

SPORT

pair, who were apparently indicating that there were two miles to go.

At this stage Bloggs was running superbly as he strode down a one-way street, acknowledging the friendly hoots of approaching cars, and as he rounded a traffic island (where he paused briefly to select eight gramophone records) there was no one else in sight, due partly to his tactical sense, partly to his tremendous fitness, but mainly to the fact that

he had gone wildly off course. Thus it was that Eric Bootbrush was a worthy winner.

1, E. Bootbrush (Dumbletown H) 28.39; 2, P.C. George Crudge (Dorset County Constab) 28.40; 3, Fido (unattached) 28.41; 4, Mrs. Myra Blenkinsop (23 Lobelia Terrace) 28.42; 5, Buster Hedd (Amalgamated Construction Co.) 28.43; 6, R. Plomley (B.B.C.) 28.44; . . . 238, T. Bloggs (Dumbletown H) 3 days, 4 hours, 6 mins. 112 started. 238 finished.

SOCCER

In the last three years the 1st XI has always been quite strong, and this also applies to the 2nd XI and the Colts.

The 1st XI has won the Fleet Trophy twice and on the third occasion lost in the final on penalties, also the team reached the Semi-Final and the Area Final of the Navy Cup. When the team was at its strongest it was unable to compete in the Cup due to operational requirements.

The team has been captained over the three years by M.E.M. "George" Jones, P.O. Glyn Pughsley and C. P.O. Ian Blaylock. All were leaders by example.

Only one may played in all three seasons and that was N.A.M. Brian Ritchie, who must have been one of the most complete centre forwards that the R.N. has ever had, and in the 50 matches he played for the ship he scored 72 goals.

The highlight of the commission must be when the team travelled to Tortola in the British Virgin Islands to play the Caribbean Champions—Tortola All Stars. After having to wait five hours for the kick off, the team turned on a display of soccer that delighted a most colourful crowd. The six goals that we scored were all gems and the entertainment that the team later received was first class.

When the team has been beaten it has been by class sides, and who can forget the all professional Spanish Army side at Barcelona who put eight goals

past our goalkeeper? As Brian Ritchie said at the time; it was a pleasure to stand there and watch them.

There has always been a close relationship with the Globe Construction Company at Chichester, and the team has always looked forward to our annual match with them. We can thank Mr. Bill Regan for his generosity in arranging the games and the ensuing entertainment and for presenting us with the "Globe Trophy", for which we have competed all over the world.

| | <i>Played</i> | <i>Won</i> | <i>Drew</i> | <i>Lost</i> | <i>For</i> | <i>Against</i> |
|----------|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| 1st XI | 60 | 43 | 3 | 14 | 184 | 89 |
| 2nd XI | 55 | 33 | 7 | 16 | 209 | 114 |
| Colts XI | 10 | 8 | | 2 | 28 | 12 |



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ARK'S FENCING ROYALE

September 1972 saw the restoration of the Fencing Club. Twenty-five members of the Ship's Company showed an interest in the sport after A.R.T.V. and *Noah's News* advertisements. By the beginning of October a nucleus of twelve formed the basis for a promising team.

Our first match was against the Royal Norwegian Air Force who matched two three-man epee teams. Our first team won 6-3, but the second team lost 2-7 giving an overall defeat 8-10. In spite of losing, this was a pleasing start. The match was fenced at the Oslo Fencing Club which sponsors two National fencers and one Olympic one—this fact came to light after they had soundly defeated our four best epeeists 16-0 in the second match of the evening. October also saw us in Portsmouth where some professional coaching by Sergeant Harrison, the R.N. Champion, improved the club standard and record. Two subsequent matches in Portsmouth, against *Collingwood* and *Temeraire*, were arranged for 30th and 31st October. The former proved to be decisive victory 13-3 for *Ark Royal* while the latter was a very close match with eight wins to each team. It was finalised by a barrage (fence off) which we unfortunately lost.

On February 11th, we fenced the Combined Services team in Gibraltar with all weapons and, after a hectic afternoon's battle, we emerged with an overall victory :

Foil won 5-4
Epee won 9-0
Sabre won 6-3

Whilst on passage to Malta in mid-February, an Individual Foil Competition was held on the Flight Deck. This was well supported but did not produce any unknown or hidden talent unfortunately. However, it was good value and provided useful practice before our last match against 41 Commando at Malta on 1st March. Enough time was not allowed for a complete match at St. Andrew's Barracks so we fenced one versus one, as compared with the usual

practice of one versus three in succession, in each weapon. The result was 6-6 with no barrage being fenced. This was probably the most valuable and exciting match fenced to date.



Conditions for training on board are not particularly good and, with this in mind, the overall results for the club are not disappointing.

| | | |
|--|------|---------------|
| 16th Oct. 1972 Royal Norwegian Air Force | lost | 10-8 |
| 16th Oct. 1972 Oslo Fencing Club | lost | 16-0 |
| 30th Oct. 1972 H.M.S. <i>Collingwood</i> | won | 13-3 |
| 31st Oct. 1972 H.M.S. <i>Temeraire</i> | lost | 8-8 (Barrage) |
| 11 th Feb. 1973 Combined Services, Gibraltar | won | 20-7 |
| 1st Mar. 1973 41 Commando, Malta | draw | 6-6 |

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P.T. STAFF GALLERY

The commission started with Lieut. Arnold Reed who was the Alf Ramsey of the Soccer 1st team squad, C. P.O. McIlgrew (who was soon relieved by C.P.O. Ken Pidwell as Chief P.T.I. and Chief Q.M.) P.O. "Head the Ball" Newstead, 2nd soccer team trainer, L. S. "Ginger" Moulson, Boxing, and L.S. Brian Cotterell, Athletics. Of course, "Ginger" will always be remembered for his T.V. appearances. In September 1971 the "boss" was relieved by Lieut. Ron Gould who also became the new "Sir Alf". The following year, in May, "Head the Ball" and "Ginger" were relieved by P.O. (later Chief) Dave Bessey and L.S. "Taff" Finnemore and they took over the predecessor's jobs and made excellent reliefs. At last we had a change with the arrival of "Taff" in the shape of an active Rugby player. Dave also looked after a very impressive swimming and water polo team. Brian Cotterell left and, much to our dismay, his relief never arrived and still hasn't one year later. However, we have been helped out occasionally by P.O. Brian Donnachie, who is on board for watchkeeping experience and to brush up his English. After Dave rose 'to the dizzy heights of Chief, he finally went off, flying home from America, and P.O. Clive Lamshead came to take his place. After the Sports in Rosyth, we are all looking forward to "hanging up our boots" for a well earned summer leave.



SQUASH

Although the squash team is not blessed with any "Navy" players, and has sadly missed two squash seasons at home when fielding the best five, it has been a credit to *Ark* and a difficult side to beat. Unfortunately, most of the team play at least one other sport for the ship, which leaves us a little short in depth. Our biggest disappointment was losing the Fleet final to *Brighton* (2-3). Once again our best

players were not available. The best win was the Maxi Ship's Challenge Cup in Gibraltar. Our most regular players have been Lieut.-Cdr. Moody, Lieuts. Russell, Mountain, Holland and Green, C.P.O. Pidwell (Squash Captain), M.E.A.(P.)1 Wood, and P.O. Donnachie. A total of 20 games were played of which we won 14 and lost 6.

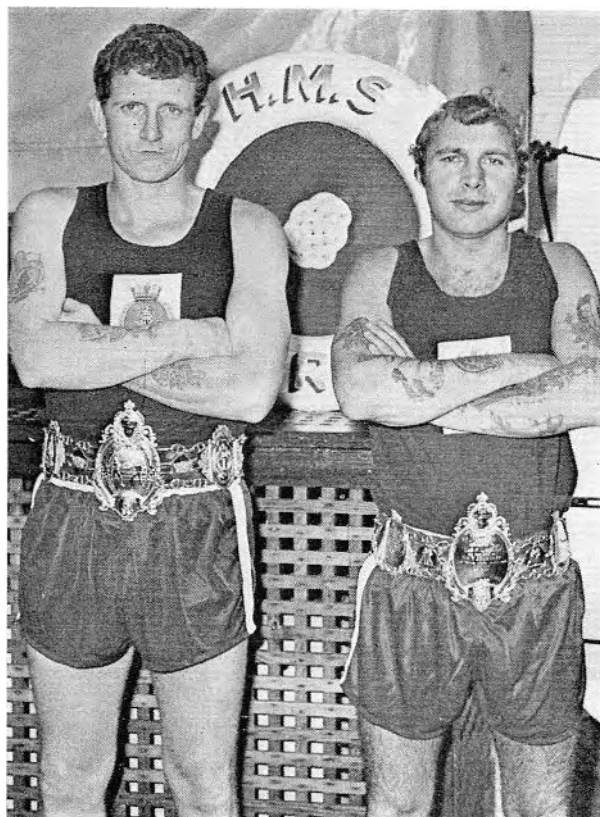
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BOXING

1970-73 has been a really successful period in the boxing world in *Ark Royal*. Leading Seaman (Ginger) Moulson took over the team at the start of the period and went on to win the Plymouth Command Novice Championships in 1970 and 1971. He was then relieved by Leading Seaman (Taff) Finnemore in May 1972 who, in turn, carried on with the job of team trainer. *Ark Royal* again carried off the Command Novices Trophy in October of that year to make it a hat trick of wins.

The highlight of the period was undoubtedly the match versus Combined Services Gibraltar in February 1973 at the R.A.F. Gymnasium there. A seven bout match with one special contest and *Ark Royal* sweeping the board eight bouts to nil. Watched by a very enthusiastic crowd of five hundred or so, the night will be long remembered on board.

Congratulations to L.M.E.M. Ron Thomas and Able Seaman (Soapy) Watkins on winning the Navy Open titles at middle and lightwelterweight respectively in March 1973. This is just what the younger boxers need to encourage them to make the next three years as successful as the last.



HOCKEY

The ship's Hockey Club has met many fixtures at various venues during this commission and is fortunate in having a number of keen players who represent *Ark Royal* all year round. This number is increased when the Air Group is embarked.

Competitions which have come our way during the last year have included the Navy Cup in the Autumn of 1972 when we finally succumbed to the very good R. N.E.C. Manadon side in the quarter final, having dealt with R.M.C.T.C. Lympstone at Exmouth in the previous round after a long dash south from Rosyth.

In the Maxi Ship's Cup which ran from October 1972 to March 1973, we made the final but were beaten 3-2 by *Bulwark* at Brickfields. We had previously beaten *Hampshire* 5-0 at Portsmouth, and *Kent* 7-0 at Brickfields. The *Kent* victory was a

triumph for the Irish—Paddys Caulfield, Kennedy, and Behan accounting for 6 of the goals with Roger Bond breaking the monopoly.

Then in February 1973 at Gibraltar in the Fleet Cup Maxi Division success came our way at last in a competition in which *Ark Royal* fielded two sides. The second XI gave a truly first class performance being narrowly beaten by *Glamorgan* in the semi-final. We were hoping for an all *Ark* final—that would have set the cat among the pigeons !

During the visit to Malta in March 1973, an Inter-Service Six-a-side competition was held. We fielded two sides for this highly successful day at Corradino. The ship had just finished a lengthy programme of 1st and 2nd XI fixtures against various sides on the island with some wins on the field, and

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every one a win off the field. The six-a-side was both a social and competitive day with the best performance coming from *Ark's* "A" side (Steve Fisher, Paddy Caulfield, Dinger Bell, Windy Gale, Peter Mountain (BV),* and John Hickson. This team lost in the semi-final to the Marines of 41 Commando (the Booties lost to R.A.F. Malta in the final, a team that *Ark* "A" had previously beaten). It was grand to see "Tricky Hicky" overlapping at speed(?) down the wing drawing the defence, and if only Steve Fisher could have seen this through the blood pouring in his eyes (from a cut deftly administered by our green beretted booties), then maybe we would have had that cup!—but that's another story. The social award of the day went undoubtedly to the ladies of the island who made our day so pleasant.

In the Fleet Knockout competition at Rosyth in July 1973, we knocked out *Devonshire* in the first

round and then were ourselves knocked out by *Fife* in the semi-final.

Of the friendlies, we remember the game of Hockey against the Club de Futbol de Barcelona(!) in November 1972. Here we received a great lesson on Possession Hockey by one of the best teams in Spain who fielded only four internationals fortunately. The heavy defeat failed, however, to dampen the *Ark's* Hockey mood, and the Spanish side gave us a splendid evening at their impressive stadium-cum-ice rink-cum-tennis hall-cum-everything else.

Thanks go out to the many supporters of ship's hockey in the *Ark*. It is always very difficult to arrange good sides whilst trying to give everyone a chance to represent the ship. Particular thanks go to those invaluable officials without whom the involved game of hockey would be impossible.

Footnote : Will someone tell Umpire Jim Mankellow where R.A.F. Safi is?

(*Before Veruka.)

GOLF

Nearly all of us in the golfing fraternity on board have, at one time or another, come close to selling our clubs and using those spiked shoes for gardening. Even those of our company who have a single figure handicap have occasionally turned in scores that Don Bradman would have been proud of. But the lack of regular practice has in no way dulled the enthusiasm of the thirty or more players who have played in the cold and wet of Malta, and the heat and caddie cars of America. We have all muttered darkly about the greens, or the local rules, and even at times the lack of either. Some of the "almost" shots would have been world beaters if it had not been for that vicious rabbit, or that high wind which suddenly sprang up.

There have been rewards though. The Western Fleet Cup took up residence in our trophy case after the splendid victory at Staddon Heights in April 1972. *Ark* was six strokes clear of the team which came second. There are no "bandits" in this ship, well—not many, anyway.

The highlights of three years' of the *Ark Royal* Golf Society are far too numerous to mention here,

but some of the undermentioned items will surely gain a captive audience at future 19th holes. Remember:

The Liphook course when we played against H.M.S. *Dolphin*?

The beautiful course in Oslo that was turned into ski slopes every winter, and that ball-catching lake?

The Club de Golf in Barcelona and that chap who took fifteen on the 13th?

That course in Malta? It's easier to play golf in a car park!

The sweltering heat of Roosevelt Roads? Who ever heard of a banana tree on a golf course?

The sand greens of St. Thomas, and the local rules? Remember the barbecue?

The fabulous course in America, the wonderful generosity of our hosts, the caddies cars, etc.?

Last but not least, let us remember that very little of our golf would have been possible had it not been for the kind offers of hospitality that we received all over the world. We owe a debt of thanks to our many kind hosts.

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WATER POLO AND SWIMMING

From the beginning of the commission, water polo was played with a gathering of enthusiastic players but little real talent. However, as the end approaches, the team is now of such high calibre that it would bring a smile to any R.N. selector's face.

Our new team was initially formed during the ship's D.E.D. back in April 1972 and several games were played at the pool in H.M.S. *Drake* with notable success. But it was not until the ship put to sea and the squadrons joined that a formidable team emerged. Players like P.O.El.(A.) Dave Wilson and N.A. Chris Boothby, both current Navy and Inter-Service players, as well as L.E M Alan Bowles, E.M. Tim Quinn and P.O.El. Bart Gallagher, all Naval Air Command players, joined us, so it was not surprising that when the ship visited "Pompey" in July, we were ready to take on anyone. Games were played against *Vernon* and *Daedalus* and two good wins were recorded.

Our next games were played at Rosyth against *Caledonia* and the R.N. Scotland side. We lost both these by close scores. The "Scots" have a distinct advantage of being water fit whereas we had just had a month at sea. On to *Oslo* and a game versus *Idruttshoyskolen* which was very rewarding. Although we lost 8-4, the practice and experience were great.

By this time the team had been strengthened even

more by Chief M.E.A. Nigel Foley (Combined Services and R.N.), Lieutenant Fuller (Naval Air Command), and M.E.M. Simpkins, a promising youngster and R.N. Junior Champion. Once more we descended on Pompey with games against *Collingwood* (lost 5-6) and *Victory* (lost 5-7), both good hard games which could have gone either way.

Our next port of call turned out to be one of the highlights of the commission. In Barcelona, a swimming and polo match was played versus the Club National Barcelanetta and, after the embarrassment of going to the wrong pool, we eventually arrived and, much to their surprise, won the swimming events. They avenged themselves at polo by winning 9 goals to 3, and made sure of it by putting three of Spain's current Olympic team in. However, it was a very enjoyable and well organised meeting appreciated by all.

Since then, the ship has visited Gibraltar and Malta, but no polo was played due to the temperature. On our current deployment to America, we have two games organised at the Swimming Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale and a good chance to meet one of the world's- greatest swimmers, Johnny Weismuller.

In the Naval Air Command Championships in July 1973, *Ark Royal* led most of the way. In fact we were in the lead up to the last minute of the game. Portland equalised and, after extra time, the score was Portland 8, *Ark* 7. Our team was built round a nucleus of three players, and the lack of fitness of the lesser experienced players and the fact that we didn't have the four substitutes which are usual in a water polo team allowed us to let the lead slip.

Four of *Ark Royal's* team have been selected to swim for N.A.C. at the R.N. Swimming Championships. They are N.A. Boothby, L.R.E.M.(A.) Bowles, E. M.(A.) Quinn and P.O.El.(A.) Wilson. All these swimmers currently represent the Navy and should have no difficulty in being re-selected this year.

To end this report on polo, it will be fitting to mention the stalwarts of the team who always come to polo matches but have to take second place to the stars. Such players as O.D. "Jock" Foster, A.B. Dickey Dowling, C.K. "Tiny" Sweeney, and L.A. Sam Lock are those without whom the squad would lose its strength in depth.



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On the pure swimming side, the climax of the whole commission occurred, fittingly, right at the end. In July 1973 the Naval Air Command Championship results were as follows

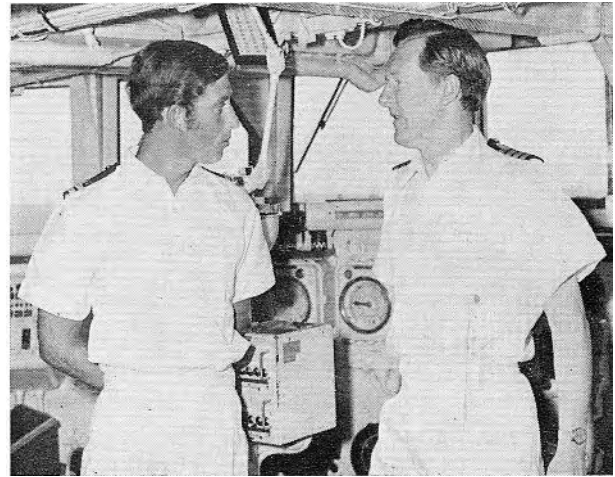
| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 800 metres freestyle | 1st Wilson | <i>Ark Royal</i> |
| 400 metres freestyle | 2nd Boothby | <i>Ark Royal</i> |
| 200 metres freestyle | 4th Gallagher | <i>Ark Royal</i> |
| 100 metres freestyle | 3rd Jones | <i>Ark Royal</i> |
| 100 metres butterfly | 1st Boothby | <i>Ark Royal</i> |
| 100 metres breaststroke | 2nd Bowles | <i>Ark Royal</i> |
| 200 metres breaststroke | 1st Quinn | <i>Ark Royal</i> |
| 4 X 2 | 1st Wilson | <i>Ark Royal</i> |
| 4 X 2 Medley | 1st | <i>Ark Royal</i> |
| 6 X 2 freestyle Relay | 1st | <i>Ark Royal</i> |

WESTLANT 73

The last deployment of the commission was to be of a similar pattern to the first of the West Indies ones and was to be the longest. With the refit put back about eight months from its original date, equipment and systems were being highly stretched and some effect of this must be inevitable. However, there were more pleasant effects and the one to which the whole ship's company was looking forward



A well known officer of H.M.S. Minerva transfers by jackstay, May 1973



and meets the Captain

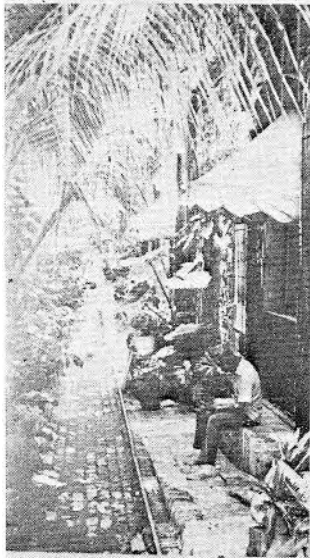
was the return to Fort Lauderdale. Stories of the visit of two years ago had sharpened the appetite of those who had joined since, and for those who had been in the ship for two years, no sharpening was necessary.

We sailed on 30th April and five days later took passage to Puerto Rico with *Devonshire*, *Diomedé*, *Rothsay* and the URG in company. While on passage, we took advantage of the proximity of a French Naval force, including the carrier *Foch*, to exercise over a two day period. The ship went alongside at Roosevelt Roads for a few hours on 14th May and we had the opportunity of stretching our legs before embarking on an intense ten day flyex in the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Range. During this period a Gannet was lost. With an engine malfunction, the crew was told to bale out and the two observers succeeded but the pilot could not get clear. He ditched the aircraft about four miles from the ship and all three were picked up safely, one by our seaboot, one by a Sea King and one by *Devonshire's* seaboot.

Then we had a period operating on only three shafts which, in light wind conditions curtailed the flying and it was fortuitous that that weekend we had been programmed to spend at St. Thomas. As in the previous visit in 1971, this was a great success. The banyans at Magens Bay were well run, most enjoyable and refreshed us ready for "Lantreadex" the big exercise of the deployment.

THE ARK

BANYANS



AT



ST. THOMAS
VIRGIN ISLANDS

BEACHES

BACARDI

BAR-B-Q'S



WESTLANT 1973

For the start of the exercise, we made a rendezvous with a number of U.S.N. ships some 700 miles to the northwest of the A.F.W.R., off the northern Bahamas, and formed up in our own task unit of 4 R.N. ships, 3 R.F.A.s and 2 U.S.N. ships ready for an opposed transit back to Puerto Rico areas.

The exercise was actually designed for the work-up of the U.S.S. *F. D. Roosevelt* and took the now familiar pattern of a "War-at-sea" phase, a "Rimex" missile firing phase and a "Sinkex". This time, as far as *Ark Royal* was concerned, it became a "Sinkex"—just a patch of bubbles where the target had been, and the exercise ended a little flatly.

We had a major Shelter Station exercise in which those having to work or pass outside the two sanctuaries had to don C.B. suits and make a hot day even hotter—but it did add to the contrast of the next day when we reached Fort Lauderdale. Having recorded the previous visit in glowing terms one can't say very much more than it was a very pleasant repeat of two years ago. The town was delighted to see the ship again, gave us a very good press on



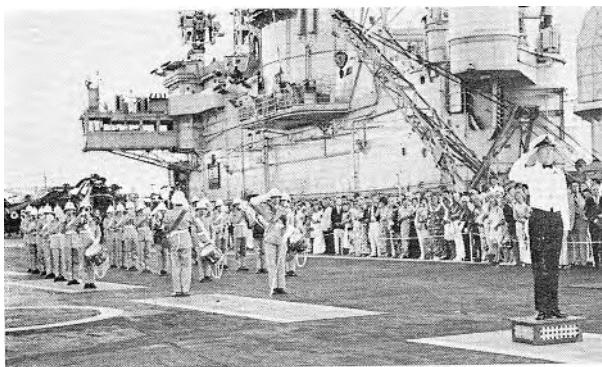
Open to Visitors

arrival and, as last time, an excellent one on sailing six days later.

The next four days we spent flying in the Jacksonville areas and the gap between refits was making itself felt even more strongly as evaporators fell over, feed water problems beset us, the waist catapult gave trouble, and with only three shafts pushing and the wind machine being wound down it was not a very successful period.



Entry into Port Everglades



Beat Retreat

We were ready for a S.M.P. and eleven days at Mayport saw us to the end of June. Apart from the work done, most people found Mayport a far better run than they had anticipated. The longer period there, compared with Fort Lauderdale and compared with Mayport in 1971, enabled us to plan a better balance of activities, spread out our runs and our sport and make plenty of friends ashore. The weather