



USCGC TAMPA (WMEC-902) Mid-Patrol Newsletter May 2011



By 1/C Izurieta and 1/C Leath – Guest Authors

Coming out of the Mission Effectiveness Project (MEP) in Baltimore, MD, has meant long but productive workdays to ready TAMPA for the District 5 area of



Seaman Harvey and members from other cutters hard at work on TAMPA after MEP

responsibility. From March till mid-May the crew worked tirelessly to ensure the cutter was well prepared for its first patrol in nearly a year. Highlights of the inport leading up to the patrol included the resurfacing of TAMPA's flight deck, fantail, and numerous interior decks, multiple engineering and electronic grooms and inspections, and of course, training. Prior to deployment TAMPA was to complete Helicopter Standardization (HELO STAN), TAMPA cast off her lines and was underway to conduct Helicopter Operations, where dozens of landings, takeoffs, in-flight refuels, and other complex evolutions took place. The training spanned a three days, TAMPA and passed with flying colors.

On May 16th, TAMPA waved goodbye to its homeport and began a week of drills and training evolutions under the instruction of trainers from Coast Guard Afloat Training Group, Norfolk. TAMPA had a

number of new crewmembers that had not sailed in a long while, thus it was necessary to perform numerous drills to familiarize the new crew with the ship. In addition to the

drills, TAMPA also practiced towing evolutions, anchoring, and a wide array of inport and underway damage control exercises. These drills improved the crew's skill as they adjusted to their new environment. The initial training week also provided valuable training experience for four Coast Guard Academy Cadets who will call TAMPA home for eleven weeks during their summer training period.

After the training evolutions concluded and members from the Afloat Training Group (ATG) were transferred to Naval Station Little Creek, TAMPA returned to action, swiftly making way towards the operations area. One of the main objectives for the patrol was to qualify or re-certify boarding team and boat crew members. Armed with advanced detection and monitoring equipment, TAMPA made her way towards a fleet of longliner fishing vessels targeting



TAMPA conducting flight operations drills prior to getting underway for the D5 patrol

highly migratory species like tuna and swordfish. TAMPA hit the ground running the very next day, conducting boardings in neat pristine weather conditions. The first week of the patrol was extremely productive, as boarding teams conducted over ten boardings. TAMPA's presence comforted fishermen and fish alike knowing both would be protected with TAMPA back in action. True to form, TAMPA's crew performed their duties with great effectiveness and efficiency, despite strained watch schedules, long nights, and a changing daily schedule. Although the crew was often given time to rest, the first week was both mentally and physically draining which made our first port call, New York City, a very welcomed sight.

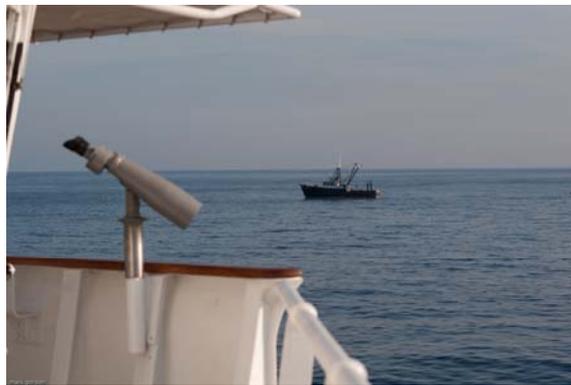
On the evening of May 24th, TAMPA staged with six other vessels in preparation for the Parade of Ships, which signals the beginning of fleet week. The morning of the



Officers and crew of TAMPA manning the rails

25th, all seven ships transited in formation from sea, under the Verrazano Bridge, past Lady Liberty, up the Hudson River towards the George Washington Bridge, before mooring up at pier 88. During the parade, the crew of TAMPA manned the rails and rendered honors to numerous monuments and passing ships, including the World Trade Center site and the USS New York, a warship with strong connections to the city that never sleeps not only in name, but in heritage. The keel was laid and constructed with steel recovered from Ground Zero after the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. The vessel is a clear symbol of America's strength through adversity. The Fleet Week festivities that followed provided a grateful public the opportunity to tour TAMPA and mingle with the crew. From 25 May through 28 May, TAMPA's decks were filled with the interested public eager to learn about the cutter and the service to which she has belonged for nearly 30 years.

After New York City, TAMPA set sail to continue its fisheries law enforcement mission working for Coast Guard District 5. After countless hours of planning, prepping, fixing, writing, conferencing, craning, training, storing, troubleshooting, weight testing, and charting, TAMPA is the Coast Guard is stronger because of it.



TAMPA conducting fisheries boardings in D5

From the Pilothouse

So far we have had a very rewarding patrol and have already boarded 12 vessels, conducted a towing exercise, a gunnery exercise, numerous drills, and participated in a literal “parade of ships”. All the hard work restoring the cutter after the 8 month drydock, completing certifications, and undergoing inspections has paid off. The cutter is working great and the crew is rapidly becoming a very efficient team after almost 5 months since our last patrol on FORWARD and 11 months since our last true patrol on TAMPA. In fact, all of our inspectors and trainers have universally commented on how far advanced we are considering the recent challenges of MEP. Perhaps most notable of all, we have reinvigorated crazy hat Friday’s and had our first successful Crazy Hat day.



“Crazy Hat” Fridays at Quarters on the Flight Deck.

Congratulations to EM1 Dent and CWO Midkiff on their outstanding.

TAMPA participated in the 2011 New York City Fleet Week along with 7 other ships (5 Navy and 2 other Coast Guard cutters) and the Parade of Ships rendering honors to Fort Hamilton at the foot of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge and at the World Trade Center site as we sailed up the Hudson River. We gave over 1,600 tours and participated in a number of unique events but were most impressed with the welcome we received out and about in town. Participating in Fleet Week was a truly memorable experience and an outstanding way to commemorate Memorial Day.

This will be my last patrol and so far I could have not asked for a better way to spend my last few weeks on TAMPA and with her crew. The change of command is scheduled for 7 July at 1800 with a reception immediately following at Port side. All of the crew’s families are invited and I hope to see you there. If not, let me say in advance - thank you for all you have done to support your loved ones who serve aboard TAMPA. The mission is important and challenging and demands sacrifices of us all, thank you for your service, skill and spirit!

Our next stop is Charleston, another wonderful place to visit. In the mean time we have helicopter operations, fisheries boardings, and as always drills and training on the agenda. Don’t worry, we will try to take some time to enjoy the green flashes, do some fishing, dolphin and wildlife watching, and perhaps even another Crazy Hat day!

Mark D. Gordon
Commanding Officer



From the Ombudsman

Just wanted to remind everyone that the Atlantic Hurricane Season is upon us and now is the time to get prepared. If you don't have a hurricane kit, put one together soon.

If you do have one, it's time to check it and make sure that it's as complete as can be. If you need more information on what should be in your hurricane kit or regarding what to do if we are ordered to evacuate, please email me and I will send you the information regarding our "safe haven" and travel claim info as well.



Boarding Teams conduct boardings in Atlantic Sea Scallop fishing fleet.

I also want to take the time to say goodbye to everyone as your Ombudsman. It has been an honor to help out when I could. I leave you in the very capable hands of Erin Weindenfeld. Thank you Commander Gordon for having faith in me to do a good job for our



Chief Josh Quintero (GMC) puts on his anchors during his Advancement Ceremony.

Many TAMPA Crewmembers received awards and/or Qualified in various positions throughout the ship. Bravo Zulu's to all! Thank you for the hard work you do everyday! Since December, we have had two sailors of the quarter! IT3 James Richard MK2 Eric Wiedenfeld! Congratulations to both of you and thank you so much for everything that you have done to make TAMPA an amazing cutter!

ADVANCEMENTS:

GOOD CONDUCT SINCE DECEMBER 2010



EM1 Eric E Dent. - 1 DEC 2010

MKC Paul M. Walukewicz



YN2 Nehemias Collado – 1 FEB 2011

DC2 David C.Dorsey



MKC James Kuvaja– 1 MAR 2011

ET3 Steven T. Arnette



DC2 Matthew Hall– 1 APR 2011

BM1 Shawn T. Wood



GMC Joshua Quintero—1 JUN 2011

GMC Joshua L. Quintero

ET3 Stephen T. Knight



MK1 Abdou Secki

SEA SERVICE SINCE DECEMBER 2010:

SN John P. Brandt

SN Robert C.Holste

SN Andrew G.Yurko

SN Brian R.Burdett

SN Jacob C.Harris

ET3 Stephen T.Knight



TEMPORARY CUTTERMAN SINCE DECEMBER 2010:

BM3 Micheal J.Mehrbrodt

SN John P.Brandt

SN Robert C.Holste

SN Andrew G.Yurko

SN Lawrence F.Felton

SN Brian R.Burdett

SN Jacob C.Harris