

HEAVY METAL

“The story behind ITCS (SEAL/SW) Daniel Healy’s anchors”

ALFA Platoon consisted of: LT Melendez, LT Murphy, Chief Healy, Chief Payne, PO1 Huntsinger, PO1 Hull, PO1 Westcott, PO1 Golden, PO2 Axelson, PO2 Suh, PO2 Patton, PO2 Luttrell, PO2 Leathers, PO1 Heskett, PO2 Mathis and PO2 Newsom.

The 16 members of ALFA Platoon, from SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team ONE (SDVT1) located in Pearl City, Hawaii were in the final stages of moving and packing for CENTCOM deployment on or about March 2005.

While clearing out and cleaning up our platoon office space for the next platoon to occupy, the platoon Chief (Dan) presented Chief Payne (Doc) with an unopened box of 2 Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO) collar anchors. Dan told Doc that these anchors were his motivation for Senior Chief, and that he thought Doc would make Senior before he would. Dan wrote with a sharpie on the back of the box: “Doc, wear these proudly! Hoo -Yah!”

Nearly half way through their deployment, ALFA Platoon was split into 3 elements: 6 men including Dan were augmenting SEAL Team 10 in Bagram, Afghanistan; 8 men including Doc were augmenting SEAL Team 7 in Baghdad, Iraq; and 2 men remained in Bahrain. Senior Chief promotion results came out and Dan received the news that he had been promoted to SCPO. During regular administrative emails between the two platoon Chiefs (PO1 evaluation reviews), Doc promised to return the SCPO anchors to Dan back at the Team in Hawaii, so he could wear his motivation.

On 28 June 2005, as the Operation Red Wings tragedy on the mountain was unfolding, a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) was deployed to assist in combat operations. Before the 2 CH-47 Chinooks took off, it looked as if Senior Chief Healy and Petty Officers Suh and Patton were to be “bumped-off” of the QRF due to manning and weight restrictions in high altitudes. Word is, that Dan stood up and told whoever was in charge, “*THOSE ARE MY GUYS OUT THERE, AND WE ARE GETTING ON THIS BIRD*”. Needless to say, Dan and his 2 men boarded that helicopter (Turbine 33) with the full intention to meet violence with greater violence to rescue his guys. Turbine 33 was shot down by a Taliban RPG, and all personnel onboard were Killed In Action (KIA).

Approximately 11 months later, Doc Payne made Senior Chief. During morning quarters back at the Team, the Command Master Chief (CMC) pinned Dan’s anchors onto Doc’s uniform. As the CMC was pinning the new anchors on, Doc told him where these anchors came from; CMC quietly replied, “*these are forever HEAVY METAL*”.

These SCPO anchors are donated to the Chief Petty Officers Mess onboard USS Michael Murphy (DDG-112) on behalf of Senior Chief Daniel Healy and the warriors of SDVT1 ALFA Platoon (2003-2005).

James “Doc” Payne

Na Koa O Ke Kai – Warriors from the Sea

**** NEVER * FORGET * ***

SPARTAN-01 SDVT1-ALFA TURBINE-33

“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:13