

PUMP IT UP PART 1

SERIES BY FITNESS FEVER FLIES AROUND VINSON
 MC3 (SW) Luke B. Meineke | Carl Vinson Staff Writer

Can you endure the heat of an open hangar bay and the heart-pumping pace of an exhilarating workout? Well, lace up your sneakers and run up to the hangar bay to build your cardio fitness and push yourself to the limit with one of Vinson's fitness classes.

Clothed in a fitness instructor t-shirt darkened with perspiration Personnel Specialist 2nd Class (SW/AW) Kenneth F. Kirlin, Administration Department's X-3 Division separations supervisor, led more than 20 motivated Sailors through an intense series of exercises during his self-titled fitness class, "Kirlin's Power Hour," on Thursday.

"Basically I run through a whole bunch of exercises," Kirlin said. "We do a variety of cardio exercises – running in place, jumping jacks, high knees – then move to strength and conditioning workouts where we work on upper body strength through planks and pushups."

As the departmental fitness leader (DFL), Kirlin conducted fitness classes during Vinson's Southern Seas underway and WESTPAC 2010-2012 deployment. This provided the genesis for "Kirlin's Power Hour."

"They were joking around saying, 'Are you ready? It's time for Kirlin's Power Hour,' and the name just stuck," he laughed.

Now, Kirlin's Power Hour is up and running on its second deployment and the response has been both good and varied. Two Sailors, from opposite sides of the fitness spectrum, began participating in Kirlin's class this deployment for rather different reasons.

"I picked Kirlin's Power Hour because I saw him do classes last deployment," said Seaman Kristen Grund, assigned to Legal Department. "I wanted to join a class now because I do better with classes and full-body, aerobic workouts. I try to figure out what clicks for me, what motivates me. The class is intense and motivating, that's what I like. Kirlin is a man of few words, he focuses mainly on the workout, but if you keep up with him, you'll feel it."

Grund continued saying, "Kirlin does, literally, the full body workout. He does the arms, he incorporates the core and incorporates the legs – I feel it all over the body. I'm feeling it right now, an hour later," she laughed.

Grund performed very well on this past cycle's physical readiness test (PRT), scoring an 'outstanding' overall. She struggles with PT at times, though, and is not as motivated when the ship is in port.

"I think running and cardio are hard for me," she said. "When we were in port, I didn't

recommended."

Kirlin's Power Hour is one of seven FEP-approved fitness classes covering a wide range of exercises. From traditional spin, yoga and step classes, to one designed specifically for the PRT, Vinson Sailors have a host of choices for group fitness.

As well as attending any of the approved fitness classes three times a week, Crow and other Sailors on FEP must weigh in with the command fitness leader (CFL) or an assistant command fitness leader (ACFL) every Monday morning. They also perform monthly PRTs until the next command PRT cycle.

Rather than be deterred by his obligations, Crow plans on using the program to achieve a principal goal.

"My overall goal is to lose 50 pounds," Crow declared. "I would like to be less than 200 pounds like I was when I first joined the Navy. Back then I weighed 180 and I'd like to at least get to 190 again." With only four days logged on the program, Crow is seeing the results.

"I weighed in last Monday for our command weigh-in," Crow said. "I weighed after Kirlin's fitness class and I'm down 10 pounds. I was shocked. I know I'm not going

to lose 10 pounds every four days, but by the halfway point in deployment, I'll at least be slimmed down."

The atmosphere of Kirlin's class and the results Crow has seen so far has left him optimistic. Along with eating healthier, Crow feels confident Kirlin's class will enable him to lose the weight he wants.

And while Crow and Grund have entirely different goals, their desire for the support and motivation found in group PT has drawn them to the same outlet and conclusion.

"Find something that motivates you to work out," Crow said. "I've tried listening to music, watching TV shows on my laptop and classes. Whether it's someone working out with you, or some form of entertainment, just find your motivation." ●



Sailors participate in "Kirlin's Power Hour," an exercise regimen led by Personnel Specialist 2nd Class Kenneth F. Kirlin, in hangar bay two. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman George M. Bell.

work out every day and I don't always motivate myself. If I go to the gym, I won't motivate myself to run or do sets or anything like that."

This deployment, Grund uses fitness classes like Kirlin's to generate her motivation.

Aviation Ordnanceman 3rd Class Jeff Crow, assigned to Weapons Department's G-3 Division and temporarily assigned to Vinson's lagging team, started attending Kirlin's class for another reason altogether. Crow is on Vinson's fitness enhancement program (FEP), which requires those on FEP to participate in three approved fitness sessions per week.

"The FEP program started up this week; before that I was doing my own routine," Crow said. "I looked through the classes offered, and I went to Kirlin's class because I wanted to do something new and exciting, plus it was

PUMP IT UP PART 2

STEPPING IT UP ON THE DECKPLATES

SERIES BY

MC3 (SW) Luke B. Meineke | Carl Vinson Staff Writer

It's 1900, Thursday, and Vinson's hanger bay, under the orange glow of sox lights, transforms as a growing group of Sailors gather for Chief Aircrew Survival Equipmentman (SW/AW) Jose D. Castillo's step class.

The genesis for Vinson's popular fitness class began 6 years ago, when Castillo, Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department's (AIMD) IM-2 800 Division branch chief, attended a step class offered at a Naval Air Station North Island (NASNI) gym.

Castillo, who hates running, thought step was a legitimate replacement for his cardio workout.

"It's great because I lose weight – a lot of weight. I look forward to the music, the intensity. When you're doing it, you get absorbed into this little zone and forget about everything else," he said.

Castillo's class represents a combination of everything he has seen and enjoyed from personal experience. He has merged workouts from high-intensity step-aerobic classes and YouTube videos to develop a routine he incorporates into his class.

The hour-long class begins with basic step exercises, then three 15-minute intervals of different step exercises to increase the heart rate, so everyone gets 45 to 50 minutes of cardio and 10 minutes to stretch and cool down, Castillo said.

The class' high level of intensity made step an approved Vinson fitness enhancement program (FEP) class, which has further increased attendance.

"You will get drenched," said Yeoman (SW/AW) 1st Class Nancy Kearney, Administration Department's X-2 Division leading petty officer. "Guys will, too. If any guy think it's too easy or it's only for girls, they should come try it."

"We had a couple of guys try the class and they didn't come back," Castillo laughed. "It's not easy. When class is done, my shoes are soaked, my socks are soaked – I'm soaked! And it feels good," he added. "It's a perfect ending to a miserable day or a great day. You come, work your ass off and then call it a day."

However, one of the class' biggest draws remains the spirit Castillo has instilled in it.

"The class is great, it motivates you to come back," Kearney said. "Once you think you have it – once you know the moves and think you can go up another step, Chief Castillo changes it up and it's hard again."

Castillo and his students recommend step to help break the monotony of customary exercise and of deployment.

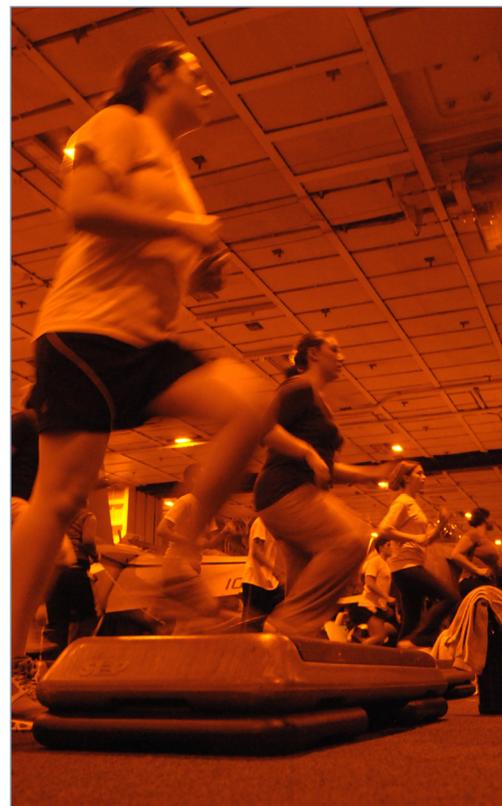
"It's fun and a really good workout," insisted Yeoman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Michelle Brown, assigned to Administration Department's X-2 Division. "Chief Castillo just keeps going. It's really motivating."

"I think they get a kick out of the noises and the arm motions I make," Castillo joked. "The more Sailors like the class, the more I like it. It really feels good when someone asks me when the next class is. On those days that you don't really feel like doing class, that makes you want to get out there and do it."

And the open area of a hangar bay makes step class an inviting break for Sailors accustomed to working out in the gyms.

"You don't have to fight anybody for space at the gym or wait for a machine," Castillo said. "I try to change the moves and the music and keep it interesting. Being here so long, doing our work every day – you need a stress reliever. So, I'll just go get my steps, set up my speaker and wait for people to show up."

Anyone interested in joining Castillo's step class need only look and listen for the boisterous, PT-gearred Sailors dominating an entire hanger bay Mondays and Thursdays at 1915 and Tuesdays and Saturdays at 1500. ●



Sailors participate in step class, an exercise regiment lead by Chief Aircrew Survival Equipmentman (SW/AW) Jose D. Castillo in the ship's hangar bay. Photos by MC2 Benjamin Stevens and MCSN Andrew Haller.

PUMP IT UP PART 3

SAILORS TONE THEIR BODIES AND MINDS WITH YOGA



SAILORS ATTEND LT. CMDR. AMY HUNT'S YOGA CLASS IN THE SHIP'S FOC'SLE. PHOTO BY MC3 (SW) CHRISTOPHER K. HWANG.

SERIES BY

MC3 (SW) Luke B. Meineke | *Carl Vinson Staff Writer*

Vinson Sailors have taken a bit of California with them this deployment. Phrases like 'Namaste' and 'Vinyasa flow' can be heard about the foc'sle, thanks to Lt. Cmdr. Amy Hunt, Vinson's training officer and resident yoga instructor. Hunt has been teaching yoga for seven years and has brought that experience with her to WestPac 2012 with her morning fitness yoga class. Hatha yoga, one of the many types of yoga and the one most commonly known in the West, is a physical form of yoga.

"The word Hatha stands for 'Ha' and 'Tha,' or 'sun' and 'moon,' and it refers to the combination of energies," Hunt said. "Throughout the workout, there are poses that build heat and then there are cooling poses. It's a balance between the two."

While some Sailors may be inclined to dismiss the class as easy, new-age malarky, (coincidentally, it's not – yoga's been around for a long time), the class is challenging and has been approved for the fitness enhancement program (FEP).

"It's a great workout for FEP because it's a total body workout," Hunt said. "We strengthen and tone muscles, build endurance through cardiovascular work that builds the heart rate and we work on flexibility. The physical fitness assessment (PFA) assesses all of those areas – your strength, flexibility and endurance. The added bonus is that it is also refreshing mentally."

"It's actually one of my more hardcore workouts," said Electronics Technician 3rd Class Christine Bottoms, a SPS-67 (V) technician assigned to Combat Systems Department's CS-6 Division. "Sometimes I'm more sore after my morning yoga sessions than after step or other classes."

"I got a little intimidated the first time I went," said Aviation Electronics Technician 1st Class (SW/AW) Lori Dearth, Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department's (AIMD) IM3 Division leading petty officer. "We were sweating and I heard, 'And that concludes our warm up.' It was harder and more of a workout than I thought it was going to be."

As well as improving a person's physical health, the benefits of yoga

extend through the physical to all parts of a Sailor's daily life, Hunt said. Yoga focuses on breathing, and becoming aware of one's breath. Most people don't use their diaphragm, the horizontal muscle just below the ribcage that, when expanded, opens the chest cavity to allow more air into the lungs. Participants subsequently take shallow breaths. "When you deprive your body of that oxygen, you're going to feel more tired and sluggish, and have less energy to go throughout your day," Hunt explained.

"I feel amazing and full of energy afterwards," Bottoms added. "I didn't realize that I could feel so great after a workout."

"I am always aware of my posture now," Hunt said. "Even when I'm standing or walking, I'm engaging my core muscles and that's all been a result of yoga."

Yoga, while increasing a person's flexibility, does not require you to be flexible to do it, Hunt pointed out. Yoga offers modifications that accommodate all flexibilities in every pose, and it's a great outlet if you have any limitations or injuries, helping you heal those injuries if other forms of exercise are too strenuous.

Dearth, who refers to herself as extremely inflexible has seen improvement since attending the class.

"When I first started going, I had to do a lot of the modifications," Dearth said. "Now I'm at the point where I can do the regular poses. My joints are looser; I'm not as sore or stiff as I used to be."

Sailors may be getting a more advanced session than they anticipated or realize, as the increased movement found on the foc'sle requires a higher level of balance than a static surface. With the music and Hunt's calming voice, focusing on your breathing and the pose, you can kind of just ignore everything else, Bottoms said. "But then, if we do a turn, or there's a wave and you're in the middle of a one-legged pose, you're suddenly brought back. I tend to look at that as a fitness challenge," she laughed.

"I think it helps us develop our balance," Hunt said. "When we go ashore and take a yoga class, it's going to be a piece of cake."

Those interested in giving yoga a shot should bring themselves, a towel and some water to the foc'sle Monday, Wednesday or Friday at 0500, though they should probably come a bit early as the class fills up quickly. ●

PUMP IT UP PART 4



SERIES BY

MC3 (SW) Luke B. Meineke | Carl Vinson Staff Writer

TABATA MADNESS!



SAILORS STRETCH IN VINSON'S HANGAR BAY AS PART OF THE TABATA CLASS. PHOTO BY MC3 (SW) CHRISTOPHER K. HWANG

Tabata. Though it may sound like a samurai's muttered curse, Tabata refers to the Tabata Protocol or Method, a high-intensity, interval-training (HIIT) fitness regiment based upon a 1996 study by Izumi Tabata and others. The program consists of 20 seconds of intense exercise followed by 10 seconds of rest repeated continuously for four minutes or eight cycles.

"It's as fast as you can go, as many reps as you can do, as hard as you can go for 20 seconds. Anybody can handle anything for 20 seconds," said Lt. j.g. Gloria V. Ewing, assistant maintenance officer assigned to Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 15.

Ewing's class includes a warm-up of dynamic stretches like jumping jacks or high knees before the workout and 10 to 12 minutes of static stretching at the end of the workout. Ewing said she doesn't like static stretches at the beginning of workouts because she feels they mess up the elasticity of muscles, relaxing them too much to give a person the spring necessary to function properly. Rather, she saves static stretching until after the workout to stretch the muscles used that day and help stretch the muscles that are sore from a previous workout.

The class is approximately an hour long, but what attracted Ewing to the class initially was that Tabata seemed a "no-frills workout."

"Twenty-four minutes is what attracted me to it, and after 24 minutes I was sore," Ewing said. "When I do it by myself, I'm in and out of there in a half an hour. And it's a pretty darn good workout if you do it right."

Phrases like "24-minute workout" and "20-second exercises" led Logistics Specialist Seaman Erik Pinos, assigned to Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department's Material Control Division, to believe the class would be easy.

"I didn't think it was gonna be a challenge," Pinos said. "I went the first time and it was really tough for me. Pushups are easy for me, but when we did 20 seconds, eight sets, that was killing me. I like the challenge; that's what really attracted me to the class."

"Lt. j.g. Ewing would do it, and it would look easy," said Aviation Maintenance Administrationman (AW) 3rd Class Bertha Espino, a central technical publication library administrator assigned to Air Department's V-2 Division. "Once we started doing it, it was not easy – not at all."

Espino and Pinos are part of a core group of Sailors who have come to the class since it began two weeks before the Hong Kong port visit. Pinos has been attending the class for five weeks and Espino for three and a half weeks.

"At first they died," Ewing smiled as she recalled their initial response to the class. "They died every day. But now it's so much easier for them because they've gotten stronger. They've come a long way, and it's great to see that progression. For me to see them get fitter and get more confident in those exercises and see the changes in their bodies, I'm like, 'Good for you, guys.'"

Tabata, because of its high intensity, breeds rapid results, Ewing continued.

This program shreds inches, more so than helping you lose weight. It's a toning program that increases functional strength, so you'll be smaller but not necessarily lighter because you are building muscle.

"It's muscle endurance," Pinos said. "My legs are stronger. I feel better when I walk; I run better, I breathe better and my core is also better."

"I'm trying to lose weight and it is really helping," Espino said. "I can't tell on the scale because I've been gaining muscle, but my waist is losing inches."

When Ewing found that Vinson's Fitboss wasn't returning for this deployment, and most of last deployment's instructors had left, she thought "We can't go all cruise with nothing." She approached Therese Guinane, Vinson's Funboss about possibly teaching a fitness class.

"I like to help people; I like to see them achieve some goals," Ewing said. "If you give me 20 minutes and even sound like you are trying to attain some fitness goal, I'll help."

Ewing emphasized her presence in the class would be felt.

"I will be all up in your Kool-Aid," she laughed. "If you have injuries and we need to spend extra time rehabbing it, you're going to stay after class and we're going to do some passive stretching and I'll teach you how to stretch better. I'm going to be involved all the way, until you are at a point that you think I can take the training wheels out and you can go, at which point, I'm like, 'Go forth and prosper, and teach someone else.'"

Ewing's passion and commitment to fitness generates from personal dogma, but also from her concern about the trend in Sailors' health and fitness, especially among the younger Sailors. She wonders how Sailors, after leaving boot camp within regulations, are arriving at their first command out of standards.

"It honestly is heartbreaking to see where we are, what we are condoning as being 'okay' as a standard in the Navy," Ewing said. "We are hurting our readiness because you are going to have to deal with health problems. People cannot deploy because they do not screen medically, because they are dealing with all the stuff that is being brought on by being too heavy or not fit."

Though believing her efforts are "not even half a drop in the bucket," Ewing says she is on a crusade against Navy obesity. "Any way I can contribute to alleviate that or resolve that, I'm going to do it."

Ewing and her shipmates are heartened, though, by the strides Vinson has taken to promote fitness and offer a variety of classes during this deployment.

"I think we're doing well," Espino said. "We have more fitness programs than last deployment, that's for sure."

"It's really encouraging to see the turnout, the amount of people that we're starting to see overall taking advantage of these classes and how many people are embracing these opportunities," Ewing added. ●

PUMP IT UP PART 5: Hangin' Tough

SERIES BY

MC3 (SW) Luke B. Meineke |
Carl Vinson Staff Writer

Just the name lets you know right off the bat that you might want to seek other fitness options if you're not already in damn good shape.

TUF, or tactical underway fitness, is an "overall full-body workout" focusing on functional strength. The class, led by Lt. Christopher Tighe, TUF instructor and information operations planner for Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 1's Flag Information Operations Department is formatted to build strength around real-life circumstances. To build functional strength, basic exercises such as squats to strengthen the muscles used when lifting a box off the deck, and shoulder presses to build the muscles used to set that box overhead, comprise the majority of TUF movements.

Though the exercises are basic, TUF is an advanced fitness class designed for Sailors with a higher level of physical fitness and thorough understanding of form and movement.

"It makes me push myself, that's what I like about it," said Lt. j.g. Brice Johnson, assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 22. "It's a tough workout and it's always intense."

"It's weird because you're balancing two things," said Lt. Jens Berdahl, also assigned to VFA-22. "You're balancing speed and form all the time."

"Right now, with the group I have, our form is good," Tighe said. "We know the movements and we can go fast and quick and hard. If it's a beginner's level, we'd need to start from basic movements. We would have to work on the form before moving on to something else."

That "something else" is not easy. One of the typical class strength workouts, "21-15-9", is only 12 to 15 minutes long and misleading in its simplicity. You pick three exercises, then do 21 repetitions of each exercise, then 15 of each, and then 9 reps of each, Tighe explained. "Last week for our workout, the three movements were handstand pushups, regular pushups, and I have these gymnastics rings we do ring-dips with. The three movements sound sort of easy, but, as you go through it, the blood gets into your muscles, you start slowing down and you feel it the next day."

With strength classes lasting 12 to 15 minutes and endurance classes only 20 to 25 minutes, one of TUF's distinctive features is its relatively short class length. The workouts are short because you can't really go much further in intensity and maintain a regular training schedule, Tighe said. "If you keep the intensity to 20, 25 or 30 minutes, you're going to feel it, but the next day you're not going to be so sore you can't work out."

"I would say to the people who think you don't get a good workout in 20 minutes –because that was my problem, I wanted longer to work out – I went and did it, and in 20 minutes, I was dead," Johnson said.

"If you do a workout faster, you're actually using more energy to do it because you're forcing your body to do more work," added Lt. j.g. Josh Raymond, assigned to VFA-22. "You get a better response out of it."

Tighe has drawn on his experience earning a level one CrossFit certification and working as a certified trainer to develop the class and instruct.

"It's not the fact that I was certified. That's just a piece of paper," Tighe said. "The fact I have experience working with people, that I've studied a little bit of kinesiology in the past, studied muscle movement, and just the experience of working with people, has helped me be able to do something like this."

Tighe runs TUF classes every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday at 1300, though the day-to-day schedule is as fluid as the training plan according to his personal schedule. Tighe said he knows that's tough for everyone, but his class picks up the slack. "What's good is I have a few guys in my group that have similar experience as I do with different programs that they're trainers in. So they fill in the gaps sometimes," Tighe said.

Currently, Tighe's class is fairly small, with most classes made up of five to 10 Sailors. "The smaller class is good, because, as time goes on, you grow a relationship – that camaraderie you build," Tighe said. "At the beginning of a workout, you're talking trash, making fun of each other and having a good time. Then, at the end of a workout, you're shaking each other's hand, saying, 'Ah, man, that was a great workout. Can't wait for the next one.'"

"The class is awesome," Raymond said. "Having the other guys there pushes you harder. We'll try to do it on our own, but you don't push yourself as hard as when there's a guy next to you."

Tighe said he likes larger groups, as well. However, larger numbers demand more equipment, and on deployment, equipment is a premium. "We have to limit the variety of exercises we do," Tighe said. "With the CSG 1 staff, I do a larger group of 15 to 20 people and we just make do. It doesn't matter the size of the class for me. However big or small the group is, as long as we're accomplishing our goals of having fun and getting fit, we're good to go."

The limited equipment available during deployment can have positive results, though. "It forces me to look out for new stuff to implement into our program to make it more interesting and more fun so people don't get bored and move on," Tighe said. "We try to find things around the ship and get creative and see how we can use it in our workout."

One stipulation Tighe makes to those Sailors interested in trying or attending TUF is they contact him first. "I'd like to know what their goals are and what their fitness level is," Tighe said. "If they are a novice and haven't done this kind of program before, maybe it's not for them, because it's kind of intense."

Raymond urged Sailors thinking about trying TUF or any advanced fitness class not to be intimidated. "That's the biggest thing," Raymond said. "When I'm back on the beach and I'm trying to get people to come in the gym, they're like, 'No, man. I can't keep up with you guys.' But that doesn't matter, even though people get intimidated by that. I would say don't be intimidated and come check it out."

However, for a large enough group of Sailors new to the CrossFit or P90X-esque programs, Tighe said he would be willing and interested in creating a beginners' group. The class would focus on teaching proper form and building strength to where, at the end of deployment, those Sailors could join a higher-intensity class.

Tighe said the continuation of functional fitness is a principle focus of this TUF class. For those with experience and those without, Tighe said he hopes "everybody gets something out of it, and not just for the deployment, but they carry it on."

Tighe knows how effective, motivating, and also distracting

PUMP IT UP PART 6

SERIES BY

MC3 (SW) Luke B. Meineke | Carl Vinson Staff Writer

SPINNING TO FITNESS

Vinson's Command Judge Advocate (Judge), Lt. Cmdr. Mitch D. Eisenberg, sporting a Vinson Fitness instructor t-shirt and matching headband, began to take his students through their paces in the Sea Side gym. Under cloudy skies, a cool breeze blew in from the Arabian Sea. It promised little relief from the vision the Judge had in store for those Sailors who chose to attend his spin class.

A five-minute warm-up initiated the approximately 60 minutes, 25 miles and hundreds of calories spent on an unforgiving bike seat for the spinners. "You don't just start off right on the heavy work," Eisenberg said.

"There's always some sort of warm-up to get the heart rate going. It depends on what you're trying to work on. If you're trying to build endurance, speed, or power to climb hills, you can tailor a class that way."

Despite the daunting numbers, Eisenberg emphasized anyone is welcome to attend spin class. "The bikes have variable resistance on them and you can tailor that resistance to your status," Eisenberg explained. "You want to keep the pace pretty much the same and keep your heart rate about where it should be. Beginners or experts, it's open for all."

Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Leonardo E. Coca, a storeroom custodian assigned to Supply Department's S-2 Cargo Division, recently started attending spin classes because he enjoys cycling. When home in San Diego, he rides with his family on the weekends. "I

like riding. It's a good way to free my mind," Coca said. "If I have a hard day, working out helps me free my mind and start a new day."

As well as a way to clear her head and shake off a bad day, CS1 (SW/AW) Linda A. Colter, S-2 Cargo Division's

Eisenberg's classes run the gamut of training focuses - speed, power and endurance.

Regardless of the variable exercises, the classes' framework remains fairly stable. After the warm up, students spin through the "heavy work" - three sets of 12 minutes.

"If they work as hard as I'm telling them to work and their heart rate stays up that whole time, they'll burn about 700 to 900 calories," Eisenberg said. "They'll build a lot of cardiovascular endurance and endurance in their legs."

The high tempo has included Judge's spin class in the list of classes approved for the fitness enhancement program (FEP). Though the muscles used for biking are a little different from those used for running, building your

legs through biking can help your legs for running, Eisenberg said.

Spin class' prime real estate both adds to and detracts from its appeal. "I like Sea Side because I like the fresh air, and you don't want to look at walls the whole time you're working out," Colter said.

However, due to Sea Side gym's relatively small size, it can only house 10 spin bicycles. "It's tough. Sometimes you have to turn people away because there are not enough bikes," Eisenberg said. "Then, sometimes there are one, maybe two people. I've taught classes to one person, and it's tough, because you're just eyeballing them the whole time," he laughed. "Overall, it's a good, long class that keeps you motivated."

For any Sailors interested in attending, the class is held on the Sea Side Gym (01-190-W1-WZ) Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1600, and Sundays at 1100. ●



Sailors participate in a FEP-approved spin class instructed by Lt. Cmdr. Mitch D. Eisenberg in the Seaside Gym. Photo by MC3 (SW/AW) Rosa A. Arzola

leading petty officer and novice cyclist, said she likes the class' instruction and challenge. "They tell you, 'Put it on this gear'. If I was doing this on my own, I probably wouldn't put it on that gear," Colter laughed. "I think he got us all the way to gear 22 and I was dying."

"I like when the Judge is trying to push us," Coca added. "You see him doing it as well, so it's better. It's not just someone talking and making me do it."

"I usually give recommendations," Eisenberg said. "I'll give them a gear and revolutions per minute. I'll tell what's important at any certain time, like if I want them to keep the speed, they can drop a gear, or if they should keep the gear and not worry if it slows them down."

Eisenberg has been attending spin classes for 10 years and began teaching onboard last deployment. Able to mold the class to his liking,

PUMP IT UP PART 7

STORY BY
MC3 (SW) Luke B. Meineke |
Carl Vinson Staff Writer

“RED LION FITNESS”: THE BEST FITNESS CLASS YOU’VE NEVER HEARD OF

They aren’t hiding. There’s no secret handshake, no password – just 10 Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 15 Sailors, equipped with a solid knowledge of fitness and a varied stack of laminated workout plans, offering Vinson Sailors a motivated physical training (PT) class four times a week.

“It’s usually around ten people per class, and mostly it’s just HS-15 personnel, even though the entire command is invited,” said Personnel Specialist 3rd Class (AW) Ratta Long-Lowry, HS-15 Administration Department’s pay specialist and assistant command fitness leader (ACFL). “It’s supposed to have five instructors per session. That way we have three people up front running the show and two people walking around making sure everybody’s doing the workout properly. We don’t want you to do it incorrectly and get hurt. Plus, if you’re doing it correctly, you’re getting more out of it.”

Though approximately 200 HS-15 Sailors are deployed onboard Vinson, they have two command fitness leaders (CFLs) and eight ACFLs. They’ve split command fitness responsibility between two five-person, CFL-led groups. The blue and gold groups, respectively, run “Red Lion Fitness” on alternating weeks with alternating daily programs.

“It’s a variety,” Long-Lowry said. “We do a mixture of workouts and try to break the workout down to different body parts – upper body and lower body – to try to work out the entire body.”

“It’s a good workout because it targets the different parts every day,” emphasized Yeoman 2nd Class (AW/SW) Kristie Sanchez, HS-15 Administration Department’s assistant leading petty officer. “You work everything and, especially now that it’s warmer, they have you dripping with sweat. I love to sweat when I work out.”

Sanchez said she has been attending “Red Lion Fitness” and running on her own to lose weight during this cruise, but that she wants to continue what she has started well after deployment is over.

“My goal is to lose weight and then keep



SAILORS ASSIGNED TO HELICOPTER ANTI-SUBMARINE SQUADRON (HS) 15, PARTICIPATE IN “RED LION FITNESS” IN VINSON’S HANGAR BAY. PHOTO BY MC3 (SW/AW) NICOLAS C. LOPEZ

it off,” Sanchez said. “I’m going to plan out how I’m going to keep it off because I don’t want it to just be a deployment thing. I want it to be a long-term thing.”

Sanchez’s attitude toward fitness mirrors HS-15’s and is a product of their recent change to prioritizing fitness, catalyzed by a changing of the guard with Senior Chief Naval Air Crewman (NAC/AW/SW) Mikel Carr’s ascension to CFL.

“We just started PT classes up this cruise,” Long-Lowry said. “Air Crewmen make PT a must. I think it’s working so far, because it’s better than before – we do more PT and have more participants now.”

The command fitness class has improved morale in the command and built camaraderie within the core group that attends class each session, Sanchez said.

“They have stuff where we have to interact with each other, like sit-ups with the medicine ball. We interlock our legs and then we pass it to the next person as we come up. You have to partner up and they partner us up with different people constantly.”

Long-Lowry said it’s hard to find time to work out with HS-15’s busy work schedule.

“Despite the low number of participants, the best part of the class is the morale that’s built and the motivation I get from the class. I feel like I don’t motivate them, but they motivate me to work out. I guess it works both ways.”

Part of the reason the class has had such positive results is because the CFLs and ACFLs have taken the time to educate themselves, Sanchez said. All “Red Lion Fitness” instructors

read command fitness instructions before the program started, and then planned and organized a variety of workout courses.

“The CFLs are knowledgeable and very motivating,” said Sanchez, who is learning tools that will enable her to reach future fitness goals. “They modify exercises to where, if your core is not that strong, for example, you can still do the exercise and get a good workout. There’s stuff they do here that I can do at home. My son’s 11 years old and he’s going out for football again this year. I’m going to have him working with me.”

“Red Lion Fitness” students say they have noticed an increase in their repetitions and endurance because of the class and its focus on correct form, but mostly due to the dedication of HS-15’s CFLs and ACFLs.

“I think the CFLs are doing a great job,” Sanchez said. “Even when we’re not at command PT, they’re still trying to motivate people to work out, come to command PT, and PT afterwards. If you ask them for help, like, ‘I need help strengthening my back,’ they’ll say, ‘Hey, I’m going to the gym tomorrow at this time. If you want to join me, I’ll help you out.’ They’ve been really great with everyone.”

Long-Lowry feels the class is going well, but wants to make sure Sailors know that the class is open to all hands.

Anyone interested in attending “Red Lion Fitness” can find the class, beginning at 1800, Monday through Thursday wherever there is space in the hangar bay. ●