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**The "Democratization of Sport:" Commander Gene
Tunney's Fitness Program as Conducted at Treasure
Island 1942 - 1945**

Throughout recorded history there have been close connections between organized exercise, athletic competition, and

the military. This was no less so for the United States Navy during World War II. Studies have examined the role of sports in the United States Navy between 1941-1945. Donald W. Rominger and Bruce Bennett, for example, concentrated on the V-5 pre-flight program. However, little has been written in regard to the Physical Fitness Program for the United States Navy. This paper examines the United States Navy Physical Fitness Program, as directed by Gene Tunney, and how its objectives were achieved, specifically at Treasure Island, a large, multipurpose naval base located on the man-made island in San Francisco Bay.

In order to examine the organization and objectives of the United States Navy Physical Fitness Program, especially as it was conducted at Treasure Island, various resources have been used. These include contracts contained in the Archival Collections of the San Francisco Public Library, and official naval publications found among the Hearst Gymnasium Historical Collection at the University of California, Berkeley. Located at Treasure Island are copies of The Masthead, the base paper for Treasure Island. This newspaper contained extensive information that makes it possible to reconstruct in considerable detail a large portion of the various sports, recreation, and fitness programs that were conducted at Treasure Island from 1942 to 1945.



Barney at the Bat