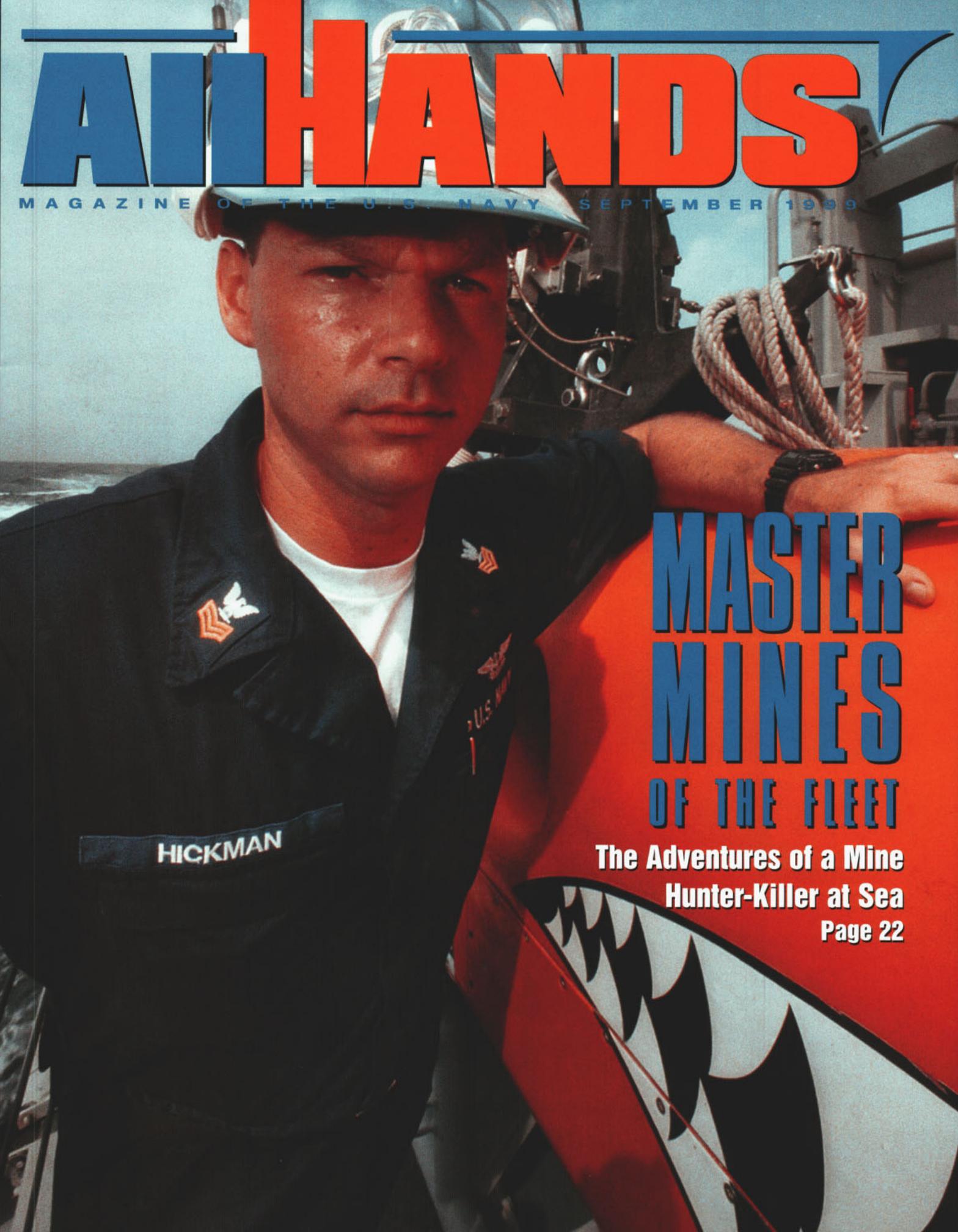


ALL HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY SEPTEMBER 1999



MASTER MINES OF THE FLEET

The Adventures of a Mine
Hunter-Killer at Sea
Page 22

Features

12 Destination: Key West

There's something undefinable about Key West. It's a place of beauty, warmth and tropical breezes; a place where, until recently, local phone numbers contained only five digits; and the Sunday *New York Times* often arrives on Monday.

16 Double Trouble

The world of women's tennis is getting used to the dynamic duo of Venus and Serena Williams. In an *All Hands* exclusive story, find out how these two young women excel in this intense sport and still stay friends – with their family and each other.

20 Clearing the Way

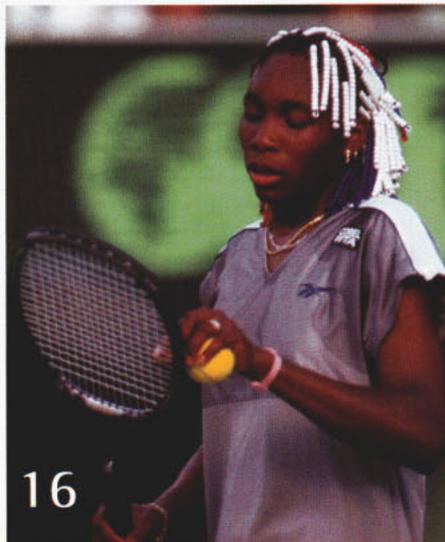
In this decade alone, the Navy has done more to advance mine warfare technology than in its entire history. The next decade promises to be more exciting as that technology reaches the fleet.

22 Seek and Destroy

Hunting mines has been Mineman 1st Class (AW) Tim Hickman's goal. Now, after a 13-year wait, he finally gets his turn in the hot seat aboard USS *Kingfisher* (MHC 56).

28 Trailblazers

Today, America's mine warfare triad of mine countermeasure ships, helicopters and explosive ordnance disposal divers ensure the U.S. Navy has complete command of the sea. Here's how they do it.



Secretary of the Navy
The Honorable Richard Danzig

Chief of Naval Operations
ADM Jay L. Johnson

Chief of Information
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30 Master Mine

According to Mineman 1st Class Katherine Frunz, an instructor at the Mine Warfare Center, Ingleside, Texas, there's no room for mistakes when you're a mineman. She teaches her students that the job must be done right the first time – or there won't be a next time.

34 Full Speed Ahead

This year, seven Navy recruiters were invited to the Indianapolis 500, not as guests in the viewing stands, but as working members of various pit crews. Ship's Serviceman 1st Class Ben Mueller, a member of Team Cheever, learned that just like the Navy, teamwork is everything.

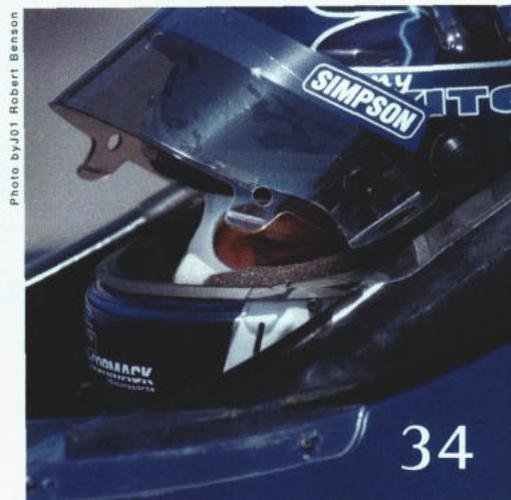


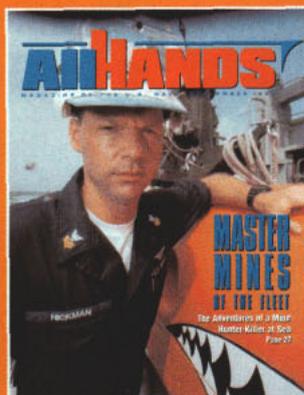
Photo by JO1 Robert Benson

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- 48 The Final Word



Illustration by Seth Sirbaugh



On the Cover

Since reporting aboard USS *Kingfisher* (MHC 56) 11 months ago, MN1(AW) Tim Hickman has earned himself a reputation as the ship's "man in the hot seat." Hickman locates, identifies and destroys enemy mines using "Shania," *Kingfisher's* high-tech, state-of-the-art mine neutralization vehicle.

Photo by JO1 Jason Thompson



On the Back Cover

ABM3 Dennise J. Kornfeld of Elridge, Md., waits by a flight deck refueling station on board the aircraft carrier USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67). Kornfeld supervises three airmen tasked with the safe refueling of aircraft.

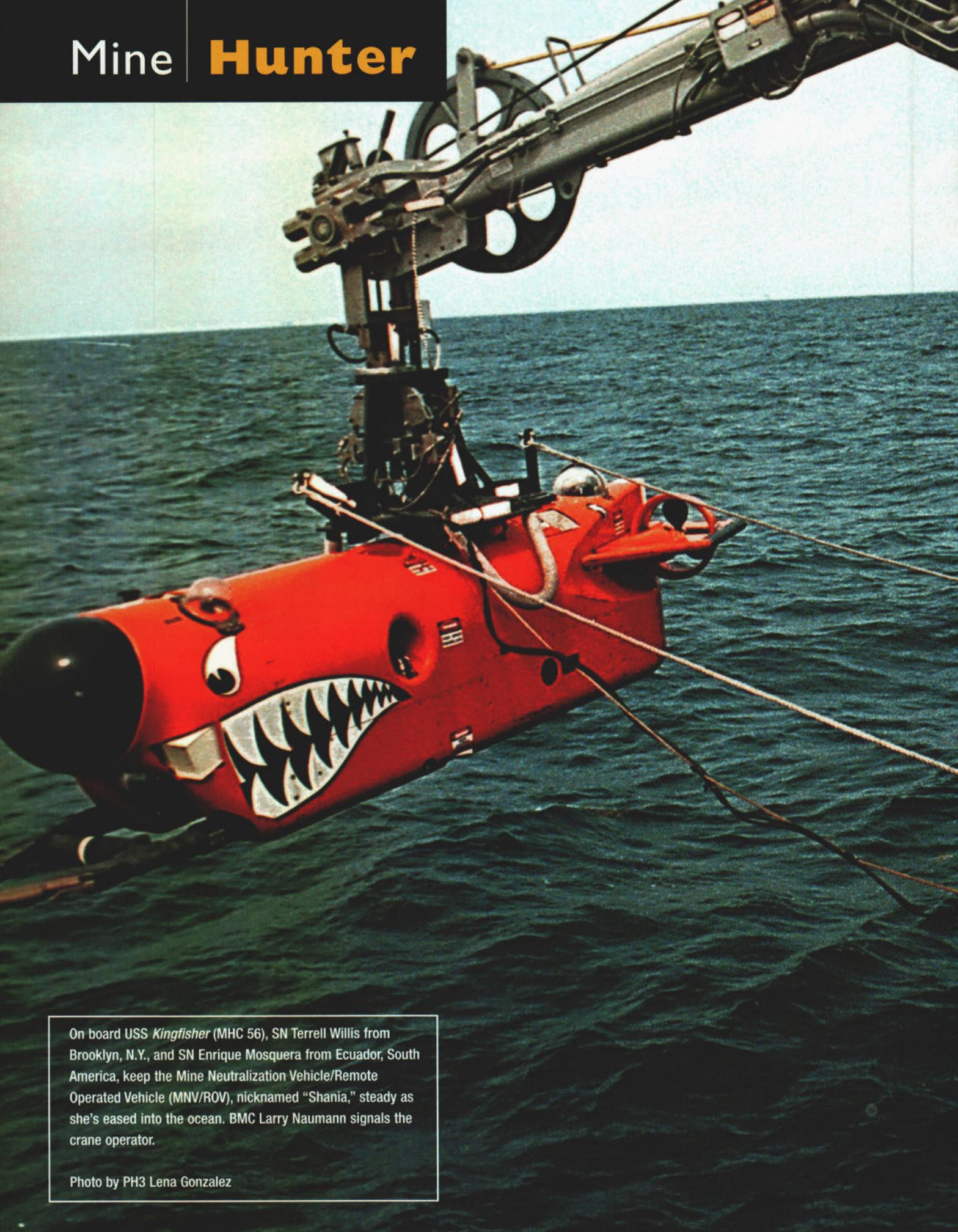
Photo by PH1 Lance Kirk

Check us out Online at:

www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/allhands/ah-top.html

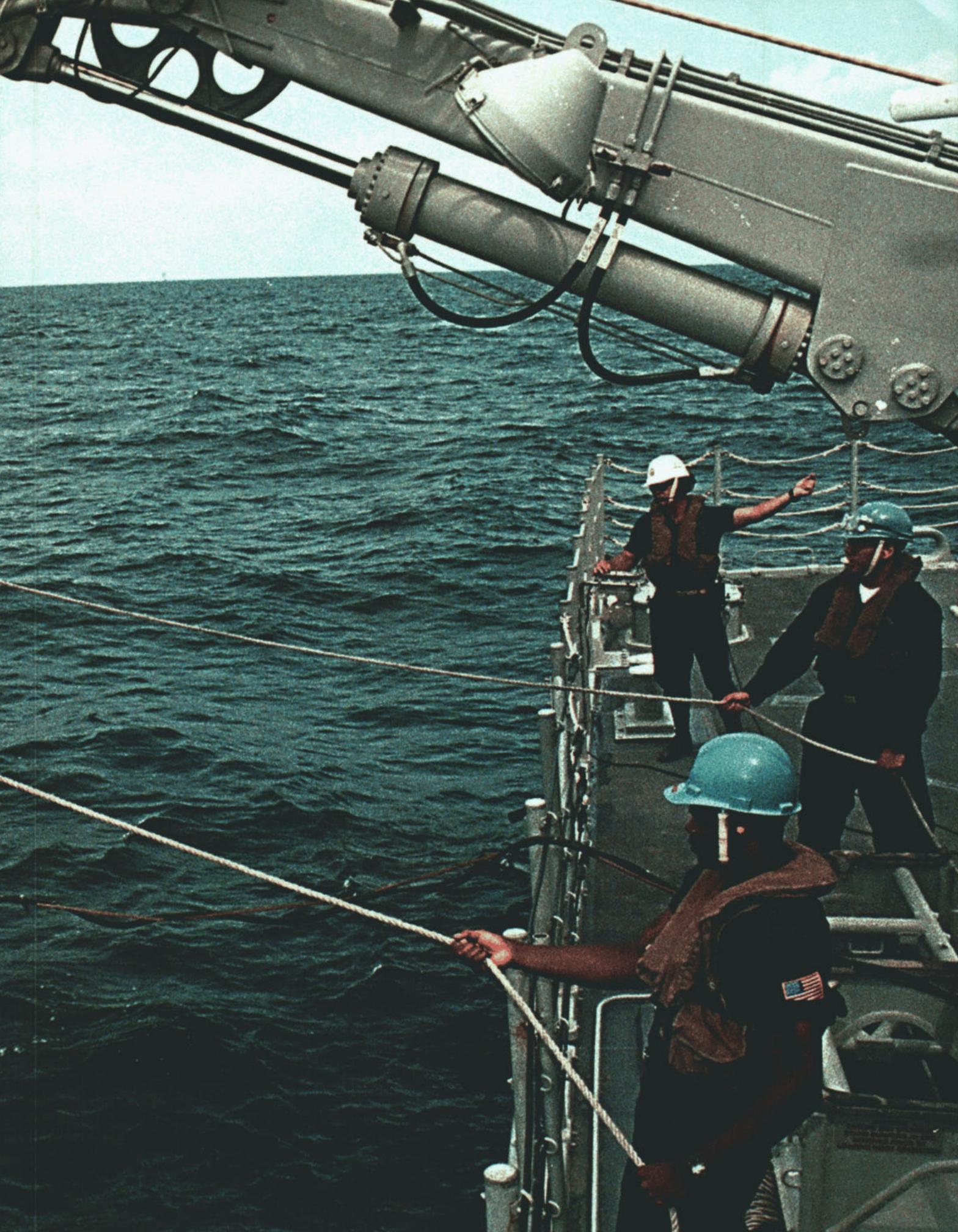


Mine Hunter



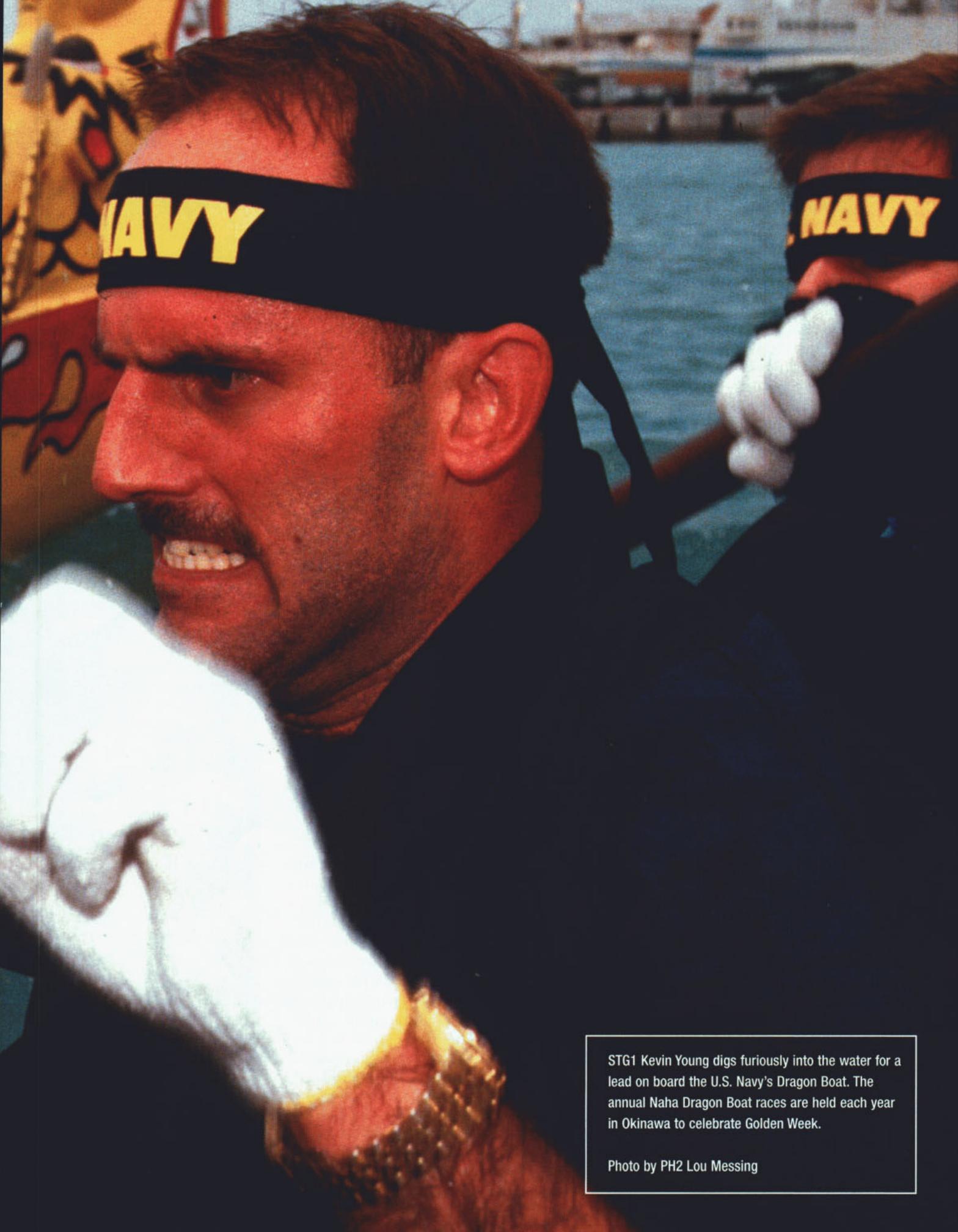
On board USS *Kingfisher* (MHC 56), SN Terrell Willis from Brooklyn, N.Y., and SN Enrique Mosquera from Ecuador, South America, keep the Mine Neutralization Vehicle/Remote Operated Vehicle (MNV/ROV), nicknamed "Shania," steady as she's eased into the ocean. BMC Larry Naumann signals the crane operator.

Photo by PH3 Lena Gonzalez



Row-Man **Warrior**





STG1 Kevin Young digs furiously into the water for a lead on board the U.S. Navy's Dragon Boat. The annual Naha Dragon Boat races are held each year in Okinawa to celebrate Golden Week.

Photo by PH2 Lou Messing

Letters

Standing Room Only

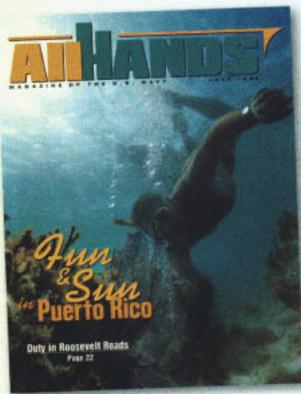
Editor,
I love to read *All Hands* and the stories it provides to the fleet. However, the cover on the June 99 issue caught my eye as a little disturbing. As an AS, I can't believe there are personnel standing on the support equipment. I know if I see people standing on my equipment, I make them aware of the policy rather quickly. This is not quite the example we want the fleet to see when we are trying to stop personnel from standing on our equipment.

AS2 Tuttle, HM-15,
USS *Inchon* (MCS 12)

Editor's Note: The photo was staged strictly for artistic purposes and not intended to depict actual equipment usage or safety violations. That said, you are absolutely correct in calling us on it. We regret any confusion as to our intent.

Coral Conundrum

Editor,
I have just received the July issue of *All Hands* and I was appalled at the picture on the cover. I am an avid diver who has dived all over the world, and I could not believe that the Navy published a picture of an individual doing one of the most destructive acts to our under water world.



Touching live coral!
The act is against the law in just about every country and in the United States. Our coral reefs are having a hard enough time trying to regenerate themselves because of this act and other environmental factors.

HM1(AW/FMF) Jason Berry

Editor's note: Like you, we fully support the Navy's efforts to act as good stewards of the environment. We assure you the Sailor depicted in this photo was pointing to and not touching the coral. Regrettably, the angle at which the photo was taken gives the impression the coral was touched.

Mistaken Identities

Editor,
I am writing to inform you that the wrong picture is in the Shipmates area of the *All Hands* magazine for the month of July 1999.

I am located at the Boise MEPS located in Boise, Idaho. The picture of the per-

son that you inserted as being selected for Naval Construction Battalion Unit 410 Seabee of the Year for 1998 is not UFC Robert F. White. That face belongs to AE2 Donald E. Valentine Jr. whom I work with at the Boise MEPS.

AE2 Valentine was recently commended for saving the life of a little girl in the local Boise area.

Denise Harvey
PAO Representative
Boise MEPS

Editor,

On the cover of your June issue, the person listed as No. 7 is not QMSA James Wagoner. The right person is Seaman Apprentice Terry of 2nd Division of USS *George Washington* (CVN 73).

BM2 Van N. Skipper
USS *George Washington*
(CVN 73)

Editor,

One of the articles in the July issue on Page 10 talks about USS *Dubuque* (LPD 8). The picture shown in the article is not a picture of *Dubuque* or even of the same class of ship. It is a picture of an LSD-class of ship.

Just a little reminder that all types of personnel read *All Hands* and junior personnel just might get a little confused matching the right class of ship with a picture in an article.

Keep up the good work putting out the valuable info to the troops.

IC1 John Brockmeyer

Who's Counting

127.4

Speed (in miles per hour) of the fastest ball on record to be served by a woman tennis player. The record is held by 18-year-old tennis star Venus Williams.

650

The number of Japanese ships sunk off the coast of Japan during World War II after U.S. aircraft laid more than 12,000 mines around Japanese shipping routes and harbor approaches.

11

The average number of seconds it takes to change four tires and fuel an Indy car during a pit stop at the Indianapolis 500. At this year's race, seven Navy recruiters witnessed the pit action as honorary crew members on various race teams.

77

The average annual temperature of Key West. It varies no more than 12 degrees in either direction. Key West is the only frost-free city in the United States.

47,000

Number of daily rations delivered by MH-53 *Sea Dragon* helicopters from USS *Inchon* (MCS 12) to refugees in northern Albanian camps during Operation *Shining Hope*.

80

Percentage of SURFLANT ships that have gone to expanded duty sections in port; some boast as many as eight duty sections.

21

Weight in tons of a single MH-53 *Sea Dragon*, the U.S. Navy's largest and most powerful helicopter. It plays a crucial role in airborne mine countermeasure (AMCM) missions, including both minehunting and minesweeping.

Tell us something we don't know.

Send your comments to: *All Hands*, Naval Media Center, (ATTN: Editor), 2713 Mitscher Rd., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20373-5819 or e-mail: allhands@mediacen.navy.mil

Countdown to the Millennium



DAYS	HOURS	MINUTES	SECONDS
122	16	29	59



Y2K and You



Recently, we received a letter from a Sailor who asked us to recap the whole Y2K problem. It's a fair question, especially given the spurt of renewed media attention the problem has been getting. Basically, Y2K refers to the potential failure of any device that relies on embedded computer chips or programs for date and time information. To save memory and reduce processing time, the earliest computer programs dropped the first two digits of the year. Thus, 1975 became simply 75. Unless modifications are made, many systems will interpret Jan. 1, 2000, as Jan. 1, 1900. Fortunately, federal, state and local governments as well as businesses, banks and utility companies have been working for some time to resolve potential Y2K problems. While we can't rule out altogether the possibility that some glitches could occur when we cross the millennium, the Navy has been working diligently to ensure there is no loss of mission capabilities and to keep Sailors and their families informed of Y2K issues.

Here are a few other very good questions:



Q: Will holiday leave periods be affected by Y2K concerns?

A: Navy leave will not be arbitrarily restricted or canceled and should not be otherwise impacted by the turning of the millennium. Of course, as always, leave must be coordinated around operational requirements and commitments.

Commanding officers will determine and put out leave policy as the holiday season approaches. Reminder: after any leave period you should check that your leave and earnings statement (LES) accurately reflects your leave balance. It would be prudent to keep copies of your LES from both before and after your leave period.

Q: What should I do if I am on watch at midnight on New Year's Eve?

A: It is unlikely that anything out of the ordinary will happen. By then, the Navy

will have completed all Y2K upgrades and installations. Both ship- and shore-based systems should recognize Jan. 1, 2000, just like any other day. For those in port, shore facilities have conducted testing to prevent power outages and to assure continuity of pier services like electricity, water and sewage. If you have the mid-watch on New Year's Eve and are responsible for equipment that relies on an electronic calendar, you will want to ensure that your systems have satisfactorily accepted the date change. If problems do occur, report them to your watch officer or LPO and follow casualty procedures as you normally would do.

Q: Will there be technical support available in case something does go wrong because of the Y2K date change?

A: Technical support is always available in the case of equipment casualties. The Navy is taking extra precautions to ensure that the sufficient number of properly trained support personnel will be available or on call if system casualties do occur during the year 2000 crossover.

Do you have a Y2K question you would like us to answer? Go ahead and send it to us. We'll select a few questions every month and seek out the experts for answers. You can mail your questions to:

All Hands, Naval Media Center
(ATTN: Y2K and You),
2713 Mitscher Rd., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20373-5819.

Or you can send us an e-mail at allhands@media-cen.navy.mil. Be sure to include your name, rate and duty station and don't forget to put the words "Y2K and You" in the subject line.

Around the Fleet

New Education Opportunities to Come On-line Soon

In a recently released message to commanding officers about Navy Education Vision, ADM Jay L. Johnson, Chief of Naval Operations, said he wants to place immediate emphasis on incorporating educational accomplishment into each Sailor's career – both officer and enlisted – to provide Sailors today with the opportunity to make lifelong learning a reality.

The CNO has approved the implementation of a program for the enlisted force called the Navy College Program, which would simplify and enhance the opportunity of every Sailor to earn a college degree.

"In the past, young people joined the Navy to get money to go to college after their service," said Johnson. "Now, young people will join the Navy to go to college while serving their country. This is a powerful notion, and one which will benefit the Sailor, the Navy and the nation."

The Navy has formed part-

nerships with accredited universities and colleges that will grant credit to Sailors for training and experience gained in their career field, in addition to those credits earned through traditional education.

"Targeted to come on-line in October, I believe this program will have a direct impact on career satisfaction, individual readiness, recruiting viability and force retention," said Johnson. "The Navy College Program will be geared toward the realities of life at sea, and we will use the Internet to provide Sailors with on-line access to their college transcript."

For the officer corps, a series of programs will be implemented to provide every unrestricted line (URL), restricted line (RL) and staff corps officer the opportunity for advanced education as a normal part of their career.

According to CNO, every career officer will be afforded the opportunity to attain both a relevant graduate degree and appropriate professional military education (PME). New opportunities for officers, such as "tuition assurance," a

program offering full tuition payment for selected career officers, and "the Washington, D.C. Intern" program, will be offered as early as this fall.

Two new programs will be offered by the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) to meet the needs of URL officers – the Systems Engineering and Integration

curriculum and the Information Strategy and Operations curriculum. Additionally the Naval War College will continue to expand its seminar and correspondence programs to reach broader portions of the Fleet.

According to CNO, this expansion will include part-

(See page 10)

On assignment

"If you've never sped across the open ocean in a RHIB boat before, then you've really missed out," said JO1 Jason Thompson, sent TAD with PH3 Lena Gonzalez to South Texas to cover aspects of the mine warfare community. "It's a blast! The coolest water park ride pales by comparison."

During the 14-hour underway period, the executive officer aboard USS *Kingfisher* (MHC 56) approved Thompson's request to ride with BM3 Gary Bowman and two other *Kingfisher* crewmembers.

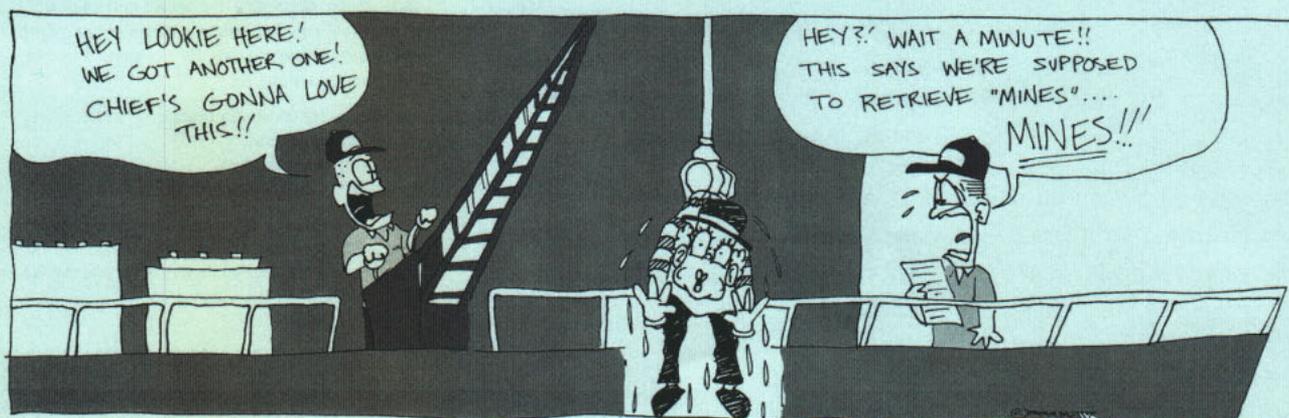
"Two notable things happened to me – one good and one not so good. The good thing was that I shot two rolls of film as the ship tested her water-washdown system. The not-so-good thing was that we navigated through some serious waves. The end result: I underwent my own personal water-washdown. Thanks, BM3. I owe you one!"

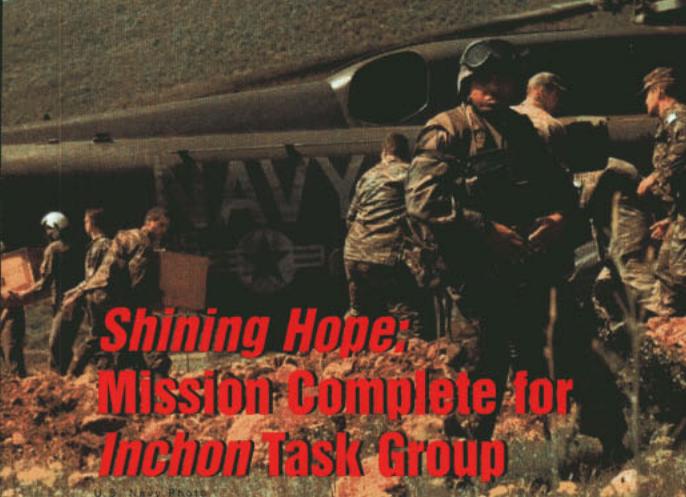
Photo by PH3 Lena Gonzalez



Ricky's Tour

By JO3 Mike C. Jones





Shining Hope: Mission Complete for Inchon Task Group

Navy helicopters provide airlift capabilities for desperately needed supplies during Operation *Shining Hope*.

As refugees left protective enclaves in Albania in June to return to uncertain futures in Kosovo, USS *Inchon* (MCS 12) quietly departed her station in the Adriatic Sea. She left behind a legacy that will be forever remembered by the hundreds of thousands of displaced people she sustained during Operation *Shining Hope*.

"Without *Inchon's* helicopters, countless refugees would have been without food and shelter, and many would have no doubt perished," said Capt. H.L. Broughton, commander of Mine Countermeasures Squadron (COMCMRON) Two, embarked on *Inchon* and in overall command of embarked units supporting Operation *Shining Hope*. "The *Inchon* Task Group performed brilliantly. I'm proud of what we've done."

When the crisis in the Balkans flared in April, *Inchon*, the Navy's only mine countermeasures support ship, was en route to the Arabian Gulf to participate in mine warfare exercises with coalition allies. She was re-directed to *Joint Task Force Shining Hope*, the joint humanitarian relief operation in Albania, where her ten embarked MH-53E *Sea Dragon* helicopters could be used to provide assistance to refugees.

The overall commander of *Joint Task Force Shining Hope*, Air Force Maj. Gen. William Hinton said, "*Inchon's* responsive transportation of humanitarian supplies to refugee camps in Kukes played a vital role in stemming the food crisis and bringing immediate relief to the thousands of starving refugees in northern Albania. We could not have completed our mission without your support."

Inchon's MH-53s delivered more than 640,000 pounds of relief supplies to refugee camps in Albania. They also carried more than 3,000 passengers, including visiting dignitaries, military commanders and media representatives to every corner of Albania.

Initial humanitarian cargo deliveries included more than 47,000 daily rations for refugees in the northern Albanian camps near Kukes. As the situation in those camps stabilized, the *Sea Dragons* switched from delivering food supplies to delivering thousands of tents, sleeping bags and medical supplies.

"Our MH-53Es were perfect for this mission," Broughton said. "*Sea Dragons* can carry a payload of up to 16,000 pounds or 55 passengers. They're rugged, reliable and their crews are exceptionally well-trained."

"*Inchon* was the right platform, with the right equipment, in the right place, at the right time," Broughton said. "Thousands of refugees are going home thanks to the hard work and dedication of this team."

Inchon returned to her Ingleside, Texas, homeport in late July.

Story by LCDR John Fleming, USS *Inchon* Task Group Public Affairs.

By Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
MMCM(SS/SW/AW) Jim Herdt

Speaking with Sailors

Photo by JO1 Robert Benson



Q: To what do you attribute the fall in quality of recruits coming out of Recruit Training Center (RTC)?

A: There is no fall in the quality of recruits coming out of the RTC. Boot camp is more demanding now than it was when most senior enlisteds went through. To graduate boot camp today, recruits have to meet much higher standards than ever before. Combined with a tougher regimen, young Sailors are taught military bearing, that is, they PT six times a week, and they know how to wear their uniform. So what goes wrong? Once we get these new shipmates on board our ships, we need to take personal responsibility to reinforce what they learn in boot camp. The best way to do this is to know what they learn there, and then to hold yourself to the same standards.

Q: What do you think is the most important thing for a junior officer to do for his people?

A: Value your people for all they do for you and the Navy! Next, advise your troops on the opportunities available to them while in the Navy. Let them know that every Sailor counts and individual work is very important. Give them plenty of direction and authority to accomplish a mission, and hold them to high standards in the achievement of that mission. This builds pride from the deck-plate Sailor to the commanding officer.

Q: Is the retention problem being fixed?

A: Retention is a top priority for everyone in the Navy's chain of command. One of the big improvements to increase retention is moving closer to paying Sailors what they're worth. Everyone will get a minimum 4.8 percent pay raise Jan. 1, 2000. Most Sailors know that. This is not a one-time restructuring deal. Everyone, from the President on down, is working to close the pay gap that has grown for service members over the past few years. Sailors can look forward to a Pay Table Reform starting in July 2000.

While money should help increase retention, let's not get away from the basics. Almost everyone is in a leadership position sooner or later. As leaders, they should challenge themselves to help grow their junior Sailors from day one, so they, too, are ready to seize opportunities when they arise. The Navy offers so much. We just need to push ourselves in making Sailors aware of the opportunities in front of them.

Speaking with Sailors is a monthly column initiated by the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy as a way of reaching out to the men and women of the fleet, whether they are stationed just down the road or halfway around the world.

Around the Fleet

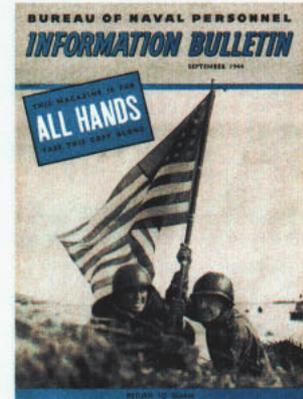
TIME CAPSULE

This month, *All Hands* looks back at what we were publishing toward the end of World War II. We grabbed a copy of the September 1944 issue, and this is what we found:

We ran photos of the triumphant American return to Guam in July 1944 when, after rigorous fighting, U.S. Marines reconquered the first U.S. territory captured by the Japanese.

Meanwhile, Washington, D.C., was taking on a whole new look that fall, as so-called temporary buildings sprouted up all over town. The Navy Department Buildings ran right along Constitution Ave., from the Lincoln Memorial to the bottom of the Reflecting Pool on 17th St. The WAVES marched in formation at the Washington Monument and lived in barracks located near the Pentagon in Arlington, next to the Communications Annex on Nebraska Ave. and out in Potomac Park.

We also ran a story about Sailors in the New Orleans Shore Patrol (SP) that provided some insight into their duties. After SP school at the Naval Training School, Algiers, La., they find that it's not just about arresting disorderly Sailors anymore. The SPs are ambassadors of the Navy - policemen/diplomats who maintain order, dispense information and instill public confidence. Other subjects in this action-packed issue included: How the Navy makes battle recordings for "Ear-witness" radio; what to do when it's time to vote; how the Navy gets movies to Sailors; EOD clears harbors; and how to take care of your torpedoes.



SHIPMATES



Builder 1st Class Eric W. Hass, of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 7 was recently awarded the Marvin G. Shields Medal. The award, named for the only Seabee to have earned the Medal of Honor, is awarded annually to the most outstanding enlisted Seabee in the eight Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Seabee battalions. Hass was selected to receive this award for his superior performance while deployed to Puerto Rico and Honduras in response to Hurricanes Georges and Mitch.



Cryptological Technician Aviation 3rd Class Brenda Hoover was selected as the Naval Technical Training Center Corry Station Junior Sailor of the Quarter for first quarter 1999. Hoover works in the base administration support department as the command awards clerk. Hoover was recognized for her dedication and hard work in the office, and also for her extensive volunteer efforts as a juvenile drug court mentor and her work with the recreation and Navy Ball committees.



Navy Counselor 1st Class Donté L. Jackson was recently selected for the FY99 Seaman-to-Admiral Program. The Andalusia, Ala., native had also been selected as the 1998 Sailor of the Year for the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Center, Washington, D.C., while command career counselor. His contributions were critical to the command winning the 1998 Golden Anchor Award. Jackson will attend Hampton University this fall.



Yeoman 1st Class Jerry A. Yost was recently selected as the Pentagon's 1999 Sailor of the Year. He received this award along with his third Navy Achievement Medal for superior performance while serving as the administrative assistant to the special counsel for the CNO. As vice president of the First Class Petty Officer's Association, he improved the Petty Officer Indoctrination Course. Additionally, he spearheaded off duty projects such as providing clothes for the homeless and home repair for the aged.

Education

(continued from page 8)

nering with NPS to offer PME to all Navy students at Monterey, Calif.

Johnson also said that new emphasis and funding priority will be placed on the development of distributive learning courses for both PME and graduate education. "The bottom line is that educational milestones will continue to rise in importance in an officer's career path, irrespective of designator," said the CNO.

"Our goal is a better-educated force from seaman to admiral," Johnson added.

Details on the implementation of these new programs will be explained through a series of Navywide messages and information channels.

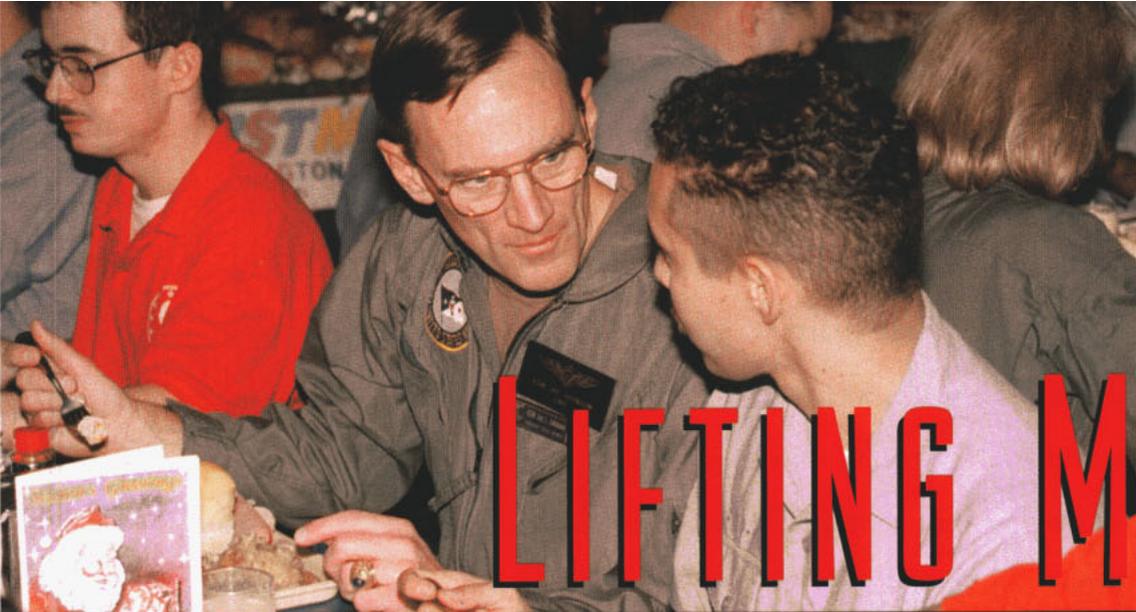


Photo by PHAN Andra Seymour

ADM Jay L. Johnson, Chief of Naval Operations, finds out what Sailors think while visiting with the fleet. Here he talks with AN Alan Milan, from Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., during a visit to USS *George Washington* (CVN 73).

LIFTING MORALE

on the waterfront

Expanded duty sections

Smart Ship, Smart Work, Inter-Deployment Training Cycle Reductions – what does it all mean? For many Sailors, it means more time at home when in homeport between deployments. Many ships have expanded to eight or more duty sections inport from the traditional norm of four – a radical concept for some Sailors on the waterfront, but a refreshing way of doing business for the ships taking on the initiative.

“The majority of SURFLANT ships, up to 80 percent, have gone to expanded duty sections in port,” said CAPT Bob Perry, SURFLANT chief of staff and member of the Fleet Review Board.

The Norfolk-based USS *Cole* (DDG 67), with her crew of 280, transitioned into a new eight-section duty rotation in April. “Initially, we had a lot of skeptical crew members, especially from the engineering side, because they thought they may be pulling triple watches,” said Master Chief Sonar Technician Paul Abney, *Cole*’s command master chief.

“A majority of the crew likes the eight-section duty, because they get a bigger break between duty days,” said Abney. That’s

the goal of the new initiative, which does have tradeoffs. Abney said USS *Cole* accomplished her goal, but added, “You have to maintain a proper balance of experience, number of personnel and qualifications across all duty sections.”

By combining some watches and eliminating others, *Cole*’s duty sections now have 30 Sailors instead of 40. Most of the reduction came from the fire party. *Cole* now operates with a 10-person inport fire party instead of 18.

Commands must also rethink the way they conduct business during the normal workday, according to Abney. “We looked at the after-hours work done by the duty section and shifted work that was risky to the normal working day.” The command used Operational Risk Management procedures to determine which jobs must have risk reduced by moving them to the normal work day. Transferring fuel was one of those jobs.

Duty days are more hectic for Sailors, and duty obligations consume most of their time. According to ENS Pete Rybski of the Norfolk-based USS *San Jacinto* (CG 56), “you get used to the fact that on your duty day you can’t get much done other

than watchstanding and duty requirements, but the trade off is well worth it for the extra days not on duty.” Sailors also noted that their leaders expect that duty days are for duty and they can complete the normal workload on non-duty days.

As more IDTC requirement reductions come on-line, the number of ships moving toward eight-section duty is growing. According to Master Chief Machinist’s Mate (SS) Thomas Hefty, U.S. Atlantic Fleet Master Chief, “The reason this is growing is we’ve lifted off some of the requirements from the past. The biggest requirement was keeping Sailors on board to man complex fire parties. Now, we have said to our ships, ‘your fire party only needs to consist of the initial response team.’”

Increasing the inport duty sections is an idea that started with the Smart Ship Project and represents ideas based on the CNO’s initiatives to reduce unnecessary requirements in the Inter-Deployment Training Cycle.

The IDTC reductions from the CNO have gone a step further than the individual unit level and eliminated many of the inspections and administrative requirements that did not

contribute to fleet readiness. The time freed up gives commanding officers the flexibility to focus on specific needs, whether it is training, maintenance or more time at home with families.

Story by Atlantic Fleet Public Affairs.

A glance at some CNO IDTC initiatives:

Elimination of:

- Propulsion Examining Board
- Pre- and Mid-Deployment Aviation Material Condition Inspections
- Tempest Inspection
- Ordnance Qualification/Certification Program Inspection
- Some PQS Program Requirements

Reduction in:

- Shipboard Watches
- Preventative Maintenance Hours
- Logistics Inspection Days and Assist Visits

Modifications to:

- Retention Program
- Security Procedures
- Electrical Safety Program
- Maintenance Training Improvement Program (MTIP)
- General Military Training Program

There's something indefinable about Key West — a balance of exotic remoteness, cultural heritage and artistic freedom. It draws Sailors and civilians alike: "I came down for a weekend six years ago ... and I'm still here," says one Key West resident.

If it weren't for the transient nature of the Navy, Sailors would probably claim the same. Duty station Key West — a place of beauty, warmth and tropical breezes; a place where, until recently, local phone numbers contained only five digits, and the Sunday New York Times often arrives on Monday.

Destination

Story and photos by J01 Robert Benson

Top Right: This truck came to the island for the weekend some 40 years ago and never left. Many Key West natives — "Conchs" — claim the same.

Bottom Right: There's no uptown or downtown in Key West, but the picturesque buildings indicate you're in the heart of the city.

Key





West



He's not a quartermaster, but Chief Hospital Corpsman Theodore Martin knows where all the flashing red buoys are in the waters around Key West. He knows the depth of water at Point Bravo, and he knows what pound test line to use to hook a 50-pound Mahi Mahi.

It's stuff he's picked up on his off time, while spoiling himself, courtesy of the Navy. Martin considers himself an honorary Conch (pronounced "konk"), a native of Key West, and he epitomizes

the island's laid-back lifestyle every weekend, when he rents a 21-foot, 150-horsepower Rendezvous boat from the Navy's Sigsbee Marina MWR shop and goes fishing, cruising or sunning.

The Navy has a fleet of boats for rent in Key West, but if you'd rather parasail, sit on a sandy beach, golf or sip a tropical drink poolside, that's just as readily available.

For many, Key West – a sunny island that's tiny enough to fit into New York's Central Park – is the ultimate duty



station. Through its rich history, remote location and natural beauty, Key West has earned a notation in just about every national and international map.

The place sits like a jewel in the middle of the sea, the western most island in the Florida Keys just off the southern coast of the Florida Peninsula. Its air quality is pure and the average annual temperature of 77 degrees rarely varies by more than 12 degrees in either direction, with a record low of 41 degrees and a record high of 97 degrees. It has never seen frost or snow. Perennially sunny, the island averages only 39 inches of rain per year.

In addition to a legion of tourists, Key West has also attracted generations of artists and writers who popularized the mythology of the island. Home to Ernest Hemingway, Tennessee Williams, Elizabeth Bishop, John Hersey, Richard

Wilbur, Philip Caputo and Thomas McGuane, more Pulitzer Prize winners have lived in Key West per capita than in any other city.

There's an added bonus for single Sailors in Key West – the housing arrangement. Unlike any other setup around the world, single Sailors here can share a home – a Navy home – with two other Sailors. They have run of the house and are free to have pets, do their own cooking, landscaping, maintenance, etc.

“If you talk to most Sailors, they love the living setup,” said Chief Mess Management Specialist (SS) Thomas Goldberg. “They take ownership of the home.”

Goldberg said although most Sailors have the option of living off base, less than two percent do. He attributes the low rate to the high quality of living on base. “Where else can you get this kind

Top: Welcome to the jungle near the home of ASAA Buddy Copper (left), JO2 David Michniewicz and TC3 Peter Washaski (not pictured). The three share a Navy town home and have complete run of the place – a living arrangement unique to Key West. That arrangement allows single Sailors the opportunity to live in a townhouse, some of the nicest on the island, for their housing allowance.

Right: The yacht harbor at Boca Chica Field, Naval Air Station Key West, draws retired and active-duty Sailors from around the world. Many of the retired Sailors live aboard their yachts, and stay in Key West for the winter ... or longer.

of environment and a townhome with a patio, lawn, multiple bedrooms and plenty of living space for your BAH rate?"

Leave that townhouse, wander into the city that has no uptown or downtown, and you'll also find there's no dress code, even for the finest of restaurants. Tolerance is the rule.

Key West is a city which celebrates itself, its history, its diversity and its various reputations in many ways. Festivals and parties punctuate the tourist season. The social calendar is full of fishing tournaments and art festivals; literary seminars and world premiere plays; house and garden tours; international power boat and yacht races; and a lighted boat parade goes on 365 days a year. Most notable perhaps is Fantasy Fest, Key West's answer to Mardi Gras. Visitors from around the world gather here for the 10-day celebration in October.

Even the daily sunset here is a cause for joy and merriment. Each evening a virtual festival occurs at Mallory Square,

where artisans, musicians and street performers pack the city pier with eager tourists to celebrate the glorious Key West sunsets.

Juan Ponce de Leon discovered the island in 1513. The first owner was Spanish cavalry officer Juan Pablo Salas. Modern Key West began in 1822 when John Simonton, a Mobile, Ala. merchant, purchased the island for \$2,000. The U.S. flag was raised over the island that same year by LT Matthew Perry. He was sent to Key West to examine the feasibility of establishing a permanent base.

Navy history is rich in Key West. Pirates had long used the Florida Keys as a base to prey upon shipping and bury their booty. In 1823, Commodore David Porter employed shallow draft barges and schooners to pursue the pirates throughout the Keys. He destroyed their lairs and drove them from the area.

The entire Atlantic Fleet was stationed here during the Spanish-American War. In February 1898, the battleship *Maine* sailed from here to Havana. She suffered an explosion while at anchor in Havana

Harbor and sank, igniting the Spanish-American War.

Naval Air Base Key West was commissioned in 1917. Use of the air base continued sporadically for the next 68 years.

In May 1942, at the peak of German submarine activities off the coast of Florida, 49 ships were torpedoed, 39 of which sunk. A convoy center was set up in Key West and losses dropped dramatically. An estimated 8,000 ships were routed there during the war.

Key West also figured prominently during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, acting as a staging place for ships and aircraft of the Navy's blockading force.

Today, after years of expansion, NAS Key West tenant commands and facilities are spread out over several areas on three different islands.

So take off those boondockers and socks, sink your feet in the beach sand and head for Key West.

Benson is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

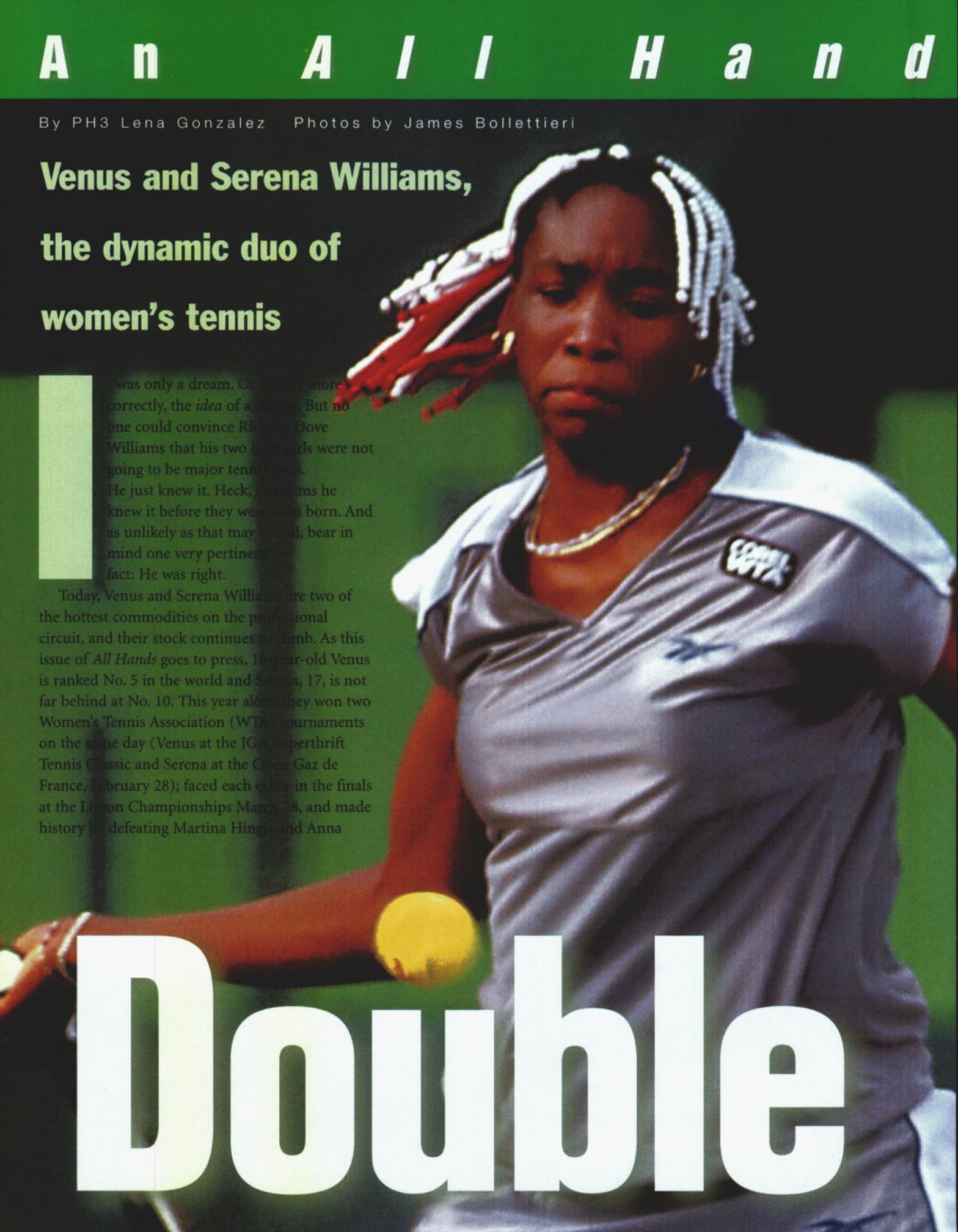


By PH3 Lena Gonzalez Photos by James Bolletieri

Venus and Serena Williams, the dynamic duo of women's tennis

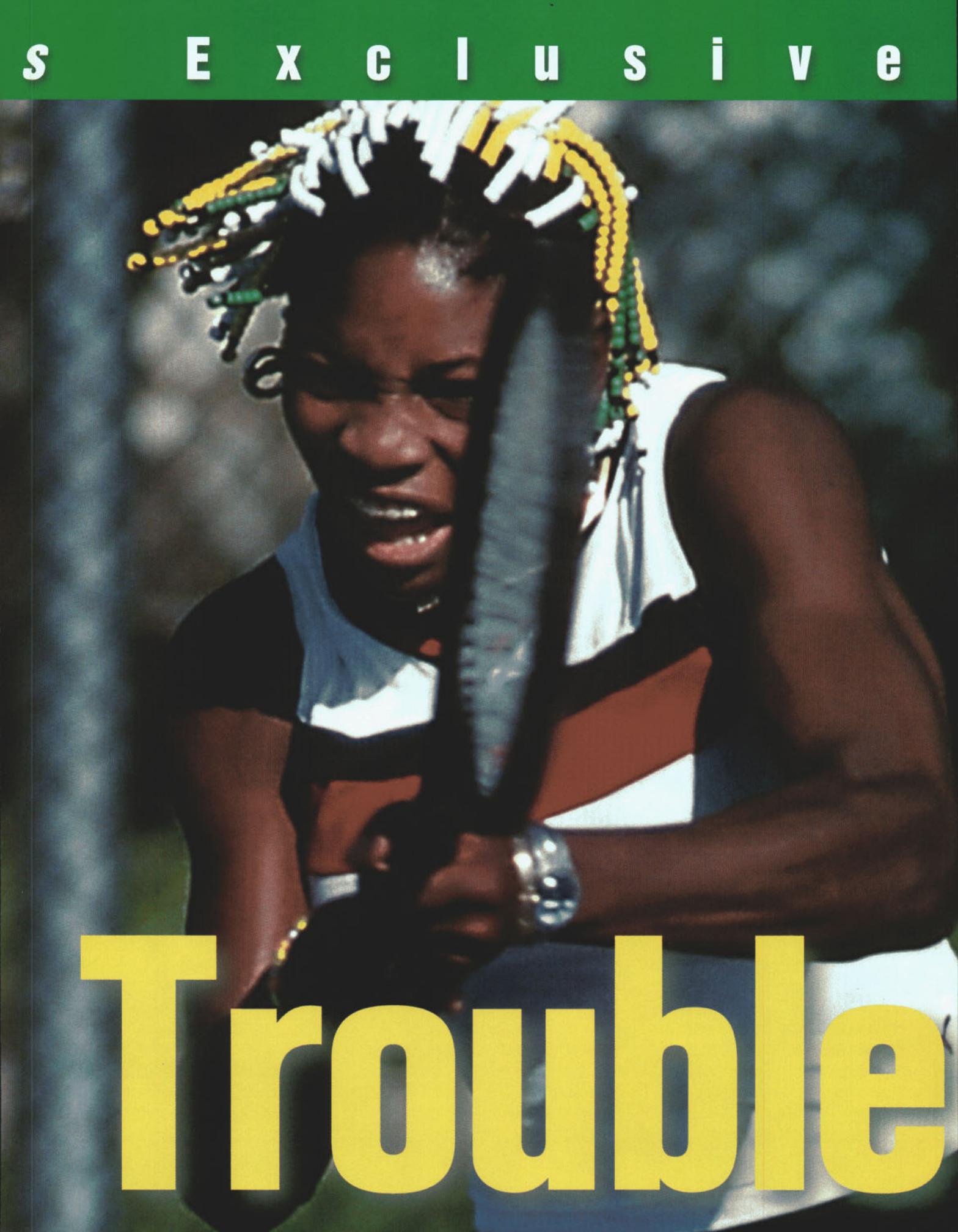
It was only a dream. Or, more correctly, the *idea* of a dream. But no one could convince Richard Dove Williams that his two little girls were not going to be major tennis stars. He just knew it. Heck, he claims he knew it before they were even born. And as unlikely as that may sound, bear in mind one very pertinent fact: He was right.

Today, Venus and Serena Williams are two of the hottest commodities on the professional circuit, and their stock continues to climb. As this issue of *All Hands* goes to press, 16-year-old Venus is ranked No. 5 in the world and Serena, 17, is not far behind at No. 10. This year alone they won two Women's Tennis Association (WTA) tournaments on the same day (Venus at the IGA Superthrift Tennis Classic and Serena at the Open Gaz de France, February 28); faced each other in the finals at the Livingston Championships March 28, and made history by defeating Martina Hingis and Anna



Double

S E X C L U S I V E



Trouble



Venus (right) and Serena Williams, the dynamic duo, share a big hug after a tough practice. The sisters never let their fierce competition get the best of them.

Kournikova in the French Open doubles championship (6-3,6-7,8-6) June 6, becoming the first sister act to do so. And between the two of them, they've won four Grand Slam mixed doubles and hold nine – that's right – nine singles titles.

Go ahead, call Richard Williams a dreamer. But don't forget that this high school dropout, who taught himself and his girls how to play tennis, also knows a thing or two about making dreams come true.

"My dad always knew that I could be a real player," said 17-year old Serena. "He's worked so hard with Venus and I since we were little." He began training them when Serena was four and Venus was five and never let up. Discipline was the norm on the court and off for the girls. Even in the home. It forced them to be fiercely competitive and self-reliant, and it paid off big time.

"I was only 8 years old when I realized I

could go far," remarked Serena, "and my parents were always around to see that discipline was applied. The hours were long and as I look back, I really don't know how I was able to stay out that long and be focused. In the end, though, it was and always is, worth it."

Professional tennis coach Nick Bollettieri couldn't agree more. He says the efforts of the girls' parents to keep them grounded have made all the difference in the world. "I have worked with thousands of students during the past four decades, including seven No. 1 world players. Richard and Mrs. Williams are geniuses in the way they have worked with their daughters. Not only have Venus and Serena become challengers for the very top, but the quality of life and values they hold off the court also meet the highest of standards."

The competition to get ahead in any sport is brutal, certainly no less so in

tennis. But how tough is it between sisters? Well, of course, there's a sibling rivalry. You just don't get to be this good without one. But it's the way the girls handle themselves that prove they're real pros. Their finals match against each other in the Lipton Championships marked the first time since 1884 that sisters had squared off against each other for a professional title. Venus took the match (6-1,4-6,6-4), winning her second consecutive Lipton title and defeating her little sister for the third straight time. But the girls walked off the court together – arm-in-arm.

They never let a game, or much else for that matter, come between them.

"Family is so important to us. It provides stability and support in our lives," said Venus. "After all, in the end all anyone has left is their family." They both agree the sport could never damage their relationship. In fact, they claim the opposite is true – that it only inspires them to

Born: June 17, 1980
Birthplace: Lynwood, Calif.
Residence: Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 169 lbs.
Plays: Right-handed
Year turned pro: 1994
Current rank for singles: 5
Current rank for doubles: 19
High rank for singles: 5
High rank date for singles: July 27, 1998
High rank for doubles: 18
High rank date for doubles: March 15, 1999
Career titles for singles: 7
Career titles for doubles: 3
Career matches won: 104
Career matches lost: 39
Year to date matches won: 27
Year to date matches lost: 4
Career prize money: \$2,932,546.00
Year to date prize money for singles: \$619,202
Year to date prize money for doubles: \$46,772

Born: Sept. 26, 1981
Birthplace: Saginaw, Mich.
Height: 5'10"
Weight: 145 lbs.
Plays: Right-handed
Year turned pro: 1997
Current rank for singles: 10
Current rank for doubles: 19
High rank for singles: 9
High rank date for singles: April 5, 1999
High rank for doubles: 18
High rank date for doubles: March 15, 1999
Career titles for singles: 2
Career titles for doubles: 3
Career matches won: 52
Career matches lost: 18
Year to date matches won: 23
Year to date matches lost: 5
Career prize money: \$905,554.00
Year to date prize money for singles: \$479,025
Year to date prize money for doubles: \$46,772

VITALS
VENUS

STATS
SERENA

Source: Women's Tennis Association, July 5, 1999.

work harder and brings them closer.

For her part, Venus demonstrates that work ethic every day. "My goal this year is to become the WTA's Player of the Year," she said. "This means I have to play superb tennis. I need to be more aggressive and mean when I play." With a record-setting serve of 127.4 mph, some would say she couldn't get much tougher.

Off the court, both girls are equally goal-oriented. "Serena and I are always trying new things in life, keeping ourselves busy," explained Venus. Recent graduates of the Driftwood Academy, where they maintained healthy 3.0 GPAs, they are now taking college courses. Venus also studies French and German; Serena's working on her Russian (her French is already pretty solid). And when they're not smashing balls across the net or surfing, they're publishing their own newsletter, *The Tennis Monthly Recap*, which they'll be quick to remind you is doing quite well. "We now

have more than 100 subscriptions from all over the world," boasts Venus.

On the more serious side, vocal Venus has also been heavily engaged in garnering more respect for women in professional tennis, to include trying to close the gender gap in prize money. "You don't get anything free, and the chance of the Grand Slams (besides the U.S. Open) giving us equal prize money without us collectively lobbying for it, would be as good as giving an opponent a match gratis," said Venus. She says women have to stand together and let the Grand Slams know that they are serious.

After tennis – and neither is quite ready to give up the sport just yet – the girls want to forge careers in fashion design, perhaps even opening up their own business one day. Venus has already designed a warm-up suit.

For now, though, they are knee deep in competition, with their peers and with

themselves – and they wouldn't have it any other way. Put simply, they're happy. And they're doing things for women's tennis that seemed unfathomable just a few years ago. They're making it exciting and a whole lot more fun to watch.

Like them or hate them, praise them or envy them, the Williams sisters are living proof that the American Dream still thrives. You can become anything you desire. You can pursue your talents and make your dreams come true. Focus and discipline are the keys.

Just ask Richard Williams. Or, better yet, talk to one of his girls.

"There's no limit to what you can achieve when you start going after your dreams," said Serena. "When you feel like quitting - don't. You can do it. The strength is always inside of you."

Gonzalez is a photojournalist with All Hands.

The year is 2004. It's 0-dark-30 and a Navy battle group steams quietly along the coast in a 21st century theater of operation ...

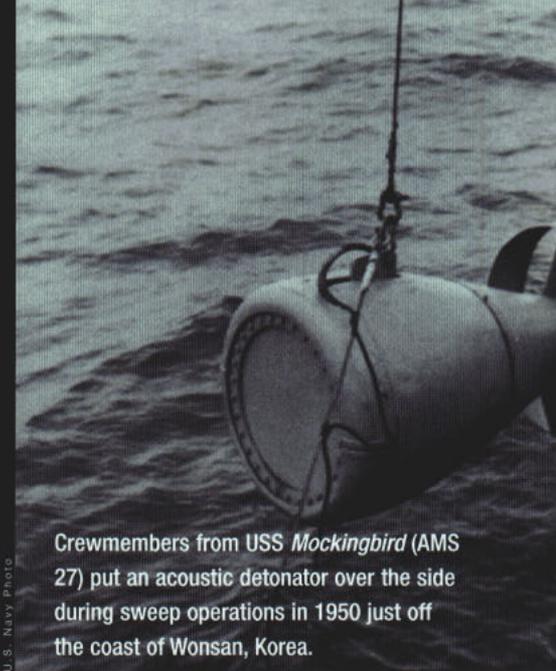
Mineman 1st Class (SW) Mike Manta, lead operator on the embarked mine warfare fleet introduction team sits at a console in the command information center (CIC) aboard the battle group's forward destroyer.

With a confidence borne of years of experience, Manta points to the console's sonar screen and explains the contact to the tactical action officer (TAO): a moored mine, some 15 nautical miles ahead of the ship, detected by the ship's remote minehunting vehicle (RMV).

With lightning speed, Manta types commands into the console's keyboard. The RMV makes a sweeping turn around the contact. Seconds later verification of the moored mine against the computer database is complete. Location marked.

The destroyer passes its findings along electronically to the battle group commander. A decision is made to avoid the mine rather than expend a neutralization device, knowing that the dedicated mine force will be along later to neutralize the threat.

This time it was only an exercise mine. Next time, as Manta well knows, it could be the real thing.



Crewmembers from USS *Mockingbird* (AMS 27) put an acoustic detonator over the side during sweep operations in 1950 just off the coast of Wonsan, Korea.

U.S. NAVY PHOTO

CLEARING

Mine Warfare Past, Present and Future

Sound like science fiction? Well, maybe, but it's really not that far away. In this decade alone, the Navy has done more to advance mine warfare technology than in its entire history. The next decade promises to be even more exciting, as mine warfare technology reaches the fleet as a whole.

But the rich heritage of past mine warriors has left an indelible mark on the fabric of naval history.

"Mine warfare has been an evolutionary process," said RADM Jose L. Betancourt Jr., commander, Mine Warfare Command, Corpus Christi, Texas. "[It] has been around for a long time and has evolved to the point it is today beginning with the legacy of those like ADM David Farragut." He's the one who uttered the now-famous words "Damn the torpedoes – full speed ahead" during the Battle of Mobile Bay, Aug. 5, 1864.

In 1776, American inventor David Bushnell fashioned the first naval mine. Dubbed a torpedo by its creator, the Bushnell mine was a rather unassuming device – a wooden keg packed with gunpowder, suspended from a float. They were effective enough that in 1777 General George Washington ordered a number of these mines set adrift to destroy a fleet of British warships anchored in the Delaware River outside Philadelphia.

It wasn't until the Civil War that the mine was widely deployed as an offensive weapon. Mines were embraced by the Confederate Navy to compensate for their inferior number of vessels. Still called a torpedo, mines helped the Confederacy sink 27 federal ships; by comparison, only seven were sunk by artillery fire.

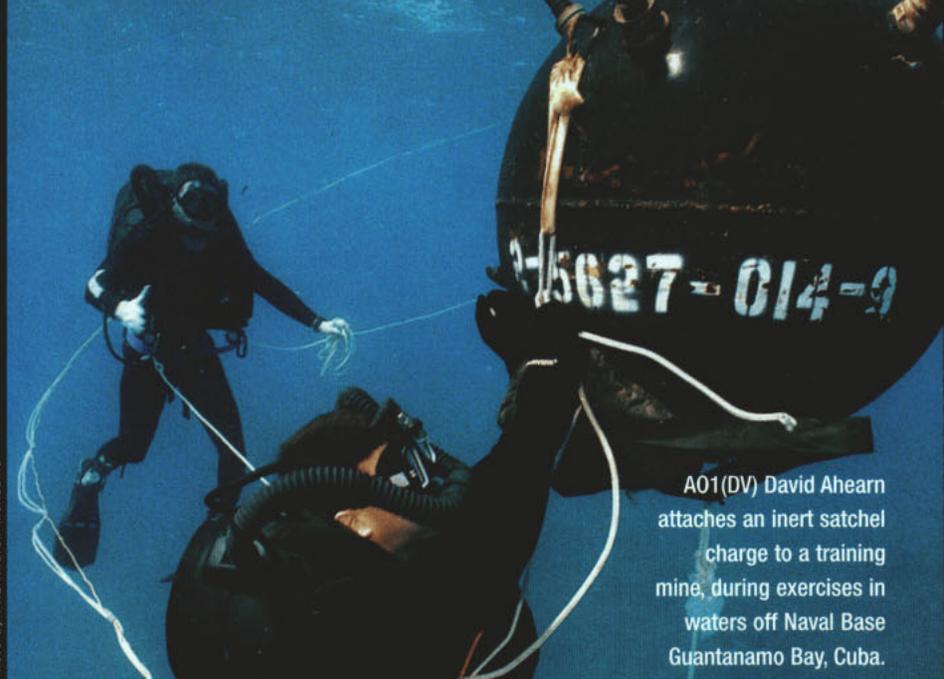
Mines again proved to be the allies' primary, and most effective weapon

against submarines during World War I. British and American minelayers seeded a 250-mile line from Scotland to Norway with more than 72,000 devices. The mine barrier destroyed six German U-Boats, damaged countless others and forced German submarine commanders to either confront certain destruction or waste precious diesel fuel and time skirting the deadly barrier.

"Influence" mines were introduced during World War II along with new delivery methods. Outfitted with electronic sensors, influence mines responded to or were affected by acoustic and magnetic changes as a ship passed close to the mine's sensing range. Allied mines were responsible for sending 1,316 Axis ships to the bottom and damaging 540 others. The Allies themselves lost more than 1,000 ships to enemy mines. More than 550,000 mines were laid on both sides.



Photo by PH2 Andrew McKaskie



A01(DV) David Ahearn attaches an inert satchel charge to a training mine, during exercises in waters off Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

THE WAY

Story by ENC Mike Randazzo, historical photo courtesy of the Naval Historical Center

In the Korean War, Communist forces effectively used 3,000 mines of varying types to hinder troop landings at Wonsan. The tactic forced Navy leaders to assess and revamp mine warfare and mine countermeasures strategies.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 created a huge stockpile of low-tech sea mines, numbering close to half a million. Since the Gulf War, the number of mine producers has also swelled dramatically. Today there are 49 countries with mine-producing capability, 30 known sea mine manufacturing countries and 20 known exporters.

“For the most part, the image of the mine as a cheap weapon that floats on the surface with pointy horns on it is no longer valid,” Betancourt cautioned. “The sophistication and proliferation of today’s mines has moved forward, but there are many unsophisticated mines still out there that pose a significant threat to

Navy ships.”

Case in point: A \$1,500 World War I-vintage moored contact mine caused \$97 million in damage to USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG 58) in the Arabian Gulf, during the “Tanker War” of 1987-1988.

Today, the Navy combats that threat with a dedicated mine force that’s on the cutting edge of technology. Fourteen mine countermeasures ships and 12 coastal minehunters complement 24 MH-53E *Sea Dragon* airborne mine countermeasures helicopters and 17 explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) detachments. This triad of surface, air and underwater assets is centered around the command and support ship USS *Inchon* (MCS 12).

The remotely-operated mine detection vehicles “flown” by our Sailors with global positioning systems controlled in cyberspace has clearly demonstrated current Navy mine warfare technology’s

ability to detect and defuse almost any mine warfare scenario.

“Thanks to technology and the dedication of our young enlisted Sailors in the mine warfare community, we have made, and will continue to make, great strides in this critical element of war,” Betancourt added.

Future advances include embedding “organic” mine countermeasures capabilities into the fleet as a whole. “By the middle of the next decade, advanced sensors will allow battle groups and amphibious ready groups to handle initial minehunting and neutralization chores prior to the arrival of the dedicated mine force,” Betancourt concluded. “Mines have gotten progressively more sophisticated throughout history, but so has our ability to combat them.”

Randazzo is a Reservist assigned to Naval Information Bureau 102, Fort Dix, N.J.

A full-page photograph of a U.S. Navy officer standing on the deck of a ship. The officer is wearing a dark blue short-sleeved uniform shirt with "HICKMAN" and "U.S. NAV" printed on it, a white helmet with goggles, and has his arms crossed. The background shows the ship's deck, a blue ocean, and a clear sky. Large, bold text is overlaid on the image.

SEEK

AND

DESTROY

All eyes in the dimly lit combat information center (CIC) aboard the coastal mine hunter USS Kingfisher (MHC 56) were on Mineman 1st Class (AW) Tim Hickman. Hickman's own blue eyes, made brighter by the overhead neon blue bulbs, were glued to one of two 8-inch monitors in front of him. From a live surveillance camera mounted above the starboard fantail, Hickman monitored deck department's progress as the ship's crane ever so carefully lifted Shania, Kingfisher's \$2 million remote-operated mine neutralization vehicle (MNV) off the deck and into the rolling seas below.

Hickman's eyes shifted right to the next tiny screen. Blinking yellow and white digits displayed the range, distance and depth of the mine-like object the ship's sophisticated minehunting sonar detected just minutes earlier.

Then the order he'd been waiting for came.

"Forty-eight pilot," rang the tactical action officer's (TAO) voice in Hickman's headset. "We have contact bearing one-eight-five; range 225 yards; possible mine-like object. You have permission to take control of the vehicle."

Now – finally! – it was his turn in the hot seat.

Thirteen years, 23 days: That's how long Hickman served as a mineman (MN) in the Navy before reporting aboard the Ingleside, Texas-based *Kingfisher*. That happened 11 short months ago. Before that he'd never been assigned to a ship. The only salt he came in contact with was the dash or two he'd dispense from a shaker at suppertime inside his four-bedroom home in sunny South Texas.

That's because, until recently, minemen didn't even hold billets aboard ships.

Sure, some, including Hickman, jumped at the rare opportunity to rack up TAD time and experience aboard U.S. and foreign mine hunters or sweepers. But that's all they were – short, sweet TAD trips that seemed to be over before they began.

Hickman's first tour of duty following mineman "A" school was a 37-month stint at Mobile Mine Assembly Unit (MOMAU) 8 in Guam. Then he got orders to another land-based operation, this time for three years at MOMAU 12, Misawa, Japan. Following that, shore duty again: MOMAU 15, Kingsville, Texas, for another three-and-a-half year tour.

Does anyone see a pattern developing here?

"I fell in love with the mineman rating at my first duty station," said Hickman. "That's why I decided to stay in the Navy. But, by not getting stationed aboard a ship, I felt I was losing out on some valuable experiences that go along with being a Sailor."

Valuable experiences like the chance to earn the much-coveted ESWS pin; the chance to go on liberty in exotic, far away



After 13 years without sea duty, Hickman admits he couldn't have learned everything he has in just 11 months aboard *Kingfisher* without the help and tutelage of people like BMC(SW) Larry Naumann (right). "It was a culture shock for me," said Hickman. "But these guys picked me up when I fell and pointed me in the right direction. Now I know the true meaning of being a shipmate."

lands; and, yes, the chance to one day return from a long overseas deployment and be able to recount sea stories (with just a touch of embellishment) to his high school sweetheart and wife of 12 years, Tina, and two baby boys Caleb and Nathaniel.

"Join The Navy: See The World." That famous recruiting slogan implies travel, adventure and a challenging, yet exhilarating way of life.

But only haze gray and underway Sailors truly see the world. Land-locked ratings, such as the MN community, are out of luck. Right?

Wrong. Times are changing – in the Navy, in the mine warfare community and in the MN rating.

Believe it or not, minemen are now packing their seabags and heading to the waterfront in droves. Billets aboard MHCs (coastal mine hunters), MCMs (mine counter measure ships) and other deployable mine warfare units, which were once filled exclusively by mineman source ratings (boatswain's mate, gunner's mate, sonar technician and operations specialist), are now, through attrition, being snatched up by MNs at every pay grade.

But it doesn't take an advanced economics degree to see how supply and demand forces are playing out in this newly revitalized enlisted community. For example, the state-of-the-art Mine Warfare Training Center at Naval Station Ingleside can barely pump out enough mineman "A" and "C" schoolers to fill the vacuum created by MNs going to sea. That's the main reason the minemen rating, now one of the Navy's fastest growing enlisted career fields, has one of the highest selective reenlistment bonuses (SRB) fleetwide. Add that to

high advancement numbers and a \$2,000 signing bonus for new enlistees who select the MN rating, and it appears the benefits of being a mineman are shaping up.

Especially for upwardly mobile, sea-thirsty Sailors like Hickman. For him, the long, frustrating wait for ship orders is over.



Back in the hot seat inside *Kingfisher's* CIC, Hickman squares his shoulders to the AN/SLQ-48 mine neutralization system console and firmly clutches the F-15 pilot stick with his right hand. Although not a pilot in the traditional sense, "flying" the MNV through the turbulent, murky undercurrent toward a predetermined target (in this case, a bottom or moored mine) is comparable to executing aerial maneuvers from a cockpit.

But piloting the MNV isn't a solo act. The success of any mine seek-and-destroy mission Hickman flies hinges on the combined efforts of all 51 crewmembers on board. When the CO gets on the IMC and sets condition "TWO-MIKE-HOTEL" or 2-MH (indicating that a mine hunting evolution is about to commence), rest assured, the entire crew – everybody – gets a piece of the action.

"It's kind of overwhelming to know that all these guys work so hard to get the ship to this point so we can clear some hidden field of mines out there," admits Hickman. "I sometimes say to myself, 'Everybody is counting on you. Don't let them down.'"

He hasn't yet and has no plans to.

Now with full operational control of the mine-killing vehicle, Hickman's right



Photo by PH3 Lena Gonzalez

With a planned water wash-down evolution approaching in a matter of minutes, BM2 Jimmy Orms quickly guides 100 feet of fire hose to the forward part of USS *Kingfisher*.

hand taps the pilot stick forward, sending the hovering MNV into a 45-degree dive. His first priority, once fully cleared from the crane's saddle release, is to put some distance between the vehicle and the ship.

"Vehicle is 50 yards from ship. Request permission to commence mine hunting evolution."

During condition 2-MH, *Kingfisher's* tactical action officer (TAO) coordinates between CIC and the bridge, relaying navigational information so the MNV's umbilical cord doesn't get entangled with the churning screws below. The data on the console monitor tells Hickman he's at the correct depth and heading straight for the target.

One hundred yards and closing ... 50 ... 25 ... 10 yards ...

There it is.

"Sir, I have the contact in sight," reported Hickman to the TAO while squinting at the dark, clouded video image on his screen. The intense light emanating from the vehicle's forward lamps cut through the dense fog of aquatic nothingness just enough to illuminate the algae-covered, cylindrical object.

"It looks like a UDM," said Hickman, referring to the Russian-built, multi-influence bottom mine that can be surface or air laid.

"Stand by to release the detonation charge," orders the TAO.

By this point Hickman's heart is pumping pure adrenaline through his veins. He is in the groove; in his element – at sea aboard a mine hunter-killer.



As a scrawny country kid from the small, Midwest farm community of Jackson Center, Ohio, the sandy blond youngster grew up in a huge, three-story house with two big brothers, a big sister and a little brother.

At 17, tired of working as a farm hand for the neighbors, Hickman was itching to do something different. Something bigger than himself.

Enter Electrician's Mate 1st Class Shannon Zurkel, the area recruiter. Like most Sailors, Hickman remembers vividly his first encounter with the recruiter that put him in the Navy:

"I was a junior in high school and



Photo by PH3 Lena Gonzalez

taking a class in Industrial Electronics at a vocational school. At the time I knew zilch about the military. Then in walks this totally sharp, squared away, gung-ho Navy guy. I had never seen someone so ... so cocky; confident; even worldly! He gave our class a presentation about exciting careers in the Navy. Later he showed us a map of all the cool places he'd been in the world. I was hooked."

The following Friday morning Hickman found himself playing hooky from school and strolling into Zurkel's office. There he sat down, combed through a worn-out *Blue Jacket's Manual*, and read the description for the mineman rating:

"MNs test, maintain, repair and overhaul mines and their components. They are responsible for assembling, testing, handling, issuing and delivering mines to the planting agent for maintaining mine-handling and minelaying equipment."

Sounded cool to him. That day Hickman signed up under the delayed-entry program. The rest is history.

Like so many of us, this young country

kid was plucked out of Middle America, and thrust into an exciting (and demanding) journey in the U.S. Navy. To Hickman, though, the abrupt change of scenery suited him just fine.

"I used to milk 60 head of cattle at three in the morning for five or six hours, then come back and do it all again at three in the afternoon," recalls Hickman of his days on the farm. "In the meantime, I still had to feed cattle, cultivate crops, bale hay and maintain the tractors."

Don't get him wrong, though. Hickman doesn't regret a single day of it.

"Ever since I was little I've been taught the value of hard work," he said. "I came away with a well-rounded work ethic."

A work ethic which has served him well in the Navy – especially as a Sailor underway aboard *Kingfisher*. In just 11 months this dedicated, hard-charging Sailor has acquired countless seamanship skills. His impressive list of shipboard collateral duties includes JOOD (junior officer of the deck), sea-and-anchor detail POIC (petty officer in charge), fo'c'sle and fantail safety officer, and, as if that

wasn't enough, he's also taken the ship's conn a time or two.

"That's one of the advantages of being stationed aboard a small ship like *Kingfisher*," said Hickman. "Most E-6s aboard bigger ships in the fleet would never get the chance to take the conn."



Like a lion sneaking up on its unsuspecting prey, Hickman carefully inches the MNV into position within close proximity of the mine.

He knows from past experience in the hot seat that this part of the mission – to deploy the 60-pound bomblet tucked under the vehicle's orange-painted, fiberglass belly – is a very complicated maneuver. One wrong move could spell disaster.

Unfazed by the mounting pressure, Hickman presses on.

"Request permission to deploy the bomblet."

"Permission granted," came the response.

Left: Following "one blast" from the ship's whistle, Hickman and his fellow shipmates render a hand salute from the starboard bow as *Kingfisher* passes another coastal mine hunter.

With his free hand, Hickman reaches down to the pilot console and pushes a red button.

Instantaneously, a tiny explosive charge with the intensity of a firecracker goes off in the MNV's bomb bay, releasing the two-foot-long bomblet nose-first into the water.

"Bomblet armed and properly deployed," reports Hickman.

"Very well, 48," replies the TAO.

"Return vehicle to ship."

It takes 20 minutes for the vehicle to be secured in its original position on the starboard fantail. Meanwhile, the ship navigates to a safe distance.

"Stand by to detonate. Three, two, one ..."

Boom. Then, BOOM!!!

Two simultaneous explosions. The first detonation is the bomblet. The second one, of course, is the UDM itself.

Cheers erupt throughout the ship, but nowhere more enthusiastically than in CIC. A frenzy of high-fives and back patting replaces the concerned looks and sweaty brows.

But the celebration is brief. After all, this was just one mine. An entire mine field awaits them.

But they're ready. So is Hickman. Now, after 13 years and 23 days of land-locked existence, this lightly salted dog knows what it's like to be a seafaring Sailor and the good things that come with it. ESWS pins, exotic liberty, tall sea tales, and, of course, the chance to be the man in the hot seat.

Thompson is a photojournalist assigned to A&H Hands.



Just forward of the starboard fantail outside his office (stuffed with countless tools, a tiny work bench, a swiveling stool and a computer), Hickman is about to perform maintenance on "Shania," the ship's mine neutralization vehicle (MNV). *Kingfisher's* plank owners, who've been with the ship since her commissioning, Oct. 26, 1996, affectionately named the MNV after country music diva Shania Twain.

“WHERE THE FLEET GOES, WE’VE ALREADY BEEN.”

Mine warfare is the cornerstone of expeditionary warfare and one of the Navy’s key resources. Without effective and timely mine clearance, the ability of the Navy to project power would be severely compromised.

Forty-nine years ago, then-Chief of Naval Operations ADM Forrest P. Sherman lamented, “... when you can’t go where you want to, when you want to, you haven’t got command of the sea.” That lesson is still true today.

And today, America’s mine warfare triad of mine countermeasures ships, mine countermeasures helicopters and explosive ordnance disposal divers helps ensure that the U.S. Navy has complete command of the sea. Here’s a brief look at how they do that:

TRAILBLAZERS

A01 Miguel A. Silva inspects a series of MK-63 *Quickstrike* mines during mine assembling training aboard USS *Constellation* (CV 64). The MK-63, invented during the Vietnam War, is a bottom mine dropped by aircraft into the water and used to detect and destroy enemy submarines and surface targets. Mines vary widely in their complexity and effectiveness and are classified by their position in the water, method of deployment and how they are propelled.



Photo by PH3 James W. Olive

“WITHOUT MINE WARFARE, THE CAMPAIGN STOPS.” — RA

Mine Warfare Assets

27 ships

1 Command and Control ship:
USS *Inchon* (MCS 12)

14 Mine Countermeasures ships (MCMs)

USS *Avenger* (MCM 1)
USS *Defender* (MCM 2)
USS *Sentry* (MCM 3)
USS *Champion* (MCM 4)
USS *Guardian* (MCM 5)
USS *Devastator* (MCM 6)
USS *Patriot* (MCM 7)
USS *Scout* (MCM 8)
USS *Pioneer* (MCM 9)
USS *Warrior* (MCM 10)
USS *Gladiator* (MCM 11)
USS *Ardent* (MCM 12)
USS *Dextrous* (MCM 13)
USS *Chief* (MCM 14)

12 Coastal Minehunters (MHCs)

USS *Osprey* (MHC 51)
USS *Heron* (MHC 52)
USS *Pelican* (MHC 53)
USS *Robin* (MHC 54)
USS *Oriole* (MHC 55)
USS *Kingfisher* (MHC 56)
USS *Comorant* (MHC 57)
USS *Black Hawk* (MHC 58)
USS *Falcon* (MHC 59)
USS *Cardinal* (MHC 60)
USS *Raven* (MHC 61)
USS *Shrike* (MHC 62)

2 Mine Countermeasures Helicopter Squadrons

HM-14 *World Famous Vanguard*
HM-15 *Blackhawks*

10 Mobile Mine Assembly Units (MOMAUs)

MOMAU 1, NWS Seal Beach, Calif.
MOMAU 3, NWS Earle, N.J.
MOMAU 5, NAS Sigonella, Italy
MOMAU 7, Barbers Point, Hawaii
MOMAU 8, NAVMAG Guam
MOMAU 10, Kadena AB, Okinawa, Japan
MOMAU 11, Charleston, S.C.
MOMAU 12, Misawa AB, Japan
MOMAU 14, NWS Yorktown, Va.
MOMAU 15, NAS Kingsville, Texas



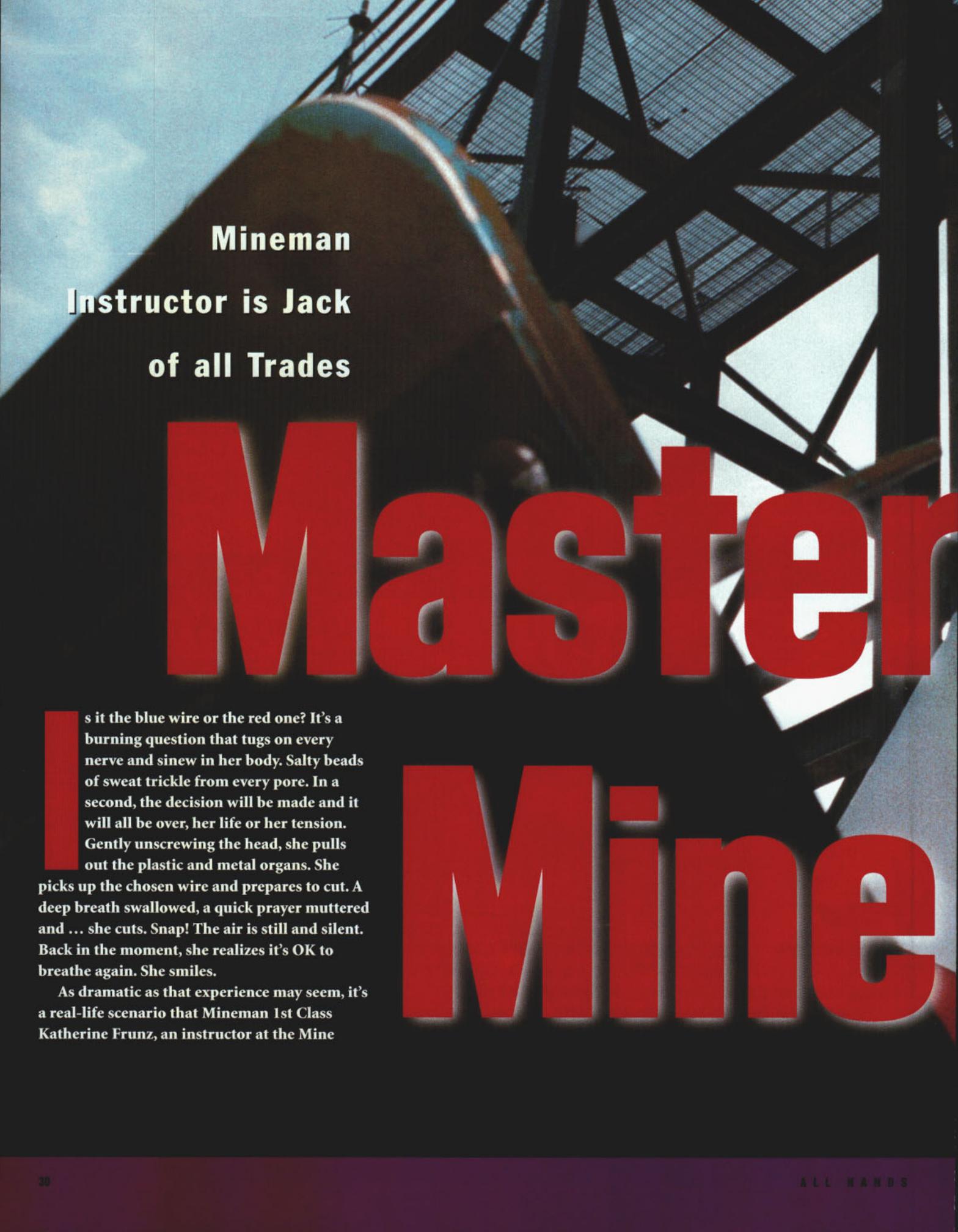
Photo by JO1 Jason Thompson

Mineman "A" school students disassemble an MK-62 training mine inside the hangar bay at Naval Mine Warfare Training Center, Ingleside, Texas. The advanced training minemen receive here prepares them for the highly technical jobs they perform aboard fleet MCMs, MHCs and other units in the mine warfare "triad."



Photo by PH2 Dwight Davis

Operating with the utmost caution, this Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 8 diver sets the fuse of a demolition charge to blow up a simulated underwater mine. EOD mine countermeasure detachments are found throughout the fleet. Their mission is to locate, identify, neutralize, recover, exploit and dispose of sea mines, torpedoes and depth charges. They also work closely with other Navy MCM forces to ensure the nation's MCM Triad (surface ships, helicopters and EOD) is trained and ready to respond.



**Mineman
Instructor is Jack
of all Trades**

Master Mine

Is it the blue wire or the red one? It's a burning question that tugs on every nerve and sinew in her body. Salty beads of sweat trickle from every pore. In a second, the decision will be made and it will all be over, her life or her tension. Gently unscrewing the head, she pulls out the plastic and metal organs. She picks up the chosen wire and prepares to cut. A deep breath swallowed, a quick prayer muttered and ... she cuts. Snap! The air is still and silent. Back in the moment, she realizes it's OK to breathe again. She smiles.

As dramatic as that experience may seem, it's a real-life scenario that Mineman 1st Class Katherine Frunz, an instructor at the Mine

Story by and photos by PH3 Lena Gonzalez



Mine Warfare Training Center “C” school students MN1 Ollie Collins of Ragland, Ala., and MN3 Lance Douglas of Dallas make a beeline to the school parking lot for their 30-minute lunch break. The advanced training that minemen receive here prepare them for the highly technical jobs they perform aboard fleet MCMs and MHCs.

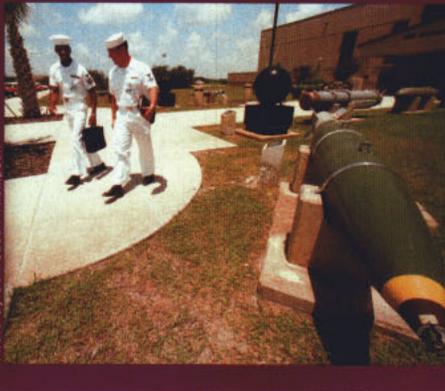


Photo by JO1 Jason Thompson

firmly to all her students. In her line of work there’s simply no room for mistakes – it’s do the job right the first time, or there won’t be a next time. And she should know.

Frunz is good at what she does – real good. In fact, she’s often referred to by students and instructors alike as the “Jack of all Trades” in this demanding field.

“There’s so much to learn as a mineman and the vast areas that we have to work in makes you extremely versatile and valuable,” she said. Minemen have to be able to do it all. From boatswain’s mate to radioman; damage controlman to sonar technician; engineman to deck hand. The mineman rating is somewhat of a melting pot for those rates and more. It could be why so many Sailors in those rates find their way through the halls of this training center. Even Frunz cross-rated – she was a storekeeper for four



MNSN Joshua Puga, a Mineman “A” School student from Dallas, practices disassembling an MK-62 aircraft-laid bottom mine.

years before becoming a mineman.

“I had the opportunity to work in all the weapons supply departments at the Yorktown Weapons Station, Yorktown, Va. Because mine warfare was a more technical field as opposed to supply being an administrative field, it really grabbed my attention,” said Frunz.

Frunz is a warrior with a real touch of class. For more than a decade now, her love for the Navy and mine warfare have satiated an equally passionate desire for adventure, but she just as easily knows how to relax. “I sit down when everything is quiet and tune it all out – the stress, everything – it’s all gone,” she said. A classical pianist in her spare time, she likes to tickle the ivories while her two daughters chase butterflies in the backyard. Playing piano provides an escape for her, a ‘Fortress of Solitude’ that she’s reveled in since childhood.

This day, however, as she plops down at her cluttered desk, Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata” on the CD player will have to do.

A native of Cleveland, Frunz dropped out of college after four years, because she was uncertain about the direction in which her life was heading. Despite the recession of the early 1980s, she managed to find a job: chipping paint off of a 200-foot salvage ship. She loved it, because it gave her the opportunity to scuba dive. But the closest body of water was Lake Erie, and that didn’t really satisfy her. She wanted the open seas.

“I joined the Navy, because I knew I would be near an ocean,” said Frunz. “I wanted to travel, pursue an exciting career, get established and finish my college degree. The Navy gave me all that.” Indeed, Frunz now holds a Master’s Degree in International Affairs.

She is a Sailor with boundless energy and she appreciates what she has accomplished. Recently, Frunz was named Instructor of the Quarter and, when she’s not teaching, she’s taking classes to keep abreast of the newest developments in mine warfare. Frequently, she can also be seen escorting junior ROTC students

around the training facility. "One of the things I point out to them is the position I'm in now, as a woman. If I were a civilian I don't believe I would have the chance to go near this equipment, let alone work on it," remarked Frunz.

The Mine Warfare Training Center was relocated from Charleston, S.C., to Ingleside, Texas, in 1993. The curriculum that instructors like Frunz teach here is demanding and requires from students an innate problem-solving ability and even more concentration. There is as much emphasis placed on practical application as there is on classroom study.

"The Training Center tests my skills," said MNSN Walter Webb, an "A" School student from Virginia Beach, Va. "It challenges my mind and body. It's an exciting whole new theory I'm working on. It's a lot to work through, but I'm doing it."

And the instructors are no less enthusiastic. Ask them how they feel about this duty, this school, and they'll tell you they never had it better. "It's great here, and the students really want to learn," said MNC Luis Bodeaux, an instructor from Fauxville, Ind. He just got back from duty in Saudi Arabia and couldn't get over the positive environment and high morale he witnessed at Ingleside. It's all because of the students, he says, all because of their eagerness and willingness to learn.

Outside, the grounds are littered with mine models: MK-65 Quickstrikes, MK-60 Captors, MK-67 SLMMs and more. Like medical school cadavers, they're to be dissected – to be used as valuable learning tools. Today, a class of "A" School students is busy with their instructor carefully disassembling a MK-62.

But course work here is also very academic, and students spend a lot of time in the classroom. State-of-the-art computers and advanced teaching tools make it easier to learn, but the stress level here isn't any



Mineman "A" school students BM3 Kenneth Boatright from Denver, and MNSN Troy Hepner from Marysville, Calif., work together disassembling an MK-62 mine while fellow student QM2 Darryl Bostic from Kansas City, reads important guidelines from the manual.

less. Students working complex problems on calculators abound, sitting almost statue-like as they tap furiously at the keys. They take the work very seriously, for out in the fleet, one small mistake – one wrong calculation – and someone could get hurt. Someone could get killed.

"We need good people out there," said Frunz. "Unfortunately, we can't get them educated fast enough." In the past, the mineman Sailor was hardly seen. But walking down the halls of the training center, it's evident that that is changing. According to Frunz, the current "A" School class consists of more than 40 students. The last graduating class was only five.

With the highest across-the-board advancement levels, minemen are reaping the benefits of being one of the fastest growing enlisted career fields. They also boast one of the highest selective reenlistment bonuses (SRBs) in the Navy. The initial sign up bonus is already \$2,000.

Is that enough? Can all those benefits replace the fear of working in dangerous and deadly mine fields? It can for some, but minemen like Frunz feel there's more to focus on. The rating's excitement,

thrills and adventure are something she'd like to see advertised more by recruiters.

Most of Frunz's days are filled with dissecting, diffusing, disassembling and servicing dead mines. These mines can't hurt anyone, but there are still too many out there below the ocean's surface that can. Does the difference of working with dead mines instead of real ones hinder the mission? Not at all. Mentally, she imagines herself in real-life predicaments and forces herself to act accordingly.

"You have to keep focused on your job and your duty first, especially in a time of conflict," she said. Otherwise, she says, your worst fear just might come true. "I'm there to do a job and I'll do it until I absolutely can't do it anymore."

Now, Frunz is ready to put her skills to the test at sea. She is scheduled to be one of the first women minemen to be assigned to a coastal mine hunter (MHC). Approval for women to serve aboard the MHC class is expected later this year.

Gonzalez is a photojournalist for All Hands.

FULL SPE



Story and photos by J01 Robert Benson

ED AHEAD

Navy Recruiters Join Pit Crew in Indy 500



TEN SECONDS.

Don't blink. You've got only 10 seconds, from now until it's gone, to understand and enjoy this thing that causes so much commotion.

Here it comes now, Ship's Serviceman 1st Class Ben Mueller's car, a speck on the horizon, hurtling toward you at 230 mph.

EIGHT SECONDS.

Look now as it skids to a stop and the dust clears: it's a \$560,000 rocket-on-wheels, being attacked by a hungry pit crew. Even now, with the engine in idle, the deafening noise of its hungry horses can out-drone 100 Harleys. This fuel-sucking beast gets about two miles per gallon but can scream down the road comfortably at 230 mph plus. The V-8 engine produces more than 730 horsepower and the mag wheels are almost a foot and a half wide.

FOUR SECONDS.

Take a photo of it. Savor the moment. Touch it in envy. Ask Mueller for his autograph. This race car is – Oops! Too late. There it goes, rocketing from zero to 100 mph in a blistering three seconds – nine seconds quicker than it takes a production Porsche 911 Turbo to reach the same speed.

Did you see it? Mueller's Indy 500 race car?

What? You've never heard of it? This is the car that made the Kessel Run in less than 12 parsecs! She'll make point five past light speed! Well, almost.

Naturally, Mueller doesn't drive the street-illegal automobile from his house to the Navy recruiting station where he works in Tom's River, N.J. In fact, he doesn't drive the thing at all. But on this day, none of the 400,000 fans who checked out Mueller in the Cheever racing team fire suit, ablaze with team

logos and racing colors, knew the difference. On this day, Mueller's machine – an Indy 500 race car – was "his." As an honorary pit crew member at the 83rd running of the Indianapolis 500 last May, Mueller experienced the fury of "the world's greatest racing spectacle" and took just as much ownership in the car as every member of the pit team. He witnessed the race like few have ever done – up close and personal with one of the world's best: Eddie Cheever, winner of last year's race.

Mueller was one of seven lucky recruiters who were rewarded with the opportunity to serve as honorary pit crew members. The chance came after he and the others scored record recruiting numbers in their respective districts.

His approach in recruiting is to look squared away and saturate the market; at the race track it was to keep his ears plugged and his jaw from hitting the





Top: "Wheeling the car out to the starting position was something I'll never forget," said SH1 Ben Mueller (one of the three wearing the red and blue shirts). Mueller, along with two other Sailors, served as honorary pit crewmembers with Team Cheever, the winner of last year's race.

Left: SH1 Ben Mueller, a recruiter in Tom's River, N.J., suits up before the big race. Mueller wore a fire retardant suit while in the pit area and helped Team Cheever in any way he could.

ground every time the race car came in for a pit stop. For a person whose only pit experience came from gassing up the family station wagon and changing the oil every six months, what he saw in the pit area left him dumbfounded.

When Cheever's car shot into the pits, the team hydraulically lifted the car, changed the four tires, filled the fuel tank, cleaned the mirrors, briefed the driver and sent him on his way in under 11 seconds. That's the same amount of time it just took you to read this sentence. "You really have to see it to believe it," explains Mueller.

Equally as impressive to Mueller was the strategy the pit crew team employed: high-end computers that monitor the car's fuel consumption based on tire wear, temperature, driving conditions and engine performance; and pit crew

managers that keep constant communication with the driver via radio.

Other things weren't so new: the team concept, as in the Navy, was paramount to success. The role each pit person had, similar to the Navy, was vital to winning.

When the green flag waved in Indianapolis starting the Memorial Day race, Mueller saw all these things come into play. "This is really cool," he kept repeating to anyone who would listen. "Hope my daughters will see me on TV."

Some 745 miles away in the Mueller household, his 14-year-old daughter secretly, perhaps, held her breath and wished the same thing. "I prepared her for five to six days before I left on what the Indy 500 is all about," said Mueller. "I told her the cars travel at 230 miles per hour – just a blur. I also told her they refuel and put on new tires in about eight

Mueller's Machine

THE ENGINE

A Dual Overhead Cam V-8, 32-valve engine that cranks out about 730 horsepower. Since the engines are driven at such extreme temperatures during competition, it has to be nearly rebuilt after each race (an engine will last approximately 700 miles – 200 miles for practice, 500 for the race). Therefore, usually five to nine extra engines at \$83,000 each are kept on hand.

THE TAILFIN

The fin helps stabilize the car through corners.

THE COCKPIT

To improve safety, the Indy Racing League (IRL) has mandated that drivers must have improved safety head protection by building up the sides of the car to further enclose the driver.

FRONT WINGS

These create downforce – 2,700 pounds of it – to make the car more stable through corners. At 200 mph this force acts like a vacuum and sucks the car down. The clearance from the track to the bottom of the car is less than an inch.



AIR INTAKE

The air intake above the driver's head forces air into the engine, creating a ram effect that acts like a turbocharger.

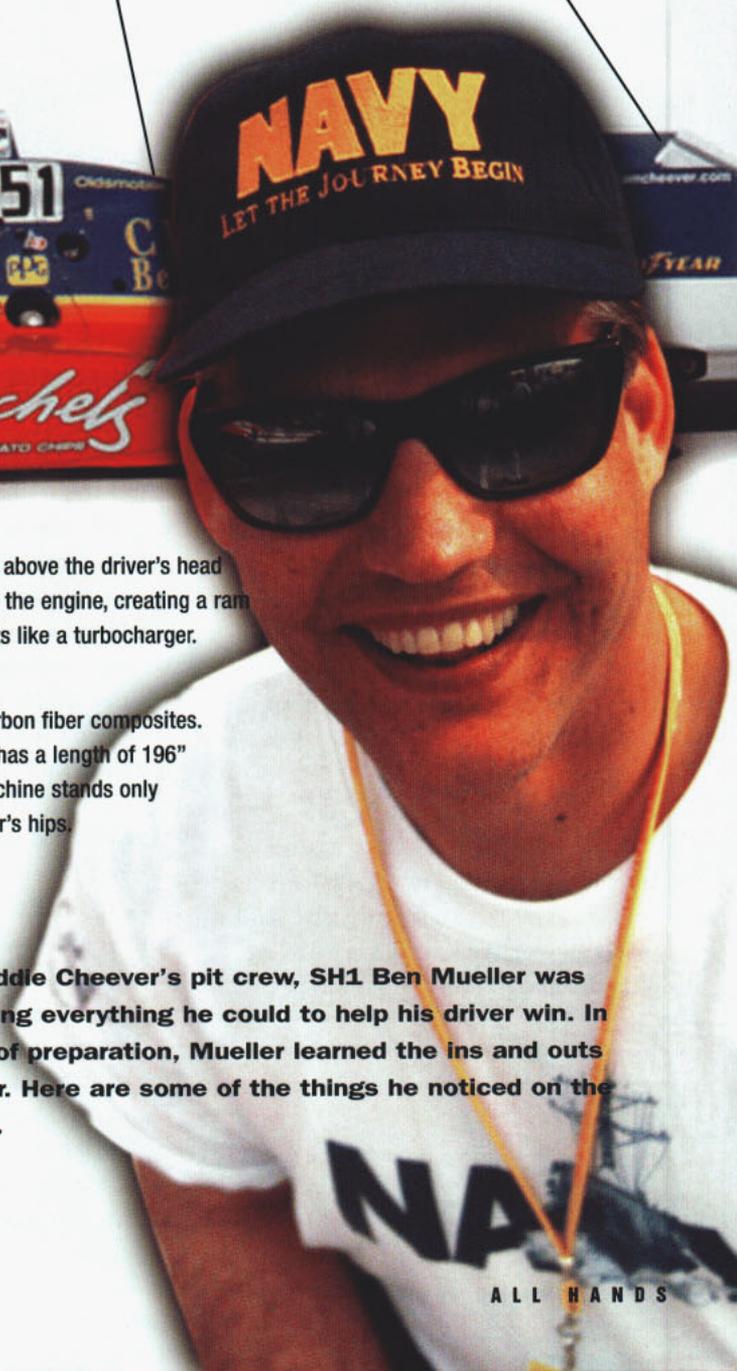
THE BODY

Cheever's chassis is constructed of carbon fiber composites. It weighs a mere 1,585 pounds, and it has a length of 196" with a 78.5" width. The rocket-like machine stands only three feet tall – barely reaching Mueller's hips.

THE TIRES

Bigger and wider than any tire you've probably seen before, these babies are 10" wide in the front and 14" wide in the back – enough to stick through the sharpest turns at the highest speeds. Here's the weird part: at speeds in excess of 200 mph, the downforce causes the tires to expand. The rears grow to 16" and fronts to 12."

As a member of Eddie Cheever's pit crew, SH1 Ben Mueller was responsible for doing everything he could to help his driver win. In four intense days of preparation, Mueller learned the ins and outs of an Indy race car. Here are some of the things he noticed on the 230-mph machine.





The winner of the 1999 Indianapolis 500, Kenny Brack, gets four new tires and fuel in about the same amount of time it took you to read this caption.

seconds.” But not even his story telling, relayed with the enthusiasm only a recruiter could muster, or the stereo sound on the 27-inch TV screen in front of her could replicate the speed, deafening noise and excitement of nearly half a million cheering fans that bombarded Mueller’s senses in Indianapolis on race day.

“There were so many people,” he recalled. “It was unbelievable. The highlight of the weekend came when I rolled the car out to the starting position the day of the race. Everyone was watching, because that was the winning car last year. It was just amazing.”

Back home a few weeks earlier, Mueller never fathomed he would be assisting one of the world’s greatest race car drivers at the Indianapolis 500. He knew his recruiting numbers were good,

but good enough to win him a sideline pass at the world’s greatest race? He didn’t think so.

But then again, his numbers were pretty good.

“Before I was here [at the recruiting station], Tom’s River wasn’t making goal. But now we’ve done it for five months in a row, averaging three to four people a month.”

Mueller attributes the increase to a new recruiting style. “We saturated the market,” he said. “I play sports with a lot of the high school counselors. They in turn have referred applicants, to me, it works out nicely.” He also boasts a skill which most people dread: public speaking. “I have a liking for talking in front of large crowds. I’ve also gone into high schools and taught military history. That helps. The kids coming in look up to me. When you go in

squared away with a nice uniform, people want to emulate you; it makes them want to inquire about the Navy.”

Mueller said he gets a sense of accomplishment from recruiting.

But what a sense it must be for him and other recruiters now, an hour into the race, during the 88th lap, when Cheever’s car pulls into the pit area, and he is called upon to jump the wall and go into action.

A tingling sensation in his gut, some butterflies and a ‘fight or flight’ feeling engulf him. With a winning purse of more than \$9 million on the line, he knew he couldn’t be indecisive. So, like he did in practice multiple times with the pit crew, he jumps the wall, stands behind the head mechanic as he loosens the rear wheel, grabs it when he takes it off, hands it to yet another person, then sprints back



SH1 Ben Mueller shows off his Navy pride to Jay Leno, this year's Indy pace car driver. A portrait of Leno now sits on Mueller's recruiting desk.

over the wall – a choreographed task that happens in a blur.

“The cars came in real fast – at 80 mph,” said Mueller. “They changed two tires and fueled the car in only eight seconds. It was very exciting.”

So exciting, perhaps, that Mueller probably didn't even notice the ABC, CBS and NBC media pack behind him, broadcasting the team's every move during the pit stop. He did take notice though, when they interviewed him a short time later.

“I wore my Navy ballcap and Navy T-shirt the whole weekend,” said Mueller. “I wanted to promote Navy awareness to each and every person I came into contact with.” Those people included, among others, Chief of Naval Operations ADM Jay Johnson and even Jay Leno, who were invited to Indianapolis to ride in the pace car at the beginning of the race.

Throughout the week, Mueller said he

felt like “part of the family” during his Indianapolis stay. He partied with the pit team the night before the race; he practiced with them all week; he was even there five days before the race during Eddie Cheever's qualifying run, where the driver nearly didn't make the cut.

“Qualifying was exhausting; but if you don't qualify, you don't race,” said Cheever. His word's rang true; as Mueller watched, Cheever waived off his first attempt at qualifying because the team felt the track conditions might have limited his speed. They made another attempt at qualifying in the backup car in the middle of the afternoon, which they also waived off. His third attempt of the day was nearly a disaster. The engine began to vibrate with two laps to go. The car began to shake at more than 220 mph, and Cheever knew that he needed to keep his foot on the

gas. “How an individual keeps the pedal to the floor, pulling three Gs at that speed into a turn at Indy and knowing the engine could erupt at any second is beyond me,” said Dick Caron, Cheever's pit manager.

But somehow Cheever qualified and earned himself a spot in the Indy 500. As he took the checkered flag on qualifying day, the engine let go, smoke began to billow, and then Cheever took a breath.

So did Mueller; his ticket to ride was predicated on Cheever qualifying.

“I met Eddie before the race,” said Mueller. “I told him ‘good luck with the race, and it was an honor to be in his pit crew.’ He also said it was enjoyable to have me on the team.”

How enjoyable was the Indy experience for Mueller? He said it ranks as a once-in-a-lifetime experience. “It was as good as skiing in the French Alps when I was on USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), or as breathtaking as seeing the Sistine Chapel. I'll never have the opportunity to do anything like this ever again.”

Although Cheever didn't win, Mueller walked away from Indianapolis with a few mementos of the race:

- The Cheever racing suit. The team let him keep it. It hangs in his garage.

- A picture of him and pace car driver Jay Leno. It's framed and sitting on his recruiting desk as a selling point to potential recruits.

- A pit pass. It's draped from a tack on a bulletin board in his office, worn from sweat and grime.

And there's the one thing he treasures most:

- An Indy race car. Believe it or not, they let him take it home. Gleaming and bright, he keeps the thing clean, and it looks stunning parked in his garage – right there on the wall, next to the race suit in an 11 x 14 picture frame.

Benson is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

Racing 101

Words to Make You Racing Savvy

Anti-roll Bar: Steel bar, generally in the shape of a shallow "U" that couples the left and right rear wheels together to resist body roll in corners.

Back (part of the track): The Start/Finish line is located on the "front" straight of a racetrack. The balance of the track, especially the tight curves, is referred to as the "back."

Blocking: Driving a line which is intended to keep an overtaking car from passing. Tolerated by drivers only in moderation among equals and usually only on the last lap. Generally considered by race officials to be a figment of the overtaking driver's imagination.

Corner: Refers to a tire, wheel, and associated suspension components, especially on a formula car. One measure of crash severity is the number of corners destroyed.

Differential: The driven wheels of a car cannot be solidly connected because, in turns, the inside tire rotates more slowly than the outside tire. The differential is a gear device that couples the engine torque to the wheels without coupling the wheels to each other.

DNF: A result sheet acronym for "Did Not Finish." Often used as a verb (i.e., "He DNFed.") To be classed as a finisher, a car must complete half the laps completed by the overall race leader.

DNS: A results sheet acronym for "Did Not Start."

Double-Clutching: A technique wherein the clutch is depressed and released once in shifting the box to neutral, the engine is revved, then the clutch is depressed and released again in shifting into the next (lower) gear.

Draft: (1) (verb) To draft a car is to pull up behind it and gain the advantage from the low-pressure air in its wake. (2)

(noun) draft is what the first car gives the second car. (i.e., "He got some draft." or "I gave him a draft.")

Dust Clouds, driving through: There are many pilots who race cars. They do not slow their airplanes when they cannot see, neither do they slow their race cars.

Flag, yellow: No passing, slow down. "No passing" is honored; "slow down" is generally ignored, especially by the guy you hope to catch. A stationary flag has no effect on car speeds.

Formula Car: Literally, a car built to a formula or a set of rules. In practice, a Formula Car is a purpose-built racecar with fully exposed wheels and tires. Examples include Indy Cars and Formula 1.

Grid: (1) The place where cars are parked before being flagged off to start the pace lap (i.e., "The cars were called to the grid."), (2) The cars themselves. (i.e., "The grid was in bad shape, but they got the green anyway.")

Horsepower: If you don't get passed on the straight, you've got enough. Theoretically, engines can be differentiated by measuring their horsepower on a dyno. In practice, different dynos give different readings, and engine builders' claims may have nothing to do with what they are actually measuring.

Kevlar: A very strong synthetic fiber that is also fire-resistant. Used in driver suits, tire construction, and bullet-proof vests. Also used in place of glass-fiber for lighter weight or higher strength in "fiberglass" race car body panel construction.

Over-rev: To run an engine beyond its RPM limit. Over-revving will often result in piston-to-valve contact, which has never been considered a good idea.

Points, Finishing: Points counting towards series or geographic championship standings are usually awarded as follows: First Place - 12, Second -9, Third -7, Fourth - 6, Fifth - 5, Sixth - 4, Seventh - 3, Eighth - 2, and Ninth - 1.

Shock Absorber: Damping device that keeps the car from oscillating on its springs. Has nothing to do with absorbing shocks. Shock absorbers have characteristic, for "bump" (compression) and for "rebound" (extension). Adjustments to these settings are sometimes possible, depending on the unit.

Short (referring to gearing): A "shorter" gear requires more engine revolutions for a given car speed. For example, if you are turning 5,000 RPM in a slow corner, putting in a shorter gear might increase RPM to 6,000 and put you in a better part of the engine's torque curve.

Slip Angle: The angle between the direction that the tire is physically pointing and the line it's actually following. This apparent slip is caused by the stretching of the rubber at the contact patch.

Tear-offs: Thin plastic overlays for a helmet visor or on car's windshield.

Tell-Tale: A second tachometer needle which mechanically "remembers" the highest rpm reached by the main needle. Usually reset between sessions. The tell-tale reset button is normally located so that it cannot be reached by the driver.

Wing, More/Less: refers to the angle of attack of a wing, consequently the downforce and drag. More wing means a higher angle of attack, more downforce and more drag. "We took a little front wing out of it," means that the wing was reset to a lower (flatter) angle of attack.

SCAMS ONLINE

Netscape and AOL have recently merged to form the largest Internet company in the world. In an effort to remain at pace with this giant, Microsoft has introduced a new e-mail tracking system as a way to keep Internet Explorer the most popular browser on the market. This e-mail is a beta test of the new software and Microsoft has generously offered to compensate those who participate in the testing process. For each person you send this e-mail to, you will be given \$5. For every person they give it to, you will be given an additional \$3. For every person they send it to you will receive \$1.”

Boy, does this sound neat. If you believe it, I have some land in the south Pacific to sell you. Yes, it's an actual e-mail hoax that has been circulating for a while now. It's a fake, a phony, a fraud ... and there are many just like it. Check out <http://www.microsoft.com/>

www.fraud.org and www.sec.gov/consumer/cyberfr.htm to see if this would be a good subject for CyberSailor.

After getting this e-mail from a friend, I wondered how many other people were getting these e-mails and didn't realize they were fake. I did some checking at www.fraud.org and www.sec.gov/consumer/cyberfr.htm to see if this would be a good subject for CyberSailor.

A few days later, I got another one that said some dying girl's last wish was to pass a poem on to a certain number of people via an e-mail and for each one a certain organization would donate money. This particular e-mail even listed the address and phone number of a professor at a known college to make it sound legitimate. I called the number and found it was another hoax.

So how can you determine what is legit and what is a con these days?

These Web sites offer some tips: www.intergov.org/public_administration/infor-

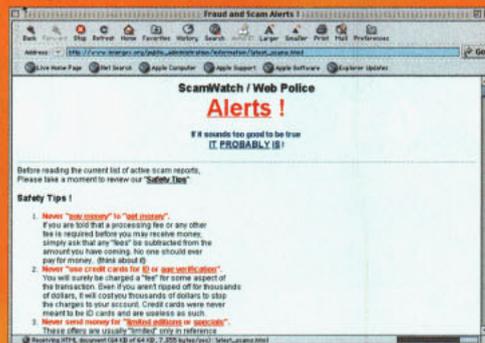
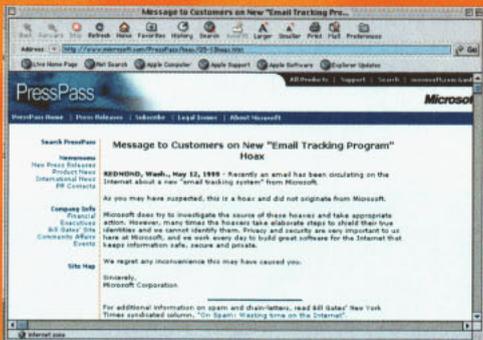
[mation/latest_scams.html](http://www.intergov.org/public_administration/latest_scams.html) and http://ciac.llnl.gov/ciac/CIAC_Hoaxes.html

Sometimes, the most telling sign that an offer is a scam is its presentation. An offer or ad that makes outrageous claims (provides extremely large returns on investments, cures the incurable, etc.) should be immediately suspect. “Special Internet offers” are likewise suspect, along with “limited time” offers or those that give you a discount if you order today. Other fraud indicators include:

1. Solicitation via e-mail. Ignore it. Most “opportunities” presented via e-mail are frauds. If the opportunity was so great, the scammers wouldn't have to force it on folks. The e-mail hucksters are playing the numbers: They send junk solicitations to 100,000 e-mail addresses, and figure they will get a 1/10th of 1 percent return – which is to say, 100 victims sending

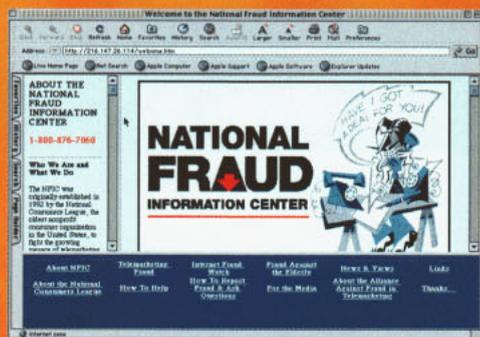
money. Don't be one of them.

2. The netpreneur offers no physical address just a mail drop, no telephone number and no name.
3. The solicitation asks you for your credit card number, or worse, to fax a check. Such demands for immediate cash are the hallmark of true fly-by-night operations.
4. The con artist continually alludes to the “great potential for entrepreneurs” on the Internet – with frequent references to the tens of millions of customers online – yet can't show or explain the product he is selling.
5. The offer urges you to order before a certain deadline, or claims to be available only to a limited number of people. This false urgency is a technique to get you to order before you have time to think things through or change your mind. Also, before forwarding



www.microsoft.com/PressPass/hoax/05-13hoax.htm

www.intergov.org/public_administration/information/latest_scams.html



www.fraud.org

www.sec.gov/consumer/cyberfr.htm

that e-mail or responding to one check out www.consumers.gov for unbiased info.

The nation's 50 state Attorney Generals are also responsible for protecting the public against fraudulent and deceptive telemarketers and others who prey on unsuspecting victims. Several of them have their own Web sites and can provide you with specific information on their activities.

For information on charities, contact the National Charities Information Bureau

at www.give.org and the Better Business Bureau Philanthropic Advisory Board at www.bbb.org/reports/-index.html#char. Also check out the Web site at www.idea-list.org for listings of legitimate charities and ways to get involved.

For information on medicine or health products, check out the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Healthfinder at www.healthfinder.gov

For information on the securities industry, contact the

National Association of Securities Dealers Investor Information site at www.investor.nasdaq.com or the National Association of Securities Dealers Regulation Web page at www.nasdr.com or the North American Securities Administrators Association at www.nasaa.org

For information on telephone service issues, contact the Teleconsumer Hotline www.teleconsumer.org/hotline

To get reports on specific

businesses, contact the Council of Better Business Bureaus www.bbb.org

Cyber Sailor

Eye on the Fleet

EYE ON THE FLEET

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HOPE AND COOKIES

AN Susan Fannie hands out homemade cookies to Albanian children near Camp Hope. The camp was the first U.S. refugee camp in Albania built in support of *Joint Task Force Shining Hope*.

Photo by PH2 Brian McFadden



GONG SHOW

Driving his team on, HMC Frank Cabrera bangs a gong in rhythm to his oarsmen during the Naha Dragon Boat Races. The races are held each year in celebration of Golden Week, the Okinawan festival of spring.

Photo by PH2 Lou Messing



HOOKING UP

Landing signal officers (LSO) guide an F/A-18 "Hornet" onto the flight deck for an arrested landing on board USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74). *Stennis* is currently deployed participating in Tailored Ship Training and Availability (TSTA2) exercises.

Photo by PH3 Mike Larson.

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Eye on the Fleet



PLOTTING IN THE DARK

OSCS Dominick Albano of Atlantic City, N.J., and OSSN Travis L. Kiefer of Cape Hatteras, N.C., review manual tracking procedures of a target using a plot board in the Combat Information Center on board USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71).

Photo by PH3 William L. Vandermate

MISSILE MEISTER

AOAN Melika D. Pittman of Fairmont, N.C., performs maintenance checks on an AGM-65 *Maverick* air-to-surface missile aboard USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71).

Photo by PH3 Donne McKissic





MAKING ROUNDS

BM2 Melissa Tackitt from Ithaca, Mich., checks perimeter security as an MH-53E *Sea Dragon* from Helicopter Mine Countermeasure Squadron (HM) 15 lands to pick up the security team. HM-15 is currently embarked aboard USS *Inchon* (MCS 12).

Photo by PH2 Brian McFadden



BEACHFRONT PROPERTY

An Air Cushion Landing Craft (LCAC) moves onto the beach at Lithoro, Greece, carrying equipment for the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). The first wave of Marines assigned to the 26th MEU came ashore during the early stages of NATO's peacekeeping mission in Kosovo.

Photo by Marine Corps CW02 Seth Rossman



The Final Word

Just In Time

By JO1 Robert A. Benson

Hello, Guinness Book of World Records? Yes, I'd like to report a national record I set recently with the help of some of my Navy buddies.

And the event was?

Plane pulling.

Plane pulling? But sir, that's almost as obscure as the goldfish swallowing, worm eating and phone booth stuffing categories. I'll have to ask your name to verify this.

Machinist Mate 2nd Class Thomas Strickland. And I know you gave coverage to a man who ate an airplane piece by piece, so I'm hoping you'll give us recognition for pulling one.

And when was this record set?

June 5th at Dulles International Airport in Virginia. We pulled a 150,000-pound 727 airliner 12 feet really quick. Set a new national record.

Ah... OK... go on.

Well, the event was meant to raise money for certain organizations. There were about 70, 20-person teams who turned out for the plane pull. Most of the teams were made up of real big guys, like ours was.

Anyway, the first team got up there, grabbed the rope tied to the plane's front wheel, and pulled like crazy when the referee blew his start whistle. They pulled it 12 feet in 10.78 seconds. Then another team did the same thing, time 9.66 seconds. Next team, 10.03 seconds; next 7.65.

And what was your team doing at the time?

Meditating; psychologically preparing ourselves. Reflecting on the months of preparation down in Norfolk where we practiced with the Secretary of the Navy's plane time and time again.

Sounds impressive!

We wanted the win bad. I'll get to those reasons in a minute.

How fast did you guys pull the plane?

You're not going to believe the time, but we have proof. Remember, the other teams were averaging about nine to 10 seconds. Our time was blistering fast; Like I said, there were personal reasons for the hard push... er... pull.

And your time?

First, let me tell you about our pull. We were screaming and hollering to psyche ourselves up. I pre-positioned everyone along the rope: fast guys up front and heavyweights in the middle. We even did a group hand salute to the crowd before we did the pull.

Wow, how patriotic. Bet the spectators liked that huh?

It really got them behind us. They were cheering us on like crazy. The adrenaline in all my 20 guys was flowing; we were actually shaking with anticipation.

Then the start whistle sounded?

Yeah, and we pulled like we never did before.

Your time?

Five point seven five seconds!!

Nobody – not on the team or in the crowd – could contain themselves. We demolished the competition.

And the inspiration you mentioned? Where did that come from?

Justin.

Justin?

He's my 13 year-old son who has Down's Syndrome. The win was for him.

Sounds like an amazing story of hope courage and teamwork. So where to now?

The world competition in Hawaii. I'm told we will take on the reigning world champs – a bunch of real big airline baggage handlers. But you know what I say?

What's that?

Look out Worlds, here we come!

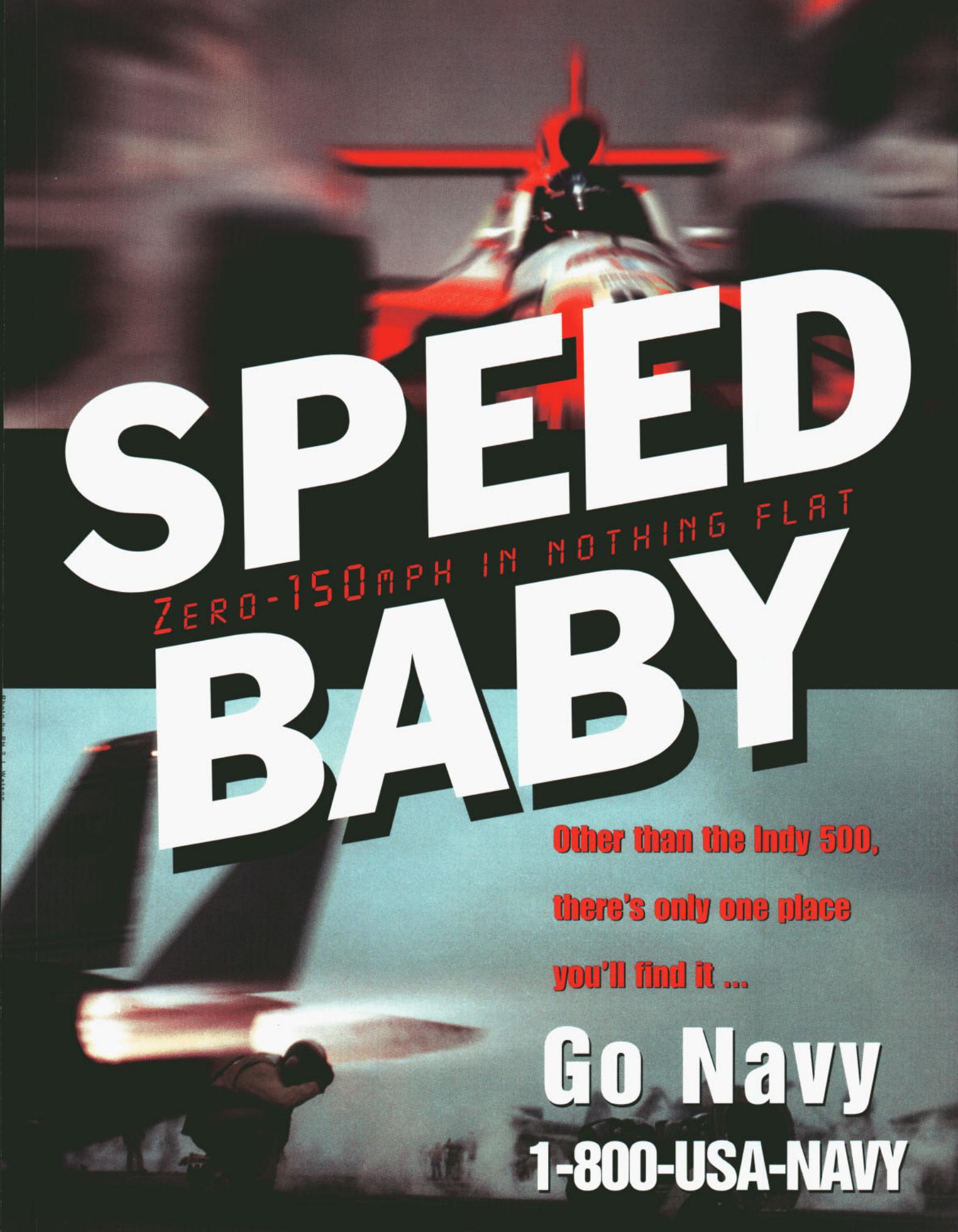
Did you know?

In 1863, the Confederate Congress established the Torpedo Service. Their mission was to sow Southern waterways with "Bushnell Kegs" (watertight kegs filled with black powder and a flintlock detonator). These mines were prone to waterlogging and faulty detonators but cheap to produce. Forty-three Union ships were struck by Confederate mines during the Civil War; 27 of which sank.

What's known today as the Indianapolis 500 was originally called the International Sweepstakes. The first year of the race was 1911; the winner, with a time of 6:42.08, was Ray Harroun. Average speed for that race was 74.602 mph. Harroun used a rear view mirror in his car, the first ever mirror used in an automobile. The 1911 race also marks the first time a pace car was used.

In March 1995, the former amphibious assault ship USS *Inchon* (MCS 12) underwent a 15-month conversion before assuming a new mission as the Navy's only Mine Countermeasures Support Ship (MCS). As a floating port, *Inchon*, now based in Ingleside, Texas, provides both a landing platform for MH-53E *Sea Dragon* mine-sweeping helicopters and a repair and resupply facility for fleet coastal minehunters (MHC) and mine countermeasure (MCM) ships.

September 23rd marks the 200th anniversary of John Paul Jones' epic sea battle against HMS *Serapis* off Flamborough Head. It was during this fight that Jones, in command of USS *Bonhomme Richard* uttered his now-famous words, "I have not yet begun to fight!"



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