



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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From: Commanding Officer, USS TICONDEROGA (CG 47)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy  
Yard, Washington, D.C. 20374

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1. Submitted.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. C. Pilcher".

R. C. PILCHER  
By direction

Copy to:  
COMCRUDESGRU EIGHT  
COMNAVSURFLANT

COMMAND HISTORY  
USS TICONDEROGA (CG 47)  
01 JANUARY - 31 DECEMBER 1985

THE BEGINNING OF TICONDEROGA'S THIRD YEAR OF COMMISSIONING FOUND HER IN THE LAST WEEKS OF A THREE MONTH AVAILABILITY AT BERKLEY SHIPYARD IN NORFOLK, VIRGINIA. UPON DEPARTURE, TICONDEROGA HEADED TO YORKTOWN NAVAL WEAPONS STATION FOR AMMUNITION REPLENISHMENT, THEN RETURNED TO NORFOLK FOR HER FIRST CHANGE OF COMMAND. CAPTAIN RAYMOND M. WALSH RELIEVED CAPTAIN ROLAND G. GUIBAULT ON 19 JANUARY 1985 (AN EVENT OFFICIATED BY MONSIGNOR O'BRIEN).

NINE DAYS LATER, ON 28 JANUARY, TICONDEROGA LEFT NORFOLK FOR CENTRAL AMERICAN OPERATIONS (CENTAM OPS) IN THE CARIBBEAN AND SOUTH AMERICAN WATERS WITH COMMANDER CRUISER DESTROYER GROUP EIGHT EMBARKED. ENROUTE TO THE CARIBBEAN, TICONDEROGA CONDUCTED EXTENSIVE AIR DEFENSE AND DATA LINK EXERCISES WITH THE NORTH AMERICAN AIR DEFENSE COMMAND AND VECTORED USAF AND USN AIRCRAFT TO INTERCEPT AND ENGAGE THE SIMULATED THREAT BEYOND THE CONTINENTAL RADAR RANGE. THE EXERCISE WAS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS AND BROADENED THE CONCEPT OF WHAT AN AEGIS CRUISER IS CAPABLE OF ACCOMPLISHING IN THE LONG RANGE AIR BATTLE.

PORTCALLS DURING CENTAM BEGAN AT THE ISLAND OF BARBADOS ON 2 FEBRUARY. MANY VISITORS FLOCKED TO TICONDEROGA TO SEE THE LATEST AND GREATEST AMERICAN FIGHTING SHIP. UPON DEPARTURE ON 6 FEBRUARY, TICONDEROGA JOINED UP WITH A DUTCH FRIGATE, HMS ABRAHAM CRIJNSSEN ENROUTE TO PUERTO LA CRUZ, VENEZUELA AND CONDUCTED CROSSDECK TRAINING AND JOINT EXERCISES. AN EXCITING SEA TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL BY HIGHLINE WAS CONDUCTED AND TURNED OUT TO BE A VALUABLE TRAINING EXPERIENCE. IT WAS A TASTE OF BOTH WORLDS, UTILIZING THE TRADITIONAL TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL BETWEEN SHIPS AT SEA FOLLOWED BY A TOUR OF THE MOST ADVANCED NAVAL WARSHIP ON THE HIGH SEAS.

TICONDEROGA ARRIVED IN PUERTO LA CRUZ, VENEZUELA ON 8 FEBRUARY 1985 FOR HER SECOND PORT OF CALL IN THE CARIBBEAN, WHERE MANY VENEZUELAN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN DIGNITARIES WERE HOSTED. TICONDEROGA DEPARTED ON 11 FEBRUARY AND JOINED UP WITH VENEZUELAN NAVY WARSHIP GENERAL SALOM AND SUBMARINE CARIBE. THE COASTAL OPERATIONS STRENGTHENED THE FELLOWSHIP DEVELOPED DURING THE PUERTO LA CRUZ PORTCALL. UPON COMPLETION, TICONDEROGA DEPARTED VENEZUELAN WATERS FOR TRANSIT TO COLON, PANAMA. TICONDEROGA ARRIVED IN COLON ON 16 FEBRUARY. ONCE AGAIN, MANY CIVILIAN AND MILITARY DIGNITARIES WERE HOSTED. ON 23 FEBRUARY, TICONDEROGA ARRIVED AT PUERTO CORTEZ, HONDURAS. TICONDEROGA'S CREW VOLUNTEERED IT'S LIBERTY TIME FOR CIVIC ACTION REBUILDING A KINDERGARDEN. THE PROJECT WAS RECORDED ON VIDEO TAPE AND WAS LATER EDITED AND SHOWN ON NAVY VIDEO NEWS - ANOTHER FIRST FOR TICONDEROGA. IN THANKS, THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT RESERVED A BEACH RECREATION AREA FOR THE CREW. MANY CREWMEMBERS ALSO TOOK ADVANTAGE OF TOURS TO THE MAYAN RUINS. TICONDEROGA DEPARTED PUERTO CORTEZ AND STARTED FOR "HOME WATERS" ON 27 FEBRUARY, ARRIVING IN NORFOLK ON 4 MARCH.

IMMEDIATELY UPON RETURN TO HOMEPORT, TICONDEROGA UPGRADED HER AEGIS COMBAT SYSTEM SOFTWARE WITH THE INSTALLATION OF BASELINE ONE. SHE WAS QUICKLY BACK TO SEA ON 11 APRIL FOR SEA TRIALS AND MOCK MINI-WAR AND THEN UP TO VISIT ANNAPOLIS MD, ON 12 APRIL. TICONDEROGA WAS OPEN FOR VISITING BY U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY MIDSHIPMEN TO DEMONSTRATE THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY OF THE SURFACE NAVY. THIRTY MIDSHIPMEN EMBARKED ON TICONDEROGA ENROUTE TO YORKTOWN, VIRGINIA FOR AMMUNITION LOADOUT. ON 22 APRIL, TICONDEROGA WAS UNDERWAY IN THE VACAPES FOR A COMBINED TASK UNIT EXERCISE, FOLLOWED BY ESCORT DUTIES FOR USS SARATOGA. DURING THESE OPERATIONS, TICONDEROGA SUCCESSFULLY ENGAGED A TARGET DRONE FLYING OVER 1000 KNOTS AND OVER 12 MILES HIGH FURTHER DEMONSTRATING THE POWER OF THE AEGIS SYSTEM. ON 04 MAY, THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, THE HONORABLE CHASE UNTERMEYER VISITED THE SHIP OFF THE VIRGINIA COAST.

AFTER A 5 DAY HOMEPORT REST, TICONDEROGA GOT UNDERWAY FOR SEABAT EXERCISES IN WHICH THE AEGIS COMBAT SYSTEM WAS TESTED IN A HEAVY ELECTONIC WARFARE ENVIRONMENT. OVER 100 USN AND USAF FIGHTERS AND BOMBERS TRIED TO PENETRATE THE AEGIS SYSTEM WITHOUT SUCCESS. THE REMAINDER OF MAY WAS SPENT WITH PRE-OPERATIONAL PROPULSION EXAM (OPPE) DRILLS, MATERIAL UPKEEP, AND WATCHSTATION TRAINING. FROM 23 MAY UNTIL 14 JUNE, TICONDEROGA WAS INPORT NORFOLK FOR A WELL DESERVED REST.

ON 14 JUNE, THE DEPENDENTS CRUISE WAS CONDUCTED OFF THE COAST OF VIRGINIA. WIVES, FRIENDS, AND DEPENDENTS HAD A GREAT TIME. EVENTS INCLUDED A FIVE INCH GUN LIVE FIRE; CLOSE-IN WEAPONS SYSTEM PAC FIRE; TOURS IN CIC, ENGINEERING, AND THE BRIDGE; AND A PICNIC ON THE FLIGHT DECK. TICONDEROGA WAS ABLE TO "SHOW HER STUFF" AND THE CREW ENJOYED "FAMILY OPS" FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG TIME. THE REMAINDER OF THE MONTH WAS DEVOTED TO PREPARATION FOR OPPE AND READEX 3-85.

ON 8 JULY, TICONDEROGA GOT UNDERWAY FOR OPPE. FOLLOWING THE RIGOROUS ENGINEERING QUALIFICATIONS, THE SHIP PROCEEDED TO MAYPORT, FLORIDA EMBARKING COMMANDER CRUISER DESTROYER GROUP TWELVE AND COMMENCING READEX 2-85. DURING THIS EXERCISE TICONDEROGA ACTED AS THE "BAD GUYS" FOR THE SARATOGA BATTLE GROUP AS THEY PREPARED FOR DEPLOYMENT. THE WEAPONS SYSTEM WAS USED TO RECORD HOW WELL SARATOGA'S AIR WING SEVENTEEN DID AGAINST A SIMULATED ENEMY SURFACE ACTION GROUP.

RETURNING TO NORFOLK ON 30 JULY, PREPARATIONS WERE BEGUN FOR OCEAN SAFARI, A LARGE SCALE NATO EXERCISE IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC. ON 27 AUGUST, WITH COMMANDER CRUISER DESTROYER GROUP TWELVE AGAIN EMBARKED, TICONDEROGA HEADED FOR THE NORTH ATLANTIC AS PART OF A THREE CARRIER BATTLE FORCE WITH OVER 60 US SHIPS AND A BRITISH ASW GROUP. DURING THE EXERCISE, THE SHIP ENCOUNTERED SEVERE WEATHER AND HEAVY SEAS ALONG THE GREENLAND - ICELAND - UK GAP. FOR OVER FOUR DAYS THE BATTLE GROUP LABORED THROUGH FORTY FOOT SEAS AND

FIFTY FIVE KNOT WINDS. THIS DID NOT DIMINISH TICONDEROGA'S PERFORMANCE HOWEVER, AS ONE AIR RAID AFTER ANOTHER WAS SUCCESSFULLY REPELLED. RADM MAUZ, THE EMBARKED COMMANDER, RECOGNIZED TICO'S PERFORMANCE BY CALLING IT, "OUTSTANDING IN EVERY RESPECT." EARLY IN THE EXERCISE, TICO FIRED THE NINETY NINTH AND ONE HUNDRETH SURFACE TO AIR MISSILE IN JUST TWO AND ONE HALF YEARS OF COMMISSIONED SERVICE (BOTH WERE DIRECT HITS). LATER TICO SPENT FOUR DAYS OPERATING IN VESTFJORD, THE LARGEST FJORD IN NORWAY, DEVELOPING REFINEMENTS FOR THE NAVY'S MARITIME STRATEGY. DURING THIS OPERATIONS, TICO ENGAGED OVER TWENTY ATTACKING AIRCRAFT FLYING DOWN THE FJORD TO ATTACK THE CARRIER IN LESS THAN TWO MINUTES. FOR ITS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THIS COMPLEX NATO EXERCISE, THE AMERICA BATTLE GROUP WAS AWARDED THE NAVY'S MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION.

FOLLOWING THE EXERCISE TICO AND THE AMERICA BATTLE GROUP PROCEEDED TO PORTSMOUTH ENGLAND FOR THE EXERCISE DEBRIEF AND THE DEPARTURE OF COMMANDER CRUISER DESTROYER GROUP TWELVE. COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON FOURTEEN THEN EMBARKED IN PREPARATION FOR BALTOPS, AN ANNUAL EXERCISE WITH THE DANISH AND GERMAN NAVIES IN THE BALTIC. THIS YEAR HOWEVER, WOULD HAVE THREE FIRSTS - THE BATTLESHIP IOWA WOULD BE THE FIRST BATTLESHIP IN THE BALTIC IN OVER FORTY YEARS, THE FIRST TIME THE AEGIS WEAPONS SYSTEM WOULD BE IN THE BALTIC, AND THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LAMPS III HELO EMBARKED IN THE MISSILE FRIGATE HALYBURTON. AS A RESULT, THIS EXERCISE DREW CONSIDERABLE INTEREST, NOT ONLY FROM OUR ALLIES, BUT THE SOVIET/WARSAW PACT NATIONS AS WELL. BALTOPS ALSO INCLUDED PORT VISITS IN AARHUS DENMARK, GOTENBURG SWEEDEN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE EXERCISE AND KIEL GERMANY FOR THE EXERCISE DEBRIEF. DEPARTING KIEL IN 25 OCTOBER, TICONDEROGA FINALLY RETURNED TO NORFOLK ON 5 NOVEMBER. ALTHOUGH NOVEMBER WAS A QUIET MONTH FOR MOST, IT WAS A VERY BUSY ONE FOR LCDR RAY PILCHER, WHO RELIEVED CDR J. W. MORELAND AS EXECUTIVE OFFICER ON 11 NOVEMBER.

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A WEAPONS OFFLOAD AT THE YORKTOWN NAVAL WEAPONS STATION DURING THE SECOND WEEK OF DECEMBER, TICONDEROGA SPENT THE REMAINDER OF 1985 INPORT. THE FINAL EVENTS OF THE YEAR INCLUDED THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY, WHICH WAS HELD ONBOARD, AND THE CHRISTMAS DINNER DANCE HELD AT THE CHAMBERLAIN HOTEL IN HAMPTON. BOTH WERE VERY WELL ATTENDED AND SPIRITS WERE HIGH AS CREWMEMBERS AND FAMILY LOOKED FORWARD TO CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR.