Faster, Higher, Stronger
The inaugural Warrior Games at the U.S. Olympic Training Center, Colorado Springs, Colo., provide a unique challenge for our nation’s wounded veterans to demonstrate the power of ability over disability through national-level competition. The Navy/Coast Guard team, though small in size, showed up with a boatload of heart and sailed away with a bounty of which they can be proud.

Photo by MC1(AW) R. Jason Brunson

Operation Bearing Duel: Putting Seabees to the Test

Operation Bearing Duel prepares the Seabees for the demands of their mission in support of overseas contingency operations. The realistic training reinforces the Seabee motto “we build, we fight.”

Photo by MC1 Bobbie G. Attaway

Shaping Future Leaders

Midshipmen at the U.S. Naval Academy (USMA), learn to appreciate that relationship early on through the tutelage of senior enlisted leaders (SELs). These SELs do not fill a specific curriculum, but in the role of counselors, mentors and role models help shape the future leaders of the fleet.

Photo by MC1(AW) R. Jason Brunson

Faster, Higher, Stronger

The Olympic motto – Citius, Altius, Fortius – is a hallmark of the very concept of any athletic endeavor, a benchmark coined more than 110 years ago by the father of the modern Olympic Games. The same legacy of relentless courage and inspiring achievement was demonstrated by the nearly 200 service members participating in the recent inaugural Warrior Games in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Photo by MC1(AW) R. Jason Brunson

Correction:

In the June issue of All Hands, Page 29, the Commander, Destroyer Squadron 15 should be listed as Capt. Charles Williams.
BM1 Jim D. Castaneda pounds his way down the lane during the preliminary swimming competitions in the inaugural Warrior Games at the U.S. Olympic Training Center, Colorado Springs, Colo. Castaneda is one of nearly 200 wounded, ill or injured personnel from all branches of service participating in the games.

Photo by MC1 (AW) R. Jason Brunson
Shipmates,

Today, Sailors continue to provide a valuable capability that no other service in any other country can provide as a whole. I believe today’s Sailors are more adaptive to any environment they are sent to than any other time in our history and are out at the very tip of the spear whether they are on the ground, on the sea, under the sea or operating in the air ensuring our nation and or Navy’s missions are carried out.

For the last nine years, the U.S. Navy has been operating at an exhaustive pace conducting overseas contingency operations and maritime engagements around the globe. Expeditionary Sailors have been at the forefront of the efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq and many other locations around the world from the very beginning.

Whether it’s Navy explosive ordnance disposal technicians operating with conventional and special operational forces enabling offensive maneuvering on the battlefield; Seabees building up the infrastructure of the U.S. fighting forces; the maritime civil affairs and security training teams partnering with host nations in Tanzania, or expeditionary logistics providing crucial cargo handling missions in Haiti; and many other commands contributing in so many other locations around the world, expeditionary Sailors have been the Navy’s “boots on the ground” from the very beginning.

Like the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) operational tempo, the stress on our force has also been increasing, and these stresses often times migrate to our families. Our families must have the means to deal with the increasing deployment schedules and the longer separations that follow. Long before NECC came into existence, expeditionary Sailors and their families have known how important it is to look out for each other.

Because our community is based around the people who serve – rather than the platforms from which they operate – the success of our mission relies on the readiness of our Sailors and the support systems in place for our families.

I am proud of our NECC Sailors for the work they have done during the last few years, and I am humbled by their families who have sacrificed so much to ensure our Sailors are mission ready. The accomplishments of the NECC forces could not have been achieved without the support of our families left behind and their tireless dedication.

It doesn’t matter what community you are representing, it is every Sailor’s responsibility to look out for one another 24/7, 365 and ensure their family is prepared for the deployment. One way you can do this is by ensuring your command’s ombudsman and family readiness team has your significant other’s contact info.

Through programs offered at Fleet and Family Support Centers, we have built up our community to be even stronger than ever and our commands and the Sailors should know that when they deploy there are several support systems in place to provide assistance to their families.

I thank you for your service, sacrifice and commitment to our great nation and our Navy!
When a Sailor goes on an IAMM assignment, they are put on tempo (PCS) orders and don't receive those same entitlements. When delays are experienced by the Fleet, it often causes a problem for Sailors. "We leave [the Maritime Strategy] a bit short on how we were going to partner with others. [The NOC] is going to help to articulate that," Dodge said.

The NOC describes how the services can be brought to bear. 

"That Sailor will remain attached to the command, but during the OSA tour won't be counted against the command's manpower numbers," Dodge said. 

An important aspect of the new NOC is the engagement of partner nations. According to Woods, the NOC formulation process involved consultation with partners and allies. "We left [the Maritime Strategy] a bit short on how we were going to partner with others. [The NOC] is going to help to articulate that," Dodge said.

"The NOC is aligned with the governing documents that guide our nation's strategy," said Woods. "It describes for the next 10 years what we believe the Maritime Strategy will deliver for the nation." For more information about the Naval Operations Concept visit www.navy.mil/maritime/noc.

"OSA will allow Sailors to apply for an IA assignment 10 to 12 months prior to their projected rotation date (PRD). A dedicated OSA team at NPC will be available to discuss OSA opportunities and details regarding specific OSA assignments that match a Sailor's desires, timing and skill sets. OSA orders will be executed at the end of the Sailor's normal PCS tour, however, these assignments will be in a TAD status from the current command to ensure Sailors and their families maintain the traditional support of a parent command relationship. 

"The family gets to stay where they are, where they know the environment, and where they have all the things in place to get the support they need while their Sailor is on an IA assignment," Dodge said.

"If a Sailor is accepted for OSA, they will be administratively extended at their current duty station for the duration of the IA assignment plus an additional 60 days to facilitate reintegration and preparation for their next PCS move. Although Sailors will remain assigned to the parent command, procedures will be established to account for Sailors filling IA assignments rather than recording them on board and filling a billet. Doing so will generate a requisition for that Sailor at their original PRD, mitigating impacts to fleet readiness.

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Through the OSA program, Sailors will have the ability to incorporate GSA tasking into their careers, Dodge said. 

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Training specialists from the Center for Service Support, Newport, R.I., and its learning sites in Norfolk and San Diego tested the improved Yeoman/Personnel (YN/PS) Specialist Advanced Administration Course, recently graduating seven students in San Diego.

"I didn't have all of the equipment I needed, and I couldn't do certain lifts," said Olmstead. "My buddies on the ship helped me out and spotted me. I still did well so I'm pretty proud."
The updated course blends computer-based training with traditional classroom instruction to bring the course up-to-date and in step with the ever-changing world of enlisted command and personnel administrators.

“As the environment in which command administrators work changes and evolves, so too must the training and the curriculum by which we train our yeoman and personnel specialists,” said Chris Leahey, a CSS instructional systems specialist.

Today’s Navy demands that YNs and PPs be more technically proficient and well-versed in all aspects of naval administration and personnel. Therefore, according to Leahey, “graduates of this course of instruction now have a better understanding of the many technical elements of their ratings and will, as a result, be more efficient and effective members of their respective command administration teams.”

Although only a small number of YNs and PPs graduated from the pilot course, the regularly scheduled course set to kick off in October 2010 will allow for approximately 400 students to attend annually in San Diego as well as the CSS Learning Site in Norfolk. Each site is scheduled to conduct eight classes per year.

The one-week, computer-based portion of the training must be completed at the prospective student’s parent command prior to arrival in either Norfolk or San Diego for the two-week residence portion. For last month’s pilot course, the regularly scheduled computer-based modules were really helpful to have as a refresher of the ‘big picture’ and to help build a foundation in order to perform first- and second-class petty officers. However, waivers for hard-charging third-class petty officers will be considered. To enroll in the course, interested Sailors meeting the course criteria should contact a CPO representative.

The course’s lesson plans are tailored to enlisted leaders in the command and personnel administration workcenters, so this advanced course is restricted to top-performing first- and second-class petty officers. However, waivers for hard-charging third-class petty officers will be considered. To enroll in the course, interested Sailors meeting the course criteria should contact a CPO representative.

The course is designed to do just that. “I strongly think that hybrid learning of computer-based training in the Navy Knowledge Online (portal) being used for pre-requisite requirements followed by the traditional classroom training will pave its way in the fleet,” said Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey Sotolongo, officer in charge of the CSS San Diego learning site.

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Around the Fleet

Naval Air Station Jacksonville (NAS Jax) recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Patriots Grove Playground specifically designed for children with disabilities.

“This is the first of its kind to open on a Navy installation. NAS Jax is one of seven bases worldwide to receive the accessible playground equipment,” said Capt. Jeffrey Madsen, NAS Jax commanding officer. “It’s been a great effort by the entire team. Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert recently said our Sailors and families require a family support network that provides relevant services and links the unit, family and the Navy. Today’s ribbon-cutting exemplifies his vision.”

The playground features one continuous surface from the parking lot to the structures. “The old playground really wasn’t friendly for … children with disabilities. This one will accommodate them. There are specially designed ramps and the features are low enough so that a parent in a wheelchair can also come out and play with their children,” said Ensign Matthew Ward, NAS Jax public works construction manager. One of the first to try out the new equipment with her children was Stephanie Melson, who also advocated for the project. “NAS Jax and the Navy do a wonderful job of taking care of their families and those with special needs. I think this park is a testament to that, and we’re so excited to be a part of it and let our children play here. It’s really beautiful,” said Melson. “My children aren’t special-needs but there are a lot of them living on base and in the community. There aren’t many parks around that are really accessible so to have this here on base is huge,” continued Melson. “It’s also great for those with very young kids who are just learning to walk.”

Free Admission for Service Members and Families to 600 Museums Across Nation

The Blue Star project offers free admission for all active-duty military personnel and their families from Memorial Day through Labor Day 2010 to 600 museums across the country.

The 600 museums across America have come together to create Blue Star Museums which is a partnership among the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and Blue Star Families, an organization that supports military families and increases awareness of the unique challenges of military life.

One of the keynote speakers, San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders, thanked the arts community for their support and acknowledged challenging times for military members and their families. “This is an effort by the nation’s arts community to reach out to military members across the country,” said Sanders. “We have [San Diego] 150,000 active-duty military personnel and 14 museums throughout the county that will be participating in this program, which includes seven in Balboa Park. It goes without saying that this is an extraordinarily challenging time for military families.”

To a complete listing of participating museums, visit www.arts.gov.

To be considered for the “Around the Fleet” section, forward your high-resolution images with full credit and cutline information, including full name, rank and duty station to navyvisualnews@navy.mil.

Click on the Navy’s home page, www.navy.mil, for fresh images of your shipmates in action.
Faster, Higher, Stronger

What The Games Are All About

“The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.”

-Baron Pierre de Coubertin, father of the modern Olympic Games

Story and photos by MC1 (AW) R. Jason Brunson
The Olympic motto, the Latin phrase – *Citius, Altius, Fortius* – faster, higher, stronger is a hallmark of the very concept of any athletic endeavor, a benchmark coined more than 110 years ago by the father of the modern Olympic Games.

The same legacy of relentless courage and inspiring achievement was recently demonstrated by the nearly 200 service members participating in the inaugural Warrior Games in Colorado Springs, Colo. Among them, 25 Sailors and Coast Guardsmen participating in a first of its kind event epitomizing the Olympic motto provided onlookers with an often elusive feeling … inspiration.

Not surprisingly, that word is often used to describe heroes. That’s what heroes do – they inspire and amaze, entrancing others with an indomitable will evidenced through courageous actions.

The Warrior Games, a weeklong, multi-sport event for service member athletes with physical disabilities competed, as individuals and teams, in shooting, swimming, archery, sitting volleyball, cycling, wheelchair basketball and track and field events.

Service member athletes were selected by their respective service through their participation in adaptive sports therapy as part of their individual rehabilitation.

During a video message at the closing ceremony, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen lauded the athletes, both for their performance in the games as well as their ability to grow from the adversity they have faced.

“You’ve just completed a rigorous test of your physical and mental skills, your strength and endurance,” he said. “But now is no time to rest. I’d like you to take what you’ve done here, what you’ve learned here and continue to serve as role models for others striving to find the independence they need. You’ve demonstrated how physical fitness can help heal the mind, body and soul. That’s a message worth sharing, and yours is a story worth telling.”

Whether injured on the battlefield, on a ship at sea or in a motorcycle accident, men and women from all five branches of military service competed in the games, and from the opening to closing ceremonies, words such as ‘amazing’ and ‘inspiring’ echoed through the roar of the crowd during the weeklong event.

With disabilities which would sideline professional athletes, Warrior Games participants were provided a unique challenge for disabled veterans, an opportunity to demonstrate power – ability over disability – through national-level competition.

Special Warfare Boat Operator 1st Class Daniel Hathorn edged 17 other competitors in a pentathlon-style competition including the air rifle, 50-meter freestyle swim, 100-meter sprint, 1,500-meter run and shot put.

**“My doctor told me the reason I’m alive is because I was an endurance athlete.”**

– SB1 Daniel Hathorn
Hathorn captured gold in the 50-meter freestyle and the 1,500-meter track events, as well as scoring a bronze as part of the Navy's 200-meter relay swim.

Hathorn grew up in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York and excelled in hockey, tennis, basketball, baseball, swimming and golf during high school. He spent a year in college before deciding to enlist in the Navy in 1999. He served three years before his acceptance into the Special Warfare Combatant-Craft Crewman (SWCC) program.

As an adult, Hathorn had emerged as an accomplished athlete. In January 2009, he was hit by a car while training for a triathlon. He sustained multiple broken bones, including five vertebrae and collapsed both lungs.

Natural competitors such as Hathorn tend not to accept defeat lying down, so he quickly assessed his new limitations and decided it was time to get to work.

"I make sure that I push myself to stay active and keep overcoming obstacles that get in my way. That's really the only way I can make sure that I get through life being happy and successful."

-- MA3 Nathan R. DeWalt

After his accident, lying in bed with a broken face, breathing out of tubes, casts on both arms above the elbow, listening to the doctors talk about amputating his arm, Hathorn said, “All I could think was, I’ve got to get out of this bed.”

Now, less than two years after he was injured, Hathorn has run one marathon and on the heels of his success at the Warrior Games, has his sights set on the Boston Marathon and the Kona Ironman.

And being recognized as the Warrior Games top participant is something he said marks the end of the long road to recovering from the serious injuries he sustained.

“Rehab was very tough,” Hathorn explained. "I have to say, though, that the Warrior Games is the culmination of my recovery. Coming this far is phenomenal. To have these medals and to compete with the Navy and for Naval Special Warfare is awesome."

Sailors competing in the Warrior Games varied in rate and rank, but all had a common goal – to prove they could excel, despite incurring what many might believe would be the end of any sense of a normal life.

Master-at-Arms 3rd Class Nathan R. DeWalt was raised in a military family in York, Pa., and is now confined to a wheelchair, the result of being struck by an automobile while riding his motorcycle.

DeWalt made the decision to continue his family’s military tradition after graduating from West York Area High School in June 2006, enlisting in the Navy.

Following basic training, DeWalt attended Law Enforcement/Master-at-Arms School where he excelled in marksmanship and earned an expert rating in both pistol and rifle.

While assigned to Naval Weapons Station (NWS) Earle, N.J., DeWalt worked with harbor security, base patrol and anti-terrorism force protection. DeWalt also earned a position on NWS Earle’s Rapid Response Team.

Prior to his accident, DeWalt was an avid athlete, working out five to six times a week with aspirations of competing in a half marathon. DeWalt was struck by a vehicle while on his motorcycle July 11, 2008. His spinal cord was severed at the T3 vertebra. While in physical therapy, DeWalt met a fellow service member who had participated in the veteran’s games.
and inspired DeWalt’s return to the gym and participation in the Warrior Games. Safe Harbor, the Navy’s leading organization for non-medical care of wounded, ill and injured Sailors and Coast Guardsmen, played a major role assembling the team, starting with the first step.

“We were basically the recruiting agency for the athletes of the Navy and the Coast Guard,” said Lt. Courtney Pollman, Navy Safe Harbor’s special projects analyst. “We brought a support staff of 15 people to support our athletes by providing around the clock availability to a doctor, a physical therapist, a coach; anything from running out and getting them last minute stuff they didn’t know they needed, to getting them from point A to point B in time.”

Despite short-term memory loss and an impending intra-cranial operation, Culinary Specialist Seaman Judith Mae ‘Judi’ Boyce also participated in the Warrior Games, competing in the Shotput, Archery and Volleyball.

As a child, Boyce spent seven years in the New Jersey foster care and adoption system. As a young adult, she started looking for stability and found it in the U.S. Navy, completing boot camp and serving aboard USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44). Here she continued developing skills in cooking - her greatest passion.

But in November 2008, Boyce suddenly began experiencing severe headaches and blurred vision — she had suffered a stroke. She was referred to National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md., and was officially diagnosed with a rare, progressive cerebro-vascular disorder called Moyamoya disease, and in March 2009, Boyce underwent the first of a series of brain surgeries.

An athlete growing up, Boyce said it was having a positive attitude and participating in sports that helped her find her inner strength to overcome personal adversity.

Never being one to avoid obstacles, Boyce, following her diagnosis, began to search, this time for an outlet for personal growth and to reaffirm that she controls her destiny - not the disease.

Training for Warrior Games provided her with that outlet.

“I will always be part of the first to play in the games. Most of us, are doing something at least one or two doctors have said we would not be able to do.” – CSSN Judith Mae Boyce

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“I will always be part of the first to play in the games. Most of us, are doing something at least one or two doctors have said we would not be able to do.” – CSSN Judith Mae Boyce

Navy team captain, said there were numerous stories of inspiration, stories of Sailors accomplishing more than they or others might have thought possible.

“We came out here a little bit ill-prepared as far as training, a little unprepared as far as equipment,” he said. “But we brought the most heart of any group here.”

To Wilson, the Warrior Games represent much more than just a competitive event. The competition shows those dealing with a new injury or disability life does go on - and the entire nation is behind them.

Wilson said as individuals, these warriors came to the games with backgrounds and personal stories as varied as their motivations for participating, but walked away with a common experience of which they could be proud.
Imagine this scenario —

You worked hard as a student growing up, always earned good grades, participated in sports, were active in your community and took all the right steps to get accepted into the college of your dreams. In college you did more of the same; you worked hard, made all the right moves and eventually landed a sweet job with a fancy title...

Then, at the ripe old age of 22 you arrive on your first day at work with your well-deserved, hard-earned degree in hand. As you look at the faces of your new employees, a frightening reality sets in. "I have very little experience, and most of these guys have at least a decade on the job. They don't seem very interested in working for me."

Now what?

Shaping Future Leaders

Story and photos by MC1(AW) R. Jason Brunnson

ATCS (AW) Jason Wood is one of 24 chiefs, senior chiefs and six gunnery sergeants serving as senior enlisted leaders (SELs) at the U.S. Naval Academy. Similar to a Recruit Division Commander at RTC Great Lakes, Ill., these SELs are often the future ensign or 2nd lieutenant’s first interaction with the Navy and Marine Corps’ senior enlisted personnel.
ATCS (AW) Jason Wood says he tries to guide his midshipmen toward finding the right answer rather than giving specific direction. “I don’t think that helps midshipmen in forming their own leadership style,” Wood said. “I’ll never take for granted the fact that I am a chief, and in being that, have gone through so many experiences, dealt with so many issues,” Wood said. “When you try to convert a civilian into a military professional, I think they apply.”

Wood said the qualifications or experiences any chief or senior enlisted person has are invaluable and can be related to issues the midshipmen might be facing as they transition into the fleet. By sharing these experiences, Wood helps prepare midshipmen to be better decision makers and leaders.

“It’s real easy for anyone to say do it because the book said to; but it’s hard to put into perspective for them, why they’re doing it,” said Wood. Midshipmen 4th Class Maxwell Johnson said as plebes (first year students), he and Johnson and his peers are constantly learning from the SELs around them things like military bearing and people skills. He said Wood is not hard on the midshipmen in the traditional sense of laying into them, but has a way of “quietly demanding” perfection.

“Seldom do you hear him raise his voice, but whenever you go past his office you want to look your best,” Johnson said. “And that’s obviously just him having a fantastic leadership style.”

According to Johnson, the direction they get from the SELs is not just about uniform inspections and room inspections, but also everyday life. He said the SEL provide a nurturing and constructive criticism. Johnson learned one his most valuable lessons from Wood on his second day of plebe summer. At that stage, midshipmen often don’t yet understand how things work and tend to feel overwhelmed.

“It’s bad enough starting out not knowing anything, but also your brain just sort of turns off and you go into robot mode,” Johnson said. “I was running and had just seen several first class midshipmen whose names I was supposed to have memorized (and called out), but couldn’t. With all of those names going through my mind, I ran past Senior Chief Wood and completely blanked out his name. As I stopped he said ‘Mr. Johnson, I understand that you are going through a hard time right now, but so is everyone else. When you are out in the fleet you will have people [working] underneath you and above you. If you don’t have the determination or common decency and respect to learn their names, they are never going to work for you.’ Needless to say, I never forgot his name again, but that was all he had to say to teach me a very valuable leadership trait.”

Wood views the role of an SEL as that of a facilitator, standing behind the midshipmen. The midshipmen have their own chain of command. The SEL tries to guide them toward finding the right answer and running their chain of command as it would function in the fleet, rather than giving specific direction.

“I don’t think that helps midshipmen in forming their own leadership style,” Wood said. Wood said helping develop their leadership style is a priority, because there is no on/off switch. One doesn’t become a better decision-maker by simply graduating from the USNA.
The SEL program began in 1994. Prior to this there was no day-to-day contact between midshipmen and enlisted personnel, with the exception of the classes that are taught by enlisted personnel, such as navigation, and some weapons and engineering classes, and the interaction with the yard patrol crews. There were six senior enlisted, either a master chief petty officer or a master gunnery sergeant per battalion and in 1994 it grew to one SEL per company, six are Marine Corps billets.

According to Senior Chief Hull Technician (SW) Carl S. Hall, brigade SEL, the academy places a lot of value and trust on what the SEL community brings to the table. It is one of a very few places in the military where SELs train new service members without a clearly defined curriculum.

Leadership at the time the program began was extremely confident about the impact the SELs would have. A study by Naval Post Graduate School students at that time suggested that a written set of duties and responsibilities for SELs would actually hamper the program.

Senior Chief Yeoman (AW/SW) Lesa A. Geddes said she has been very fortunate throughout her 21-year career to have worked for some very good chiefs and strong leaders that prepared her for this job.

"That's what's helped me achieve all I've achieved throughout my career," Geddes said.

And now, she is dedicated to passing it on. Previously, she served as a company commander at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill., for her last shore duty tour and is currently the 23rd company chief.

Geddes said a big part of her job is working with the first and second class midshipmen, teaching the relationship between the division officer and division chief, peer leadership and fleet orientation. This formation is particularly helpful as midshipmen get several opportunities to go underway during summer training.

"I remember being in reactor department and one my second classes bringing in some midshipmen, my first thought was what the heck are they doing here, we have a job to do here," Geddes said. "I think that's a failure on our part out there in the fleet."

Though the academy has a military structure, it is a school. She said there are a lot of basics that without things like the summer training in the fleet and the SEL program these future leaders wouldn’t experience.

"Now they do get our perspective, and it makes things easier knowing that the chief isn’t just another Sailor. Like the leading petty officer is to the chief, the chief is the division officer’s right hand," Geddes said.

She said she loves her job, not because of the work she’s doing now, but because she realizes the reward to follow.

"After I pushed boots, seeing what used to be one my recruits as a second class and dual warfare qualified [petty officer], That was my reward," Geddes said. "Having that impact on the enlisted side and now being able to come here and train future officers, it can’t get any better than this. Who knows? One of these midshipmen could be my next department head or my next division officer."

Brunson is assigned to Defense Media Activity – Anacostia, Washington, D.C.
“Bunkers, bunkers, bunkers, gas, gas, gas!” Seabees scrambled for their mission-oriented protective posture (MOPP) gear as gas grenades went off throughout their forward operating base.

Most Seabees took their designated positions in bunkers while the security team (React Force) set up patrols throughout the camp on lookout for aggressors.

In the aftermath of the attack, Seabees heading back to their posts discovered what appeared to be injured or dead comrades with bloody wounds and splintered fragments of wood sticking out of their arms and legs.

The intensity and urgency of the Seabees’ reaction did not betray the fact that these weren’t real life-threatening situations; they were all just part of the annual field training exercise (FTX) Operation Bearing Duel.
During the recent three-week exercise at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., Seabees lived in tents, built basic tactical structures and fought in simulated battles.

The 31st Seabee Readiness Group (31st SRG) developed this iteration of the exercise to evaluate and instruct Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 and Reservist Battalion 21 for an upcoming deployment. These realistic scenarios tested Seabees on the full range of their various skill sets.

Seabees support U.S. global operations by building bases, repairing/constructing runways and roads and building bunkers/barracks while providing their own security.

“We generally rely on Marines, but there will be times when there are no Marines available,” said Lt. Javier Lopez-Martinez of the 31st SRG. “In those situations, Seabees have to be ready to do security operations themselves. This training is geared to remind Seabees of that fact in a very real way.”

As a critical part of the troop increase required for operations in Afghanistan, Seabees need to be prepared to handle their own security, convoy escorts and creation and maintenance of entry control points in forward operating bases.

The scenarios at the exercise involved bunker drills, gas and MOPP gear drills, convoy escorting, perimeter scouting, establishing and building.

“We train in classrooms using PowerPoint presentations, and we do some smaller, more specific field training exercises,” said Construction Electrician 1st Class (SCW) Leonardo Calderon, a Seabee instructor and FTX evaluator with the 31st SRG. “This is where they put it all together.”

The training exercise is geared to be as realistic as possible while still providing room for constant feedback.

“We want Seabees to have a constant dialogue with us so that we know what we are doing right and what we can improve,” said Lopez-Martinez. One of those improvements was the addition of a role-playing scenario involving paid civilian actors to be Afghan civilians.

Both NMCBs were ordered to set up a lookout post at a certain location. The Seabees of each NMCB were not told there was a simulated village adjacent to the designated area. As the builder convoy approached, they slowed then stopped, not knowing what to expect. The town could be full of people hostile to U.S. forces; there was no way to tell. To avoid potential violence, the Seabees needed to proceed with caution.

Advancing slowly, the Seabees put their training to use by establishing a perimeter around the intended lookout post and an entry control point into the safe zone just outside the village.

The village was constructed to simulate the operations environment in Afghanistan. Open windows, hanging laundry, broken-down cars and a bazaar were all part of the scene, including a mosque with a large blue dome that towered above the other buildings.

The villagers looked on with curiosity as music played loudly from the mosque. The Seabees scrambled to get themselves ready for anything.

“We actually have no direct plan of action for them,” said Lopez-Martinez. “They’re going to do what they’re going to do. There’s no real ‘correct’ way to do this. We just evaluate them based on whatever decision they make.”

Darkness quickly overtook the village as the sun set over the mountains in Fort Hunter-Liggett. The Seabees had the perimeter secured and began to put up their lookout structure. Just then, a group of villagers approached the entry control point. The Seabees put floodlights from their trucks onto the group as they approached.

The villagers shielded their eyes, yet they walked casually toward the entry control point.

“This part of the exercise is to ensure that if and when Seabees come into contact with civilians they use everything they know to ensure their safety and the
Seabees assigned to NMCB 5 talk with government contractors working with the 31st Seabee Readiness Group acting as locals at a new construction site. This is just one of the many possible scenarios NMCB 5 could face on their deployment.

"We're here to get the Seabees accustomed to interacting with Afghani people," said a contractor who preferred not to be named. "We hire the role players and design cultural courses for the Seabees to attend. The role players will actually be teaching and giving feedback on the cultural do's and don'ts after the scenario.

"We work on scenario development, simulated injuries and education," the contractor said. "Our ultimate goal is to allow each Seabee to forget that this is an exercise, and then help them understand their choices and perhaps (give them) some better ones once it's over."

The village scenario was just one of many potentially dangerous situations in which Seabees could find themselves, the contractor explained. To properly secure themselves against aggression, Seabees need to have an understanding of tactical operations, especially defensive tactics, according to Marine Capt. Anthony Friol, a tactics trainer with the 31st SRG.

"Seabees aren’t taught offensive tactics because their job is to build," said Friol. "But they do need to know basic tactics, where to set up gunning positions, how to do patrols, perimeter sweeps; basically anything that can help keep them safe."

Throughout history, Marines and Seabees have worked together and continue to work together in modern times; Seabees build bunkers and continue to work together in modern times; Seabees build bunkers and Marines protect Seabees, said Friol. Since Seabees need to be capable of many different jobs themselves, they need specialists in tactical operations.

Success of the mission, said Calderon. "Part of that is peaceable interaction with the locals."

The Seabees called out their interpreter and he got to work communicating with a man who turned out to be the village elder.

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Each Seabee battalion has a Marine advisor on tactics to ensure that Seabees and Marines are in accordance as to how they operate," said Friol. "Seabees are then expected to be able to run security for themselves according to that advice."

From the Marines, Seabees learn fighting positions for defending the camp and ways to create defense perimeters of both patrols and physical boundaries. The Marines also train the React Force to sweep through the camp in case of enemy infiltration.

"The Seabees are in country to build, but they can't build without being secure," said Friol.

Sometimes, though, tactics aren't enough. Sailors, Marines and Airmen all risk being injured in times of war. To keep these service members in the fight, the team relies not only on hospital corpsmen as each Seabee needs to be familiar with field triage and basic first aid.

"The Seabees did training at their homeport in Port Hueneme, Calif., in classrooms, but needed practical training as well."

"We need this to be like 'muscle memory' for these guys," said Sensor Chief Hospital Corpsman (FMF/AW) Daniel Smith, an FTX evaluator. "Combat situations and situations where corpsmen are not available are very real possibilities and Seabees need to know how to handle them without thinking."

To address this, the 31st created a mass casualty scenario in which Seabees are required to physically perform triage, field first aid, tend to the wounded and sort out the dead.

"We improve both our courses and FTX every year from constant feedback from the Seabees we train, and even from our own guys," said Lopez-Martinez. "In this way we're constantly creating a new breed of Sailor."

"The work will be hard on deployment," Lopez-Martinez said. "They'll be earning their pay. These Sailors give me so much hope. They enlisted in a time of war to do one of the harder jobs in the Navy.

"That kind of spirit is what it's all about: We Build, We Fight."
The Navy’s goal is for spouses to be resilient, well-informed and adaptable to the Navy environment. To achieve this goal, the Navy provides an array of programs, education services and resources to prepare spouses and family members to meet the unique challenges of military life.

Spouses new to the Navy, far from home or starting a new chapter in their life may be unsure about what support is available or how to take advantage of it.

"Just call your nearest Fleet and Family Support Center," Kathy Turner, a program analyst at Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC), said. "Even if you’re too far from a base to come in, just call. The staff will be happy to answer your questions. In fact, when you’re sure that there’s no help available, that’s a good time to call us. We’ll get you headed in the right direction."

CNIC helps spouses reach this goal with its Child and Youth Program, Ombudsman Program and Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSCs).

FFSCs can also assist military spouses in obtaining employment and maintaining a career, as well as offering courses in personal financial management, with topics ranging from car and home buying to the financial impact of deployments.

FFSCs can also provide guidance on making permanent change of station moves, helping a family learn about their new duty station, the cost of living, availability of housing, even the cultural changes they will encounter.

FFSCs also offer clinical counseling and classes on a variety of topics, including anger management, stress management and couples communication.

"A spouse may have effectively dealt with anger, sadness or stress when they lived in a familiar town with family and friends they have known their whole life," Turner said. "But, leaving this personal support system may be stressful and require adjustment. Fleet and Family Support Centers offer life skills classes and services that show how to adjust and even thrive in these situations."

Short-term clinical counseling can help Sailors and families obtain the tools necessary to cope with the challenges of daily living. The courses and the counseling are free. People are welcome at any time, without an appointment or a referral from the command.

For children and youth ages four weeks to 18 years, the Navy’s Child and Youth Programs provide high quality educational and recreational programs. Teams of caring, knowledgeable professionals provide developmentally appropriate programs tailored to the unique needs, abilities and interests of children.

"Military children face more than the usual challenges of growing up, such as moving every few years and establishing new friendships, while worrying about family members who have been deployed," Chuck Clymer, of the Navy’s Child and Youth Programs, said. "We provide children and families with trusted programs and services that assist in coping with these challenges, making the difference between stress and success."

Story Courtesy of Commander, Navy Installations Command, Washington, D.C.
Sailor Mentor Brings New Capability to Afghan Hospital

Making something out of nothing is a daunting task on its own, turning Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers into biomedical engineers is an entirely different matter and the perfect job for one Sailor.

HM1 Sean Buckley, NATO Training Mission Afghanistan biomedical engineering mentor, is solely responsible for mentoring a three-man biomedical engineering shop at the ANA Camp Shaheen regional hospital.

Mentors in Afghanistan typically advise and make suggestions to soldiers who have previously been trained in their field of expertise, but Buckley was faced with training from the ground up.

“His knowledge and skills have made an untrained, aviation electronics mechanic able to repair hospital equipment,” said Chief Petty Officer Brandon Ellison, leading chief, who has been working with Buckley for nine months, starting with combat skills training prior to deployment at Ft. Polk, La. “He is a strong, positive influence to those he mentors.”

Buckley said he was making progress with his Afghan counterpart.

“I wanted to take the skills he already had and use them to troubleshoot hospital equipment. He understood basic electronic theory and that was helpful because he has a professional knowledge of schematics and circuits, which usually takes the longest to learn.”

Biomedical engineers play a life or death role in the daily operations at the ANA hospital.

“Our job is very important because if equipment fails, doctors cannot treat patients, or patients could die,” said ANA Lt. Fazil Haq, Biomedical Engineering Department head, who has been in the position for more than three years. “We are kind of like doctors because we take care of the machines like they treat patients.”

“Doctors know the equipment works because we tell them it works - that is an incredible amount of trust,” Buckley added. During one recent experience, an operating room sterilizer malfunctioned causing a “show-stopping” situation for the much-needed piece of equipment.

“We had the equipment fixed within 24 hours, just as the operating room was down to five sets of sterile instruments for surgeries,” Buckley said. “In a situation like this, I wanted to stress the importance and benefits of working with someone as a team.”

Of the skills taught, Buckley emphasized the importance of preventative maintenance to his three-man team and often accompanies them on daily rounds to verify the status of equipment.

“We check each area of the hospital, such as the emergency and patient rooms, dentist, physical therapy, optometry, etc., to check on the equipment and find out if anyone is having issues,” Buckley said. “Additionally, I sometimes have to train the hospital staff on proper use to prevent injury to patients or damage to equipment.”

He has played a pivotal role using other areas of his expertise while mentoring Afghan soldiers.

“Buckley has mentored senior executive staff on contract management and given crucial input on equipment requirements. He has taken a spearheaded approach to a 50-bed addition to the hospital and barracks construction projects,” Ellison said. “This job is easy when you have good people working for you.”

Spend such a considerable amount of time with ANA soldiers has had a significant impact on the 38-year-old mentor stationed at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Va.

“What’s really cool is that it isn’t just about being a mentor, we’re friends as well,” Buckley commented on the relationships formed during his seven-month tour. “Working with these guys is great, they are energetic, want to learn, and are always willing to work. We feed off each other, when they have a bad day - I bring them up, and if I have an off day - they bring me up.”

DeWitt is assigned to RC North Public Affairs Advisory Team Mentor, Mazar-E-Sharif, Afghanistan.
Training Reinforces Force Protection Importance

One such event, held recently at Naval Station Norfolk, is Citizen Protect 2010 (CP10). CP10 is a U.S. Fleet Forces Command and Navy Installations Command-led training event designed to assess the Navy’s capability to protect ships against various potential threats in Navy ports.

“This exercise was a tactical-level exercise specifically focused at testing our tactics, techniques and procedures at the waterfront scene,” said McCormick.

The training presented Sailors with different scenarios, which required them to respond quickly and effectively. The use of realistic simulations and Hollywood-style special effects, including pyrotechnics, added to the authenticity of the training experience.

“The exercise was extremely beneficial,” said Capt. Kelly M. Johnson, commander, Naval Station Norfolk. “Any time training is conduct- ed using realistic scenarios, first responders learn to adapt and overcome in an ever-changing environment.”

CP10 successfully determined the Navy’s capabilities for identifying both strengths and weaknesses in ashore/afloat integration. “Ultimately, prevention of future attacks will come down to the individual Sailor and their ability to recognize and respond to a threat,” said McCormick. “It is important that we make the training as realistic and authentic as possible.”

“Having the opportunity to utilize learned skills and test reaction time not only benefits the Navy, but it also benefits individual Sailors,” Johnson said. “They gain the confidence necessary to act in stressful situations.”

Since the attack on Cole, the Navy is making significant strides in improving its force protection. The attack took place in a non-

Navy port outside the U.S., making it slightly different than the scenarios presented during CP10. However, important lessons were learned from both situations.

Advanced training programs like CP10 help the Navy as it constantly strives to enhance its readiness, and the lessons learned will help shape future planning.

Far East CPOs Donate Thousands to Relief Society

The Far East Chief Petty Officer Association (CPOA) at Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) recently presented a check for approximately $8,000 to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS).

The money derived from a 117-hour con- tactor-run put on by the Far East CPOA will support victims of the Millington flood. The CPOA and major contributors gathered at CFAY’s Berkeley Field to hand over the check to the NMCRS representative.

“This is one of the single largest donations we have ever received,” said Amy Lacaria, president of Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Japan. “When I first heard about this fund-raiser, I thought $1,500 would be a good goal, but they went well over that thought they would earn.”

The marathon was conducted on two tread- mills and a stationary bike, and each hour as one chief completed his or her race against the clock, another “relocated the watch” for the next hour. The 117-time frame of the event repre- sented the number of years U.S. Navy chief petty officers have been walking the deckplates and leading Sailors. Proceeds were based on “per mile” pledges, but passers-by were also able to support the runners by donating on the spot. Area commands were encouraged to pledge based on the assumption that runners will average of five miles an hour. “I feel we did very well, and this money is going to do a lot of good,” said Cmdr. Dean VanderLey, commanding officer, NMCRS.

Several Army units. The current area is not nearly enough, however, the projects underway will provide an area large enough to accom- modate the footprint of incoming units where significant portions of the incoming forces can live in, and fight from. With all the work comes opportunity and obstacles to overcome.

“IT’s great that we get to do a little bit of everything and get to see it from the ground up!” says Utilityman Dan Arzamast MT2 (SW). Daniel Rodriguez. “We have to stay flexible, ev- erything is always changing,” said Rodriguez. “Between the ever changing weather, getting to and from the job site, we have had our share of challenges,” said Engineering Aid 1st Class Daniel Rodriguez. “We have to stay flexible, every- thing is always changing,” said Rodriguez.

According to VanderLey, Sailors face a number of significant challenges including the sheer size of the project. Weather and associ- ated soil conditions created problems as well, the soil is fine clay which becomes very soft and sticky when wet. Since the project site is not contiguous with any existing Forward Operating Base, security also presents a challenge. Sailors essentially created what they called our own small “Port Apache,” expanding out from that. VanderLey added that NMCR 4’s Sailors have put their...
Millington Hosts First Navy 10–Nautical Mile Run

Naval Support Activity (NSA) Mid-South recently hosted a 10–nautical mile run in Millington, Tenn.

The NSA Mid-South community pulled together after more than a month of flood recovery efforts to celebrate what they hope will be the start of an annual Navywide event. The community was hit by a storm May 1 that caused severe flooding, significant structural damage to NSA Mid-South facilities and crippling the base’s infrastructure.

“Like people around the world, we were impacted by the floods,” said Capt. Kurt Hedberg, NSA Mid-South commanding officer. “We are here as partners to support our families during the flooding,” said Hodges. “When we found out about the 10 Nautical Mile, we jumped at the opportunity to take part in the event.”

As with every event, there are risks to assess and overcome, but Afghanistan posed new threats and risks not common stateside. With temperatures reaching nearly 125 degrees some days and the constant threat of possible adverse contact, Hodges said numerous procedures were taken to ensure the safety of all participants.

“All steps were taken to mediate the risks,” he said. “We made sure security personnel were in key locations to ensure the safety of all participants and our checkpoints had water and medical personnel on hand.”

Detter added that the race’s measurement the nautical mile was selected to reflarm participants, largely Sailors and civilians associated with the U.S. Navy, ties with the sea service, something she said is more than just clever word play.

“A nautical mile is actually about one and a quarter miles,” she said. “While everyone will understand the term ‘nautical’, most individuals really don’t know the distance, and as Sailors we should.”

Detter added that the date of the race was significant as well, and stressed the importance of ensuring the date is imprinted on Sailor’s minds. Detter selected June 6 because of its importance in Navy history.

“As you know, June 6 is the Battle of Midway, a famous battle for the United States Navy and June 6 was D-day,” said McGowan. “[The Navy] had a significant part to play in those historical events, and so we are doing this as a commemoration to those two major events,” he said.

Despite the entire month of May centered on flood recovery; Detter proceeded with plans for the inaugural event, seeing the race as an opportunity to further connect with the community after the flood. Detter said nearly 450 individuals ran the 11.5 mile course.

“I think oddly enough the flood increased people’s desire to run,” Detter said. “It was a spirit of perseverance that seemed to make it something we ‘had’ to do, and after such a devastating event in the community, being able to pull everyone together for an event designed to boost morale and focus on something positive if only for a couple of hours seemed the right thing to do.”

Detter added that not only was the event successful in boosting morale and employing team-building concepts throughout NSA Millington, but proceeds from the race were donated to charity.

“All proceeds go to the Fisher House this year and all years in the future,” said Detter. “We received so much assistance during and after the flood, and it feels good to us as a community to donate what we can to an organization which truly needs it.”

The Fisher House is a home-away-from-home for families of patients receiving care at major military and Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers, similar to the service provided by the Ronald McDonald House at civilian hospitals.

Detter added that this is the first race of which she is aware that is measured in nautical miles, a concept she hopes will continue to spread throughout the military and gain the reputation of other military athletic contexts.

“This year we reached out to another command a half-a-world away to participate, and even though they’re in an area which isn’t conducive to fun, they all had a good time.”

Nineteen U.S. and Italian service members participated in the race, running in conjunction with personnel at NSA Mid-South but representing all levels to ensure our message of progress and overcome, but Afghanistan posed new threats and risks not common stateside. With temperatures reaching nearly 125 degrees some days and the constant threat of possible adverse contact, Hodges said numerous procedures were taken to ensure the safety of all participants.

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**John Paul Jones, FDR and The Movie That Almost Was**

*Story by MC2 Geraldine Hawkins*

I wish to have no connection with any ship that does not sail fast, for I intend to go into harm’s way," said John Paul Jones, who is commemorated by three anniversaries this month - his birth, July 6, 1747, his death July 18, 1792 and his repatriation at the U.S. Naval Academy in July 23, 1905. Is it any wonder that he was the hero of the president who assured his countrymen that "the only thing we have to fear is itself?"

Franklin D. Roosevelt held a deep love for the Navy. After serving as assistant secretary of the Navy from 1923 to 1932, Roosevelt fell ill with a devastating attack of polio and for the rest of his life used a wheelchair. During his period of recuperation (lasting several years), Roosevelt wrote a historical novel and a screenplay dealing with the life of John Paul Jones. In the spring of 1923 Roosevelt sent his screenplay to Famous Players – Lasky (later Paramount) Studio, where it was brought to the attention of James West of the production department. "Miss West is very anxious to talk over your proposed story to determine just what you have in mind and will be glad to assist in every way possible in developing it for the screen," wrote Eugene Zukor, son of movie mogul Adolph Zukor. As a petty possible illegitimacy as a boy in Scotland, of the president who assured his historical record, even including a romantic of John Paul Jones. 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**Logistics Specialist 3rd Class Ricardo Chery**

The ability to move troops, supply and equipment has always been key to mission success. For the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), this mission is complicated with rugged terrain and treacherous roads.

In this environment, ISAF personnel provide more than combat presence and support. They also perform missions which can have a positive impact on operations in Afghanistan – establishing a relationship with the Afghanistan population in areas where they deploy. ISAF personnel accomplish this through Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), small but efficient units focused on civil engineering, humanitarian aid, education and other tasks.

Logistics Specialist 3rd Class Ricardo Chery, a reservist from the Navy Operations Support Center (NOSC) West Palm Beach, Florida, is serving a 14-month assignment with the Army Reserve’s 572nd Engineer Brigade at forward operating base (FOB) Sharana, a launching-pad and headquarters for PRT Paktika where Chery assists PRT Paktika personnel in accomplishing their mission.

"While here, I assist with requisitions for items to maintain PRT readiness," he said. "I also assist with other tasks such as receiving cargo that comes into forward operating base Sharana and distributed throughout Paktika province – medical supplies, plant seeds and coordination with military and civilian transport officials for all cache logistics."

"In this environment far removed from where I served traditionally take Sailors, Chery credits preparation and training as essential to his successful deployment. "I’m grateful that the staff at my NOSC were very engaged as to what I needed to prepare for a deployment," he said. "The tasks and training I received helped in the sense that the position I’m currently in is similar to those given to me and a previous one aboard USS Abraham Lincoln as a storekeeper. Upon my arrival to my unit here, there was basically no changeover needed – I was able to step into my role without difficulty.""

PRT Paktika is actively engaged in counterinsurgency operations (COIN), an initiative derived from coalition forces’ experience in Iraq centered around positive interaction with Afghan populations, something Chery said is imperative to success in the region.

"COIN has to be instilled in all training for the mission here in Afghanistan," he said. "The military’s new strategy for peace through COIN seems to have changed many things here, from what I’ve seen. I believe this strategy is having a great effect. Not only are we helping to eliminate the bad guys, but we are also constantly looking for ways in which we can build up and support the average Afghan, just trying to live their lives in safety and protect their families.""

Chery also said Sailors interested in IA assignments should volunteer, something he said can provide a more complete understanding of coalition forces’ mission in the area.

"I believe this experience [develops] character and a great sense of appreciation of the great freedoms the United States of America offers us all," he said. A

Coverley is assigned to Defense Media Activity – Anacostia, Washington, D.C.
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