

## Coast Guard Boarding -- Of Another Type

Anyone who has ever seen the 1979 film, *Apocalypse Now*, is familiar with the words “Charlie Don’t Surf!” In the film’s subsequent sequence Colonel Kilgore, played by Robert Duvall, has his air cavalry squadron attack a Vietcong-held village to drop off a Navy Patrol Boat, River (PBR) and to surf the “break” off that point. Well, given the pictures below, it appears that Francis Ford Coppola’s depiction of U.S. servicemen engaging in water sports while deployed in Vietnam was more reality than fiction.



Unidentified crewman “hanging ten” off Da Nang (Note: He appears to be wearing GI-issued skivvies)

These photos of USCGC *Point Dume* (WPB-82325) were taken by LTJG H.D. Willis on 14 October 1965 while on board USCGC *Point Arden* (WPB-82309). Both cutters were part of Division 12, Squadron One and were stationed at Da Nang, Republic of Vietnam. These vessels were part of the U.S. Navy’s OPERATION MARKET TIME which was intended to interdict maritime infiltration and re-supply of the Vietcong from North Vietnam. As you can see, a crewman appears to be waterskiing behind the cutter. He is, however, actually boarding, not skiing. As Retired Master Chief, Gunner’s Mate and Vietnam Veteran, Bill Wells, has informed the Historian’s Office, he is riding a single board. Akin to a cut-off surfboard, it apparently provided one heck of a ride, especially in a combat zone.

