

O.O.D. REMINISCENCES

Relax, this could be quite painless, not as painless as the story of why A.B. Blank was a couple of hours adrift in Salvador, but as that hasn't been forthcoming and I'm desperate for copy here goes.

The oddest and often most hilarious happenings can occur to relieve the routine of this duty, one such occurrence occurred in Liverpool. It had been a quiet normal sort of 'Meet the Royal Navy' day, the Captain had made a couple of formal calls, we had been visited by parties of schoolchildren during the forenoon including an unscheduled party of about 80 and then settled down for a quiet afternoon looking after our visitors. The ship was open on this particular day and as we only had 6,000 it was fairly straightforward, one of them was very drunk and insisted on looking after the gangway but as he kept addressing me as 'Captain' found him most charming company.

The day wore on and at about 0300 I had finished messdeck rounds and arrived back on the gangway in time to see a civilian gentleman stagger up the gangway with two huge suitcases and obviously as full as an egg with Watney's Best. He placed the suitcases carefully alongside 'X' turret and he was allowed to sit on them for a while to recover his breath and also to focus on the gangway staff, this took some considerable time. Suddenly he spoke, 'Right Wack!! When do you leave for the Isle of Man?' I went to bed after this but the commercial possibilities of this occurrence had not been lost to me and the Q.M. was instructed to take any other intending passengers to the First Lieutenant's cabin having extracted fifty shillings from them. *Puma* might have become a paying concern, who knows?

I was going to mention Mallaig but perhaps it's better not to, where did you get all that whisky, by the way? I must say you were very upright but I was rather repulsed by all the codfish you flung on to the quarter-deck before getting out of the M.F.V. *Puma* was beginning to look like one of those trawlers in the fish finger adverts, you know the ones, 'Quick frozen in the bright dawn and never called me mother'.

Oporto was an interesting place in which to be O.O.D. My own duty there was again highlighted by the ship being open to visitors, again we had about 6,500 with a similar number on the jetty. The ones on board were very quiet and smug about all this, the ones on the jetty were quite Latin about it and began to shout odd Portuguese expressions like 'Seen Orf', With the greatest of difficulty I found a policeman who could speak a little English and having flashed up the loud hailer I stood him in a commanding position on the top of the bridge having already explained to him that he was to tell the crowd that we were sorry but the gangway must be closed and give it lots of 'Obrigada' pal. At the words 'Attention, Attention' he obtained an awed silence and then warmed to his subject, he was obviously enjoying himself, so were all his chums on the dock gate who were collecting admittance fees from even more people.

Anyway, back to my Portuguese orator who was still

making with the powerful argument over the loud hailer.

Had a sneaking feeling he was inciting a riot and these suspicions were realized when the crowd began to take the gangway to pieces. However, it was soon finished and a small body of large sailors held the crowd away. During this time the situation was eased by returning libertymen with sunstroke and one half-drowned sailor being passed unconscious over the heads of the crowd. That was a pretty memorable birthday for me.

The foreign leg produced its own highlights. I shall never forget taking over one morning from the Gunner in Lome, at this moment a small tug was trying to get a very large surf boat alongside. The boat was eventually subdued before it passed straight through 12 and 13 messes; its crew, a very shrivelled Togolese sailor with a huge grin and a little white smock with blue anchors on it seemed to have come all the way out to us to request in these immortal words, 'Massa, Massa I beg you, give me one cigarette'. 'Bon Voyage' we explained.

Other incidents have included the sticking of pro-Rhodesian signs across the Admiral's lifebuoy on the gangway in Durban. Then there was the curious business of a pitter-patter of huge feet down the jetty one night in Mar del Plata and a party of well armed soldiers went flashing by the ship, the sound died away in the distance to be replaced by the rattle of musketry, then came pitter-patter again getting louder and louder and out of the darkness burst a soldier complete with rifle with eighteen-inch bayonet fixed, pistol, ammunition strewn about his body and various other gee-gaws of a military nature. He only wanted to use the telephone, presumably to ask H.Q. for reinforcements. 'Senhor', he explained to the Q.M., 'There eez an unidentified boat in thee harbour'. The astonished Q.M. was invited to disarm the next one who wanted to come on board and showing complete disregard for my own safety scuttled down to the wardroom to await, in perfect calm, the 'all clear' from the Quartermaster. This particular night was also enriched by one of the more junior members being the sole entrant in the 1966 Cross South Atlantic Race. He was fished out after a long delay by young Mason. The water, incidentally, was bitterly cold.

A regular source of worry to the Officer of the Day is that very dangerous ladder to the after messdeck which seems to have claimed a number of victims during the course of the commission. One victim had managed to take the hatch and its ladder to a dance in Port Stanley and when he had duly fallen down I discovered him nursing a badly cut lip and took him to the sickbay. At the first stitch the Duty P.O. fainted, at the second I discovered pressing business at the gangway. When I congratulated the M.A. on the neatness of the four homeward-bounders he replied that stitching was easier than he expected, a suspicious 'Why?' from the O.O.D. 'I've never done it before sir' he replied.

The final story, did I hear a respectful 'No, No' or was it an agonized 'OH NO', anyway the final one I consider to be the highlight of the commission from an



'Gotta pin, Jack?'

Officer of the Day viewpoint. It occurred in Bathurst and briefly the circumstances were that the ship had unknowingly committed a black by sending a party of half a dozen to the traditional dancing when in fact the organizers were expecting the whole ship's company. The dancers then expressed their willingness to perform on the jetty and this was then arranged. The organizers then went back to the stadium and led them back to the jetty playing an introductory number on the calabashes. This had the effect of drumming up a huge audience of

several thousand who settled themselves on the beach behind the jetty and being honour bound to provide an audience lower deck was cleared and up came the duty watch and those who had not yet gone ashore, a far from grunted audience I might add.

The dancers represented most of the West African tribes, Mandingo, Yorruba and Iboe and they were clearly enthusiastic, their captive audience caught some of the enthusiasm and out came the cameras. After a couple of hours I thought I ought to stop them, but they insisted on continuing. The only way out of the dilemma seemed to be to get the leaders of each team into the wardroom for a soporific glass of something and the midshipman and I and one other nameless officer who had missed the bus to a reception managed to entertain them. This was a most enjoyable interlude, the young women were very coy, the men were eager to talk and one old man played a one-stringed fiddle throughout, no one knew of a way of turning him off.

Meanwhile, some crests had been produced and the leaders insisted that they be presented properly with a speech. This was duly done, the speech being translated into various dialects and after one final dance the display was over.

Well, that's it, a thousand things have happened but have disappeared into that limbo of very pleasant memories that remain from the commission and all of us who have stood on the gangway have in retrospect enjoyed the job and in particular the unexpected happenings which alternately amuse or terrify.



Came the dawn

THE PATROLS WERE RUGGED



AND THE WEATHER CHANGEABLE



SPORTS REPORT



The record shows that we finished up the commission a little more down than up, but it doesn't show the keenness and determination of our players, this was first class all the way through.

Having been on the ship only since January 1966 I cannot comment on the games played on the 'Meet the Navy' tour around Britain, but since we sailed on to the SA/SA station *Puma* has always played hard and well on the field.

Our first games, hockey and soccer, played at Gibraltar resulted in defeats for both teams, a result which we hope to reverse on the way home.

After a short visit to the Cape Verde Islands, where we found that they could play cricket and soccer just a little better than we could, we reached South America for the first time. Recife proved itself to be typically Brazilian as far as soccer was concerned but the *Puma* cricket side chalked up the first win of the trip when they easily beat the British Country Club.

On arrival at the West coast of Africa we found that we were matched against far superior teams, especially in soccer. However, the teams played well and our opponents had to work hard for their wins. Holding the Gambian Football Association XI to a 5-1 win for them was a good example. We were also scheduled to play the Liberian all Stars in a television match but this had to be cancelled for local government reasons.

On to the Ascension Islands in early March where we managed to beat the Americans at their own game of Softball. Not quite so lucky at Badminton, we went down 4-5.

At the end of March we reached long awaited South Africa. One of our first sporting engagements was a boxing tournament arranged by the S.A. Navy. We entered three boxers who did their best against much fitter opponents, none managed to reach the finals. On 1st April our Rugby XV proved they were no fools when they beat a strong team from *Protector* and two days later took the S.A.N. signal school for a 9-0 win. Around about the same time the soccer team were playing some impressive games against the Cape league teams, Vishoek and Greenpoint.

A short visit to Madagascar, where we won one game out of four played, then we were on our way to what

was probably the sporting highlight of the trip, Mauritius.

In nine days in Mauritius we fielded 16 teams covering eight different sports. The rugby, soccer, hockey, water-polo and squash teams all chalked up wins but the game of the visit was without a doubt the soccer match against the Islands top team — The Sparrows. In front of a large audience of locals we were cheered all the way to a 3-2 win. The game was so close that some of our team had to be convinced that we had really won.

Back to Simonstown, and to games far too numerous to mention. Once again the rugby team played well and got a well-earned mention in the *Cape Times* when they drew with the Western Province referees XV 18-18. The soccer teams excelled when they beat Vishoek first and second XI's, the score in both matches was 6-1.

September arrived and a trip to Durban where we managed to get in three soccer matches, winning one, losing two. Back for our last stay at Snookie and right away the hockey team went into action, beating Afrikander 6-2 and a few days later nailing *President Pretorious* 4-2. We also played in a charity soccer match against a team made up of Western Province league players, we lost the game but judging from the speed that the beer was sold I think that the main object of the match, raising money for youth organisations, was achieved.

Way down south to the Falklands where we managed to play soccer, cricket, and badminton, losing all except the second XI soccer game which we won 5-4.

Over to the land where all games take second place to football, South America. As expected we didn't get a win but managed to force one draw against a naval side in Argentina. The hockey team came close to winning in Rio but had to be content with a 3-3 draw with the British club.

There are only 2 or 3 games left to play before we reach Guzz. The hockey team are training hard and are all out to revenge the outward bound defeat by Rooke.

I'm sure *Puma* has left a very good impression with all the teams that met us. Let's hope they got as much enjoyment out of the games as we did.

D. CARSON (P.T.I.)





CRICKET

Played 15, won 6, lost 9, is the bald record of the cricket played during the commission. But behind these figures lies the true story of the game, played under every sort of condition, from the frozen rain-swept turf of Aberdeen to the dust-laden glare of the baked earth of Ascension. And always the same friendship displayed by the opposition whether it be the off-duty watch of the Manchester Fire Brigade or the elderly local Portuguese of Sao Vincenti in the Cape Verde Islands. With players such as these, at Bathurst, St. Helena and Ascension, the result was not important. They wanted to win, yes (and usually did), but the outcome was soon forgotten in the warmth of their entertainment and departing handshakes. And perhaps the most enthusiastic club of all was that at Monrovia with no ground, no clubhouse and who had never played a match, but who had loud blazers, big smiles and who gave us a splendid lunch. And this in spite of the game being cancelled due to National Fasting having been declared the day before.

Some useful players emerged, L.M.E. Cranford being the top scorer with an average of 25, though M.E. Holders innings of 56 not out at Ascension will be long remembered there. A good commission's cricket, but not nearly enough of it.

GOLF

Since we started our golf team shortly after work-up we have re-designed the rough in places as far apart as the Deeside at Aberdeen, the Royal Cape at Cape Town, the Pernambuco Country Club in Brazil, and the Gymkhana Club in Mauritius. In all, about fifty courses have reeled beneath our hackings and slashings during the commission, and our sporting hosts have even invited us again.

We have drawn a few matches, and when the opposition kindly lent us a few players we have even won one or two. Handicaps have varied between 16 and infinity. Hazards have included mountaineering (at Braids Hills), Scotch mist (at Murcar), holidaymakers in bunkers (at Llandudno), snakes (at Bathurst), highland cattle (at Oban), and tremendous hospitality before, during and after the game (everywhere).

Shots have included a drive into the professionals' hut, two drives which finished a hundred yards astern via the ladies' tees, and a sixty-yard putt by the Supply Officer which dropped in the cup via a cart track, drain and sloping green.

We haven't kept the scores, which is a pity because we are sure we could claim a world record of some sort. It has been tremendous fun and we have thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.





SOCCER

During the early stages of refit regular representative football could not be managed owing to pressure of work and limited crew members. Not until August 1964 could any progress be made to the shaping of a reasonable First XI soccer team.

In June 1964 and before the arrival of the present team player-manager, E.A. Tullett, himself a keen soccer man, took the initiative and entered *Puma* into the Portsmouth United Services League Div. III. This fixture list had to be completed before Christmas because the ship was due to sail after that time. We managed to complete these fixtures with the result that *Puma* were runners-up in the final placings to H.M.S. *Excellent* whose three fixtures with *Puma* were the highlights of the season's soccer. They are worthy champions.

Portland work up periods left little opportunity for soccer. However, with odd matches here and there *Puma* gradually formed an average Frigate standard football team. Eventually the ship toured Britain visiting many soccer minded areas where the younger element of the team came up against older and, quite often, very experienced civilian players. One match in particular springs to mind versus the Aberdeen Police Force who were unbeaten that season. Six foot plus each and every one of them, we found a way because there was a will. Perhaps the only time this commission where *Puma's* will have 'one up' on the Police Forces we came away with a 4-2 win. Tea was served on completion . . . yes in Scotland. During those enjoyable months gains and losses were about even, the value of first-hand experience was immeasurable. A spell of Christmas leave in December '65 saw the end of our home leg of this commission, it was with eagerness then and with thoughts of the encounters with foreign teams to come, that we sailed for the South American and South Atlantic station.

One cannot discount the hard facts when summing up experiences. In the 11 weeks that it took to reach Simonstown, team morale could well have fallen. Almost everywhere the side met with very strong opposition. Losing our first overseas fixture in the new strip against H.M.S. *Rooke* appeared a poor start. We were given a lesson and they subsequently emerged winners to the tune of six goals to one. However, determination prevailed and the slogan then became: firstly to enjoy the game of soccer, win or lose; to remember that it is good experience to play such top class sides. We played 9 and lost 9 en route, yes hard facts. All had been thoroughly enjoyed and few incidents were noted. Team members had expected different temperaments with foreign sides; some were very clean and very deadly clever footballers, a few were extremely talented but this was offset by temperamental behaviour. On the West Coast of Africa I believe *Puma* left a favourable impression, typical I say, and in keeping with the ship's company as a whole, on the field or off.

Ability and knowledge enhanced from such a trip, *Puma* then took on local divisional sides such as Fish Hoek and Greenpoint F.C. With floodlights available and excellent Club facilities we enjoyed our encounters with Fish Hoek. After losing the first match 5-3 (in which both Walters and Haggie scored for the opposing team . . .), revenge was a must. It came, not once but twice with good wins of 5-2 and 6-1. Greenpoint F.C. who are in Div. I gave a hard match and honours stand even with the first game a win to *Puma* 2-1 and the second a good win for Greenpoint 4-3 after we had been 4-0 down. Both Clubs also entertained our second under lights. Under strength Fish Hoek went down 6-1 while Greenpoint managed to reverse the decision of the first team result 1-2.

Madagascar fixtures in Tamatave and Diego Suarez set us back with losses, this is, of course, soccer all over. However, in Mauritius we were, for the first time since leaving Gibraltar, up against our own kind when we met H.M.S. *Mauritius* in one of the favourite games of the commission. In all spheres this was a great game with the ball in every corner. I might mention that the grounds are some of the best I have ever played on and, along with hospitality shewn, second to none. Appropriately the match ended in a draw with neither side deserving the win. Of equal calibre was the match versus one of the Island's top civilian sides, 'The Sparrows'. *Puma* rose to the occasion with a crowd of almost a thousand cheering them on. Fought in the best of friendly ways we narrowly took victory 2-1.

Back to Simonstown where we took a deserved thrashing from the South African Defence Forces 6-1. This brought home the fact that all this sea time sets one's fitness back and further, that local potions and talents in various forms, help little to rectify the matter. On reflection it would seem that Sunday

morning games are not popular with the above remarks being relevant —no names in this issue ...

One match worthy of mention is the weekday fixture and subsequent victory over the S.A.N. Frigate *President Pretorious*. We took this one by 11-1 which enables one to conceive the tremendous difference in soccer standards, even between the two Navies. South Africa generally, which includes professional footballers, are only now coming into any sort of reasonable soccer standards that one could possibly compare with the U.K.

This then is *Puma's* brief history from a soccer point of view. It is almost impossible to relate every man's memories. As the record shows, we broke even. Whether we won or lost I can store away memories of many hard working, sweaty and thoroughly exhausting hours on the field, I have enjoyed every second.

My thanks go to all those first and second team members who have stood by me loyally throughout. Decisions were often hard on the individual, harder perhaps on myself. I stuck to a few basic principles and hope a little was gained by everyone from your soccer matches whilst representing *Puma*. Not only soccer, but sport in general, builds character and strengthens one's self discipline. With this in mind always go on the field clean and tidy, you will then play clean and tidy.

Finally, a special thank you to our staunch few supporters who rarely missed a game; who willingly ran the line, refereed or even broadcast match events back to the ship, you have no idea the pleasure it was having you around.

R.S.

RESULTS

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost
Soccer	81	33	7	41
Hockey	21	10	2	9
Rugby	45	16	2	27
Cricket	19	8	1	10
Water Polo	19	10	2	7
Badminton	3	1	0	2
Volleyball	3	0	1	2
Basketball	6	3	0	3
Softball	1	1	0	0
Totals	198	82	15	101



... and trod on the fishes and chips'



And modelling

We have said good-bye to:—

Captain M. N. Lucey, D.S.C.
 Cdr. G. Pope.
 Lt.-Cdr. P. Hames.
 Lt.-Cdr. P. J. Marsh.
 Lt.-Cdr. E. Pullen.
 Lt.-Cdr. J. R. Atherton.
 Lt. J. Ainger.
 Lt. M. Sturdee.
 Sub-Lt. L. Radford.

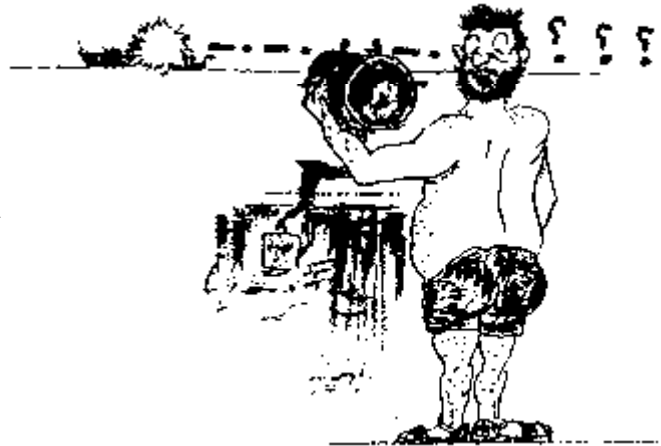
Our congratulations on their promotions go to:—

To Commander
 Lt.-Cdr. G. Pope.
 Lt.-Cdr. P. Hames.
 To Lieutenant Commander
 Lt. J. R. Atherton.
 To Lieutenant
 Sub-Lt. F. R. Trevethan.
 Sub-Lt. M. Sturdee.

BUT SERIOUSLY



It's been fun



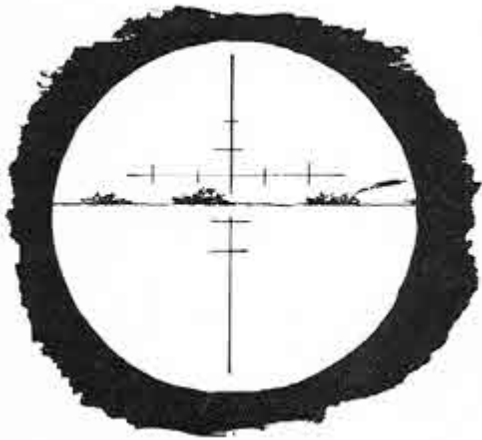
Though the work was hard



And the company of others
occasionally disturbing.



We reached the heights



Plumbed the depths

But thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.



I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING !!!

'Gotcha card, Jan?' asked Tiny as he clambered down the ladder into the mess with the grace of an expectant elephant. It is the custom in the Navy to christen all large lumbering messmates Tiny, and similarly all small whippet-like men are called Tich.

Wossat, Tiny? Cards?' said Jan, looking up from his book. "Aven't got time. Bubbly'll be up in a minnit."

'Nar, Yer card-Drafting Preference Card. They got stacks up in the Reg Office an' everyone's got to fill one in before Friday,' Tiny patiently explained, sitting down at the table and flourishing the king-size piece of cardboard. 'They're supposed to tell 'Aslemere what you want next time if you're lucky.'

'If you're luck's right!' Ginge moved melancholically across to the twos as they studied the instructions on the back. 'I reckon all they do is collect 'em up in a big 'eap, 'ave a good giggle at some of 'em, then put all the names except their own in a nat and draw for the lucky winner.'

'Well, if you don't slap in, you got no drip when they send you up the wilds of Scotland with your missus cryin' er eyes out back in Guzz!' remarked Smudge, the killick of the mess. 'They don't do all this for their 'ealth, you know!'

'What was that about Scotland?' Jock was roused from his reverie in the corner in the hope of reviving the rebellion which stirs the heart of every true Scot. 'I don't think any' un but us natives should be allowed to put in for Lossie. There's hardly a billet there now as it is and what there is, the Airys have got.' Shut up, you 'aggis-yafflin' nutter', Smudge replied good humouredly. 'You can 'ave the 'ole of Scotland to yourself if you wannit . . . and the pipes as well!'

'Woss this bit?' asked Tiny, "OME SEA SERVICE—I don't see 'ow you can be at both.'

'Thassa typical Evap watchkeeper's remark,' said Jan. 'Wottit means is that you're at sea . . . but at 'ome, if you get me. That reminds me, I must slap in for Murray —my oppo's just gotta draft there so she's on to some-thing good. 'E's the bloke I was tellin' you about; married that party out of the Drafty's office in Pompey. Two munce later they was off on their 'oneymoon in Malta for two years. Mind you, 'sno good now. You'd 'ave to marry Ernie an' I don't think I'm good-lookin' enough!'

'U.K. SHORE SERVICE—that's easy. Pompey, Chatham, Guzz,' said Tiny when the laughter had died down. 'Week-ends from Pompey, runs to the Smoke from Chatty Chats and scrumpy in the KEPPLE'S 'EAD down in Guzz-ean't go wrong!'

'I want to go to them Inland Minesweepers,' said Ginge. 'Sounds a good racket—er one of them Stone Frigates you old 'ands are always cacklin' about.'

'The only Stone Frigate you'll ever see is Stonehouse, mate, if you don't watchit!' Smudge muttered, 'You wanna volunteer for a course — I.C.E. or summick. Get you ashore for a bit any'ow.'

'I ain't volunteerin' for nothin', ' said Ginge. 'Never 'ave and never will; it's the principle of the thing.'

'Ark at old 'igh and mighty-principles got!' put in Jan. 'I volunteered for the Royal Yacht in '58. I'm still waiting for my draft chit but I don't think I'd go now; I've 'ad all the big-ship routine I want for a few years.'

'I am not a volunteer for Local Foreign Service. Too right I'm not!' said Tiny, 'an' as for the OVERSEAS AREA PREFERRED, I'm slappin' in for Derry.'

'You nit! That's 'Ome Sea, that is; it's only us foreigners wot's overseas in Derry, not blokes like old Mick. Where is 'e, by the way? Time 'e was back with the giggle juice.'

As if summoned from the Rum Tub by mass telepathy, the rum fanny, closely followed by Mick, came down into the mess. Books and writing pads were thrust aside and the almost sacred ceremony of dishing out the bubbly was started, Smudge presiding. With practised skill, he drew glass after glass of grog, each meticulously measured, from the fanny.

'I'll fill this in tomorrer,' said Tiny, pushing the card into his locker and making his way thirstily to the table.

BROCK.



Goodbye