Mine Countermeasures Ships - MCM

Description
Ships designed to clear mines from vital waterways.

Background
In the early 1980s, the U.S. Navy began development of a new mine countermeasures (MCM) force, which included two new classes of ships and minesweeping helicopters. The vital importance of a state-of-the-art mine countermeasures force was strongly underscored in the Persian Gulf during the eight years of the Iran-Iraq war, and in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990 and 1991 when the Avenger (MCM 1) and Guardian (MCM 5) ships conducted MCM operations.

Avenger class ships are designed as mine sweepers/hunter-killers capable of finding, classifying and destroying moored and bottom mines. The last three MCM ships were purchased in 1990, bringing the total to 14 fully deployable, oceangoing Avenger class ships.

These ships use sonar and video systems, cable cutters and a mine detonating device that can be released and detonated by remote control. They are also capable of conventional sweeping measures. The ships are of fiberglass sheathed, wooden hull construction. They are the first large mine countermeasures ships built in the United States in nearly 27 years.

Point Of Contact
Office of Corporate Communication (SEA 00D)
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General Characteristics, Avenger class
Builder: Peterson Shipbuilders, Sturgeon Bay, Wis.; Marinette Marine, Marinette, WI.
Date Deployed: Sept. 12, 1987 (USS Avenger)
Propulsion: Four diesels (600 horsepower each), two shafts with controllable pitch propellers.
Length: 224 feet (68.28 meters).
Beam: 39 feet (11.89 meters).
Displacement: 1,312 tons (1,333.06 metric tons) full load.
Speed: 14 knots (16.1 mph, 25.76 kmph).
Crew: 8 officers, 76 enlisted.
Armament: Mine neutralization system. Two .50 caliber machine guns.

Ships:
USS Avenger (MCM 1), Sasebo, Japan
USS Defender (MCM 2), Sasebo, Japan
USS Sentry (MCM 3), San Diego, CA
USS Champion (MCM 4), San Diego, CA
USS Guardian (MCM 5), Sasebo, Japan
USS Devastator (MCM 6), San Diego, CA
USS Raptor (MCM 7), Sasebo, Japan
USS Sour (MCM 8), Manama, Bahrain
USS Plover (MCM 9), San Diego, CA
USS Warrior (MCM 10), San Diego, CA
USS Gladiator (MCM 11), Manama, Bahrain
USS Adent (MCM 12), Manama, Bahrain
USS Dextrous (MCM 13), Manama, Bahrain
USS Chief (MCM 14), San Diego, CA

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