

EDITORIAL

Learn DC duties well

By JO2 D. C. Kaster

In basic training the instructors stated there is only one rate in the Navy that doesn't need to know any other rates. That rate is "Damage Controlman." In the upcoming months this statement will strike home on Bennington.

UNDERWAY TRAINING ON TAP

Underway training is on tap, with general quarter drills being held day and night. Drill after drill will be held until you are fighting fires or floods in your sleep. Towards the end of the arduous training you will be able to do your job without hesitation or falter. You will know your job like the back of your hand.

WHY SO MANY DRILLS?

Some will say, "Why so many drills? I know my job." Sure you may know your job and accomplish everything step-by-step in a drill, but what would happen to your smooth actions in an actual casualty? Will your shipmate be able to perform his job, or will you?

"Nothing is going to happen to the Bennington anyway. We're not in a naval war." That's right, but neither was the Enterprise, the Forrestal or the Oriskany. You can't tell when fire is going to engulf the ship, or when a plane will make an approach too low and slam into the fantail. You can't tell when explosive fumes will hit a lighted cigarette when the "Smoking Lamp" is out.

BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING

When you get fed up with General Quarters and become careless in performing your damage control duties, it's like forgetting to pay your accident insurance premium. You just won't be ready when and if an actual casualty happens, and being unprepared may cost you or your shipmate or both your lives.

Mail bouy ahoy!



BE ALERT--"Did you report that bouy over there?" BM3 Robert D. Robertson of Second Division asks FA Alfred J. Romus, the mail bouy watch.

"If a big bouy with 'MB' on its side came by, I was supposed to grab it with the boat hook, if I could," recalled FA Alfred J. Romus, 18, of his experiences as a mail bouy watch at sea on April 10.

"I had been working down in the Ship-fitter Shop when SFM2 Tom Morrison came up and sort of ordered me to go aft in unpress blues to stand a watch," he said, laughing.

"When I got to the fantail, there were 20 or 25 men just standing around. I sensed something was wrong because everyone started whispering and snickering as I arrived at the fantail.

"If I saw any bouys, I was to report their presence by calling out," said Romus.

Unfortunately, Romus didn't spot the mail bouy by the time he had been relieved. As a result, mail call went a little late that day.