

*"DOMINANT IN BATTLE"*

# THE DOMINANT NEWSLETTER



*ISSUE 8 JULY 2012*

Another month has elapsed and your Sailors of MCM Crew DOMINANT have been hard at work. We have a lot of very exciting news to bring to you in this issue of the DOMINANT Newsletter, as always!

Our Department Heads and Command Master Chief have written articles, highlighting such things as the completion of our Maintenance Availability period, the Holy Month of Ramadan, exercises completed since our last newsletter, and, also, our new barracks!



USS GLADIATOR at dusk, miniaturized by the vast Arabian Gulf.

Between all of this month's operational accomplishments, your Sailors were able to have a swim call in the balmy 95° Fahrenheit water of the Central Arabian Gulf! For two hours, we stopped and had some FUN! We dove, cannon-balled, and, occasionally, belly-flopped from the boat deck of USS GLADIATOR.

The past month has seen some farewells, including LT Cass, our former Operations Officer. We wish him Fair Winds and Following Seas, and anxiously welcome LTJG Hume as the Crew's newest "Ops." We were also sad to see EM2(SW) Rodriguez and MN2(SW) Cadigan go, and wish him the best of luck at his new commands. Finally, we would like to send a warm Crew DOMINANT welcome to our newest shipmates, whose pictures are on page 5!

Do not forget to check out and follow MCM Crew DOMINANT on [Facebook](#)! We will continue to share pictures of events and post information and resources to help keep you informed while we are away. You can see many pictures on our page that we couldn't fit into the newsletter!

We'd love to hear from you! If you would like to contribute an article from the perspective of a family member of a Sailor or have another idea please forward them along to [john.morgan@mcm11.navy.mil](mailto:john.morgan@mcm11.navy.mil).

-John R. Morgan III, First Lieutenant

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## CO's COMMENTS

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Greetings, Crew DOMINANT family and friends! I hope that everyone is doing well. Over the past month your Sailors have run USS GLADIATOR (MCM 11) through her paces at sea. We have been able to accomplish a lot and GLADIATOR is in the best shape she has been in for quite some time. The hard work and effort your Sailors put forth during the maintenance availability paid off and allowed GLADIATOR to operate at sea for 15 of the last 22 days since the availability ended. During these underway days we completed our Tactical Development (TACDEV), Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Indoctrination Exercise (INDOC-EX) and a Route survey.



Our time in port has been busy. We had two days between each underway period, during which your Sailors worked steadily to re-fit and re-supply GLADIATOR. In addition to preparing GLADIATOR for sea, we moved into our barracks ashore on July 20<sup>th</sup>. This is a well-deserved privilege earned by the hard work the MCM force has put forth over the past couple of years. The barracks rooms give our Sailors the ability to rest off of the ship and have a place where they can relax out of GLADIATOR's small confines. This marks the first time since 2006 that MCM crews have had permanent barracks off the ship in Bahrain.

Now that we have been deployed for over two months, we are looking forward to our first port visit. They don't come that often since GLADIATOR is homeported in Bahrain. Your Sailors are looking forward to enjoying a little bit of liberty outside of Manama and the sights and activities that await them!

Our Facebook Page is being updated regularly by our OMBUDSMAN and crew editors. We are striving to push out relevant information and photographs to help show our Family and Friends in San Diego and also show you what your Sailors are up to between Newsletters. If you haven't "liked" our page yet, it's easy to do, just search for "MCM Crew DOMINANT". Make sure check your email regularly; our Family Readiness Group (FRG) will be holding its first event in the next couple of weeks. Mrs. Megan Moran and Mrs. Teresa Crum will be helping to bring everyone together.

Please help me in extended a warm welcome to Mrs. Elicha Moyer who will be relieving Mrs. Valerie Williamson as OMBUDSMAN next month! If you are not receiving e-mails from our OMBUDSMAN and you would like to be added to the crew's family and friends e-mail list, please e-mail her at "dominantfamily@gmail.com".

On a solemn note, an MH-53 mine countermeasures heavy lift helicopter crashed near Muscat, Oman on July 19<sup>th</sup> while assisting the Omani military in conducting recovery operations for one of their downed aircraft. Please keep the family members of the 2 airmen that were killed and the 3 others who were injured in your thoughts and prayers.

We've had a few new crewmembers join Crew DOMINANT over the past two months that I'd like to welcome: LTJG Hume, ENS Nguyen, MNC(SW) Simoncic, EN2 Evans, MN3 Brown, MNSN Richwine, MNSN Thomas, QMSN Graham, and MNSA Carrizales. Welcome to the Crew DOMINANT family!

Until next month, I hope you continue to enjoy the summer weather!

M. T. Erdner  
Commanding Officer

## XO's POST

Dear DOMINANT families, the heat has certainly set in this month and we've still got another month or two before the mercury starts backing off a bit. The swim call Captain Erdner called as we were delayed waiting for our divers to catch their breath for a while was a great relief to your favorite Crew... as long as we managed to not burn our feet on the decks baking in the sun. Thank goodness for the engineers keeping the A/C plants humming along, allowing the combat gear to function and keeping the good ship GLADIATOR habitable. The dedicated men of the operations department have made excellent use of our time at sea over the past couple weeks, examining scores of contacts and getting many folks cross-trained on the sonar and mine neutralization vehicles. The deck division completed superb combination sweeps and even a mechanical sweep of a mock moored mine that earned MN2(SW) McReynolds the title of "Swagemaster of the Year." I don't want to spoil the story, but I highly recommend asking your Sailor to

give you the background about that one. Not to be outdone, the talented folks in the supply department



have been stacking stores waist high in the passageways and working magic in the galley keeping the crew well-fed with some of the finest meals I've ever had at sea! It's pretty amazing what the Supply guys can do with fish and chicken, especially considering the postage stamp of a space they have in which to work. Your Sailors are in good hands and getting the job done out here. Be assured that you are all in our thoughts and prayers as I'm sure we are in yours.

## CMC's BLOG

## BMCM (SW/AW) Bernard

### Ramadan Awareness – Preparing Our Sailors for the Islamic Holy Month

We held two briefs on the mess decks early this month, to increase awareness of Islam's approaching holy month and to help those unfamiliar with the observance know what behaviors are expected and appropriate. Ramadan is a month in the Islamic lunar calendar, or Hijra, and is celebrated as the time when the Qur'an was revealed to the prophet Mohammed. This year, Ramadan began at sunrise July 20th and will last through sunset August 18. Because Hijra is a lunar calendar, which is shorter than the 365-day Gregorian calendar by 10 to 11 days, the holy month occurs 10 to 11 days earlier every year.

During Ramadan, Muslims fast for 29 or 30 consecutive days. Fasting is the fourth of five pillars of Islam, and is central to the observance of the holiday. Muslims abstain from eating, drinking, tobacco use and other designated activities while fasting. It is believed that suspending these behaviors will help them to purify themselves of their sins.

Muslims see the beginning of Ramadan as a chance to embark on a new beginning. It's kind of like making a New

Year resolution. "I'm going to work to improve on certain points to become a better person."

Because we are based in Bahrain, a country whose main practiced religion is Islam, our Sailors wear long sleeve shirts and pants during the Holy



Month of Ramadan and must abstain from eating, drinking, and using tobacco during daylight hours while in public. It is important for our Sailors to comprehend and be sensitive to the cultural and religious differences while stationed in another country. The more we all know about the culture, the better prepared we are to show the utmost respect for the people and traditions of Bahrain.

As always - Enjoy your day, because you deserve it!

## CHENG's PIT

Crew DOMINANT successfully completed a Continuous Maintenance Availability early in July. The crew worked with contractors to complete work on over 70 pieces of equipment. All scheduled work was completed on time and several other additional emergent work items were also completed. Later, Crew DOMINANT took the newly repaired engineering plant back out to sea. The crew executed numerous engineering drills while underway helping to get several individuals qualified to stand major watch stations.

The Engineering Department said farewell to Electrician's Mate 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Gregory Rodriguez who transferred to his new duty station in South Carolina this month. Crew DOMINANT would like to



DC2 Lovorn swings out into the sea during this month's swim call.

wish EM2(SW) Rodriguez the best of luck at his new command. Several new sailors reported aboard this month. Electrician's Mate 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Barnes and Fireman Robinson arrived onboard in July and have already made great contributions to the Engineering department. The department also welcomes aboard Ensign Jeffrey Nguyen to the crew. Ensign Nguyen is a recent graduate of the Naval Academy and is serving as the Repair Officer.

The engineers of Crew DOMINANT have been working hard to keep USS GLADIATOR ready to meet all operational requirements. The engineers are up to the task and ready to face all challenges. Thanks for all the support from friends and family back home.

## OPS's STAND

It's been a busy month for Crew DOMINANT. Operations would like to extend a warm welcome to its newest Chief, MNC (SW) Simoncic. He is the new CPO for Deck Division. July started with TACDEV, an exercise in tactical development. Crew DOMINANT had over 40 Mine Neutralization Vehicle "Flights" that week, and the exercise was a resounding success! Following a couple days in port, Crew DOMINANT was at it again, this time with an EOD detachment embarked in order to complete their Indoctrination



Four shipmates dive simultaneously while those already in the water look on!

Exercise. The exercise had the entire crew and EOD Det. busy working on minesweeping, minehunting, diving and a gunnery exercise. The week ended with a boom, as the EOD team detonated an 80-pound C4 charge just below the surface! Following another brief stop in port, Crew DOMINANT headed out for a week-long surveying exercise. The around-the-clock work minehunting meant long hours on watch but a lot of valuable training to our crew. Now, after another quick stop in port, Crew DOMINANT is looking forward to heading out for our first port visit to Jebel Ali, UAE. Stay tuned for more updates in the next newsletter!

## **SUPPO's BIN**

Another month is coming to an end, which brings MCM Crew DOMINANT one month closer to the end of deployment and one month closer to returning to San Diego. This past month has brought several changes, including all MCM Crews in Bahrain being provided with off-ship barracks rooms. Located in several different locations surrounding Naval Support Activity Bahrain, these rooms will give everyone a chance to relax and unwind when in port. The

barracks are all very spacious, fully furnished, and equipped with fitness facilities, swimming pools, cable television, and Wifi. They are certainly a vast improvement from the normal living conditions onboard an MCM! With the busy schedule the crew has been supporting the past few weeks as well as in the coming weeks, it will be great to be able to leave the ship at the end of the day and just get some down time.

## **THE PODIUM**

### **AWARDEES**

#### **Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal Recipients:**

LT Cass, MN2(SW) Cadigan, MN2(SW) McReynolds, QM2(SW) Marrero, CS2 Nguyen, EM2(SW) Rodriguez, MN3(SW) Trinidad.

#### **Letter of Commendation Recipients:**

IC1(SW) Simmons, MN2(SW) McReynolds, EN3 Tolleson, MNSA Long.



**Senior Sailor of the Quarter**



**Junior Sailor of the Quarter**



**Blue Jacket of the Quarter**

### **CHIEF PETTY OFFICER SELECTEE**

HM1(SW/FMF) Martinez.

### **ADVANCEMENTS AND REENLISTMENTS**

BMCM(SW/AW) Bernard, MNCM(SW) Williamson.

*"DOMINANT IN BATTLE"*

**NEW ARRIVALS**



LTJG Hume



ENS  
Nguyen



MNC(SW) Simoncic



EN2  
Evans



MN3 Brown



MNSN Thomas



MNSN Richwine



QMSN Graham



MNSA Carrizales



**New Bahrain Water Front at Mina Salman!**

**FAREWELLS** – LT Cass, EM2(SW) Rodriguez, MN2(SW) Cadigan - You will be missed!

