



MERSEY BEAT

The monthly newsletter from HMS Mersey to
all our friends and affiliates



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GOING DUTCH

This month has one of Mersey's busiest so far. The ship spent 29 out of 31 days at sea or heading out to sea and steamed a huge 5,300 nautical miles. During one of the two patrols Mersey took part in a Joint Deployment Patrol (JDP). This is where fisheries



inspectors from other countries use the ship as a base from which to inspect fishing vessels. Which means that fishing vessels can not escape detection by crossing over into the waters of another country when they spot Mersey on the horizon. Mersey played host to a Dutch inspector who transferred over from the Fishery Protection Vessel "Baron Biesheuvel". Another benefit of having inspectors from other countries onboard is overcoming the language barrier; particularly useful when our boarding teams are trying to explain that they are also carrying out scientific survey of certain fish caught, in order to assess the recovery of fish stocks, as well as looking for any infringements

ON PATROL

During May Mersey has:

- Steamed 5,350 nautical miles
- Spent 29 days at sea
- Inspected 54 fishing vessels from eight different countries.
- Issued 7 cautions for infringements.
- Taken part in a maritime border protection exercise.



SOMETHING FISHY

This month's MB is dedicated to the magnificent *Gadus Morhua*, or Arctic Cod. This month Mersey's boarding team's have been conducting scientific sampling to help gauge the recovery of the species following restrictions put in place to conserve stocks.

The Arctic cod, which is traditionally fished when they approach the coast to spawn.

The season occurs between January and April (March and April are the peak months), at a depth of 200 metres (660 ft) in specific spawning grounds at water temperatures between 4 and 6 °C (39 and 43 °F). Around the UK, the major spawning grounds are in the middle to southern North Sea, the start of the Bristol Channel (north of Newquay), the Irish Channel (both east and west of the Isle of Man), around Stornoway, and east of Helmsdale.

The cod, can change colour at certain water depths, has two distinct colour phases: grey-green and reddish brown. Its average mass is 5–12 kilograms (11–26 lb), but specimens weighing up to 100 kilograms (220 lb) have been recorded. Cod feed on molluscs, crabs, starfish, worms, squid, and small fish including young cod. Some migrate to warm water in winter to spawn. A large female lays up to five million eggs in mid-ocean, but only a very small number of which will survive to adulthood.



CHOCKS AWAY CRABS (Jackspeak for the RAF)



Mersey's Ship's Company had an interesting break from the routine, when an RAF search and rescue helicopter asked if they could carry out some winching practice. The aircrew demonstrated their skill at winching from various and progressively more awkward places onboard the ship. Working with helicopter proved a useful refresher for Mersey, as she would be needing those skills soon (*See next month*).

Sporty Mersey

The cargo deck has been busy this month, thanks largely to the good weather. The Seniors Rates organised and then won the Volleyball tournament. (right). In case you were wondering, the volleyball was secured to the middle of net using a laundry bag



and a long piece of string to prevent it becoming “man overboard” exercise and an early end of play.

The following patrol, the Junior Rates team evened up the score by winning the hotly contested bucketball competition. Demonstrating the blistering form that won Mersey the Squadron Sports Trophy at the beginning of the year.

Caption Competition Fun

Last month's photo



“I am smiling because I have no idea what this equipment does, fact!”

“Honestly mate, we’re off to the Caribbean; would I lie to you?”



Thought of a funny caption to accompany this photo of the engineers?

Let us know at
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See you next month