



USS FALCON (MHC 59)
FPO AA 34091-1957

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5750
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From: Commanding Officer, MHC CREW PRESTIGE
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 2005

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12J

1. As required by reference (a), the following command history of the USS FALCON (MHC-59) is submitted for the calendar year 2005.
2. Supporting documentation attached.


J. R. MIDKIFF

**USS FALCON (MHC 59)
(MHC CREW PRESTIGE)**

Command Operations Report

1. Command Data

**Name of Unit: USS FALCON (MHC 59)
V22151**

**Name of Command: (MHC CREW PRESTIGE)
(40174)**

Commanding Officer: Midkiff, James R, LCDR

Date Assumed Command: 2004-07-16

Mission: Mine hunting, the technique of locating mines with sonar and neutralizing them with a remotely controlled underwater vehicle or EOD units.

Homeport: Ingleside, Texas

Operational Superior in Command: COMCMRON TWO

Administrative Superior in Command: COMCMRON TWO

**Number of Personnel Assigned:
Officers: 8 Enlisted: 41**

Command Point of Contact:

██████████, ENS, USNR,

Public Affairs Officer

Classified EMAIL: ██████████@falcon.navy.smil.mil

Unclassified EMAIL: ██████████@falcon.navy.mil

Phone Number(s): (361)776-5767 / 5766 / 1244

**Command Mailing Address: MHC CREW PRESTIGE
FPO-AE 09501-5101**

**Chronology For MHC CREW PRESTIGE embarked
onboard USS RAVEN (MHC 61) and USS FALCON
(MHC 59) for 2005**

JANUARY 2005 – USS RAVEN (MHC 61)

**01-07 U/W Central Arabian Gulf (CAG)
07-31 Inport Mina Salman, Bahrain**

FEBRUARY 2005

**01-23 Inport Mina Salman, Bahrain
24-28 Basreq Shipyard, Bahrain (Drydock)**

MARCH 2005

01-06 Basreq Shipyard, Bahrain (Drydock)

MARCH 2005 – USS FALCON (MHC 59)

10-31 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX (Post-Deployment Standdown)

APRIL 2005

**01-10 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX (Post-Deployment Standdown)
10-18 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
18-21 U/W Corpus Christi Operation Area
21-30 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX**

MAY 2005

**01-09 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
09-13 U/W, enroute Naval Station Panama City, Florida (Port Visit)
13-17 Inport Naval Station Panama City, FL
17-22 U/W, enroute Naval Station Ingleside, TX
22-23 Consolidated Tams Readiness visit Ingleside, TX
22-31 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX**

JUNE 2005

01-10 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
10-10 U/W for Family Day Cruise
10-13 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
13-27 CMAV Ingleside, TX
27-30 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX

JULY 2005

01-06 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
06-08 U/W Corpus Christi Operation Area
08-31 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX

AUGUST 2005

01-07 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
08-12 U/W Corpus Christi Operation Area
12-22 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
22-24 U/W Corpus Christi Operation Area
24-31 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX

SEPTEMBER 2005

01-04 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
04-14 U/W in support of Hurricane Katrina relief off coast of Louisiana and Alabama
14-30 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX

OCTOBER 2005

01-17 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
17-20 U/W Corpus Christi Operation Area
20-31 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX

NOVEMBER 2005

01-04 U/W Corpus Christi Operation Area
04-29 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
29-30 U/W Corpus Christi Operation Area

DECEMBER 2005

01-02 U/W Corpus Christi Operation Area
02-16 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
16-27 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
(Christmas Holiday 1st LV Period)
27-31 Inport Naval Station Ingleside, TX
(Christmas Holiday 2nd LV Period – 09JAN06)

HISTORY AND MISSION

USS FALCON (MHC-59) is the ninth ship in the U.S. Navy's MHC-51 (OSPREY) Class Coastal Mine hunter program and the fifth U.S. Navy ship to bear that name. FALCON'S keel was laid on July 1, 1993 and was commissioned February 8, 1997.

Four previous U.S. Navy ships have borne the name "FALCON". The first, USS FALCON, Gunboat was called to duty during the Mexican War from 1846 to 1848. Reclassified as a motor launch, the second FALCON, Falcon Motor Launch patrolled in the 13th Naval District during World War I. The third FALCON, USS FALCON (ASR2), had numerous calls to duty. They were summoned for Lightship operations from 1918 to 1919, and patrolled in the North Sea during World War II from 1919 to 1920. The FALCON conducted Submarine Salvage operations from 1921-1925, and was part of a Control Force in the Canal Zone from 1925-1943. Ending their duty, they were tasked as a training ship from 1943 to 1946. The fourth FALCON, USS FALCON (MSC-190), a coastal minesweeper, conducted minesweeping operations for the United States Atlantic Fleet from 1945 through 1969.

MHC Class ships are the world's largest Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) ships and the first U.S. Navy ships designed solely for mine hunting, the technique of locating mines with sonar and neutralizing them with a remotely controlled underwater vehicle or EOD units. A precise navigation system is installed to integrate the mine hunting sonar with the mine neutralization system. The ship is powered by two diesel engines that drive two cycloidal propellers; a unique propulsions system that provides superior maneuvering and station keeping ability while the ship is operating in a minefield. The ship's mission is to clear harbor and coastal waters of acoustic magnetic, pressure, and contact-type mines, utilizing reconnaissance, classification, and neutralization tactics. The MHC Class design integrates modern mine countermeasures technology into a uniquely designed platform with exceptionally low magnetic and acoustic signatures to protect against detonations during mine hunting operations.

The U.S. Navy Mine Countermeasures mission statement requires the following strategic factors be considered:

- Ability to deploy worldwide for multi-purpose missions.
- Ability to clear strategic U.S. or foreign ports and harbors of mines.
- Surveillance of U.S. and foreign coastlines.
- Neutralization of a variety of mine threats.
- Peacetime support of Naval activities.

U.S. Navy strategic considerations provide the basis for the following Mine Countermeasures mission requirements:

- Search, detect, and neutralize moored and bottom mines.
- Accompany deploying forces overseas.
- Permit breakout of U.S. Forces from CONUS ports.
- Provide navigational assistance to other fleet surface units through mine fields.
- Conduct underwater surveys of ports and harbors through mine fields.
- Collect of oceanographic and navigational data.

USS FALCON (MHC-59) (MHC CREW PRESTIGE)

NARRATIVE

The year 2005 marked a diverse year for USS FALCON (MHC 59), and all OSPREY class Coastal Mine hunters as they became platforms utilized for the Crew Swap initiative. The year began with MHC CREW INFLICT, embarked onboard USS FALCON continued preparation for departure to the Arabian Gulf for a six-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and the war on terrorism. The crew, onboard USS FALCON, would be relieving MHC CREW PRESTIGE who was currently embarked onboard USS RAVEN (MHC 61) forward deployed in Bahrain in the Arabian Gulf.

MHC CREW PRESTIGE embarked USS FALCON (MHC 59) March 9, 2005 after a successful deployment to the Arabian Gulf. The crew enjoyed a 30-day post-deployment stand down before embracing their assigned tasks from Commander, Mine Countermeasures Squadron Two. The schedule was built by MHC CREW PRESTIGE'S Commanding Officer, and Operation's Officer, approved by Commander, Mine Countermeasures Squadron Two, and put into motion. The months of April and May included underway for Mine Warfare training in the local Corpus Christi, Texas Operation Areas. The crew utilized their minehunting capabilities as they tested and operated their SQQ-32 variable depth sonar system for minehunting and their SLQ-48 mine neutralization vehicle for areas focusing actual mine counter measures. In April USS FALCON was underway to Panama City, FL for a well-deserved port visit for the crew. During the transit, the crew trained on minehunting, and damage control events. The damage control training consisted of numerous fire fighting drills.

In June the Captain authorized a "Family Day Cruise." This was a time the Commanding Officer set aside to get underway with the crewmembers' families. With this special underway the crew demonstrated various evolutions to give the families a good idea about the ship's mission which included shooting the ship's 50' and 60' caliber machine guns. The favorite activity of the day was a "Steel Beach Picnic." The crew and family indulged in some fine eating as the ship's Culinary Specialists put on a grilled feast for everyone's pleasure. The months of July and August included maintenance and training both pierside and underway. September made its presence known with the disastrous hurricane Katrina. As the this dreadful Hurricane left its mark on the US Gulf Coast the US Navy went into action, in various capacities, lending specific support. The minehunting community was a vital part of the Navy's support structure during this time. A number of ships, including the USS FALCON, were called upon to provide assistance in various degrees. USS FALCON was ordered to get underway September 4, 2005. They were tasked with Platform Surveying along the ravaged coastlines of Louisiana and Mississippi. This mission involved USS FALCON surveying the platforms for visual damage, and also searching for any platforms that may have sunk during the storm. The aforementioned task was accomplished utilizing their

SQQ-32 variable depth sonar system. The crew returned home September 14, 2005, with a feeling of accomplishment being able to support the relief efforts in the capacity assigned. October provided a little more of the normal routine as USS FALCON spent time in port for maintenance, and a few days at sea for training. It was also during this time the crew was assigned a 3-M preventive maintenance assist (3MA); the Supply Department worked through a Supply Management assist (SMA) at the same time. The visit was deemed a success, and the crew was provided valuable training. The holiday months of November and December were enjoyed immensely. It was especially gratifying considering the crew spent last year's holidays underway, in the Arabian Gulf, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

As the crew enjoyed their holiday periods with their families, they could also enjoy the fact that their ship, USS FALCON (MHC 59) was up to every challenge presented. With the close of the year 2005 MHC CREW PRESTIGE, onboard USS FALCON, was ready for all challenges to come in the upcoming year 2006.