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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
HELICOPTER ANTI-SUBMARINE SQUADRON TWELVE  
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Encl: (1) Squadron History 1991

1. Enclosure (1) is hereby forwarded for your review.

  
D. C. SIMONDS

*Logged*



## DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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### HELICOPTER ANTI-SUBMARINE SQUADRON TWELVE

The primary mission of Helicopter Anti-Submarine TWELVE is to detect, identify, localize, and destroy enemy submarines. Secondary missions include plane guard, search and rescue (SAR), medical evacuations, logistics support, and strike rescue. To accomplish these tasks, the "Wyverns" operate six Sikorsky SH-3H "Sea King" helicopters. Each aircraft is manned by a pilot, co-pilot, sonar operator, and assistant sonar operator/SAR swimmer.

HS-12 was commissioned July 15, 1977 under the operational control of Commander Anti-Submarine Warfare Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. The squadron first deployed with USS CORAL SEA (CV43) in 1978. In early 1979, HS-12 deployed aboard USS AMERICA (CV66) accumulating over 2,000 accident free hours. In recognition of its outstanding safety record, the squadron was awarded the 1979 CNO Safety Award. HS-12 rejoined USS AMERICA in 1981 for a successful Indian Ocean deployment. In 1982, the squadron deployed aboard the USS CORAL SEA on an "around the world" cruise participating in FLEETEX 83 and winning the Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy for having the most improved anti-submarine warfare combat readiness in the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

In June of 1984, the squadron changed homeports from NAS North Island in San Diego, California to Yokosuka, Japan joining Carrier Air Wing Five (CVW-5) and USS MIDWAY (CV-41). As the Navy's first permanently forward deployed HS Squadron, the Wyverns have operated at a fast pace at the "tip of the sword" since their arrival in Japan. They have completed deployments to various locations in the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean while participating in numerous ASW exercises with Commander Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN in support of Battle Group ALPHA commitments.

Calendar year 1988 proved to be a banner period for HS-12. January through April found the squadron completing a four month western Pacific and Indian Ocean deployment as part of Battle Group ALPHA'S Earnest Will operations and Team Spirit '88 off the coast of Korea. After two months ashore, detachment operations commenced with bilateral exercises, Cobra Gold and Mekar-88, aboard the USS OLDENDORF (DD-972). HS -12 returned to the USS MIDWAY to provide a U.S. presence at the Korean Olympics and finally, ANNUALEX 88. During this time, the squadron achieved unprecedented levels of operational readiness. In recognition of that performance the Wyverns won the Commander Naval Air Force U.S. Pacific Fleet, Battle Efficiency "E" award, the Commander in Chief U.S. Pacific Fleet, Captain Arnold J. Isbell trophy, and the Admiral "Jimmy" Thach award for CV ASW excellence and were runner-up for the CINCPACFLT Golden Anchor retention award.

In 1990, HS-12 began the year by participating in three work up cruises, five detachments to various locations in the Western Pacific, and completed several ASW exercises, including joint operations with the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force. On the 20th of June, HS-12 MEDEVACED six MIDWAY shipmates injured during a tragic shipboard fire. On the 2nd of October, HS-12 began a major deployment to the North Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. During Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, HS-12 participated in numerous operations, including the retaking of Qaruh Island, the first piece of Kuwaiti land to be liberated, and the rescuing of 31 enemy prisoners of war (EPW). During the war, HS-12 was NAVCENT's primary CSAR unit. The Wyverns flew over 3200 hours, with helos forward deployed to the USS OLDENDORF and the USS LEFTWICH, on station in the northern Persian Gulf.

In June of 1991, HS-12 assisted in Operation Fiery Vigil, the evacuation of over 1800 military personnel and dependents from the Philippines. Following this operation the USS MIDWAY began her final cruise back to the States. In Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, HS-12 cross-decked to USS INDEPENDENCE (CV-62), WESTPAC's new forward deployed carrier. The rest of 1991 proved to be extremely busy for HS-12. October through November found the Wyverns occupied with training operations in the Philippine sea, Operation Valiant Blitz, and Annuaalex. In early December, HS-12 participated in a highly successful Advanced Tactical Assessment, with the Independence battle group. HS-12's extremely successful 1991 resulted in the squadron receiving its second consecutive Battle "E" award, the Captain Arnold J. Isbell ASW Trophy, the Sikorsky Maintenance award, the 7th Fleet ASW Excellence award, and the Top Torpedo award.

D. C. SIMONDS

## HS-12 "WYVERNS" WRAP UP A RECORD 1991

### WIN BATTLE E

The WYVERNS of HS-12, based at NAF Atsugi, Japan and now aboard USS INDEPENDENCE (CV-62) are looking back on one of the most eventful years in squadron history. The intense pride and professionalism throughout the squadron has manifested itself through a tremendously successfully and rewarding year. The Navy Unit Commendation, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, COMASWINGPAC Top Torpedo Award, Sikorsky Maintenance Award, Seventh Fleet ASW Excellence Award, Independence Excellence Award, and finally, the 1991 Battle "E" all reflect the skill, dedication and hard work exhibited by every member of the Wyvern team. The year began with the thunder of Desert Storm and culminated with a "fully combat ready" assessment for the HS-12/CVW-5/INDY Team during the December ATA. All the operations, exercises and inspections left barely enough time for anyone to catch their breath.

With April's memorable end to the Desert Storm deployment still fresh in everyone's mind, the Wyverns were soon involved in planning ASW exercises with the JMSDF and a CSAR det. to Korea. Unfortunately, this training quickly gave way to the more pressing operational requirements brought about by the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines. HS-12, aboard USS MIDWAY, participated in Operation Fiery Vigil, supporting the evacuation of over 1800 military personnel and dependents from volcano ravaged Subic Bay. In August USS MIDWAY'S extended tour of duty as the U.S. Navy's only forward deployed carrier had come to an end. Leaving Yokosuka with Air Wing FIVE on board, MIDWAY set a

course for Pearl Harbor and the swap with the USS INDEPENDENCE. The move to INDY not only required adaptation to a new ship but also integration with its "new look" air wing. The adjustments began immediately as HS-12 and VS-21 demonstrated their capabilities as the new ASW team during the famous "Banzai Torpedex 91" at Barking Sands, Hawaii. The exercise gave both squadrons a chance to forge a strong working relationship and HS-12 the opportunity to drop eight torpedos, their first on an instrumented range since forward deploying in 1984. The Wyverns and Redtails have become a formidable team and each is proud of their respective 1991 'TOP TORP' awards.

By early October the squadron was again underway on INDY enroute to the Philippines to join most of CVW-5 which was already in country for integrated air wing strike training. The intense week of training that followed for the Wyverns included integrated CSAR, VFR nav and Night Vision Goggle flying. This "Cubi Det" highlighted not only CAS 5's unique capabilities and combat readiness but also the significance of the loss of the Philippines as a major training site once the base closes.

After the Philippines, HS-12 sailed with INDY for Operation Valiant Blitz, a major amphibious exercise with South Korean naval forces. Immediately following Valiant Blitz the HS-12/CAS 5/INDY Team returned to the coast of Japan to join Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Forces in ANNUALEX 91. The Wyverns polished their skills with several ASW exercises against Japanese and US subs and topped off the cruise with day and night small boat landing qualifications on the Japanese destroyers JDS KURAMA and JDS KASUYAMA.

The Wyverns were ready for ATA! Despite severe weather conditions and heavy support scheduling, HS-12 managed a flawless TORPEX, 24 hours of submarine contact time and held the simulated enemy submarine at bay with three "hot dippers" during the final "close-in" ASW phase.

The Wyverns will soon embark on an extended deployment, so 1992 is already proving to be another challenging year. Congratulations to all hands on an historical 1991.

HS-12 "WYVERNS" WRAP UP A RECORD '91

The WYVERNS of HS-12, based at NAF Atsugi, Japan, are breathing a sigh of relief after concluding one of the most eventful years that anyone in the squadron can remember for some time back. 1991 was a year that began with the thunder of Desert Storm and culminated with WYVERN/CAG 5/INDY TEAM being declared "fully combat ready" after an Advanced Tactical Assessment (ATA), after being on board their new "mother", USS Independence, for only three months.

The successful ATA was by no means routine and its success resulted directly from hours of intense preparation. The swap from USS Midway to USS Independence not only required adaptation to a new ship, but also some custom tailoring for Carrier Air Wing Five, which lost two squadrons and gained three after the Pearl Harbor cross deck. The adjustments began immediately, as HS-12 and VS-21 participated in the "Banzi Torpex" at Barking Sands, Pacific Missile Range Facility. The exercise gave both squadrons a chance to begin a working relationship as they practiced joint ASW problems. Another key factor in uniting the new air wing was a 5 day, fully operational port visit to NAS Cubi Point, RP, just prior to ATA.

HS-12, along with the entire air wing, conducted some of their most intense flight operations ever during this sortie packed week in the Philippines. With an array of CSAR, NVG, and VFR Navigation exercises, HS-12 launched and completed 22 sorties for

54.6 total flight hours.

The aftermath of the eruption of Mount Pinatubo provided an added point of interest for VFR Navigation flights. The devastation and power of the volcano was inherently obvious and offered countless photo opportunities. The moon-like terrain near the volcano, which was covered by volcanic ash, provided ideal training opportunities for safe low-level/navigational flight training as well as the much needed Night Vision Goggle (NVG) training conducted by our newly qualified and flight hungry NVG crew.

The restoration of Subic and Cubi Point bases, after Operation Fiery Vigil, was nothing short of amazing, since just four short months prior, HS-12 had witnessed the almost total destruction of the area due to an 8 to 12 inch layer of volcanic ash. The month of October saw NAS Cubi Point virtually swept clean and returned to a fully functional status. The opportunities for training in the Philippines will be sorely missed when the bases are finally turned back over to the Philippine government.

The week's heavy flight schedule was not without its bumps and bruises as two engine failures and their accompanying unscheduled changes challenged the Wyvern Maintenance department to rise to the occasion. Despite a heavy schedule of weapons loading practice for its conventional load teams. HS-12 Maintenance crews performed admirably, and ultimately determined their



destiny with the awarding of the well deserved 1991 Sikorsky Maintenance Award.

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After the Philippines, HS-12 sailed with INDY for Operation Valiant Blitz, joining South Korean forces off the coast of Korea. Immediately following Valiant Blitz the HS-12/CAG 5/INDY Team sailed south to the coast of Japan to join Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Forces in ANNUALEX. The Wyverns polished their ASW skills with several ASW exercises against Japanese and US submarines and topped off the cruise with day and night small deck landing qualifications on the Japanese destroyers JDS KURAMA and JDS MATSUYAKI.

The Wyverns were ready for ATA! Despite severe weather conditions and heavy support scheduling, HS-12 managed a flawless TORPEX, 24 hours of submarine contact time, and held the simulated enemy submarine at bay with three helicopters at once, during the final "close-in" phase of ATA ASW.

Another milestone for HS-12 was the outstanding coordination between themselves and the "Fighting Redtails" of VS-21. The S-3's belonging to VS-21 are new to the forward deployed "Tip of the Sword" CAG 5/INDY Team, but are now fully integrated and proving their worth. Since the Midway/Indy swap, the Wyverns and Redtails have worked well together as an effective ASW team, and each squadron is able to proudly boast of their respective 1991 'TOP TORP' awards.

The Wyverns anxiously await the upcoming year which is already

promising to be a full one and each member of HS-12 extends a hardy "hello" to the gang back on the Seawall at North Island and our comrades from "The Other Coast" as we embark on another action packed year.

## HS 12 WYVERNS PLAY KEY ROLE IN DESERT STORM

By: CDR Timothy A. Meyers

Since the outbreak of the war with Iraq, HS 12 has been forward deployed to the North Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Desert Storm. They have flown combat search and rescue (CSAR) missions, mine countermeasure missions and have been instrumental in several enemy prisoner of war (EPW) missions.

On the 24th of January the WYVERNS participated in the raid on Jazirat Qaruh, a small island 22 miles east of Kuwait. After four Army attack helicopters laid suppressive fire on the island, HS 12 landed two helos and inserted sixteen Navy SEALs who immediately secured the island from the surrendering Iraqi forces. The HS 12 crews were CDR Doug Roulstone, Lt Scott Killpack, AW2 Matt Beare, AW2 Kelly Carter and LCDR Carl Bindman, LT Dave Howard, AW2 Ed Malernee, AW2 Jody Taylor. Twenty nine Iraqi EPW's were rounded up with a large amount of weapons including small arms, mortars, and SA-7 shoulder fired missiles. Three Iraqi's were killed in the exchange with zero U.S. casualties. The EPW's were then flown to the USS CURTS for further processing. Flags from free Kuwait and the U.S. were hoisted over the island.

On 30 January HS 12 led a daring mission which resulted in the capture of twenty Iraqi EPW's eleven miles off the coast of the Iraqi Al Faw Peninsula. The EPW's were survivors from an earlier attack on their Polnochny class LSM naval combatant, forced to abandon their sinking ship. SPEARGUN 611, piloted by CDR Tim Meyers and LCDR John Rosa with crewmen AW2 Ed Malernee and AW2 Jody Taylor, was flight leader for the mission. With a HS 9 SH-3H (Jaguar) as wingman the Sea King flight proceeded north toward the survivors. An SH-60B provided a communications link with the USS LEFTWICH (CSAR forward deployed operating base for the H-3's) and an A-6 Intruder provided overhead protection for the rescue helicopters. With the burning Polnochny combatant only a mile away the EPW's were searched and hoisted aboard the helos. Each helo picked up 10 EPW's with the mission completed well after dark.

On 31 January the forward deployed CSAR helos (SPEARGUN and JAGUAR) were again called upon as 15 Iraqis were discovered on the Khawar Al Amaya oil terminal, only 10 miles off the coast of Iraq. An emergency maritime SAR beacon led U.S. forces to the terminal as apparently, these survivors were hoping to be rescued. LCDR Dave Moran, LT Brian Westervelt, AW2 Rob Wake, and AW2 Gary Schreffler manned up Speargun 611 and led the Sea King flight towards the terminal. Support for this mission was provided by an SH-60B Sea Hawk, a British Navy Lynx helicopter and an A-6 Intruder. The H-3's inserted their SEALs who quickly gained control of the terminal, captured the 15 EPW's and prepared them for hoisting. While hoisting, an Iraqi TNC-45 Naval combatant was reported 10 miles away and heading for the terminal. The Lynx helo and A-6 quickly responded and successfully attacked the TNC-45, leaving it dead in the water and sinking. The daring mission proceeded without further incident as both helos completed their hoisting and safely egressed the area back to USS LEFTWICH.

HS-12 has also played an important mine countermeasures role in the North Arabian Gulf. The heavily mined waters have been a tremendous threat to U.S. and Allied Naval Ships operating up north and every organic helicopter has logged countless hours searching for mines. HS-12 crews have deployed seals to successfully detonate 8 mines thus far including the first night detonation.

On 27 Feb, the day before the cease fire, HS-12 teamed up with HS-14 for the final EPW mission of the war for the CSAR detachment. A report of a small boat near Bubiyan Island, Kuwait with four souls on board resulted in a late afternoon launch of the Sea Kings. Lightning 615 (HS-14) launched first and proceeded to the scene as an EP-3 patrol aircraft provided airborne assistance and communications relay to USS OLDENDORF. Speargun 615 arrived on station shortly thereafter with Lightning on the ground and her SEALs in action. The four prisoners were rounded up as HS-12 provided armed reconnaissance overhead. Bubiyan Island had at one time been heavily fortified with hundreds of troops but now was just a barren war scarred island as the Iraqi Army was heading north. The boat which the 4 EPW's used to proceed to Bubiyan was located just off the beach. HS-12 door gunners AW1 Tony Davenport and AW3 Todd Zoldowski disabled the boat with their M-60 machine gun and the boat was left ablaze as the two Sea Kings headed home.

In addition to CSAR, EPW and mine countermeasures flights the detachment also flew numerous combat logistics flights in support of the many U.S. and Allied ships in the Northern Gulf. Moving parts, mail and people to and from Battleships, Frigates, Destroyers, Amphibs, and even Kuwaiti Naval vessels was an important part of HS-12's role in Desert Storm. HS-12, as part of CVW-5 and USS MIDWAY was proud to be a part of Desert Storm. The successful accomplishment of each mission was a team effort from the very beginning.

HS-12 also flew into Kuwait following the cease fire.....But that's another story!