



BASKETBALL

By virtue of a 10-point lead gained in the first half, the Chicago captured the Group B gonfalon from the Houston in the final game of the curtailed basketball season, Wednesday night at Admiral Leigh Gymnasium.

The first ten minutes of the game were played on even terms with close guarding of both teams keeping the score at 4-all. Midway in the first half, however, the Chicago Bull Dogs solved the Ramblers defense and began feeding the ball to McNulty, Chicago pivot man for tip-in shots. Thus at the half-time marker the Houston was trailing 8 to 18.

Scoring first in the second canto, the Chicago made a bid to further turn the game into a rout, but a shift of the Houston defense and a more concentrated offense made the contest a dog-fight again. In the closing minutes after frequent personal fouls by both teams, fouls were committed with great frequency. One Houstonite and two Chicagoans were removed from the melee via the personal foul route.

The current Houston quint is regarded as the best in years. It is indeed unfortunate that of necessity the season is cut short, else, far-reaching recognition might be gained. A representative comparison may be reached by considering the showing made in a recent game with the U. C. L. A. 145-lb. varsity squad. This game was won by U. C. L. A. 39-38 after the Houston Feather Merchants (second team) had played most of the last half.

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It gives me great pleasure to extend my cordial Christmas Greetings to the officers and crew of the Houston and to their families. Due to the whole hearted devotion to duty of all personnel, the past year has been a very successful one for our ship; the efficiency in Gunnery has shown great improvement, and in Engineering and Damage Control we stand near the top.

On departure from the ship at the completion of this cruise last summer the President of the United States gave the ship "Well Done!"; and at the Annual Military Inspection recently completed, the Division Commander reported "I consider the Houston presents a 'smart' appearance—the general condition of the ship is Very Good to Excellent."

Let us all enjoy a well earned Christmas leave.

G. N. BARKER,
Captain, U. S. N.,
Commanding.

CONGRATULATIONS!!

To W. J. English, BM1c, who received notice of his place as No. 3 on the list for future appointment to Boatswain. Having known "Limey" for several years it is our own particular pleasure at this time to wish him well. Of his success we are certain.

WRESTLING

'Headlock' Wellbourn's coterie of muscle maulers finished the elimination series in a three-way tie with the Pensacola and Salt Lake City for top honors. Beaten in points only, by the Pensacola, the squad weathered four meets.

Four Houston men were undefeated. Lead by Chick, All-Fleet Bantam, the unbeaten group also included Butler, Calamitous Coxswain, Fordemwalt, Paladinous Postman and Arthur, Gymnastic Gunner. These men are eligible for Fleet Elimination Finals, which will probably be held during maneuvers, at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, late in March.

Other members of the squad who did not remain undefeated, but who contributed to the high standing of the Houston in the final tabulation were Drover, Keimel, Miller, and Vassar.

Final standing:	W	L	Pct.
HOUSTON	3	1	.750
PENSACOLA	3	1	.750
SALT LAKE CITY	3	1	.750
NORTHAMPTON	1	3	.250
VESTAL	0	4	.000

BOXING

Houston boxers lost only one match in Cruiser eliminations. By close decisions the Pensacola gained the nod, to become the only Houston Nemesis of the short season.

Under the able tutelage of Archie Arsenault, there were three men unbeaten in their class. Slugger Lewdanski, Houston Heavy, Major Hodge,

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—: THE BLUE BONNET :—

A weekly publication of the ship's company of the U.S.S. Houston, Captain G. N. Barker, U.S.N., Commanding and Commander C. A. Bailey, U.S.N., Executive Officer.

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AN EDITORIAL

"Peace on earth, good will to men."

Long years have rolled by since those words were uttered near Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus Christ, for whose coming the heavens were lighted up and an angel visited a group of shepherds to direct them to a tiny stable where a Child was born. That Child taught one of the first versions of that famous "Golden Rule," later developed in the United States Navy slogan: "All for one and one for all." It seems to have become more or less neglected in recent years: one sees people in washrooms wasting fresh water that some one else works hard to make; mess cooks throw away bread that others work hard to bake. Many other instances come to mind as we sit here listening to our radio.

As men mature (in the service) they lose the carelessness apparently characteristic of youth. One occurred about a year ago when a small group of men were working topside on the mainmast. A chief petty officer passing saw how cold and tired they looked. He went below to return shortly with a full pitcher of steaming coffee from the CPO pantry. Acts of kindness fill the heart with joy, the giver as well as the receiver. "For charity covers a multitude of sin," says the Lord. If your shipmate steps on your toes—well, anyway, move aside and during these holidays give a little thought to something besides being first on the mess table.

OUR GUESTS

The Blue Bonnet staff wishes to extend a most hearty welcome, on behalf of the officers and crew, to our little visitors and their escorts on this happy occasion. Truly do we wish for them a really good and enjoyable time on this Christmas Day party at which we are the hosts.

The touring of the ship, the Christmas dinner, arrival of Santa Claus with his gifts and jolly greetings, the entertainment and other things that go to make a Christmas party worth while have all been planned with an eye toward the fun and pleasure of our little friends.

A tummy filled with turkey and dressing, fruit cake, ice cream, candy and nuts, is surely something to make the body glow with warmth and pleasure. By the time the gifts are put out and then the final assembly for leaving the ship it is certain that many little heads will be drooping with weariness.

And so, with the above anticipations of a good time to be had by all we will look forward to greeting our guests with a bright and cheery smile, a mellow handshake and a hearty "Merry Christmas" to one and to all!

BOXING TEAM

(Continued from page 1.)

hailed as another Armstrong, and Bud Adams pounded out wins in every battle to qualify for the Fleet Finals to be held late in March.

Completing the Houston stable and providing points for Houston Iron Man standings are Colbert, Holton, Martin, and Harris.

Final standings:	W	L	Pct.
PENSACOLA	4	0	1.000
HOUSTON	3	1	.750
NORTHAMPTON	2	2	.500
VESTAL	1	3	.250
SALT LAKE CITY	0	4	.000

The tramp paused outside the house. "Clear out!" shouted the lady of the house. "I ain't got no wood to chop. There ain't nothing you could do around here."

"But, Madam, there is," retorted the wayfarer with dignity. "I could give you a few lessons in grammar."

HOUSTON'S PHANTOM ELEVEN

By Scoop

It may be said that some Man-O'-Wars-Men have great elevens, battleships and so on, but Old Scoops firmly believes that there has never been, in American Naval History, one that can quite equal this season's all Houston football squad. Certain it is that this member of Crudiv 4 is, in spirit, a main spoke in the wheel of American Naval football.

Now let us have a glimpse, for our space is necessarily small, at the men who comprise this team and those who make it what it is. The lineup:

At quarterback we have Watrous, Sea2c, 178¾ lbs., from Chitlingsworth, Texas. This is considered to be (by Headlock Wellbourn) the fastest stick of dynamite which ever stepped on a rattlesnake.

At left-halfback we find Kish, MM 2c, 157½ lbs., better known as Flash and Splash, the Blocking Half from St. Andrews, Japan.

Now for the fullback, that pivot man unexcelled, Crashboat Meadows, 175 lbs., from Jumpoff, N. Y. He is known as well for his offense as well as the defense.

For the right halfback we have selected that acme of courtesy and gentility, the soft and quiet-spoken Kaymeyer, 194 lbs. of vim and vigor from Wagonwheel, Georgia. He is to be recognized and will answer to the name of The Flyer, senior swabber of the 4th division mess deck.

That completes the backfield, my dear readers, and now let us have the forward wall. Mainstay of an impregnable line is the center. In this position we have Jack Machado, BM 1c, 214 lbs. gross; hails from Cottonburg, Oklahoma, the cleverest center that ever fired a pigskin. The right tackle position is ably handled by Jim Wallace, GM1c, 234 lbs. of might and main from Bund Ox, Manila, P. I., imported to fill the cleated boots of Henry, whom everyone will remember as a great tackle.

The right guard in this grand assemblage is Crego, EM1c, 265 lbs., bedside net, from Ossining, N. Y., and a great guard he is, too—Ask his messmates.

The right end is Pipp, Sealc, 114 lbs., from the Ostrich Farm, Los Angeles, California. He learned to

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Have you lads been taking notice of the Engineers' Force super-activity the past while? All day and all night they sweat and slave from port side of the head to Forward Engine Room, cutting, carrying, and finally fitting tubes in the giant (to yau and me) condensers that are so vital a part of our engineering system. Under careful and competent supervision of Palmer, CMM, Moberly, CMM, Kelso, MM1c, of our own crew, Ford, Ch. Bmkr., and Tack, CBmkr., from U. S. S. Vestal, the work has gone forward with great speed and efficiency. Not to be forgotten is Tear, SC1c, on whose shoulders falls the job of cooking a night meal for the lads every evening. Well, it's a happy man who has a full tummy.

* * * *

New addition to the Chief Petty Officers' Mess is Phillips, who advanced from Machinist's Mate First to Chief on Thursday of last week. Being attached to the CinC barge he will be going back to the Pennsy soon again.

* * * *

The annual season of merrymaking and rejoicing is upon us. Watching the boys in the Ship's Service Store bundling and bustling around one can see a small representation of what is going on in every shoreside store. Even Phillips, our canteen yeoman, has his stock of gift packages of cigars and candies. When you make second you can do the Santa Claus act, Phil, and be sure to remember Ocko.

* * * *

Some of the lads are immensely worried about how the new system for advancement in rating is gonna work. Well, don't worry lads, for almost two hundred years they've been changing the Navy around so that a fellow on the original flagship of Stephen Decatur or one of his contemporaries would be a total stranger here today. If one of us were to return for a visit in 2092 he would see

a lot more changes. So don't worry boys, you'll get it as soon as the other method and who knows, maybe sooner.

* * * *

Some 4th division deck hands keeping tune(?) with the orchestra on Auld Lang Syne caused honorable Bandmaster to positively raise his brows in absolute horror. It was a bit off key.

* * * *

Seen the past week: Del Hunter Smith, BM2c, rolling his own out of Velvet—a real Golden Grainer. Paul Baker, F2c, messcooking after dodging the detail for two years—they always get you, don't they? A man waiting to get into the barber shop for a whole half day. He was next in line and it was almost time for the barbers to eat; his face was pleasant to see as he visioned himself in the chair when lo!! Here comes a Hackie in a hurry, copped the boy's place and at 1300 he was back again. At 1500 he got into the chair. Cheer up matey, you've got sympathy and that's more than the barbers get—all they get is a growl.

* * * *

Congrats to Pappy Means, that engineer's passage looks as nice as Ocko has ever seen it in the past two years—keep it up all the time.

* * * *

What is a liberty hound? Ans: A mess cook borrowing fifty cents so he can go ashore for the twenty-sixth consecutive night! Also a couple of first class bakers I could mention. How about it Akeman? (Akeman has the duty a week at a time).

* * * *

Recently seen playing "My Ship" to visitors were Sims, SF3c, who entertained that lovely bride of his at the gedunk stand two weeks ago; Kuba, EM3c, had his No. 1 heart-throb out here a couple of weeks back as did Harris, the scullery-maid of honor. Christiansen of Div. 2's boat crews was proudly displaying his little one and only too. Then last Sunday a previously mentioned lad had his father and mother aboard. They are from back in the Badger State as well as your reporter and a grand time was had by all. Also met some friends of Lance, RM3c, from the old home state. Does a fellow good to see the old home folks occasionally.

During the past week our Chief Storekeeper, L. R. Shepherd, was sent to the Relief. Before leaving he penned out the following note:

TO THE EDITOR BLUE BONNET:

I take this privilege to wish all my shipmates aboard the ship a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year, and may your cruise be a happy one.

With sincere wishes,

L. R. Shepherd, CSK.

* * * *

That gang at the S. S. Store darn near took all my money payday: That Davis is sure a good one—talks about stuff till a feller gets it bought and when he's got all your money goes after somebody else. Ocko fooled him though—I kept out a quarter so I could go ashore Christmas anyway.

* * * *

Well, beyond a doubt this is the last issue of our Blue Bonnet in which Little Ocko will take a very active hand for quite a while. However, during the Houston's future rambles we will keep in contact with it via the Blue Bonnet, and once in a while it is possible Ocko might drop a line. As it is, when you're in conditions Affirm and Baker and in a helluva condition your scribe will be in sunny San Diego, where they have morning papers every day instead of morning press bulletins. Happy days—Happy cruise to all hands.

Sincerely,

Ocko.

NAVY FLASHES TIME

Los Angeles has a "Big Ben" of its own. Not located on a tower like London's famous clock within view of the city's teeming hundreds of thousands, but hidden away in a little room of the Boulder Dam power plant, 266 miles away, this little giant of electrical timing rules the accuracy of 234,000 electric clocks in Los Angeles. At 9 o'clock every day, a radio signal from the Navy station at Arlington, Va., flashes to Boulder Dam power plant the exact time as recorded at the Naval Observatory. The Boulder Dam master clock is regulated by that daily signal. In turn, this master clock, by delicate electrical and mechanical connections,

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It is hoped that if the Houston arrives on the East Coast before the end of the season that further laurels may be added to those already gained.

BOX SCORE

HOUSTON(28)		CHICAGO(32)
Hagerstrom(4)	C	Brann(10)
Phillips(6)	F	Rabourn(4)
Chmura(7)	F	McNulty(10)
Callahan(2)	C	Smith(2)
LaBarge(5)	G	Burgess(1)
Faulkner(0)	G	Betzinger(1)
Hattermer(4)	G	Armitage(4)
	G	Shiple(0)

* * * *

FINAL STANDINGS	W	L	Pct.
CHICAGO	6	0	1.000
HOUSTON	5	1	.833
PENSACOLA	4	2	.667
SALT LAKE CITY	4	2	.667
UTAH	4	2	.667
MEDUSA	3	3	.500
NORTHAMPTON	2	4	.333
LOUISVILLE	2	4	.333
PORTLAND	0	6	.000
RELIEF	0	6	.000

NAVY FLASHES TIME

(Continued from page 3)

regulates the speed of the giant rotors, each of which weighs 600 tons, which generate electricity. These huge machines are controlled to produce exactly 7700 electrical pulses a minute. That minutely accurate pulsation maintained through 266 miles of transmission at the tremendous pressure of 275,000 volts, actuates the Mechanisms of the 235,000 clocks in homes and offices of this city. So the hands of all them move in exact unison controlled by that little but mighty master clock at Boulder Dam. Barring local interruptions, which are comparatively rare, if a local electric clock is set correctly.

NEVER TOO LATE

It is never too late to be happy;
 It is never too late to smile;
 It is never too late to extend a hand
 And a cheerful word once in a while.
 Let me, tonight, look back, across the span
 'Twixt dawn and dark, and to my conscience say,
 Because of some good act to beast or man,
 The world is better that I lived today.

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kiss the pigskin chasing the leggy burds of L. A. Hopalong Hodges, TC1c, fills the left tackles billet at 230 lbs. He's an able man from Bell Center, Missouri. When he hits them mister, they know they've been hit.

The left guard's duties are upheld and dispatched by Barricklo, Bkr1c, 172 lbs., from Salt Rock, Utah. He plays for keeps.

The left end is swung by Lloyd, SM3c, 112½ lbs. Better known as The Mouse, he headquarters at Jack Roach's, Los Angeles, Calif. Learned the finer technique of his deadly tackling by smashing plate glass doors in LA's PE station. Whatta man, to see him snag those flat passes from the hands of left halfback "Flash" Kish is a real treat.

There, gentlemen, an all Houston line-up such as you have never seen. What a treat to see, as depicted, this mighty array in practice on the flight deck every day at noon time. Give a look.

Such a team must have a staff for the purpose of proper representation, and management, to say nothing of coaching and directing. Here they are:

- Athletic Director: Lt. Comdr. Tarbutton.
- Athletic Surgeon: Comdr. (MC) Funk.
- Publicity Agent: Ensign Wengrovius.
- Finance Manager: Lt. (SC) Norcross.
- Scouts: Ensigns J. P. M. Johnston, Leedy, Buuas.
- Head Coach: Shepherd, CSK.
- Ass't Coach: Franklin, CWT.
- Backfield Coach: Barnett, CCStd.
- Ass't Backfield Coach: Dutton, CBM.
- Line Coach: Buck Weaver, CGM.
- Ass't Line Coach (Understudy): Pappy Asher, CTC.
- Individual End Coach: Mitchell (Heh! Heh!) CTC.
- Waterboy: Wilkinson, GM3c.
- Ass't Waterboy: 6 point Borghetti, FC2c.
- Trainer: Put Put Putnam, MM1c (The famous four-hasher man).
- Mascot (at 124 lbs.) S. N. (Red) Lewis, MM2c.
- Manager: Johnny Allen, MM1c.

DRAWING A DEAD HORSE

Much, to many a naval officer's regret, this old custom survives. A real ceremony was connected with the days when the crew "stopped working for nothing."

In the old days of sail, both in the Navy and particularly in the Merchant Marine, seamen were permitted to draw some money in advance. In the British Merchant Service, it was approximately a month's advance when the sailor shipped. After five weeks at sea or whatever time the advance money had been worked off, the men made a horse out of canvas stuffed with old cordage and waste material or out of a cask with oakum tail and mane, and permission was requested to light it and hoist it out to the end of a boom or yard. This was done amid cheers, and marked the time that the crew started to accumulate wages "on the books." The advance was usually spent in high living in the port just left. Plans could now be made for the next port.

* * * *

COINS AT STEP OF MAST

The ancient custom of placing coins under the step of a mast when building the vessel dates from antiquity. This is a very old superstition. One explanation, given by Commander Beckett, R.N., is that possibly it is a survival of the old Roman custom of placing coins in the mouths of the dead to pay their way to Charon for transportation across the River Styx. If a ship met with mishap at sea, this insured that the way of all was paid.

The officers of the U. S. S. New Orleans (commissioned 1934), placed during construction 10 pennies beneath the foremast and two dimes, three nickles, and 28 penies at the heel of the mainmast. All coins were placed "heads up."

All these customs tend to show that seafaring men subscribe most cheerfully to superstition, and that sea services unwittingly maintain many ancient traditions that have no particular bearing on modern sea life.

Then there's the one about the farm editor who wanted a story cut down. When they finally got through with it the cow was giving condensed milk.