

AMERICA AT WAR

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.S. is using cluster bombs, looking into claims of more civilians killed

The United States is showering targets in Iraq with the most unpredictable weapons in its arsenal: tiny cluster bombs so deadly they can demolish a tank, but so erratic they can take years to blow up. The U.S. Central Command in Doha, Qatar, said it is investigating reports that cluster bombs killed at least 11 civilians in Hillah, a city 60 miles south of Baghdad and the scene of heavy fighting. The military acknowledged for the first time Wednesday that cluster bombs were being deployed. Human rights groups have called for their ban, and their use during the campaign to oust Saddam Hussein is particularly sensitive because of the stated aim of the U.S.-led force to minimize civilian casualties.

Blair says coalition should hand power to an Iraqi government

London — Prime Minister Tony Blair said Wednesday that coalition forces should hand over power to an Iraqi government as soon as possible once President Saddam Hussein's regime is overthrown. "Iraq at the end should not be run by the Americans, should not be run by the British, should not be run by any outside force or power. It should be run — for the first time in decades — by the Iraqi people," Blair told the House of Commons. "In the immediate aftermath of the conflict of course the coalition forces will be there," he added, after Liberal Democrat leader Charles Kennedy asked whether an interim government would be led by the United States or the United Nations. "The U.N. has made it quite clear itself that it doesn't want to lead an Iraqi government, what it wants is the ability to work with us in partnership to make sure that we assemble the broadest possible representation from within Iraq itself."

BBC journalist killed in northern Iraq; partner sustains foot wound

London — A land mine explosion killed one British Broadcasting Corp. journalist and injured another in northern Iraq on Wednesday. Kaveh Golestan, 52, an Iranian freelance cameraman for the BBC, died instantly when he stepped on the mine as he climbed out of his car in the town of Kifrey, the company said. Producer Stuart Hughes, 31, was injured in the foot by the explosion, while correspondent Jim Muir and their translator were unhurt, the BBC said. Hughes was being treated in a nearby American military medical facility.

LA Times photographer dismissed after altering photograph from Iraq

Los Angeles — The Los Angeles Times said Wednesday it fired a photographer for altering a front page photo of a British soldier and a group of Iraqi civilians. In an editor's note in Wednesday editions, the Times said photographer Brian Walski acknowledged in a phone call from Iraq that he had used a computer to combine elements of two photos to improve the composition. Journalism ethics forbid changing the content of news photographs, and it is specifically barred in the newspaper's policy. The two photos, taken moments apart, showed a British soldier directing Iraqi civilians to protect themselves from possible Iraqi fire on the outskirts of Basra. Only after the altered photo appeared Monday did editors notice that some civilians in the background appeared twice, the Times said.

French ambassador: Bitterness should be put aside after the war

Washington — France's ambassador to the United States says his country has been "a bit of a scapegoat," portrayed as the driving force in the U.N. Security Council's resistance to the U.S.-led war on Iraq — but he wants bygones to be bygones. Russia, Germany and China had also argued Iraq could be disarmed peacefully through strengthened weapons inspections. Jean-David Levitte said Tuesday. Still, Levitte said, "Let's go beyond the bitterness of what happened" and join in a common effort to rebuild Iraq once the war is over. The United Nations should play a pivotal role in reconstruction, Levitte said, warning U.S. aid on its own may be perceived as an occupation.

Southern Baghdad hit by explosions; very little activity in Iraqi capital

Baghdad, Iraq — Huge explosions Wednesday night rocked southern Baghdad, where U.S. forces bore down on the capital's outskirts even as Iraqi TV showed pictures of a laughing and relaxed Saddam Hussein. A statement attributed to Saddam told the Iraqi people that "victory is at hand." Saddam wore a military uniform, looking jovial and even laughing at one point as he met with Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz and several Cabinet ministers and aides, according to the silent footage shown on state TV. A news anchor in a military uniform said the Iraqi leader urged his people to rise up, adding that the country's armed forces have yet to display their full battle power.

Democrats want to add billions to war bill for domestic protection

Washington — The Senate rejected a Democratic effort Wednesday to boost security spending for ports as it began debating a nearly \$80 billion bill financing the first costs of the war with Iraq, the fight against terrorism and aid to struggling airlines. A Democratic drive to add



■ *USS Providence "Hot Runners," from left, MM2 Joshua Williams, MM2 Craig Forehand, MM1 Jeff T. Crumley and MM3 Gregory Schmuck are some of the noted achievers on the submarine.*

TIM COOK
The Day

DISPATCHES AT SEA

Editor's Note: Day reporter Robert Hamilton and photographer Tim Cook were aboard a Navy sub covering the war in Iraq.

Meet The 'Stars' Of The USS Providence

Aboard A Nuclear Sub At War, The Crew Is What Really Makes Things Tick

By ROBERT A. HAMILTON
Day Staff Writer

Aboard the USS Providence — The submarine community is considered to be one of the Navy's most elite, but even on submarines there are people who distinguish themselves.

A machinist's mate on Providence, Joshua D. Williams, joined the Navy in June 1999, and made chief of the watch after less than three years, which meant he was responsible for the people who were driving the ship, an awesome responsibility for someone just barely into his 20s.

"I get that feeling every time I sit in that chair," he acknowledged.

Electronics Technician 2nd Class Marcus Allen Koegler qualified as radio supervisor recently, a position normally held only by the chief petty officer. He was also appointed to a couple of other jobs that normally go to more senior people, such as coordinating maintenance on the radio and periscope masts.

"Those guys are really driven," said Cmdr. Jonathan H. Kan, captain of the Providence. "They like to be problem solvers, and they tend to get frustrated if you don't give them the opportunity to solve the problems that they find."

Kan said even though some of his young people have advanced quickly, he had complete confidence in them as the Providence headed into combat against Iraq, making missile strikes from the Red Sea.

"I will qualify a guy for any watch on this ship as long as he has the technical capability and the maturity," Kan said. "I won't hold them back — let them shoot for the stars. I think you get what you expect from your people; if you expect a lot, you're going to get a lot."

"There is some risk," Kan acknowledged. "If someone fails, people are going to ask, 'why did you every trust a kid on the watch?' But I try to make sure there is no single point of failure. There are senior people watching out for the ship all the time."

But by piling on as much responsibility as someone can handle, he said, you quickly learn whom you can count on as a "hot runner," someone who will beat all the averages and advance at a rapid pace.

"I think it's a question of opportunities," Kan said. "Smart guys make the most of opportunities, and there are a lot of smart submariners."

Williams, a member of the auxiliary division or an "A-ganger" as he is known aboard, shrugs off suggestions that he is one of the stars of the crew, though many others hold that view.

"It's the ship," Williams said. "It's nice that everyone had enough confidence in me to qualify as a chief of the watch as a third class, but it's really not about me."

"As an A-ganger, as a machinist mate, you know the boat a lot better than a lot of guys," Williams said. "As a chief of the watch you're dealing with trimming the ship, hydraulics — pretty much all the systems you deal with as a chief of the watch, I deal with as an A-ganger."

"The most difficult thing for me to learn was how to lead people more senior to me, to delegate tasks to them and make sure they follow up on what I tell them," Williams said.

Eventually, he said, he wants to be the leading chief petty officer in his division, perhaps one day even Chief of the Boat. Few doubt he will rise at least that high.

Now that he has all the certifications for a machinist mate, he said, he's set his sights on becoming an expert in other specialties.

"I'll learn how to do weapons handling and weapons launching next," Williams said. "Learning how to do other people's jobs makes you a better submariner. You learn more about your ship."

Koegler found himself almost forced to accept more responsibility in the radio



■ Lt. Matt Mulcahy, right, signs off on MM3 Louie Leontakianako's qualification aboard the USS Providence while operating in the Red Sea on March 24.

TIM COOK / The Day

room after two of the leading first-class petty officers moved on to other boats.

"I had to learn everything I could from them and when they left I had to take over," Koegler said. "Anybody can operate the equipment — it's how to fix it, how do you jury rig it to make it work when it's broken, that makes the difference."

"There comes a time when you have to step up," Koegler said. "You can't just sit back and say, 'well, I'm not qualified to do this,' and let the division go to the dogs."

He recently took the test to advance to first-class petty officer. He passed it last year, but later found out he hadn't served long enough as a second-class to qualify.

He said he appreciates the captain's philosophy, which is to let him do the work if he proves capable, rather than relying on an arbitrary measure such as how much time he put in.

A good sailor can typically advance to chief petty officer in 12 to 16 years.

"My goal is to make chief in less than 10," Koegler said.

Fire Control Technician Seyerle

Kan said Fire Control Technician 2nd Class Ian D. Seyerle has probably fired more missiles than anyone else in the submarine force.

Seyerle's position during battle stations is at the attack console, a position that only goes to someone with the captain's complete confidence. He was there when the Providence fired on Taliban strongholds in 2001, and again against Iraq this month.

"I didn't feel any different at the time, because of all the times we'd trained to do it," Seyerle said about the attack on Afghanistan. "When I had time to sit around and think about what had happened, it hit me that I had launched something, done it for real."

"It's my job. It's what I do," Seyerle said. But there was also a personal aspect in 2001. "My mom and my girlfriend both worked in New York on Sept. 11, and I didn't get word that they were OK until more than a month afterward."

A native of New Jersey, he joined the Navy in 1998, and took the advice of his uncle, an electronics technician on aircraft carriers, to "go subs."

He had tried college for a semester after high school, but he said that didn't work out.

"I figured if I joined the military it would give me a little maturity and a little discipline." And it has, he said.

Machinist Mate Forehand

Being a machinist mate on a nuclear submarine can mean 18-hour days at times, but apparently that didn't keep MM2 Craig Robert Forehand busy enough, so last fall he went to school to become a diver, too.

The first two weeks of the five-week program in Florida put him through hours of intense physical training every morning, followed by six hours of classroom work. Then came "pool week," when they dove in a pool while the instructor did things like disconnect their air hoses.

"They called it disorientation training, to make sure you can recover in the water, and won't panic," Forehand said. "And it is pretty good training, I guess. You end up feeling like you can handle any situation. But the first couple of times it happens, it's pretty scary."

"You know in the back of your head that they're not going to let you die in the pool, but at the same time, someone is taking away your air," Forehand said.

Now the 23-year-old is responsible for hull inspections before leaving port, and a variety of jobs underway — everything from unwrapping buoy tethers from the propeller, to checking for clanking grates or sound-absorbing tiles.

"I pretty much have a guarantee that I'll be topside during every maneuvering watch, which was a major incentive," Forehand said. He got a front-row seat when Providence sailed through the Suez Canal this month, while everyone else was locked below.

"Plus, you get paid a little more," he said. On the other hand, in liberty ports, when everyone else has a last day on the town, he has to report to the ship to make a security check dive, and the day before Providence left Groton last month, he was chipping ice off the vents topside.

"Days like that, you question the value of dive pay," he said with a laugh. "Let me tell you, it gets pretty cold, even in a wetsuit."

Engineer Mulcahy

Normally the people picked as a ship's engineer are among the top graduates at the six-month Submarine Officer Advanced Course in Groton. Lt. Matt Mulcahy, the "Eng" on Providence, was snatched out of the course before he finished his first two weeks.

"SOAC is a great chance to bring yourself back up to speed, but it's all stuff that you've covered before, so it just requires a little more effort to bring yourself back on your own," Mulcahy said.

Other officers said he's being too modest, that the engineer keeps the longest hours and has the toughest job of any of the department heads. It's one reason why the person who holds the job is normally spot promoted to lieutenant commander. Mulcahy will likely get his promotion soon.

The job has also meant that Mulcahy gave up a half year of being home with his wife every night, and a vacation after he finished SOAC.

Lt. j.g. John Killila said some officers would prefer not to get the engineer's job, even though it increases the likelihood that you will be picked for command.

"You get more pay, but it's associated with a lot more work and a lot more responsibility," Killila said. "The engineer owns almost two-thirds of the boat in port, and then at sea he has a lot more administration and other work associated with the nuclear department. You have to decide if it's worth it."

Machinist Mate Schmuck

Battle station jobs in the control center go only to the best sailors on the ship, so it's quite an honor for Machinist Mate 3rd Class Gregory R. Schmuck, who joined the Navy less than four years ago, to be "sticks," the helmsman, when the call comes to combat.

He said he was growing up in Sherman, Texas, "and I figured I needed to do something useful with my life," so he enlisted with the hope of going subs.

"I'd seen some movies about submariners, and I thought it would be kind of exciting," Schmuck said. "And it does get exciting at times."

Normally his job is to run the atmospheric controls and the diesel engines that provide auxiliary power.

"Growing up in Texas, I never thought I'd be driving a nuclear submarine," Schmuck said. "It feels pretty good."

Machinist Mate Crumley

Machinist Mate 1st Class Jeff T. Crumley was picked this year as the Providence Sailor of the Year for 2002, which designates him as one of the best members of the crew.

But the 12-year Navy veteran said he was ready to get out of the Navy two years ago, at least until the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

"I didn't think I'd ever be able to face anybody I knew, after getting out when the going got rough," said the Alabama native. "We from the South don't do that type of thing. We don't like wussing out."

Then, he said, a couple of chief petty officers took him under their wing.

"I had these two people who really, really believed in me, and they kind of changed my career around," Crumley said. "It was the first time in the Navy that someone put their faith in me completely, and it's amazing how well you can do when someone believes in you that much."

He said if he has distinguished himself, it's because he has been inspired by the chain of command on the Providence, an engineer who works hard and leads well, an executive officer who sets a great example, and a captain who is a master of motivation.

One day last winter when the Providence pulled into port, someone forgot to drain the snorkel, and it froze up solid, a tube with 12 feet of ice. He and some people in his division were using a heater and a chipper to clear it when the captain came through about 7 p.m.

"The captain stayed all night with us," Crumley said. "He had finished his work up, but he said, 'I guess I'm in this with you,' and he was up there chipping ice with us. I've never seen anything like that. This is the big kahuna, the captain, and he proved he was with us like that, no matter what. I tell you, I'd walk through fire for the guy." b.hamilton@theday.com