



HMS SOUTHAMPTON

Guided Missile Destroyer



Guided Missile Destroyers

The Town Class Type 42 destroyers pack a powerful punch against aerial, surface and submarine targets in a moderately sized hull. They are only two thirds the displacement of the previous County class, and the ship's company is only half the size, yet the armament is more powerful due to the incorporation of the very latest technical advances. Sheffield, Birmingham, Newcastle, Coventry, Glasgow, Cardiff Exeter and Southampton have already commissioned. Nottingham, Liverpool, Gloucester, Manchester and York are currently being built. With the Type 21 and 22 frigates and the new ASW cruiser, the Type 42 represents the modern technologically advanced ships which will make up the Royal Navy of the future.

Ships Company

Each member of the ship's company has an important job. The ship has to be self-supporting and the specialists in each branch—Operations, Supply and Secretariat, Engineering, Electrical, Air and Medical, can operate, repair and maintain the complex equipment, and feed and pay the ship's company, over extended periods. Stocks of fuel, ammunition and stores are replenished at sea.

Importance is attached to welfare facilities. The sick bay is well equipped, dining and sleeping arrangements make the best of the compromise inevitably found in a fighting ship when so much space is required by weapons, machinery and stores. There is a well-stocked library and a television studio which can relay programmes to all recreational areas.



Command and Control Operations Room

Because modern warfare requires quick reaction, all the weapon systems are fully automatic but the decision to open fire remains with the Captain, who is responsible for the tactical handling and fighting of the ship.

The ship is fitted with a "real time" computer system. With inputs from all sensors, (radar, sonar, etc.), the computers produce an accurate, up-to-date visual picture which ensures the most effective employment of the weapons. By way of comprehensive and modern communications, the ship is able to provide information to other ships, aircraft and to the shore.

Lynx Helicopter

The ship has a hangar and flight deck to accommodate the Lynx helicopter. This is an Anglo-French helicopter of advanced design and is capable of many roles.

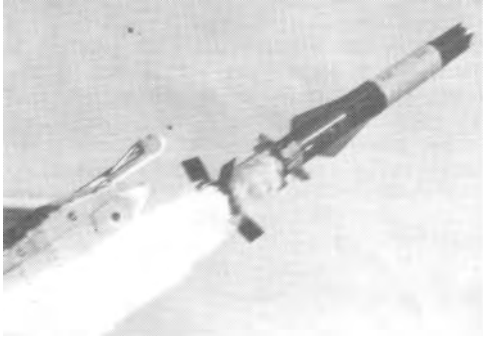


Lynx helicopter

The Weapons

Sea Dart

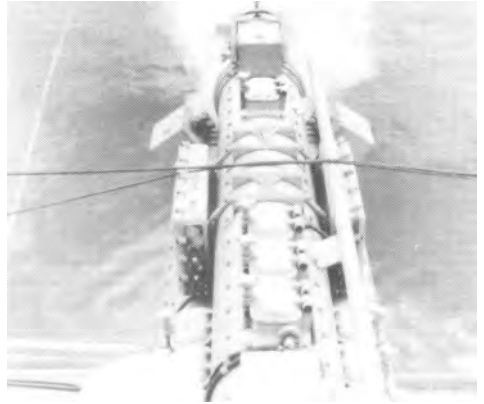
The main armament is the Sea Dart missile. This is a new missile with supersonic speed, having the range and manoeuvrability to cope with air/missile attack. The Sea Dart can also be used against surface targets.



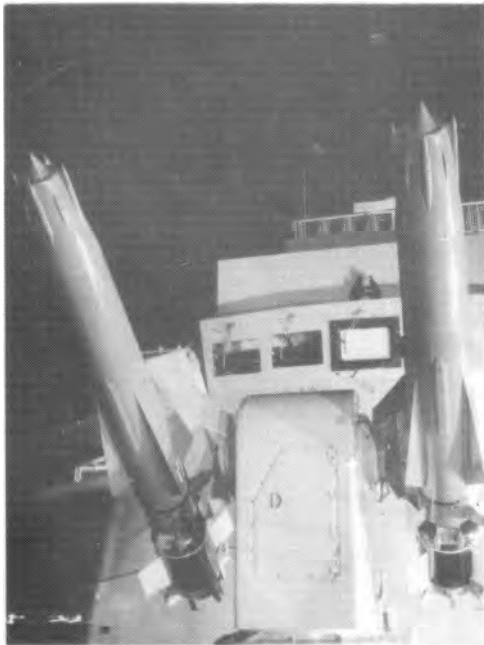
Sea Dart missiles (above and below).

STWS

Shipborne Torpedo Weapon System gives the ship an offensive anti-submarine capability.

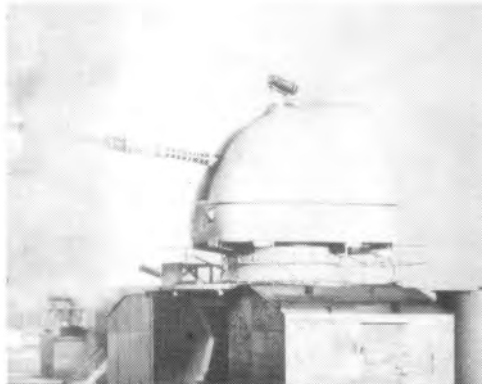


STWS firing



4.5in. Gun

This armament consists of a single barrel 4.5 inch mounting which can be used for self-defence anti-aircraft fire, against other ships, and for shore bombardment in support of the Army. It is automatic (the turret is unmanned), has a high rate of fire and is highly accurate.



4.5in. Gun trials firing

The Ship

HMS *Southampton* is the Royal Navy's newest warship, having been accepted from the Ship-builders in the summer of 1981. She is the 8th Type 42 Destroyer to be built and is the second of the second "batch". She has a slightly different equipment fit to the first six ships of this class.

The ship was built by Vosper Thornycroft (UK) Ltd, at Woolston, and was laid down on Trafalgar Day (21 October) 1976. She was launched by Lady Cameron, wife of the then Chief of the Defence Staff, Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Neil Cameron, on 29 January 1979.

Historic Predecessors

HMS *Southampton* is the sixth ship of that name. The first *Southampton* was built in 1693 in Southampton, only a short distance up river from Woolston. The second ship of the name was a frigate built in 1757, which saw action throughout the heyday of the Royal Navy, being involved at Belle Isle, Glorious first of June and the Battle of Cape St Vincent among other actions. This famous ship, thought to be the first true frigate ever built, was finally wrecked off the Bahamas in 1812. The third *Southampton* was built in 1820 and served throughout the world until 1867 when she started work as a Training Ship at Hull. She was finally broken up in 1912. The fourth *Southampton* was a light cruiser built in 1912, and she saw action throughout the First World War, including the Battle of Jutland, being finally scrapped in 1926. The fifth ship of the name was built in 1936 and saw continuous action during the Second World War before being sunk while escorting a convoy in the Mediterranean in January 1941.

Description

The latest *Southampton* has an overall length of 412 feet, a beam of 42 feet and displaces 4,000 tons. She is powered by four Rolls Royce gas Turbines, two 'Olympus' giving a maximum speed of approximately 30 knots, and two 'Tyne' engines for cruising. The ship's primary role is to provide area defence for a group of ships, for which role the main armament is a twin launcher for the Sea Dart missile system. A single 4.5in. Mk 8 automatic gun mounting is also fitted.

A Lynx helicopter is carried for anti-submarine work, and the ship is fitted with a full range of sonar detection equipment and two triple torpedo tubes. The helicopter can also launch air to surface missiles, thus providing the ship with a very long range anti-ship missile system. All weapon systems are controlled and directed by a computer based action information system. Fully air-conditioned, and with a complement of 21 officers and 260 ratings, HMS *Southampton* is capable of operating anywhere in the world.



The Launching of a Type 42