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The HMS ST ALBANS Newsletter

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RISIN' UP TO THE CHALLENGE

It's often been said that we like our sport on HMS ST ALBANS. From watching the Rugby World Cup around the mess decks to the Sports Day in Bahrain and Adventurous Training in Muscat, everyone likes to get involved. Sometimes it can be quite hazardous venturing onto the upper-deck in the afternoon out of fear of getting mown down by runners or tripping over a group doing circuits. And as we reach the mid deployment point quite a few people are starting to be seen sporting the coveted 100 and 500 Mile Club T-Shirts.

However perhaps the most eagerly anticipated sporting fixture to date was the Blind Boxing competition on the evening of Saturday 19th March. Organised with flair by the 26 Man Mess, it was an evening of unrivalled entertainment.

Each mess entered contenders for the Heavy Weight bouts, but the evening began with the Light weight rounds. The final came down to a match between Marine Lloyd "The Dark Knight" Bailey (representing the Royal Marines) and ET Connor "The Red Bull Rage" Murphy (representing the 26 Man Mess) who after a couple of hard fought rounds was judged to be the winner.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CO



Dear families and friends,

I've nicked my seat back from XO, just in time to wish you a very happy reunion. It's been an extremely busy first half; successful, varied, but challenging professionally and personally for us all at times. There have been some real highlights here – carrier escorting, drug busting, sailor saving, turtle rescuing, run-ashoring, as well as some fun onboard. Like other events, the recent "blind boxing" was hilarious and showed brilliant ingenuity. However, it's time for you now and we can't wait – I hope you all have a great time wherever you spend it with your "Saint(?)"!

Yours sincerely,

Rich

**Commander R P H Hutchings RN
Commanding Officer HMS ST ALBANS**



The Heavy Weight Semi-Final was between Lt James "L-Rad" Robson (representing the Wardroom) and the man mountain that is 'Jack Dusty' Ratu "Baba-licious" Matanababar (representing the 42 Man Mess). The outcome, as shown in the photograph, was pretty much a foregone conclusion, with the Bish giving "L-Rad" his last rites before entering the ring. "Baba" despite being a new member of the Ships Company proved an extremely popular contender and was suitably magnanimous in victory. He went on to win the final in a competitive bout against PO "Frankie" Powell.

Everyone agreed that the bar has been set very high for whatever sporting event follows after mid deployment leave.

TURTLE RESCUE

Whilst on a routine patrol in the Gulf of Oman, HMS ST ALBANS spotted a turtle caught up in fishing nets. Clearly showing signs of distress it was decided to launch one of the two seaboats to see if any help could be given.

The turtle and netting were lifted from the sea into the seaboat and after a few minutes with a sharp knife the turtle was released from the netting and freed.

After the short interlude both HMS ST ALBANS and the turtle carried on with their respective patrols.

“We usually train to rescue people from the water, so having the opportunity to free a tangled turtle from some old fishing net was a real change and privilege” said L/S Sea Dan Hambling.

Also in the seaboat rescue party were Coxswain AB Charlie Dodds and L/S Joe Arney



Photo taken by Lt Cdr Gordon 'Knocker' Whyte. All other photography by PO 'Dodge' Long



MASCOT OF THE MONTH

Tenacious B belongs to Ella Rose (5) and is a Koala bear from Court Lane School in Cosham, Portsmouth. Tenacious B was sent out to keep her dad (PO Shaun Ditchman) company on Op KIPION. He is a mischievous bear that likes to hide around the ship and even stowed away with PO 'Frankie' Powell on a visit to the US carrier without permission.