



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS MITSCHER (DDG 57)
FLEET POST OFFICE
AE 09578-1275

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5750
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MAR 26 2003

From: Commanding Officer, USS MITSCHER (DDG 57)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR CY02

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G, Command Histories

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Commanding Officer Biography

1. In accordance with reference (a), USS MITSCHER's command history for calendar year 2002 is submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. A. Schmieley", written over the typed name.

D. A. SCHMIELEY

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

Command Title: USS MITSCHER (DDG 57)

UIC: 21687

Missions: Anti-Air Warfare, Anti-Submarine Warfare,
Anti-Surface Warfare, Strike Warfare, and
Maritime Interdiction Operations

ISIC: Commander, Destroyer Squadron TWENTY-TWO
(COMDESRON 22)

Commanding Officer: Commander D.A. Schmieley, USN

Homeport: Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia

Aircraft Assigned: None (Not Capable of Embarking Helos)

**USS MITSCHER (DDG 57)
CHRONOLOGY**

JANUARY

- 04 Distinguished Visitor: Commander, Carrier Group TWO,
Rear Admiral (RADM) J. J. Quinn, USN
- 05 Engineering Limited Training Team (ENG LTT) and Light-Off
Assessment (LOA) assessed by Afloat Training Group (ATG) Norfolk
- 10 Virginian Pilot Newspaper Interviews with the crew
- 14 Underway (U/W) for ATRC, CAST
- 15 Mk 45 5" Gun / Mk 15 Close In Weapons Systems (CIWS) PACFIRE,
WSN-7 NAVCERT with Combat Systems Department
- 16 Expendable Mobile ASW Training Target (EMATT) Launch with Combat
Systems Department
- 18 TACAN/ Identify Friend or Foe (IFF) Quick Look SESEF Range
exercise
- 22 Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) Waterfront Tactical Seminar with
Combat Systems Department
- 23 Initial Assessment I (IA) for Engineering Department assessed by
DESRON 22 and ATG Norfolk
- 28 Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART) II Inspection
evaluated by COMDESRON TWENTY-TWO (DESRON 22) and ATG Norfolk

FEBRUARY

- 04 Capstone Visit / Advanced Tomahawk Weapon Control System (ATWCS)
Material Certification (MATCERT) evaluated by DESRON 22 and ATG
Norfolk
- 11 Mission Capability Assessment System (MCAS) Installation, OSAT,
PATT, ATWCS, MATCERT/ PMS 400F Captain McManamon visit
- 12 Naval Surface Fire Support and Mobile Training Team (MTT) testing
with Combat Systems Department
- 19 Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification (CMTQ) LTT, BMTT, QDAS
- 22 Safety Survey I assessed by NAVSEA
- 27 Replenishment at Sea (RAS) with USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (T-AO 195)
- 28 Burial at Sea for Navy Veterans: Construction Mechanic Second
Class David A. Lynch, Radioman Senior Chief William Traylor, and
Airman Aviation Storekeeper Edward Parmele

MARCH

01 U/W for Local Training (Ship handling, Combat Systems Training Team (CSTT), Engineering Training Team (ETT), MOB)

03 Damage Control Olympics, Aviation Certification (AVCERT) preps

04-08 Inport at Port Everglades, Florida

08 RAS with USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (T-AO 195), HELO Services ELVA, Lost Plane Homing training with Combat Systems Department

09 Gun Exercise (GUNEX) with TRIMARAN in Jacksonville Oparea (JAXOA)

11 Chaff Firing exercise/ Surface Launched Missile exercise (SLAMEX) with Combat Systems Department

12 RAS with USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (T-AO 195)

18 Intermediate Supply Assessment (ISA), Supply Management Assessment (SMA) for Supply Department assessed by DESRON 22 and ATG Norfolk

22 Norwegian Officers' Visit

25 Link 11 Long Look / Aviation Certification (AVCERT) with Operations Department

27 Romanian Officers' tour

28 3M Inspection assessed by ATG Norfolk that concluded with 94.7 % Shipwide Accomplishment Confidence Factor.

APRIL

01 Navigation Department LTT, Engineering Department LTT assessed by ATG Norfolk

04 Battle "E" Award Presentation by Commodore O'Bryan, COMDESRON 22 (CDS22)

05 Underway for Opposing Forces (OPFOR) exercise with GEORGE WASHINGTON BATTLE GROUP (GWBATGRU)

09 RAS with USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (T-AO 195)

12 Commander Destroyer Squadron FOURTEEN, Captain Jackson, CO's of USS DEYO and USS STOUT visit

14 Combined War Exercise in South Puerto Rico Oparea (SPROA) SCCEX 2

15 RAS with USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (T-AO 195)

21 RAS with USNS LARAMIE (T-AO 203)

23-26 Port Visit at Mayport, Florida, Shipwide training assessed by ATG

Mayport LTT

26 Underway from Mayport, FL.
26 RAS with USNS KANAWHA (T-AO 196)
28 Chaplain Stevens, COMDESRON 22 Chaplain, visits
29 RAS with USNS LARAMIE (T-AO 203)

MAY

08 SEMAT II/C5RA Phase I assessed by ATG Norfolk
09 Aviation Readiness Qualification (ARQ), Combat Readiness Exercise
(CRA) with Operations and Combat Systems Department
10 Initial Assessment (IA) for Engineering Department assessed by
DESRON 22 and ATG Norfolk
11 AEGIS Baseline 5.3.8 Upgrade with Combat Systems
12 Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification (CMTQ) final qual evaluated
by DESRON 22 and ATG Norfolk
18 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Trainees' (50) visit
20 Combat Systems, Command, Control, Communications And Computer
Readiness Assessment (C5RA)/ Systems And Equipment Material
Assessment Team (SEMAT) Visit
23 Admiral (ADM) Antanitus Space and Naval Warfare (SPAWAR) visit
28 18 Midshipmen arrive for Midshipmen Summer Cruise Phase I

JUNE

01 Clean the Bay Volunteer Program, 11 MITSCHERMEN volunteer
02 Supply Management Inspection (SMI) for Supply Department assessed
by DESRON 22 and ATG Norfolk
06 Underway for Target/Hull Sinking/Destruction Exercise (SINKEX)
with USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), USS HAWES (FFG 53), USS OSCAR
AUSTIN (DDG 79), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), and USS BRISCOE (DD
977)
08-13 Core Training for Midshipman (CORTRAMID)
09 Burial at Sea for Navy Veterans: Hospital Corpsman Chief Andrew
Kruk, Motor Machinist Second Class Donald A. Mitchell, and
Private First Class Wayne F. Miller
11 RAS with USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (T-AO 195)
12 Small Arms Familiarization Fire (FAMFIRE)

13 RAS with USNS LEROY GRUMMAN (T-AO 195)/ Inport Norfolk Naval
Base, Virginia
14 CDS22 Midshipman Picnic at COMNAVSURFLANT Park Center
15 USS BARNEY (ex-DDG 6) Reunion: 100 visitors arrive for ship tour
20 Electrical Safety LTT assessed by ATG Norfolk
23 Electrical Safety Survey II evaluated by NAVSEA / Morale Welfare
and Recreation (MWR) Kings Dominion Navy Family Day
25 Engineering Department LTT assessed by ATG Norfolk
26 SLAMEX Phase I with Combat Systems Department

JULY

01 Underway Demonstration (UD) for Engineering Department evaluated
by CDS22 and ATG Norfolk
04 4th of July Holiday / Dress Ship
14 Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Safety Award presentation by
Commodore O'Bryan, Commander Destroyer Squadron TWENTY-TWO.
18 MWR Small Ship Softball Tournament Champions with a standing of
12 - 2.
22 Underway Demonstration (UD) for Engineering Department evaluated
by CDS22 and ATG Norfolk
30 Final Evaluation Period (FEP) evaluated by CDS 22 and ATG Norfolk

AUGUST

01 CO's/Commanders' Meeting aboard USS HARRY S. TRUMAN (CVN 75)
06-07 Warfare Commanders Conference/ Anti-Terrorism Exercise (ATEX)
Brief
09 MITSCHER Change of Command - CDR Don Schmieley relieves CDR Mike
Barclift, COMCARGRUTWO (CCG2) RADM J. Stufflebeam and COMDESRON22
Commodore O'Bryan as guests
12-16 Vessel Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) training at Expeditionary
Warfare Training Group Atlantic (EWTGLANT) Little Creek, Virginia
with VBSS Blue and Gold Teams
15 BGMTT brief / Local Area Network (LAN) Upgrade / VANDALEX TLM
gear installation with Combat Systems Department
14 Ammunition Onload / Anchor Drop Test with Operations Department
15 CO, CMC, OMBUDSMAN, and Family Support Group (FSG) president

luncheon. / Integrated Training Team (ITT) fast cruise

20 ISAT Phase III / Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS) Scenario

22 Final Evaluation Period (FEP) and Full Power Run evaluated by
CDS22 and ATG Norfolk/ enroute to VACAPES / MOB-N-3/5-SF
Precision Anchorage / AW-24-SF Non Firing Detect to Engage (DTE)
Sequence test

23 MIREM 21 Computer installation

24 U/W from Norfolk Naval Base, Virginia with USS HARRY S TRUMAN
(CVN 75), USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), USS
OSCAR AUSTIN (DDG 79), USS BRISCOE (DD 977), USS DEYO (DD 989),
and USS HAWES (FFG 53); enroute Puerto Rico Operation Area for
Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX) / MIREM 21 Data
Collection / MH-60s Deck Certification and Wind Envelope
validation

26-28 VANDAL exercise (VANALEX) with USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), USS
OSCAR AUSTIN (DDG 79), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), USS YORKTOWN (CG
51), and USS COLE (DDG 67)

28 Anti-Submarine warfare (ASW) proficiency training

29 Main Space Fire Doctrine (MSFD) General Quarters (GQ) / Naval
Surface Fire Support (NSFS) Scenario in Puerto Rico OPAREA
conducted with USS BRISCOE (DD 977), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75),
and USS DEYO (DD 989)

30 RAS with USNS JOHN LENTHALL (T-AO 189)

SEPTEMBER

01 Enroute Puerto Rico Operation Area / CCG2 RADM J. Stufflebeam and
CDS22 Chaplain Stevens embark / Mk 45 5", Mk 15 CIWS, 25mm
PACFIRE

03 RAS with USNS JOHN LENTHALL (T-AO 189) / SAMSLEX rehearsal /
Deceptive Lightning exercise with Combat Systems Department

03 STREAM RAID exercise conducted with USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), USS
HAWES (FFG 53), USS BRISCOE (DD 977), USS DEYO (DD 989), and USS
DONALD COOK (DDG 75)

04 Virgin Islands Passage transit

03-14 Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO) Training, events 1-8
conducted with GOSPORT, USNS KANAWHA (T-AO 196), USNS MOUNT BAKER
(T-AE 34), and USNS JOHN LENTHALL (T-AO 189)

04 Tactical Land Attack Missile (TLAM) Quickdraw Exercise with
 Combat Systems Department

05 MARCONEX 1

06 PACFIRE, TDU, TLAM Quickdraw / Surface Ship Radiated Noise
 Measurement SSRNM Brief

07 Torpedo Exercise (TORPEX) / Global Positioning System (GPS) GPS-
 EX / RAS with USNS KANAWHA (T-AO 196)

08 ADEX 1 / Search and Rescue exercise (SAREX)

09 OPINTEL Fusion exercise

10 GPS-EX

11 Tactical Land Attack Exercise (TLAMEX) / ADEX 2 by Combat Systems
 Department

12 RAS with USNS KANAWHA (T-AO 196)

13 ADEX 3 / RAS with USNS KANAWHA (T-AO 196)

21 RAS with USNS KANAWHA (T-AO 196) / TLAMEX / Information Warfare
 Exercise (IW) Jeopardy with Combat Systems Department

25 Junior Officer shiphandling training with HSTBATGRU.

26 Inport at Norfolk Naval Base, Virginia

OCTOBER

05 JTFEX 03-1 FPC/Air Coordination Conference on USS HARRY S TRUMAN

08 Sailor and Spouse pre-deployment brief with ships crew

08 Commander Naval Surface Forces Atlantic (COMNAVSURFLANT) visit by
 RADM T. Etnyre

15-17 Inport Yorktown, Virginia for Ammunition Onload

16 JUNIPER COBRA exercise training with Combat Systems

17 Family Day Cruise from Yorktown, VA. / Inport NORVA

22 Anti-Terrorism exercise (ATEX) with Force Protection
 watchstanders

23 Family, Singles pre-deployment briefs

25 U/W from NORVA for Joint Forces Exercise (JTFEX) 03-1 with
 HARRY S. TRUMAN Battle Group (HSTBATGRU) with USS SAN JACINTO (CG
 56), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), USS OSCAR AUSTIN (DDG 79), USS
 BRISCOE (DD 977), USS DEYO (989), and USS HAWES (FFG 53)/ OPSECON
 EX / Mk 15 CIWS PACFIRE

- 25 Burial At Sea for Navy Veterans: Hospitalman Senior Chief John J. Mechtel, and Radioman Third Class Frank Hall
- 27 RAS with USNS PATUXENT (T-AO 201)
- 30 NSFS Scenario with Combat Systems

NOVEMBER

- 06 Inport at Norfolk Naval Base, Virginia
- 07 Pre-Operational Movement (POM) I begins
- 08-17 Automatic Bus Transfer (ABT) MACHALT 505 repair conducted by Fleet Training Service Center Atlantic (FTSCLANT) and AMSEC Corporation
- 14 Alcohol and Drug Abuse Managers/Supervisors Training (ADAMS) Conducted by Drug and Alcohol Prevention Administration (DAPA) Norfolk
- 20 POM I ends / POM II begins
- 25 115 Students/Faculty from Sewell's Point Elementary School visit
- 27 Thanksgiving Dinner with ship watchstanders

DECEMBER

- 02 POM II ends / 2002 Senior and Junior Sailors of the Year named (Interior Communications First Class Surface Warfare [REDACTED] and Engineman Third Class Surface Warfare [REDACTED] respectively)
- 07 Underway for Sixth-month Deployment with the HARRY S. TRUMAN (CVN 75) Battle Group. Ships in company include USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), USS OSCAR AUSTIN (DDG 79), USS DEYO (DD 989), USS BRISCOE (DD 977), USS HAWES (FFG 53), USNS MOUNT BAKER (T-AE 34), and USNS KANAWHA (T-AO 196)
- 10 Straits of Gibraltar (STROG) transit
- 11 Tactical Land Attack Missile Exercise (TLAMEX) with Combat Systems department
- 23-27 Inport Aksaz, Turkey
- 25 Christmas celebration and dinner with ship's crew
- 27 Underway to Eastern Mediterranean for duties assigned
- 30 CAESER SWORD exercise with Combat Systems Department

USS MITSCHER (DDG 57) 2002 NARRATIVE

The New Year began with MITSCHER moored in Portsmouth, Virginia in Moon Engineering Shipyard to finish the upkeep and maintenance begun the previous deployment. While finishing the necessary modernization, MITSCHER aggressively began preparations for the Inter Deployment Training Cycle. As a result of the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center, USS MITSCHER (DDG 57) started 2002 with a heightened physical security posture and an eagerness to defend her nation's citizens.

On January 4th MITSCHER welcomed Rear Admiral (RADM) J. J. Quinn, Commander Carrier Group TWO (CCG2), USS HARRY S. TRUMAN Battle Group. Towards the end of the year MITSCHER and rest of the USS HARRY S. TRUMAN battle group would be departing for deployment. Admiral Quinn discussed the importance of the training cycle and the importance of each sailor to this cause. The visit included a tour of MITSCHER's spaces including the Combat Information Center and Central Control Station. Engineering began its phase in the IDTC a day later with the Light-Off Assessment (LOA). This inspection, conducted by Atlantic Training Group Norfolk, tested the ship's ability to go underway after a lengthy stay in the repair facility. The Engineering Department did well as the inspectors granted the department the go ahead to begin their training.

The following week MITSCHER went to sea to begin preparations for her deployment, the fourth. This included Anti-submarine Warfare exercises using the Torpedo Countermeasures Transmitting Set AN/SLQ-25A, commonly referred to as Nixie, and an Expendable Mobile ASW Training Target (EMATT), which the ship can track using SONAR, as it would an actual submarine. This was just the beginning of many Combat System qualifications for the ship.

Continuing the Inter-deployment Training Cycle, MITSCHER entered its first major Engineering inspection with an Initial Assessment (IA) on January 23rd. IA assesses the Engineering department's operations and material conditions, in addition to such programs as Hearing Conservation, Tag-out, Electrical Safety, Lube Oil/ Fuel Oil Quality Management and the ship's ability to combat a main space fire. Through the few days of the inspection, the Engineering Department went through several evolutions that tested their

Enclosure (3)

ability to operate the ship's services. DESRON 22 and Afloat Training Group (ATG) Norfolk performed the assessment for the ship. This was the first of what would be the three major Engineering inspections: IA, Underway Demonstration (UD), and the Final Evaluation Period (FEP).

Command wide, the ship entered its second phase of the Command Assessment Of Readiness And Training (CART II) inspection. On January 28th, inspectors from Afloat Training Group, Norfolk VA (ATGN) assessed every MITSCHER program. CART II is a robust, performance-based assessment of administrative and combat readiness in primary mission areas. The inspection identified any areas that needed a training emphasis during Tailored Ship Training Availability (TSTA). CART II produced a quick look of MITSCHER in preparation for the Final Evaluation Period (FEP). The ship did well for CART II in all areas, from the training program to its manning cycles.

On February 4th, forty-two Generals and Admirals, including a retired four-star U.S. Marine Corps General and a retired four-star Air Force General, visited USS MITSCHER for a CAPSTONE visit. The National Defense University (NDU)'s Capstone Course is mandatory for all active duty Officers promoted to the General/Flag rank. The course focuses on national security issues, policies and strategies. The tour included information on MITSCHER's contribution to battle group operations and its use by the Joint Task Force Commander. MITSCHER also briefly mentioned her unit's perspective on retention as a theme applicable across unit and joint boundaries. Her mission concentrated on basic orientation with an emphasis on joint and combined operations. It was an overall success for the ship and her crew. During the visit inspectors from Naval Surface Warfare Center in Port Hueneme, CA conducted the Advanced Tomahawk Weapon Control System (ATWCS) Material Certification. This is the first step toward achieving full operational certification for cruise missile weapon system operation. MITSCHER's Combat Systems Department fared well and was on their way towards earning the Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification (CMTQ).

MITSCHER completed Combat Systems Phase I requirements and conducted the first of three Phase II ISAT exercises on February 5th. The Inport Synthetic ASW Training (ISAT) Phase II is a relatively new program of exercises designed to train and test the proficiency of the entire combat and sonar

watch teams in all facets of ASW prior to deployment. The ISAT program provided objective based ASW training from the individual unit level to the battle group level. Both the CIC and sonar training teams did well in their inspection, moving ever closer towards CMTQ. Later in the month on a sunny February 28th day, MITSCHER conducted a Burial-At-Sea ceremony for the following Navy Veterans: Construction Mechanic Second Class David A. Lynch, USN, Vet; Radioman Senior Chief William Traylor, Sr., USN (Ret.) and Aviation Storekeeper Airman Edward Parmele, USN (Vet.) The ceremony included a rifle guard, honor guard, and a color guard that only added to the respect that the crewmembers paid for these individuals.

Entering March the ship enjoyed a port visit in Port Everglades, Florida. While there, the Broward Navy League hosted a reception on the 4th for an all-hands-party in downtown. It was a great turnout as the crew took the invitation and lived every moment. This was a great port visit for the crew, who up to that point were busy with initial qualification phase of the IDTC. It was a well-deserved break for the crew.

There were several more tours at the end of the month as seven Officers from the Norwegian Navy visited on March 22nd. They were treated to a ship's history brief and luncheon with the Commanding Officer, CDR Mike Barclift. Five days later on March 27th the ship hosted three Officers of the Romanian Navy, including the Chief of Rules and Regulation Compartment of the Navy Staff. This visit allowed the foreign Officers an opportunity to familiarize themselves with some of the standards and practices of the United States Navy -- particularly those practices of a guided missile destroyer. The visit served the simultaneous function of giving the foreign officers a chance to learn manning structure and mode of operation, as well as to demonstrate to them, in a practical and unclassified manner, how the ship fulfills various missions. They came away impressed by the display of enthusiasm from the MITSCHERMEN. A week later on March 29th, four Aviation Certification (AVCERT) inspectors from NAVAIR inspected the ship's Flight Deck, Forward VERTREP Station, Aviation Fuel Systems, Flight Deck Lighting, Helicopter Start/Servicing Power, AFFF Systems, Aviation Firefighting Equipment, Stabilized Glide Slope Indicator (SGSI), Helo Control Station Exterior Communications Systems, and TACAN system. The inspectors gave MITSCHER an overall rating of satisfactory.

MITSCHER became the first Arleigh Burke class destroyer to receive three consecutive Battle Efficiency Awards. The 2001 Battle "E" was her fifth award overall since the ship's commissioning in 1994. Commander, Destroyer Squadron TWENTY-TWO, Captain M. Stewart O'Bryan, presented the plaque to MITSCHER's Commanding Officer, CDR Mike Barclift, on April 4th, and observed as the 2001 Sailor of the Year and Junior Sailor of the Year painted the symbolic white "E" on the ship's bridge wings.

The month of April saw the MITSCHER go underway for an OPFOR exercise with the GEORGE WASHINGTON Battle Group. MITSCHER participated with the group by simulating an enemy vessel with several other small vessels, training the carrier group for combat readiness. After three tense weeks of training MITSCHER visited Mayport, FL on April 24th to take advantage of Afloat Training Group Mayport (ATGM) training teams and for some much needed relaxation. The primary areas of focus for this training period were Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification (with emphasis on the RGM-84 Harpoon cruise missile system), Navigation, Deck Seamanship, Aviation, Supply (S-1 operations), Visual Communications and Vessel Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) tactics.

With deployment late in the year, MITSCHER entered May prepared for her Combat Systems, Command, Control, Communications and Computer Readiness Assessment (C5RA)/ Systems And Equipment Material Assessment Team (SEMAT) Visit between May 8th-May 20th. The C5RA inspection applies to all ships within the Atlantic and Pacific regions and provides a comprehensive assessment of the ship's Combat Systems, C4I, Support Equipment, and Logistics condition. The Systems and Equipment Material Assessment Team (SEMAT) II Visit is a condition-based assessment program for HM&E systems and equipment. It is a direct outgrowth from a COMNAVSURFLANT policy to consolidate the numerous redundant inspections and assessment visits that were paralyzing ships of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

One of the final hurdles in MITSCHER's deployment preparations was the Cruise Missile Tactical Qualification. On May 12th, inspectors from COMDESRON TWENTY-TWO (CDS 22) along with a team from ATG Norfolk conducted the final inspection for Combat Systems. CMTQ is a required step to advance from the

Basic to the Intermediate stage of the Inter-deployment Training Cycle. CMTQ conducted by COMDESRON TWENTY-TWO, as senior evaluator, with technical assistance from Afloat Training Group. On May 18th MITSCHER hosted 60 prospective Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) prospective agents for a familiarization tour. The purpose of this visit was to introduce the agents to the Surface Navy. This visit allowed them an opportunity to see up-close the missions and functions of a guided missile destroyer.

The ship welcomed RADM Dave Antanitus, Director of Space and Naval Warfare (SPAWAR) Installations and Logistics for a visit on May 23rd. The purpose of Rear Admiral Antanitus' visit was to remain connected to the waterfront by visiting at least one ship a week. The objectives of the visits were to improve customer service by acting on feedback from the fleet customers and to improve processes at SPAWAR. Rear Admiral Antanitus met with the CO, XO and others directly related to SPAWAR systems or installation such as the EMO, CSMO, ETC, ITC, STO, etc. Other Officers accompanying the Admiral were Captain Tim Naple, Director of Integrated Afloat C4ISR installations and Commander Art Billingsley, Officer In Charge of SPAWARSYSCEN Charleston.

On June 1, 2002, 11 MITSCHER volunteers participated in the annual Clean the Bay Day, working along 3.5 miles of the Chesapeake Bay shoreline. For three hours, the volunteers sloshed through one-and-a-half miles of muddy Chesapeake Bay coastline. The volunteers collected 1,100 pounds of trash, including a couch, two chairs, a day bed with trundle, three automobile wheels and even a pair of crutches. The cleanup proved to be a morale booster for the community in the Chesapeake region who were grateful for the efforts by all volunteers.

Although nominally focused on Supply Department, the Supply Management Inspection (SMI) was in reality an all hands event held on June 2nd. SMI assessed not only Supply's operational practices and management abilities, but also command-wide adherence to such programs as Maintenance Assistance Modules (MAM), Hazardous Material Minimization Center (HAZMATMINCEN) and Parts Management. Everyone in MITSCHER contributed toward the successful completion of SMI. For the ship's efforts, the inspectors from ATG Norfolk gave an overall outstanding report for the Supply Department.

Fourteen Midshipmen embarked MITSCHER on June 8th for their Core Training of Midshipmen (CORTRAMID) Summer Cruise. The following week, MITSCHER received 18 more Midshipmen from various ROTCs and the US Naval Academy. While onboard the Midshipmen had an outstanding opportunity to see the surface Navy in action with a seven day underway period, including a Sink Exercise (SINKEX) and ship handling evolutions. The purpose of Midshipmen summer training is to further the professional development of Midshipmen by introducing them to the operational Navy, reinforcing their academic year programs, instilling a sense of pride in their identification with the Service, and inclining them toward Officer careers in the Naval Service. With their arrival, MITSCHER went underway for a Sink Exercise with USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), USS OSCAR AUSTIN (DDG 79), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), and USS HAWES (FFG 53). The group spent the week underway to conduct live firing exercises with their weapons. For MITSCHER it would be her Mk 45 5" gun and various missiles. In the middle of the week MITSCHER honored three Veterans, laying them to rest in a solemn Burial At Sea. Laid to rest on June 9th were: Hospital Corpsman Chief Andrew Kruk, USN (Ret.); Motor Machinist Mate Second Class Donald Allister Mitchell, USN (Vet.); and Private First Class Wayne Francis Miller, USA (Vet.).

With the ship back inport Naval Station Norfolk on June 16th, USS MITSCHER (DDG 57) hosted nearly one hundred former crewmembers of USS BARNEY (DDG 6) for a reunion and celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the U.S. Navy's destroyers. MITSCHER sailors had the unexpected honor of meeting two crewmembers of the previous USS MITSCHER. Siras D. Browning, BARNEY's Commanding Officer from May 1971 to August 1972, had previously commanded USS MITSCHER (DDG 35). Boatswain Mate First Class (BM1) [REDACTED] also served on USS BARNEY from 1965 to 1968 and then on USS MITSCHER (DL 2). The tour group was brought around the entire ship, seeing such places as the pilothouse, boat deck, and flight deck. A post tour ceremony on the flight deck saw the MITSCHER CO present CDR Browning with the ship's traditional khaki ball cap, one of Admiral Mitscher's memorable ideas and a continued tradition on the ship. The end of the month, on June 21, 2002, Lieutenant Commander Cary Krause relieved Lieutenant Commander Patrick Kelly as Executive Officer of USS MITSCHER (DDG 57.) LCDR Kelly transferred to Tactical Training Group Atlantic in Damneck, Virginia.

MITSCHER had their most important engineering inspection of the phase, Underway Demonstration (UD) with inspectors from ATG Norfolk. During the two-day inspection where MITSCHER was underway, the engineering department was inspected for its ability to conduct space evolutions and casualty control drills while in a deployment state. Though the ship did not come away with a complete inspection, they were left with a positive encouragement from the inspectors to excel later in the month. USS MITSCHER (DDG 57) received the 2001 Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Safety Award in a July 12th ceremony on the ship's flight deck. The Commander of Destroyer Squadron TWENTY-TWO, Captain M. Stewart O'Bryan, visited the ship to personally present the award to the Commanding Officer. Although MITSCHER has received three consecutive safety awards from the Commander of Naval Surface Forces, Atlantic (COMNAVSURFLANT), this is the ship's first CNO Safety Award. The last half of the month began with MITSCHER completing its Underway Demonstration certification and ended with ship wide Final Evaluation Period. With FEP, the ATG inspectors conducted an across the board survey of the ship's ability to train the crew. Every training group was evaluated, and exercises from man overboard drills to a mass conflagration general quarters (GQ) were inspected.

On August 9th CDR Don Schmieley relieved CDR Michael Barclift as Commanding Officer during a ceremony onboard MITSCHER while in port Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia. Guests included Commander, CARRIER GROUP TWO RADM QUINN, Commander DESTROYER SQUADRON TWENTY TWO Captain M. Stewart O'Bryan, and family members of the CO and PCO. CDR Barclift transferred to the Staff of Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group Eight as Surface Operations Officer. The ceremony was emotional for both parties as the crew welcomed the new CO with the traditional saying, "SEIZE THE DAY!" Post-ceremony activities included a reception at the North Carolina House in the Norfolk Naval Base.

After completing the first phase of pre-deployment training, MITSCHER got underway on August 24th for the Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX), the second phase of Battle group training. During the month long underway, MITSCHER exercised her Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS) capabilities, fired her standard missiles (VANALEX, STREAM RAID), practiced Tomahawk missile engagements and Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO) with the USS HARRY S TRUMAN Battle Group. Battle Group members included USS HARRY

S TRUMAN (CVN 75), USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), USS OSCAR AUSTIN (DDG 79), USS BRISCOE (DD 977), USS DEYO (DD 989), and USS HAWES (FFG 53).

The ship's first missile firing exercise, VANDALEX, came just a few days after getting underway beginning on August 26-28th. VANDALEX presented the MITSCHER a challenge to maximize training and exercise Battlegroup air warfare capabilities. For the MITSCHER, as well as other participants USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), USS OSCAR AUSTIN (DDG 79), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), USS COLE (DDG 67), and USS YORKTOWN (CG 51), VANDALEX also prepared the combatants for defense against supersonic, sea skimming anti-ship missile threats that would be encountered during the upcoming deployment. MITSCHER performed well with this exercise, firing several missiles without any major problems.

With MITSCHER's missile exercises well underway, the ship also tested its surface fire capabilities through the NSFS. The Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS) exercise trains the ship's crew to deliver fire support to a Landing Force under a wartime combat condition. This entails training to coordinate communication with the Landing Force on the shore and to provide counter-fire for the ship's defense. Off the shores of the then Naval firing range, the Puerto Rican island Vieques, MITSCHER along with USS BRISCOE (DD 977), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), and USS DEYO (DD 989), fired several rounds from her Mk 45, 5 inch, 54 caliber gun mount into several preplanned targets. MITSCHER had a satisfactory NSFS run, due in part to the crew's teamwork and training.

This success carried onto the ship's next missile exercise, STREAM RAID. Exercise STREAM RAID trains a ship's personnel to fire surface to air missiles accurately in an Anti-ship Missile Doctrine (ASMD) environment against multiple low flying targets. STREAM RAID allows the ships to focus shipwide team training and coordination against anti-surface missiles. Joining the MITSCHER for the exercise were USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75), USS HAWES (FFG 53), USS BRISCOE (DD 977), and USS DEYO (DD 989).

In order for MITSCHER to prepare for the possibility of conducting merchant vessel boardings in the Mediterranean Sea and Arabian Gulf, the Battlegroup conducted several MIO exercises from September 3rd that utilized the various auxiliary ships in the area. MIO, Maritime Interdiction Operations, gives allied Naval vessels the United Nations (UN) backed right to board a merchant vessel and search it for illegal goods and other smuggled cargo. Created by the UN after the end of the 1991 Gulf War, MIO is intended to prevent illegal storages of oil and goods from coming in or out of Iraq. Just in the last couple of years, MIO has also extended to the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea to conduct searches for evidence linking to terrorist networks. Along with the HARRY S TRUMAN battlegroup, Fleet Auxiliary ships USNS KANAWHA (T-AO 196), USNS MOUNT BAKER (T-AE 34), and USNS JOHN LENTHALL (T-AO 189) along with the torpedo recovery vessel GOSPORT acted as the merchant vessels for the events. MITSCHER's blue and gold teams, consisting of 12 sailors each, trained on various MIO tactics from embarking/ debarking a ship, inspection of the ship's cargo, interrogations, and evidence searching. Both teams were also subjected to controlled hostile situations that tested their mental and physical ability to act under intense pressure. The training also gave the ship's crew a chance to exercise their logistical ability to support the teams. Over the eight increasingly challenging MIO events, both the blue and gold teams increased their level of boarding proficiency performing well and with little error.

During the middle of the exercise, the ship also welcomed Commander, Carrier Group TWO, RADM J. Stufflebeam, for a brief with the crew. Due to a severe tropical depression, MITSCHER returned a week early to Norfolk with the rest of the battle group on September 27, completing her battle group qualification.

October was the beginning of the last two months for the MITSCHER and crew in Norfolk. On October 10, Commander, Naval Surface Forces Atlantic, RADM T. Etnyre, paid a visit to meet the wardroom and crew. There, RADM Etnyre discussed the ship's importance to the deployment. He was treated to a tour of the ship's spaces where he came away impressed by the MITSCHER standard of excellence. MITSCHER departed Norfolk on the 15th to Yorktown, Va., for ammunition onload. Two days later, a family day cruise was held with departure from Yorktown. MITSCHER families witnessed operations by a

pair of Landing Craft Air Cushioned (LCAC) vehicles and shipboard exercises. The ship returned to Norfolk that same evening with guests happy for the chance to see their loved one's ship. The end of the month was busy for the MITSCHER as she went underway on October 25th with the HARRY S TRUMAN battle group to participate in the Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX). This is the final training event before deployment consisting of "unscripted" War Games with the HST Battle Group and selected 'enemy' ships as played by other naval ships and aircraft. Two days later on October 27th, USS MITSCHER laid to rest the following Navy Veterans in a Burial At Sea ceremony: Hospitalman Senior Chief John J. Mechtel USN (Ret.), Radioman Third Class Frank A. Hall USNR (Vet.), and Seaman Apprentice Anthony Campbell USN (Ret.) Within those two weeks, MITSCHER continued missile exercises until November 7th, when she returned inport Norfolk.

The month of November brought the crew its last chance to prepare for deployment, as well as receive some much needed relaxation. November 7th was the beginning of the Pre-Operational Movement (POM) period, where half the crew took leave for two weeks. During the first half of the month, the ship saw various repairs, such as topside deck resurfacing, in-ship main deck resurfacing, and the upgrade of various ship electrical Automatic Bus Transfers (ABTs). POM I ship's crew returned from leave on November 20th, where they turned over duties with the POM II crew, allowing them to begin their leave period. The second half of the month saw continued work on the ship's decks and ABTs. However with all the work going on, MITSCHER and her crew set some time aside to welcome 115 students and teachers from Sewell's Point Elementary School for a day tour. The tour, which occurred on November 25th, allowed the children to witness first hand the life of a MITSCHER sailor in various parts of the ship. Those who had stood the duty on November 27th, Thanksgiving Day, were treated a fine Turkey dinner, courtesy of the ship's cooking staff.

With the crew all back and rested from POM leave, MITSCHER departed for the Mediterranean on December 5th. On a cold, rainy morning, crewmembers hugged and kissed their loved ones goodbye, with promises to be safe and to return home. MITSCHER was not the only ship to leave that day. The rest of the HARRY S TRUMAN battle group, including the nuclear carrier USS HARRY S TRUMAN (CVN 75), cruiser USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), destroyers USS DONALD COOK

(DDG 75), USS OSCAR AUSTIN (DDG 79), USS DEYO (DD 989), USS BRISCOE (DD 977), and frigate USS HAWES (FFG 53) also departed. After five days of transit across the Atlantic Ocean, which included several combat and operational exercises, the MITSCHER passed through the Straits of Gibraltar on December 10th. The transit proved to be a safe one, allowing the MITSCHER and her fellow battle group ships into the Mediterranean Sea. The next two weeks saw the MITSCHER participate in several exercises, focusing on tomahawk employment and Sixth Fleet operating procedures. After a RAS with the USNS KANAWHA on the 16th, the crew prepared for the first port visit of the deployment.

On December 23, MITSCHER moored at the Turkish Naval Base in Aksaz, Turkey. This was a first for many of the crewmembers that had not been in a European country. The 5-day stay allowed the crew to witness and participate in a very unique culture. They were exposed to Turkish rugs, tea, and the popular spices. Those who were all about sightseeing visited one of the greatest archaeological sites in history. The ancient city of Ephesus, completely intact, is one of the most preserved Roman cities today. Crewmembers had the pleasure of viewing the ruins, including the popular and preserved amphitheater, which housed 25,000 citizens thousands of years ago for plays and musicals. The stay in Aksaz allowed the MITSCHER to celebrate Christmas in a foreign port. MITSCHER departed Aksaz, Turkey on December 27th, continuing her mission in the Mediterranean.