



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS SAIPAN (LHA 2)  
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From: Commanding Officer, USS SAIPAN (LHA 2)  
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Naval Historical Center  
Washington Navy Yard, 901 M Street SE, Bldg. 57,  
Washington, D. C. 20374-5060

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY OF USS SAIPAN (LHA 2) FOR 1998

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command History 1998  
(2) GENADMIN SOPA ADMIN NORFOLK VA 021426Z JAN 98  
(3) Live the Dream Martin Luther King Program Brochure  
(4) GENADMIN SOPA ADMIN NORFOLK VA 201426Z FEB 98  
(5) GENADMIN COMNAVSURFLANT NORFOLK VA 171440Z MAR 98  
(6) GENADMIN COMPHIBGRU TWO 182300Z MAR 98  
(7) GENADMIN COMPHIBRON EIGHT 191836Z MAR 98  
(8) Command Inspection Results, dtd 02 APR 98  
(9) Letter from Senator Dan Coats, dtd 19 MAY 98  
(10) SAIPAN Family Day Cruise Brochure  
(11) SAIPAN Welcome Aboard Brochure in French  
(12) GENADMIN COMPHIBGRU TWO 061955Z JUL 98  
(13) GENADMIN COMNAVAIRLANT NORFOLK VA 081355Z JUL 98  
(14) SAIPAN PAO Article on Rescue At Sea  
(15) GENADMIN USS SAIPAN 280300Z JUL 98  
(16) GENADMIN COMSIXTHFLT 281101Z JUL 98  
(17) GENADMIN COMSIXTHFLT 290544Z JUL 98  
(18) GENADMIN COMSIXTHFLT 290558Z JUL 98  
(19) GENADMIN COMSIXTHFLT 291136Z JUL 98  
(20) GENADMIN COMPHIBGRU TWO 291845Z JUL 98  
(21) GENADMIN CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK 300700Z JUL 98  
(22) GENADMIN COMSIXTHFLT 061400Z AUG 98  
(23) GENADMIN USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GE 221330Z SEP 98  
(24) GENADMIN USS SAIPAN 201815Z OCT 98  
(25) Announcement of Change of Command aboard USS SAIPAN  
(26) Assumption of Command, dtd 10 NOV 98  
(27) GENADMIN USS SAIPAN 100831Z NOV 98  
(28) CAPT J.S. Gershon, USN, Biography  
(29) CAPT M. P. Nowakowski, USN, Biography  
(30) USS SAIPAN Tiger Cruise Brochure  
(31) USS SAIPAN Deployment Stats  
(32) 3.5" disk of selected USS SAIPAN Public Affairs News  
Releases

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY OF USS SAIPAN (LHA 2) FOR 1998

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (32) are forwarded.

  
M. P. NOWAKOWSKI

Copy to: (w/o enclosures 2 through 32)  
COMNAVSURFLANT  
COMPHIBGRU TWO

USS SAIPAN (LHA-2)  
Command History - 1998

1. Command Composition and Organization.

a. Mission. To embark, deploy, and land elements of a Marine amphibious landing force able to conduct opposed assault operations from the sea. Elements of the landing force may include AV-8 Harrier attack jets, CH-46, CH-53, AH-1W and UH-1 helicopters, conventional landing craft, air cushion or tracked amphibious vehicles or a combination of these elements. SAIPAN serves as the flagship for the Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) operations. Evacuation, disaster relief, and hospital ship are secondary missions of SAIPAN.

b. Organizational Structure.

(1) Immediate Senior Command:

Commander Amphibious Group TWO, Norfolk, VA

(2) Units under operational/administrative control: None

(3) Command Organization:

Commanding Officer

Captain Joseph S. Gershon, USN  
(01 January 1998 - 10 November 1998)

Captain Michael P. Nowakowski, USN  
(10 November 1998 - 31 December 1998)

Executive Officer

Commander Michael W. Brannon, USN  
(01 January 1998 - 31 December 1998)

Command Master Chief

BMCM(SW) C. H. Lovett, USN  
(01 January 1998 - 31 December 1998)

(4) Composition: SAIPAN's crew is composed of 64 officers and 842 enlisted personnel

2. Chronology.

02 JAN	Recognized by SOPA ADMIN NORFOLK SUBAREA VA as this week's "Top Dog" on the waterfront for outstanding performance as Pier SOPA.
08 JAN	Depart Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA enroute Virginia Capes Operating Area (VCOA) enroute system testing/demonstration and preparations for upcoming INSURV inspection.
09 JAN	Arrive Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA.
13 JAN	Depart Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA enroute VCOA for INSURV inspection. Commander INSURVLANT embarked.

Enclosure (1)

Arrived Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA.

17 JAN TWO TWO Marine Expeditionary Unit (22 MEU) Commander onboard SAIPAN for orientation and ship tour.

20 JAN Depart Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA enroute VCOA for TSTA II and Engineering Certification (ECERT).

27 JAN RADM Holder, COMPHIBGRU TWO arrived by helicopter to observe engineering drill sets. Arrived 0840 local and departed 1430 local.

Arrive Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA.

29 JAN COMPHIBRON EIGHT embarks.

30 JAN Command celebrates Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday with a special ceremony.

30 JAN Intelligence Oversight Inspection conducted by COMPHIBGRU TWO. Grade: SAT.

02 FEB Fast Cruise in preparation for Final Evaluation Phase (FEP).

04-05 FEB FEP inport Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA.

06-11 FEB Depart from Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA conducting FEP and Air Combat Element (ACE) PHIBRON MEU Integration Training (PMINT).

07 FEB Completed FEP (SAT).

11 FEB Arrive Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA.

20 FEB Recognized by SOPA ADMIN NORFOLK SUBAREA VA as this week's "Top Dog" on the waterfront for outstanding performance as Pier SOPA.

26 FEB Navy Marine Corps Intelligence Training Center (NMITC) tour of SAIPAN intelligence spaces by 25 Naval Intelligence Basic Officer Course (NIOBC) students.

02-09 MAR Underway from Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA conducting PMINT.

09 MAR Arrive Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA.

17 MAR Awarded Maritime Warfare (Power Projection/Sea Control) Excellence Award 1997 (Black "E") - Ninth consecutive award.

Awarded Command and Control Excellence Award 1997 (Green "E") - Second consecutive award.

Awarded Logistics Management Excellence Award 1997 (Blue "E") - Fifth consecutive award.

- 18 MAR Joint Chiefs of Staff Intern Program Ship visit. Group composed of approximately 80 JCS interns for command brief and tour of SAIPAN.
- 02 APR Senior Executive Service (SES) personnel visit SAIPAN for command brief, lunch in the wardroom, and ship tour.
- 02 APR Concluded Command Inspection. The following areas were considered outstanding: Tobacco Prevention, Substance Abuse, Family Care, and HAZMAT Control and Management. All other areas were satisfactory. The overall evaluation for this inspection is satisfactory.
- 16 APR Armed Forces Epidemiology Visit. Group composed of O-5/6 personnel and toured the medical facilities, crew berthing, messing and CBR/DECON facilities.
- 20 APR Ceremony for Virginia's Partnership with the U.S. Navy with regard to offering low interest mortgage loans for junior enlisted Navy and Marine Corps personnel. The Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia presided over the ceremony. Numerous state congressional dignitaries, admirals, city officials and press were in attendance.
- 20-23 APR Dock Trials/Fast Cruise in preparation for upcoming underway period.
- 22 APR NMITC tour of SAIPAN intelligence spaces by 19 NIOBC students.
- 27 APR-17 MAY Underway from Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA for Amphibious Ready Group Marine Expeditionary Unit (ARG-MEU) Exercise Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX) 98-2 and Supporting Arms Coordination Exercise (SACEX).
- 01 MAY Senator Dan Coats, R-Indiana, visits SAIPAN.
- 13 MAY Arrive Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico for working portcall. Conduct vehicle washdown and stores on-load.
- 15 MAY Depart Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico enroute Onslow Bay, North Carolina to off-load 22 MEU.
- 17 MAY Arrive Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA.
- 17 JUN Depart Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA for a Dependent's Day Cruise. SAIPAN departed at 0830 and returned to pier 25 at 1730 local.
- Conducted Burial at Sea of AMS2 Dearl Thomas Haynes, USN (Ret).

25 JUN Director of Intelligence, Chilean Navy, CAPT Sergio Huidobro. There were three additional Chilean Navy Officers on the official party, LCDR Javier Sanchez (Director of Fleet Intelligence), LT Andres Orchard (Intelligence Analyst) and CDR Hugo Barra (Liaison officer to CINCLANTFLT). The tour included an unclassified tour of the Joint Intelligence Center (JIC), bridge, well deck, flight deck, and flag plot. CAPT Johnson, COMNAVSURFLANT Intelligence Officer also accompanied the group.

26 JUN COMNAVSURFLANT, VADM Giffin visited the Commanding Officer, Wardroom and CPO Mess for a pre-deployment "farewell." VADM Giffin also addressed the crew over the 1MC.

01 JUL Depart Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk, VA for Mediterranean Deployment 98-3.

02 JUL Arrive vicinity of Morehead City and Onslow Bay, NC for 22 MEU on-load.

04 JUL In celebration of the Nation's 222<sup>nd</sup> birthday, SAIPAN hosted a 5K fun run and Steel Beach Picnic on the Flight Deck as we crossed the Atlantic.

06 JUL Bravo Zulu for ARGSIT from COMPHIBGRU TWO.

08 JUL COMNAVAIRLANT takes great pleasure in announcing for the Norfolk Chapter Aviation Boatswain's Mate Association the selection of ABH2 (AW) ██████████ assigned to SAIPAN, as the 1998 Atlantic Fleet Junior Aviation Boatswain's Mate of the Year.

14 JUL Anchor vicinity of Rota, Spain. Completed turnover with WASP.

15 JUL Arrive pierside Naval Station Rota, Spain for on-load of stores/fuel and brief "Cinderella" liberty.

17 JUL Depart Naval Station Rota, Spain enroute Exercise MATADOR 98 off the east coast of Sicily.

21 JUL Transited the Strait of Messina during morning hours. Also, conducted unrep with USNS BIG HORN in the early afternoon hours.

Arrive in ARG Box off the east coast of Sicily for MATADOR 98.

21-27 JUL Participated in MATADOR 98 off the east coast of Sicily, Italy.

28 JUL Conducted Rescue at Sea. Received distress call from M. V. HUNTRESS just after midnight of a major fire aboard. HUNTRESS was located at 380310N/0190720E, which was 26nm

from SAIPAN's position. SAIPAN proceeded to area and picked up the crew of eight; six American citizens and two British. SAIPAN rescue and assistance team attempted to extinguish fire, but the fire was already out of control. The eight crew members rode SAIPAN to the next port of call, Corfu, Greece.

29 JUL Received Bravo Zulu from COMPHIBGRU TWO regarding Rescue of HUNTRESS crewmembers.

30 JUL Received Bravo Zulu from CINCUSNAVEUR regarding Rescue of HUNTRESS crewmembers.

28 JUL-03 AUG Anchor vicinity of the Greek Island Corfu for portcall.

03 AUG Depart Corfu, Greece enroute next portcall in Marseille, France.

06 AUG Arrive Marseille, France for portcall.

06-12 AUG Portcall Marseille, France

07 AUG Hosted French VIP reception on board SAIPAN.

12 AUG Depart Marseille, France

13 AUG Received deployment order in support of OPERATION AUTUMN SHELTER. The MODLOC will be off the coast of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

14 AUG Arrive Rota, Spain to refuel and resupply in support of OPERATION AUTUMN SHELTER.

15 AUG Depart Rota, Spain enroute OPERATION AUTUMN SHELTER. Will rendezvous with TORTUGA and continue to MODLOC off Democratic Republic of Congo.

16 AUG COMSIXTHFLT discontinued requirement for USS SAIPAN and TORTUGA to proceed to MODLOC off Democratic Republic Of Congo in support of AUTUMN SHELTER.

17-20 AUG MODLOC off Rota, Spain for embarked ACE to conduct flight operations.

22 AUG Anchor vicinity of Rota, Spain.

23 AUG Arrive Rota, Spain for Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV).

23 AUG-03 SEP IMAV and port visit Rota, Spain.

25 AUG Visit by VADM Giffin, COMNAVSURFLANT. VADM Giffin met with Commodore Enderly, COMPHIBRON EIGHT, COL Helland, 22 MEU, and CAPT Gershon, Commanding Officer SAIPAN. VADM Giffin also met with CPO mess, had lunch with the officers in the wardroom, and spoke to the crew on the hangar bay. In

addition, VADM Giffin awarded Enlisted Surface Warfare Designation and Aviation Warfare Designation to several Sailors.

03 SEP Depart Rota, Spain. Anchor vicinity of Rota, Spain for 22 MEU on-load.

04 SEP Depart Rota, Spain anchorage enroute portcall in Thessaloniki, Greece.

10 SEP Arrive anchorage vicinity Thessaloniki, Greece.

15 SEP Depart Thessaloniki, Greece anchorage.

18 SEP Arrive Augusta Bay, Sicily for refueling and supplies.

19 SEP Depart Augusta Bay, Sicily.

19-28 SEP Participate in Exercise ATLAS HINGE off the coast of Tunisia.

29 SEP-04 OCT Arrive Cagliari, Sardinia for a port visit.

05 OCT Depart Cagliari, Sardinia.

05-15 OCT Participate in Exercise DYNAMIC MIX off the southern coast of Sardinia.

16 OCT-19 NOV OPERATION BALKAN CALM off the coast of Albania

04 NOV Visit by the U. S. Ambassador to Albania.

05 NOV Arrival of Prospective Commanding Officer, CAPT Michael P. Nowakowski.

10 NOV Change of Command. CAPT J. S. Gershon, USN, 002720-20, is relieved by CAPT M. P. Nowakowski, USN, 002893-20.

23-25 NOV Arrive Rota, Spain for a port visit and turnover with NASSAU.

26 NOV Depart Rota, Spain enroute Morehead City, NC for 22 MEU off-load.

26 NOV-06 DEC Transit the Atlantic Ocean.

06-07 DEC Arrive off the coast of Onslow Bay, NC for 22 MEU off-load.

07-08 DEC Arrive off the coast of Morehead City, NC for 22 MEU off-load.

08 DEC Arrival of "Tigers" for return trip to homeport of Norfolk, VA.

09 DEC Arrive homeport of Naval Station Norfolk, VA after completing a 161 day Mediterranean Deployment.



### 3. Basic Historic Narrative.

During the period from the end of holiday leave and standdown through the third week of February, SAIPAN successfully conducted several of the most demanding and important inspections and certifications in the Surface Navy. The first was a superbly coordinated and executed Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) inspection, conducted January 13<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup>. On January 20<sup>th</sup>, SAIPAN was again underway in the VACAPES for Engineering Training Group Tailored Ship's Training Availability (Phase II) and Engineering Certification (ECERT). ECERT was successfully completed on January 27<sup>th</sup>, with the Propulsion Examining Board awarding the ship a grade of SAT in all areas. After embarking COMPHIBRON EIGHT at the end of the month, SAIPAN went to sea at the beginning of February for the Final Evaluation Period (FEP), conducted in conjunction with Air Combat Element PHIBRON/Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration Training (ACE PMINT). FEP was a great success, with SAIPAN displaying superb readiness and professionalism in all warfare areas ranging from amphibious assault to damage control. The ship then rolled into her Logistics Management Assessment, earning outstanding results in both the supply and 3M areas. Also conducted during this period were COMPHIBRON TWO's Intelligence Oversight Inspection, with a grade of SAT; Phase I of Combat Systems Readiness Review; a Personnel Administration Training Group assist visit; and a significant amount of pre-deployment equipment installations and grooming of the new Advanced Combat Direction System (ACDS).

After a short break at the end of February, the ship was underway on March 2<sup>nd</sup> for PMINT training with elements of 22 MEU in the vicinity of Cherry Point, NC through March 9<sup>th</sup>. Upon return to Norfolk, SAIPAN commenced a Fleet Maintenance Availability with SIMA Norfolk, and continued the myriad combat, computer, communications, and other system installations and upgrades required prior to deployment. The availability and other industrial work occupied the rest of March and most of April. SAIPAN made the best of this inport period, wrapping up all remaining required schools and trainers while pierside. SAIPAN also conducted several extremely high visibility tours and VIP visits, hosting (among others) Senator Dan Coats (R-Indiana); students from the Joint Chiefs of Staff Intern Program; Senior Executive Service personnel and Armed Forces Epidemiology Command officers. Most visible of these was the launching of the Commonwealth of Virginia's low-interest mortgage loan program for junior enlisted personnel. This partnership was announced during a ceremony hosted by Governor Gilmore (Virginia) in SAIPAN's hangar bay, which was attended by numerous state and city officials as well as Navy flag officers, and received extensive coverage in the regional press.

SAIPAN departed Norfolk on April 27<sup>th</sup> for JTFEX 98-2, conducted in both the Cherry Point, NC and Puerto Rico OPAREAS. This grueling exercise included near round-the-clock flight operations, amphibious assaults and Support Arms Coordination Center (SACC) training, providing an excellent forum for streamlining operations coordination between the Blue (Navy units) and Green forces (Marine units) of the SAIPAN Amphibious Ready Group (ARG). The ship returned to Norfolk on May 17<sup>th</sup> to begin CSRR Phase II and implementation of the Combat Systems Operational Sequencing System (CSOSS). These evolutions, along with a final pierside maintenance period, continued until commencement of Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) on June 6<sup>th</sup>. SAIPAN conducted a combined pre-deployment underway and Family Day Cruise on June 17<sup>th</sup>, then returned to Norfolk to finish POM. In the early morning of July 1<sup>st</sup>, SAIPAN ARG (SAIPAN, TORTUGA, AUSTIN, COMPHIBRON EIGHT, and 22 MEU) departed Norfolk for her Mediterranean Deployment (MARG 3-98).

The SAIPAN ARG arrived Morehead City, NC on the morning of July 2<sup>nd</sup> for 22 MEU on load, then set sail for the Mediterranean. The optempo for the transit was high, as SAIPAN and embarked air and ground elements, executed an intense training regimen of flight operations, war-at-sea exercises, Emergency Defense of the Amphibious Task Force (EDATF) drills, General Quarters, and other training evolutions to hone their fighting skills prior to arriving on station. The ARG pulled into Rota, Spain on July 14<sup>th</sup> for turnover with the WASP ARG, then departed on July 17<sup>th</sup> enroute for her first major exercise of the deployment, MATADOR 98, off the east coast of Sicily. MATADOR 98 was a large multinational exercise, with SAIPAN coordinating and executing amphibious assaults from both sea and air with resounding success. At the close of the exercise on July 27<sup>th</sup>, SAIPAN turned east enroute the first portcall of the deployment in Corfu, Greece.

One of the most dramatic events of the deployment began in the early morning hours of July 28<sup>th</sup> as SAIPAN steamed across the Ionian Sea toward Corfu. At five minutes after midnight, SAIPAN heard a faint distress call over bridge-to-bridge radio from a vessel identifying itself as the Motor Vessel HUNTRESS. The HUNTRESS reported a major fire onboard and loss of propulsion. The vessel's position plotted 26 miles to the southeast of SAIPAN. SAIPAN immediately turned to starboard at full speed to render assistance. As the situation developed, it was learned that eight personnel were onboard, and that all but the vessel's master had already fled the burning ship to the safety of life rafts. Upon arriving onscene, SAIPAN dispatched a ship's small boat to the smoldering 140 foot vessel, retrieving the crew and master to the safety of the ship. After a quick medical examination, during which it was determined that all the HUNTRESS crewmembers were uninjured, SAIPAN damage control personnel, along with the master, planned a scheme to attack the fire and returned to the HUNTRESS. The fire fighting effort continued until 0500 local, at which time fires in inaccessible parts of the craft began to burn out of control and the vessel was abandoned. SAIPAN remained onstation as the yacht was engulfed in flames and explosions that lit up the pre-dawn sky. As Greek Coast Guard authorities closed the area to take over, SAIPAN finally departed and headed for Corfu, where her eight grateful passengers were finally debarked.

After an enjoyable port visit in Corfu, SAIPAN headed back to sea on August 3<sup>rd</sup> for Marseille, France, arriving on August 6<sup>th</sup>. This was another extremely successful visit, highlighted by an elegant VIP reception held for French national, local, and military officials in SAIPAN's hangar bay.

Just after departing Marseille on August 12<sup>th</sup>, SAIPAN received a warning order to standby for possible tasking in support of OPERATION AUTUMN SHELTER, to conduct a Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) of Americans and other designated personnel from the troubled Democratic Republic of Congo (DRoC). SAIPAN dashed at full speed to Rota for a brief stop for fuel and supplies, then departed the Mediterranean enroute a MODLOC position off the DRoC, in company with TORTUGA. On August 16<sup>th</sup>, OPERATION AUTUMN SHELTER was canceled, and SAIPAN returned to the Mediterranean. From August 17<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>, the ship conducted ACE flight operations in the vicinity of Rota, then pulled into Rota for mid-deployment Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV).

IMAV continued through September 3<sup>rd</sup>. A highlight of the inport period was a visit by VADM Giffin, COMNAVSURFLANT. VADM Giffin met with COMPHIBRON EIGHT, 22 MEU, and CAPT Gershon, then addressed the Chief Petty Officer's Mess, had lunch with the wardroom, and addressed the crew in the hangar bay. He also took a moment to award Enlisted Surface and Enlisted Aviation Warfare pins to several newly qualified SAIPAN Sailors.

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, SAIPAN departed Rota for a port call in Thessaloniki, Greece. Flight operations and engineering drills were conducted enroute. The visit to Thessaloniki lasted through September 15<sup>th</sup>, when the ship headed to the central Mediterranean for exercises ATLAS HINGE and DYNAMIC MIX. Both of these exercises were multinational with SAIPAN executing a myriad of air and amphibious assaults. The ship also embarked Navy personnel of all nationalities involved, greatly increasing the coordination of operations and improving ties between the participating countries.

ATLAS HINGE was conducted from September 19<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>. From September 29<sup>th</sup> through October 4<sup>th</sup>, SAIPAN held her last port visit in Cagliari, Sardinia. After a brief port call, SAIPAN departed for the southern coast of Sardinia for participation in DYNAMIC MIX from October 4<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup>.

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, SAIPAN commenced the operation which would occupy the remainder of deployment, OPERATION BALKAN CALM off the coast of Albania in support of security requirements for the U. S. Embassy in Tirana and NEO contingency operations. From October 16<sup>th</sup> through November 19<sup>th</sup>, SAIPAN patrolled the southern Adriatic, conducting flight operations and other operations in support of this extremely high-visibility mission. During this time, SAIPAN also hosted a visit by the U.S. Ambassador to Albania.

SAIPAN's prospective Commanding Officer, CAPT M. P. Nowakowski arrived onboard November 5<sup>th</sup> and commenced turnover with CAPT Gershon. The change of command was conducted during a ceremony on the hangar bay on November 10<sup>th</sup>.

The ship departed the Adriatic on November 19<sup>th</sup> enroute Rota for a turnover with NASSAU, spending November 23<sup>rd</sup> thorough the 25<sup>th</sup> pierside in Rota while conducting washdown, customs inspection, and turnover. On the 26<sup>th</sup>, SAIPAN departed Rota for the last time and began her transit back to the United States.

Throughout the extremely demanding competitive cycle, SAIPAN's crew performed with consummate professionalism, skill, and enthusiasm, as demonstrated by her superb record of achievements. SAIPAN overcame every challenge with determination and zeal, and set the standard in the Mediterranean. The performance of SAIPAN's crew during this year were of the highest caliber.