McCampbell participates in IMDEX 2011 during Singapore visit

Story and photo by MC3 Charles Oki, *USS McCampbell* Public Affairs

SINGAPORE – Sailors from The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer *USS McCampbell* (DDG 85) participated in several events as part of the International Maritime Defense Exhibition Asia 2011 (IMDEX 2011) prior to the ships departure from Singapore May 21.

Sailors interacted with members of the Australian, British, Indian, New Zealand, Indonesian, French, Malaysian, Russian and Thai navies during a visit, board, search, and seizure (VBSS) training, senior enlisted interaction program, ship tours and a reception.

"It's events like these that help build relations with all of our partner countries throughout the region," said Cmdr. Steven DeMoss, commanding officer of *McCampbell*. "It is always a good thing any time we can come together as maritime partners to learn more about each other."

The *McCampbell* VBSS team trained alongside VBSS teams from the New Zealand, Thailand and Singapore navies. Following three days of classroom training and discussions, the VBSS team conducted practice runs in a dedicated facility before conducting a simulated compliant boarding of a Singaporean vessel. The evolution had the team scaling a ladder, conducting a search of the ship and arresting two simulated suspects.

"The training gave us a rare chance to work with several teams at the same time," said Engineman 3rd Class Julie Swank, from Victorville, Calif. "The live boarding exercise was definitely a challenge, but I think the team as a whole came away with a lot of knowledge on how to board a vessel and conduct a search."

With more than a dozen ships moored at Changi Naval Base. Sailors took advantage of seeing how their counterparts in other countries worked and lived aboard their warships. As *McCampbell* Sailors took the opportunity to tour other ships, the ship also welcomed sailors from the other navies in attendance.

(Right) *USS McCampbell* (DDG 85) Sailors FC1 Candy Hogate and ET2 Michael Stevens, speak to a member of the Australian navy while attending the Senior Enlisted Interaction Program 2011 in Singapore May 19. The program is part of the International Maritime Defense Exhibition Asia 2011, which *McCampbell* participated in during its Singapore port visit.

"It was great to see all these countries come together in such a distant port and learn about each other," said Ensign Jake Huntley, from Minneapolis, Minn. "While giving tours I found it interesting that the sailors from every country had questions about different things, whether it be about if we ate meat at every meal or if men and women worked together in the same roles."

With all the ships in attendance, the Republic of Singapore Navy used the opportunity to invite senior enlisted members of all the navies, in order to share information and to get to know their counterparts better.

"It was definitely an interesting experience," said Fire Controlman 1st Class (SW/AW) Candi Hogate, from Vernon, Texas. "Despite working with other nations during exercises, we don't normally have a chance to specifically talk about leadership within our own organizations. I think this has been a great opportunity."

As IMDEX 2011 came to a close, a reception for foreign and U.S. dignitaries to include Adm. Patrick Walsh, commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, Chief of the Singapore Navy, Rear Adm. Ng Chee Ping and the heads of 10 different navies was held on the *McCampbell* flight deck.

"I think IMDEX 2011 has been a great opportunity for the ship and the crew to get to learn more about our regional partners," said DeMoss.

Commander 7th Fleet lauds legacy of Japanese battleship *Mikasa*

From U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs

A former Japanese Imperial Navy battleship moored as a museum in Yokosuka is a strong symbol of Japan's naval heritage and of the U.S. Navy's friendship with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), according to the U.S. 7th Fleet commander.

Vice Adm. Scott Van Buskirk spoke May 27 at a ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the preservation of the *Mikasa*, 106 years after it served as flagship for Adm. Heihachiro Togo during one of the most important operations in naval history, the Battle of Tsushima.

"All of us in the U.S. Navy are extremely proud of our association with the *Mikasa* and with Adm. Togo's legacy," said Van Buskirk. "And we are extremely proud of our alliance with Japan, and with the JMSDF."

Togo, widely considered to be one of world's greatest naval heroes, positioned the *Mikasa* to lead the combined Japanese fleet into a decisive naval victory against Russia. The Russian fleet lost 21 out of 38 Russian ships, with seven captured, six disarmed, 4,545 Russian servicemen dead and 6,106 taken prisoner, while the Japanese only lost 116 men and three torpedo boats. A pre-dreadnought ship named after Mount Mikasa in Nara, Japan, *Mikasa* stands as the last remaining example of its kind anywhere in the world.

Van Buskirk explained how Togo and the *Mikasa* were associated with the U.S. Navy via Adm. Chester Nimitz, a lifetime admirer of Togo who considered himself a "disciple" of the Japanese admiral. After the war in 1957, Nimitz learned from Japanese friends that the *Mikasa* had fallen into a state of disrepair and was being used as a bar and dance hall. He wrote an impassioned article for the magazine *Bungei Shunju* reminding the citizens of Japan of Togo's great victory and how important it was in their and the world's naval heritage. He donated the 20,000 yen he received for the article to start what became the *Mikasa* Preservation Society.

C7F Vice Adm. Scott R. Van Buskirk addresses *USS Mustin* (DDG 89) Sailors during a visit to the ship. Van Buskirk spoke at a ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the preservation of the Mikasa May 27.
U.S. Navy photo by OS3 Class Chin Ng

Van Buskirk noted that the ceremony was not just about the ship, but also about the strong bonds of friendship between the combined forces of the U.S. Navy and the JMSDF, which are built on the recognized and accepted principles that make a naval power for a nation critical to its maritime success. Van Buskirk cited Operation Tomodachi, which saw 7th Fleet forces assisting their JMSDF counterparts to deliver disaster relief to northern Japan following the devastating tsunami in March, as a powerful example of the strong relationship.

"During Operation Tomodachi - and in my daily interaction with Vice Admiral Takashima and Vice Admiral Kuramoto - I observed the JMSDF closely in what was an incredibly difficult mission, and I recognized that Togo's spirit lives on," said Van Buskirk. "As the men and women of the JMSDF operated under intense physical and emotional stress, they were at their best, never wavering in their focus, in their devotion to the mission's success, and in their sense of duty to their nation."