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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDING OFFICER
USS LABOON (DDG 58)
FPO AE 09577-1276

5757
DDG 58-PAO/026
15 Mar 01


From: Commanding Officer, USS LABOON (DDG 58)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH)
Naval Historical Center
Washington Navy Yard, 901 M Street SE, Bldg. 57
Washington, DC 20374-5060

Subj: USS LABOON (DDG 58) COMMAND HISTORY FOR 2000

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative

1. In accordance with reference (1), enclosures 1 through 3 submitted as USS LABOON (DDG 58)'s Command History for 2000.


P. C. PARDUE

2000 COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION OF USS LABOON (DDG 58)

MISSION: LABOON underwent deployment with the DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER Battlegroup to the Persian Gulf and Mediterranean.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: Destroyer Squadron Two Six, EISENHOWER Battle Group.

COMMANDING OFFICER: Commander Eugene F. Moran, Jr.

HOMEPORT: Norfolk, Virginia.

2000 CHRONOLOGY OF USS LABOON (DDG 58)

- January 19: Laboon Family Day
- February 12-14 Independent Steaming Operations VACAPES OPAREA
- February 18: Began Deployment
- March 10-13: Port Visit Dubrovnik, Croatia
- March 15-17: Port Visit Souda Bay, Greece
- March 23: BSF Aden, Yemen
- March 29-April 4: Port Visit Bahrain, UAE
- April 11-13 Port Visit Bahrain, UAE
- May 10: BSF Aden, Yemen
- May 14-19: Port Visit Aqaba, Jordan
- May 25-29: Port Visit Menorca, Spain
- June 2-6: Port Visit Trieste, Italy
- June 12-15: Port Visit Palma, Spain
- June 26-29: Port Visit Valencia, Spain
- July 3-7: Port Visit Sainte Maxime, France
- July 10-14: Port Visit Civitavecchia, Italy
- July 17-24: Port Visit La Maddalena, Italy
- July 28-31: Port Visit Split, Croatia
- August 4-7: Port Visit Gibraltar, UK
- August 15: Port Visit Newport, RI
- August 18: Homecoming
- August 18-September 18: Standdown
- October - December: SRA NORSHIPPCO, VA

2000 Awards:

- Atlantic Fleet MWR Runner Up
- Maritime Excellence Award
- Command and Control Excellence Award
- Engineering Excellence Award
- Health Excellence (Green "H") Award

2000 COMMAND HISTORY OF USS LABOON (DDG 58)

KEEL LAID: 23 MAR 92
LAUNCHED: 20 FEB 93
COMMISSIONED: 18 MAR 95

During 2000, USS LABOON (DDG 58) capped off a very successful year with her deployment as part of the USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69) Battle Group. This deployment would see LABOON travel half way around the world and participate in numerous exercises with foreign navies, two different aircraft carriers, and provide a vital need as part of the Middle East Maritime Interdiction Operations.

On Wednesday, January 19, over 150 family members and friends of the crew of LABOON came aboard for a special one day Family Cruise. The cruise was a huge success, allowing LABOON Sailors the opportunity to show off their ship to family and friends. All guests earned Honorary Crewmember certificates for their contributions to a splendid day at sea.

As soon as LABOON shifted colors and pulled away from the pier, the guests were treated to a historical tour of Hampton Roads from the mariner's prospective. The tour included highlighting the location of landmarks such as the infamous Civil War battle between Ironclads *Monitor* and *Merrimac*, and the site where USS MISSOURI ran aground at the Three Sisters, as well as an explanation and history of Navy terms and traditions. Crewmembers also treated guests to tours of the ship's spaces, including the Pilothouse, Messdecks, Combat Information Center, several of the main engineering spaces, a berthing compartment, the SONAR room, and the 5 inch gun mount.

LABOON performed several maneuvering demonstrations to the delight of the visitors. First, the ship conducted a high speed run at 27 knots and a full power "crashback" from all engines ahead full to all engines back full. The ship also practiced rescuing a "man overboard," an intricate shiphandling event which requires turning the ship around at high speed, and carefully approaching the simulated person in the water. The demonstration ended with a fly-by of four F/A-18 Hornets.

Then on January 31 Lieutenant General T. R. Burnette, U.S. Army, Deputy Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Joint Forces Command, came aboard LABOON, to tour the ship and become more familiar with the day-to-day operations of the Navy. The General's tour route began in LABOON's Combat Information Center with a presentation highlighting the ship's capabilities and missions. From there, he proceeded to the forward Vertical Launching System, the Mark 45 five inch 54 caliber gun, a berthing compartment, the galley and crew's mess, the engineering plant, and the bridge.

With hundreds of family members waving their goodbyes on the pier, LABOON commenced her transit across the Atlantic Ocean towards the Mediterranean Sea early on the morning of February 18. Several of the other ships in the battle group began steaming towards the Northern Atlantic, while LABOON was given the challenge of serving as Air Defense Commander (ADC) and escort for DWIGHT D EISENHOWER from the Atlantic, through the Straits of Gibraltar, and up into the Adriatic Sea. Normally a task performed by a cruiser, the role of Air Defense Commander was an unique opportunity for a destroyer, one LABOON accomplished with a high degree of success.

Shortly after arriving overseas, LABOON was awarded Destroyer Squadron 26's 1999 Battle Efficiency Award. This prestigious

Enclosure (3)

recognition is awarded to the ship in each Destroyer Squadron or Cruiser-Destroyer Group that displays the highest levels of overall combat readiness. Winning this award set a tone of performance excellence for LABOON for the remainder of her cruise.

After three weeks at sea, LABOON pulled into her first port of call at Dubrovnik, Croatia. The visit began with courtesy calls on the Dubrovnik Mayor, Vido Bogdanovic, the Dubrovnik-Neretva County Prefect, Ivan Sprlje, LTGEN Milivoj Petkovic, Commander 4th Area Command, Commodore Ivica Tolic, Commander Southern Adriatic Naval District, and Dubrovnik Port Authority Director, Mr. Vlaho Durkovic. The Croatian officials were treated to a return call, command briefing and tour of LABOON that included the Bridge, Messdecks, Combat Information System Magazine, and the Mark 45, 5 inch/54 caliber gun. After the tour, LABOON's Wardroom hosted a reception on the Bridge, where the Croatian officers and distinguished civil leaders shared first-hand accounts of their 1991-1992 Separation War experiences.

LABOON was open to the public throughout the weekend, and over 1800 visitors toured the ship. Additionally, another group of twenty Croatian naval personnel, attendees of a military/media conference, and Maritime High School students were given special tours.

LABOON also hosted a Joint Contact Team briefing for the Croatian Navy, highlighting how the United States Navy is organized and operates. EW1(SW) [REDACTED] and FC1(SW) [REDACTED] demonstrated and familiarized Croatian missile and fire control Chief Petty Officers with LABOON's guided missile weapons systems. The demonstration assisted them in developing appropriate standard operating procedures and improving training and watch activities. Familiarization briefings also included explaining the different Navy rates, what they are responsible for, how they train and qualify, and how they are promoted. LABOON technicians also explained their equipment and its employment, both in combat and routine day-to-day operations at sea and in port. The brief was followed by a luncheon in LABOON's Chief's Mess with several of LABOON's Chief Petty Officers. Overall, it was a very positive experience on both sides, allowing Croatian and American Sailors to understand each other better.

LABOON Sailors volunteered at the Dubrovnik Children's Home, helping restore their playground through garden work and repairing the wall surrounding the playground. The sixty residents of the Children's Home were delighted by the bonfire that the Sailors lit, and enjoyed playing basketball on the freshly cleaned court. "It was great helping out the community, and it gave us a sense of pride and fulfillment," said STG1 [REDACTED], who added that the entire event promoted good relations between the two countries, as well as brightening the lives of these children.

MAJ Bozo Burichz-Zha, PAO for the 4th Armored Command of the Croatian Army, invited several LABOON crewmembers on a tour of historic sites throughout Dubrovnik. The tour commenced in a special section of the Dubrovnik Cemetery, where soldiers who died during the war of 1991 and 1992 are buried. MAJ Burichz-Zha explained that the state paid for an elaborate funeral ceremony and tombstones for all service members killed during the war, and for the fresh flowers that were upon every grave. From there, the group proceeded to the Maritime Museum and the Ron Brown Memorial in the historic "Old City" section of Dubrovnik. The former U.S. Secretary of Commerce died just outside of Dubrovnik in a tragic plane crash in 1996.

MAJ Burichz-Zha recounted an especially memorable and personal tale from the war for independence when the group visited the Napoleonic fort on the mountain overlooking the city. He was the officer-in-charge of thirty soldiers faced with defending the fort, the last Croatian stronghold in the city, from the Serbs with a mere 7000 rounds of ammunition. For several days they held off their attackers, while now-Mayor Bogdanovic attempted dangerous reconnaissance runs for supplies. Finally, with the Croatians down to only 120 bullets, the Serbs retreated, mistakenly believing that the Croatians had received reinforcements. This was the turning point in the war with respect to Dubrovnik.

Of course no port visit is complete without a sports challenge. Led by coaches IC1(SW) [REDACTED] and SK1(SW) [REDACTED], the 11 member LABOON team defeated the Croatian team in a friendly but fierce game by a score of 70-69, making LABOON the first Navy team to ever beat the Croatian club. "They were great competitors! Hopefully we will be able to play them again sometime in the future," said IC1 [REDACTED] after the game.

Following a brief respite in the port city of Souda Bay, on the island of Crete, Greece, LABOON transited south through the Suez Canal, into the Red Sea, and continued to the Arabian Gulf. Along the way, LABOON welcomed aboard two Egyptian naval officers as part of an international naval officer exchange program. The Egyptian officers spent the better part of two months onboard LABOON and were incorporated into LABOON's daily routine and watch rotation in order for them to learn more about LABOON and to better understand the U. S. Navy in general.

While in the Arabian Gulf, LABOON operated with the USS JOHN C STENNIS Battle Group (JCSBATGRU) actively enforcing United Nations' economic sanctions against Iraq through Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO). LABOON operated as part of a multinational force enforcing sanctions, and played a key role in halting would-be petroleum smugglers. Some fifteen countries have participated in MIO since the operations began in 1990. During this time, over 26,500 merchant ships have been queried. LABOON's MIO teams successfully captured a confirmed smuggler and performed guardship duties for five other suspected smugglers. This required around-the-clock security details, provided by personnel from all departments on LABOON in a remarkable display of teamwork.

During LABOON's two month stay in the Arabian Gulf, the crew welcomed two port visits to Manama, Bahrain, and Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Upon completing MIO duties, LABOON, enjoyed one last Middle East port visit in Aqaba, Jordan, before commencing the northbound transit of the Suez Canal. While in Aqaba, LABOON's crew conducted exercise "INFINITE SHADOW" with the Jordanian Navy, promoting positive relations between our navies. This was an excellent opportunity for the two navies to share and compare their ways of operating. LABOON Sailors thoroughly enjoyed liberty in Aqaba and many LABOON Sailors participated in a tour of the Lost City of Petra, which was most notably featured in the motion picture "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade."

After returning to the Mediterranean Sea, LABOON enjoyed several more exciting liberty ports including Port Mahon on the Spanish island of Menorca and the exotic island of Palma de Mallorca, Spain. Menorca and Mallorca are two of Spain's Balearic Islands, which are known throughout the world for their fabulous beaches. LABOON also visited

Trieste, Italy, which afforded many Sailors an opportunity to visit the nearby city of Venice. The fine Italian cuisine was excellent.

After such fantastic liberty, it was time to get tactical. LABOON participated in a bi-lateral submarine exercise, "SHAREM 133," off of the southeast coast of Spain with other United States and NATO naval units. This event promoted multi-national cooperation and enhanced the submarine-hunting tactics of everyone involved. LABOON's Sonar Technicians performed exceptionally well during this exercise and received special recognition from the lead evaluator.

Several more exciting port visits followed "SHAREM 133." LABOON Sailors enjoyed fun in the sun on the beautiful beaches of Valencia, Spain and San Maxime, France. A few Sailors also made a special excursion north via train to Paris, France to see the famous "City of Lights." Favorite spots to visit in Paris included the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre museum. Other liberty plans included journeying to the famous World War II Normandy Beach battlefields along France's northern coast, bringing to mind the past heroism of U. S. and allied military members over the Fourth of July weekend.

LABOON's next stop was Civitavecchia, Italy, the port city of Rome. LABOON Sailors took advantage of this fantastic opportunity and toured many historic sites in both Rome and Vatican City. St. Peter's Basilica, the Sistine Chapel, Colliseum, Fountain of Trevi, Forum, and Piazza de Espana topped the list of the crew's favorite places to visit. The ship also welcomed aboard over sixty members of the Vatican's famous Swiss Guard. A special tour and presentation of LABOON was given by volunteer crewmembers, followed by a reception for the Swiss Guardsmen. Additionally, Princess Caroline of Monaco, visiting the Civitavecchia area with her family, was a surprise and welcome guest onboard for an extensive tour of LABOON.

Following Civitavecchia came a week-long maintenance availability in La Maddalena, Italy, with USS EMORY S LAND (AS 39). EMORY S LAND is an U. S. Navy submarine tender stationed in La Maddalena to provide repair and parts support to deployed U. S. Navy ships, assisting them in maintaining the highest levels of combat and material readiness overseas while deployed. In La Maddalena, LABOON Sailors enjoyed some of the comforts of home as they were afforded a chance to view free, current release American summer movies at the local naval support unit movie theater. Additionally, the town of La Maddalena was holding their annual Summer Festival, which boasted an outstanding fireworks show during the finale.

LABOON began the western journey home following a fantastic port visit to Split, Croatia. In Split, LABOON was warmly welcomed by Split's mayor, county prefect, and the fleet commander of the Croatian Navy. While in Split, LABOON Sailors enjoyed touring the many historical sites this city has to offer, including the 1,700 year old "Diocletian's Palace," which was built in the third century A. D. by the Roman Emperor Diocletian. This was LABOON's second trip to Croatia this deployment and was one of the crew's favorite countries visited. The cuisine, sightseeing and atmosphere were all simply outstanding.

Before crossing the Atlantic, LABOON enjoyed one last port visit to Gibraltar. Along with great shopping and dining, Gibraltar offered LABOON Sailors opportunities for several incredible tours. Crewmembers explored many of the thirty miles of man-made tunnels carved deep into the rock itself, used for protection from potential invaders, storage for large amounts of food, water and ammunition, and advantageous placement of offensive weapons. Crewmembers also participated in the

"Gibraltar Rock Race," an arduous 2.5 mile run from the waterfront all the way up to the top of the rock.

Finally LABOON stopped briefly in Newport, Rhode Island, to pick up family and friends for a "Tiger Cruise" immediately prior to returning to Norfolk, Virginia. The "Tigers" rode LABOON from Newport for LABOON's homecoming to Norfolk Naval Base on August 18th. During this cruise, the crew of LABOON was able to demonstrate their jobs to friends and family alike. In addition LABOON also demonstrated a Underway Replenishment and firepower demonstration for them.

At last on August 18th LABOON returned home to Norfolk, Virginia. It had been 183 days since LABOON was last there and the bad weather did little to dissuade family members from being there to welcome the crew home. Upon return, LABOON enjoyed a well deserved one month standdown for her crew.

Throughout the deployment, LABOON's Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) committee organized a wide variety of underway shipboard and inport liberty events for crewmembers. "Steel Beach Picnics," movies on LABOON's flight deck, ice cream socials, bingo nights, early departure (early bird) plane ticket raffles, and talent shows were common events while underway. While inport the MWR committee arranged special tours at discount prices and organized ship's picnics and sports activities.

LABOON Sailors were active as community relations (COMREL) volunteers in many ports throughout the cruise. At the Dubrovnik Children's Home, for example, LABOON Sailors restored the children's playground through extensive garden work and repair of a stone wall surrounding the playground. The sixty residents of the Children's Home also were delighted by the bonfire that Sailors lit for them and thoroughly enjoyed playing basketball on the freshly cleaned and restored court. LABOON Sailors also made significant painting efforts for Jordanian schools in the Aqaba area, as well as at the U.S. Navy Cemetery in Port Mahon, Spain, and at an orphanage for handicapped children in Valencia, Spain. The selfless gestures on the part of many LABOON Sailors brought smiles to the faces of those in need and showed the heart of the LABOON Sailor.

After deployment LABOON would sail up the river to NORSHIPCO for a four month Selected Restricted Availability. During which LABOON sailors would take over ten thousand hours of classes to train themselves for the next deployment. Not a single department was unaffected; from bow to stern LABOON would get a complete and total workover. Credit especially goes to the Engineering department who spent countless hours getting LABOON ready for her next deployment. All of their hardwork ensured that LABOON was operating at top efficiency.

In the year 2000 LABOON would travel over fifty thousand miles and spend 183 days away from homeport exercising American policy. For all of her crew members it was a challenge, one that they proved up to the task of completing.