strike team to send Tomahawk Land Attack Missile (TLAM) information known as Mission Data Updates (MDU) to other shooters. Additionally, MITSCHER was sponsored by CNO Surface Strike Directorate (N863) to attend and provide fleet input at the 1995 Tomahawk Operational Advisory Group (OAG) meeting in San Diego, CA. MITSCHER also maintained two LSE trained and fully qualified to conduct night vision device (NVD) flight operations with U.S. Army OH-58D helicopters, a capability shared with only one other ship in the Fleet.

As 1995 began the men of the MITSCHER looked forward to experimenting with these new technologies and capabilities and settled into what they knew would be a demanding schedule, even for a new construction ship. In early January MITSCHER slipped her berth in Norfolk, Virginia, and assumed Plane Guard for USS AMERICA (CV 66) during carrier landing qualifications. This responsibility proved to be quite a learning experience for the officers and crew because it was the first time that the MITSCHER had operated so closely with an aircraft carrier. It also presented a good opportunity to conduct coordinated USW, SUW, and AW for the ship because it operated with two French and two U.S. submarines as well as the carrier.

Once detached from the AMERICA, MITSCHER turned north and headed for Naval Weapon Station Charleston for an ammunition onload. The ship continued to train and maintain its active schedule throughout the month, pausing only for its first foreign port visit in Nassau, Bahamas, for four days of eagerly awaited liberty.

As February progressed the ship concentrated its efforts on the challenges CSSQT presented. Immediately after the inport portion of the qualification, the ship steamed for Port Canaveral, Florida, and the Puerto Rico Operating Area for the underway portion.

By the end of April MITSCHER had successfully completed CSSQT, NGFS qualification and a Missilex. The ship also managed to fit in port visits to St. Martin and Boston to recover from an aggressive underway schedule and to offer tours to the general public of the U.S. Navy's newest and most advanced destroyer.

In May and June the ship prepared for the Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE). Through the efforts of the Engineering Department MITSCHER received an overall adjective grade of "good." The Mitschermen were also lucky enough to return to Nassau during that month on a dependent's cruise.

By the end of June MITSCHER had settled into Pascagoula, MS, for a long overhaul period known as Post-shakedown Availability, or PSA. Quickly, the men of the MITSCHER found themselves adjusting

from the rigors of being underway to the challenges of being inport for three straight months of paperwork, drydock, and taking NALO flights home to see loved ones in Norfolk.

October marked the end of PSA and a return to Norfolk and the surrounding area. By November MITSCHER had again returned to the Puerto Rico Operating Area, this time for Combat System LTT. During this month the ship completed NGFS requalification, gunnery exercises and CIWS live fires. MITSCHER also operated with the German navy for the first time when it conducted the Kormoran Missilex. MITSCHER also pulled into St Maarten and St. Eustatius for several days of well-earned liberty.

By the end of the month the ship returned in Norfolk and concentrated its efforts on Logistics Management Assessment (LMA). MITSCHER earned an overall grade of "satisfactory." Included in that grade was a score of 98.6 % for crew support, the highest grade ever given in that area. Following the successful completion of that qualification, the ship again went to sea to complete TSTA III during mid-December. Upon return from yet another successful underway period, MITSCHER settled into holiday routine and the remainder of the year slipped away.

The men of MITSCHER truly distinguished themselves over the course of 1995 through their ingenuity, initiative and determination. More importantly, some of their efforts directly contributed to improving the warfighting capabilities of the Navy itself. Mitschermen have discovered the level of commitment and the tenacity required to truly achieve excellence.