Yokosuka Scouts pay tribute on Veterans Day

Story and photo by MC2 Devon Dow,
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YOKOHAMA, Japan – U.S. Scout members paid their respects at the Yokohama Foreign General Cemetery Nov. 11 to honor service members who died in Japan.

Troop 13 and Troop 35 from Yokosuka along with Venture Crew 3 and Cub Scout Pack 33 placed more than 100 American Flags on the grave sites of fallen U.S. service members and paid their respects to the grave site of a pioneer for the Boys Scouts in Japan.

The first boy scouts troop in Japan was organized in Yokohama in 1911 by Clarence Griffin. The troop, organized under an English charter, was mainly comprised of British students who were studying in Yokohama. Griffin is recognized by the Scout Association of Japan as Japan's first Scoutmaster. At the cemetery he is honored with an inscription on the marker at his final resting place.

Despite the rainy weather conditions Kim McCann, unit commissioner and scoutmaster of Troop 35 Yokosuka, told the scouts that their presence at the event was something he hope that they would never forget.

"This is a very honorable day and I cannot thank you enough for coming out here today," he said. I know it raining, but like a good friend of mine told me on the way over it was also raining on many days when these service members were defending our freedom."

Zachary Travis, a recent addition to Troop 35 Yokosuka, said it was his first time ever coming to the cemetery and said he is happy he was able to come.

"This cemetery has a lot of history in it, today has been a great experience for me and good way to show my appreciation for service members," he said. " Learning about the history of Clarence was very inspiring. Not only did we learn about it, but we were able to pay our respects to his grave site."

Brian Skelly, cubmaster of pack 33 Yokosuka, said he was honored for the opportunity the scouts were given to participate in the days events. He said he believes their visit to the cemetery is of important.

A Scout and his mother from the Boy Scouts Troop 35 Yokosuka, render honors after placing an American flag on the grave site of a fallen service member at the Yokohama Foreign General Cemetery on Veterans Day Nov. 11. The scouts honored the final resting place of U.S. Sailors and Marines who died in Japan and paid their respects to the grave site of Clarence Griffin, the first Scoutmaster in Japan.

"What is happening here today means a lot," he said. "The older generations are passing onto younger generations the respect we all need for our fallen heroes. These service members sacrifices will never go unappreciated or unrecognized."

PSD Yokosuka Sailor member of All-Navy Golf Team

By Jeffrey C. Doepp, CFAY Public Affairs

Wouldn't it be nice if, as part of your military service, you could actively participate in your life-long hobby or sports interest? A Sailor on board Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) gets to do just that – at least on a semi-regular basis.

Personnel Specialist Seaman Adam Dickey, attached to Personnel Support Detachment (PSD) Yokosuka has been playing golf since the age of four and is a current member of the All-Navy Golf Team.

"I have been playing golf competitively for 10 years," said Dickey, whose golf idol is Tiger Woods. "I started originally when I was about 4-years old in the Philippines. When I moved to California at age five, I started to take the game more seriously."

According to Dickey, when he was four, his dad would take him to the golf course to watch him play.

"My dad noticed that I was getting bored just walking around and watching, so he cut down some of his older clubs for me to hit balls down the fairway as he played his round," Dickey said. "My dad taught me the basics of the game and the etiquette of the game. Once I started I was hooked on the sport."

Dickey knew the Navy has sports programs and with a little research, found out about the All- Navy Team. After he filled out the required paperwork and got approval from his commanding officer and base sports director, he submitted his package to the All-Navy Sports director for final approval.

"Submitting the paperwork to tryout for the team is a simple process," he said. "Being that I made the team on my first attempt, to me is a great accomplishment. I had been told by numerous people during tryouts that it can take three or four attempts before they make the team and some had still not been selected."

Dickey, who tries to play golf every weekend at the Atsugi, Camp Zama and Tama Hills courses, is a strong supporter of the Navy sports program and proud to be a member of the All-Navy Golf Team.

"Allowing service members to enjoy doing what they love the most while being in the military is great. It relieves a lot of pressure and stress knowing that while being in the military, you still have that opportunity to pursue your dreams and goals," he said.

(Left) Members of the All-Navy Golf Team CTMCS Franklyn Marcus, ET2 Daniel Diedrich, Lt. Cmdr. Antonio Mauro, Professional Golf Association Master Bill "Goose" Munguia, PSSN Adam Dickey, HMC David Perry and Lt. j.g. William Boyd pose for a group photo during the opening banquet of the Armed Forces Golf Championship at the Fort Jackson Golf Club in South Carolina Sept. 26.
Photo courtesy of PSSN Adam Dickey

"Just being on the All-Navy Golf Team is a memorable experience," Dickey added. "But meeting all the fellow great golfers that are in the Navy is also a great experience. But the best experience I would say would be competing, not just for me but with the Navy team."

Naturally, PSD Yokosuka is also proud of having one of their own who is part of such a special, prestigious Navy sports team.

"When PSSN Dickey approached me about this chance to be a member of the golf team, I was absolutely elated by it and almost jumped out of my skin," said PSD Yokosuka Officer-in-Charge Lt. Cmdr. Jed R. Espiritu. "To have one of my people display the talent that he has... I felt like a proud father watching his son achieve great things."

Although not a golfer himself, Espiritu, who does a workout program called CrossFit, never realized before he took charge of PSD Yokosuka how beneficial the All-Navy Teams are to morale and Navy esprit de corps.

"Having one of my very own people represent the entire Navy in a sport against other armed forces brings a wider perspective on the Navy and the Department of Defense as a whole. I hope to send him again next year – that is if he continues to perform well at work," Espiritu said with a smile.

According to the Commander Navy Installations Command (CNIC) website, All-Navy Golf is an opportunity for Sailors with the appropriate skill set to compete at the highest level outside of the service academies. Golfers who are selected to attend the trial camp compete for roster spots available on the All-Navy Team.

Once the All-Navy Team is established, the golfers will continue to work hard at practice and compete in several matches prior to the armed forces championships. At the completion of the armed forces tournament, higher-level playing opportunities still exist for a select few. From the golfers who participated in the armed forces tournament, top finishers, depending on availability, will move on to represent the United States in the Conseil International du Sport Militare (Military World Championships).

Visit the CNIC website http://www.navyfitness.org/all-navy_sports/ to obtain an application or for more information on All-Navy Sports.