

Scimitar Logbook



XXX
Confidential

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Read this classified information carefully before you attempt to navigate the Scimitar. Failure to comply with the instructions in this Logbook may result in severe damage to the craft.



The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Friend,

Congratulations on your election into the Discovery Squad! I knew that one day you would join the ranks of this elite group of inventors. Everyone here in Washington is happy for you. But I'm wondering, how are you going to make the acceptance ceremony next week if you're right in the middle of testing your new sub, the Scimitar? Awards on Monday, submarine launch on Tuesday—you must not get much rest!

In any case, I'm not going to be able to fly in for the Scimitar's christening because I have to be in China for some diplomatic business. But, after you've finished your first mission, heaven knows what it might be, my wife and I would like you to come to the White House for a visit. She's never met anyone from the Discovery Squad before, and she's really looking forward to entertaining a true American hero.

Once again,
Congratulations,

The President
The President

NAVIGATION

Destination—Aquadome

Getting to the Aquadome takes more than just a keen sense of direction. For one thing, you'll probably want to take a look around the lab before you leave, talk to some of the people, and use some of the equipment. You may want to TURN ON THE VIDEOPHONE, for instance.

You can always move from place to place, whether you're walking or in your sub, the Scimitar, by typing the compass direction you want to move. SEASTALKER understands eight compass directions: NORTH, EAST, SOUTH, WEST, NORTHEAST, SOUTHEAST, NORTHWEST, and SOUTHWEST. Or you can use these short forms: N, E, S, W, NE, SE, NW, and SW. Of course, sometimes you may need to go UP or DOWN (or U or D). Other times you may want to go IN or OUT. Here are a few examples of movement commands:

CLIMB UP THE LADDER
GO DOWN THE RAMP
NE
WALK WEST

If you know which room you want to go to and you don't want to examine things along the way, just type GO TO (wherever it is you want to go). For example: GO TO THE OFFICE.

Submarine Navigation

Once you leave the Research Lab and head out into Frobton Bay, you'll need to look at the map on the inside of this package to see where to go. For instance, if you want to HEAD NW THEN SET THROTTLE TO MEDIUM, just type it in and then hit the RETURN (or ENTER) key. You'll start moving right away, and you can watch your progress on the sonar-scope. (See Infocard #6.)

Your sub moves at three speeds: SLOW, MEDIUM, and HIGH. To change speeds

just type SET THROTTLE TO (SLOW, MEDIUM, or HIGH). If you want to DIVE TO 5 METERS just type it in. (Your sub dives in multiples of five meters: 5, 10, 15, etc.) If you want to SURFACE just type it in. Look on the right-hand page for more detailed navigational information.

Undersea Exploration

You're off to save the Aquadome. But, really top-notch submariners usually examine things and people along the way. Any curious object, creature, or person should be investigated. The more you know, the better your chance to save the Aquadome.

Whenever you go into a place, SEASTALKER tells you its name in parentheses. For instance, (lab center). When you go into a place *for the first time*, SEASTALKER describes it in detail. Everything in each place is within your reach. You don't have to walk around to PICK UP an object or EXAMINE something. If you want a detailed description of a place *every time* you enter, there are important special commands that you can type in. See the section on page 6 called "Five-Star Commands." The words to look for are VERBOSE, BRIEF, and SUPERBRIEF.

Tips for Smart Skippers

Many things that you'll discover in SEASTALKER are important because they give you clues about the puzzles you want to solve. So examine anything and everything. As the story begins, something like this might happen. Suppose your first command after you see the prompt (>) is:

GO EAST

Then you hit the RETURN (or ENTER) key, and the computer responds: (east part)

You are standing in the east part of your lab. A doorway leads out past the Electrical Panel through a short corridor to the office of your lab assistant, Sharon Kemp. A Microwave Security Scanner stands against the wall. An intercom sits on your desk. Tip is off to the west.

>

You're curious about the scanner, so you type:

TURN ON THE SCANNER
and then you hit the RETURN (or ENTER) key. The computer responds:
No beep occurs. Scanner displays: NO INTRUDER PRESENT ON GROUNDS.

As you play the game you'll notice that SEASTALKER understands many different kinds of sentences. The examples you see listed below may not really be ones you use in the game, but you're sure to use commands like them. Here are some examples:

TAKE THE MIKE
PUT ON THE AMULET
PICK UP THE CATALYST CAPSULE
DROP IT
GO OUT
DROP THE MIKE ONTO THE WORKBENCH
WALK NORTH
SW
GO TO THE SUPPLY ROOM
GET IN THE SUBMARINE
PUSH THE JOYSTICK EAST
EXAMINE THE DEPTH FINDER
SHOOT THE MONSTER WITH THE DART
LOOK AT THE SONARSCOPE
LOOK UNDER THE WORK BENCH
LOOK BEHIND THE COMPUTESTOR
AIM SEARCH BEAM TO STARBOARD
QUESTION TIP

Now you have a basic idea about exploring. Next you'll learn how to deal with the people that you meet along the way.

The Ultramarine Bioceptor "Scimitar"

Operating Controls for the Two-Seater Test Sub

THROTTLE controls the Scimitar's speed. There are four speed commands: STOP, SLOW, MEDIUM, FAST. If you SET THROTTLE TO SLOW, the Scimitar travels through one "sea square" each turn. (You can see these "sea squares" on the nautical chart of Frobton Bay. Each side of a square is 500 meters long. That's about 1/3 of a mile.) MEDIUM speed is two "sea squares" per turn, and FAST is three.

DEPTH CONTROL directs the Scimitar's automatic guidance system to keep you a certain depth below the water's surface. When you SET DEPTH TO (a number) METERS, the Scimitar starts moving to that depth. It will change depth by 5

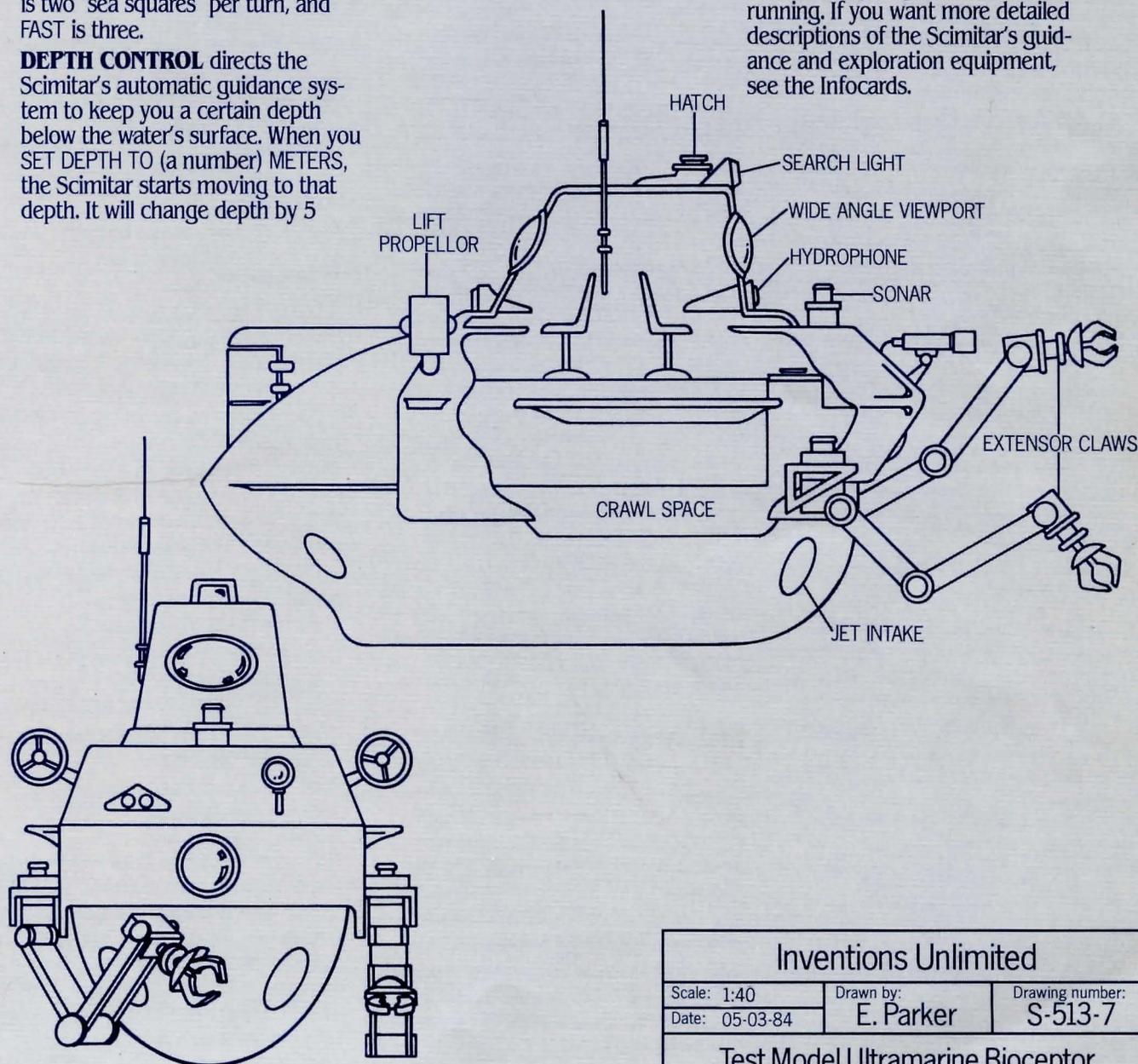
meters for each "sea square" that it moves through, or, if the throttle is closed, by 5 meters for each turn.

JOYSTICK turns the Scimitar to face any of the eight compass directions.

AUTO PILOT switches all the sub's operating controls, except the throttle, into automatic, so you don't have to pilot the sub yourself.

REACTOR-CATALYST CAPSULE - REACTOR LEVER. The secret of the sub's power supply is its midget plasma-fusion reactor. To make it work, you put a catalyst capsule into the reactor and push the reactor lever. The sub will not move without a catalyst capsule in place.

ENGINE STARTER BUTTON works like a car key to get the Scimitar running. If you want more detailed descriptions of the Scimitar's guidance and exploration equipment, see the Infocards.



Inventions Unlimited		
Scale: 1:40	Drawn by: E. Parker	Drawing number: S-513-7
Date: 05-03-84		
Test Model Ultramarine Bioceptor		
Side View, Front View		

THE SUBMARINER'S GUIDE TO LEADERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE

Talking to Your Crew Members

You have a whole crew of workers who'll be assisting you. Your constant companion Tip is probably the most important because he's with you all the time. So if you need answers to specific questions, ASK TIP ABOUT (something or someone). He can often help.

Of course, there are a lot of other crew members you'll be talking to, and you can give them commands, too. Look at your Infocards in the package for a short description of some of the people you'll meet. There are simple rules to follow when talking to people.

1. To talk to a person, type their name, then a comma, then whatever you want them to do. For example:
MARV, CHECK THE SONAR EQUIPMENT TIP, FOLLOW ME
MICK, GO TO THE DOCKING TANK THEN FIX THE SUBMARINE
2. You can ask a question by typing ASK (someone) ABOUT (something or someone). If you're not sure what to ask about, you can try QUESTION (someone)—but the person you talk to may not be very helpful.

Complex Commands for Master Submariners

Once you've mastered some simple commands, you'll want to try some more complex ones. For example, if you want to TAKE, EXAMINE, or DROP more than one object, you can do it in one command by separating the objects with a comma or the word AND. Here are some examples:

TAKE THE BLACK BOX, OXYGEN GEAR, AND UNIVERSAL TOOL

DROP THE MIKE AND THE LOGBOOK

In other cases you may want to do a few things in a row by using the word THEN.

For example:

MICK, GO TO THE DOCKING TANK THEN FIX THE SUB

OPEN THE ACCESS PANEL THEN CLIMB THROUGH IT

And there's another way to enter multiple commands at one time: separate them with a period. For instance:
READ THE SIGN. OPEN THE ACCESS PANEL. GO THROUGH IT
Then when you hit RETURN (or ENTER), SEASTALKER obeys all the commands. (If the computer can't understand one of your commands, it ignores that one and any that follow it on the same line.)

Keyboard Operation

SEASTALKER looks only at the first six letters of each word you type and ignores any letters after that. So, the words ELECTRIC and ELECTRONIC look like the same word to SEASTALKER.

SEASTALKER uses many words that it will not recognize in your sentences. For example, you might see "Sunlight shimmers across the dusty cobwebs" in the description of a place. However, if the program doesn't recognize the words SUNLIGHT or COBWEBS when *you* use them, then you know that you don't need the sunlight and cobwebs to finish the story; they are in the description only to make the story more interesting. SEASTALKER recognizes nearly all the words that you are likely to type. If SEASTALKER doesn't know a word that you want to use, or any word that means the same thing, you're probably trying to solve the puzzle the wrong way.

Five-Star Commands

Sometimes you'll want to type a one-word command to SEASTALKER instead of a sentence. Some commands give you information and others let you start or stop the story. You've already read about some of these commands. And you can use them again and again.

BRIEF commands SEASTALKER to display everything about a place or thing only the first time you see it. This is the way it works when the story begins.

DIAGNOSE commands SEASTALKER to

give you a brief report about your health. INVENTORY (or I) commands SEASTALKER to display a list of everything you are holding.

LOOK (or L) commands SEASTALKER to describe the place you are in.

QUIT (or Q) allows you to quit playing. (If you want to quit for now, but continue from this same place at another time, use the SAVE command instead.)

RESTART stops the story and starts it over from the beginning.

RESTORE lets you continue playing from any place where you used the SAVE command.

REVISION tells you the Revision number and the Serial number of your copy of SEASTALKER.

SAVE lets you stop playing for now, but continue from this same place at another time, by making a "snapshot" on a separate storage diskette.

SCORE tells you your current score and a rank based on it.

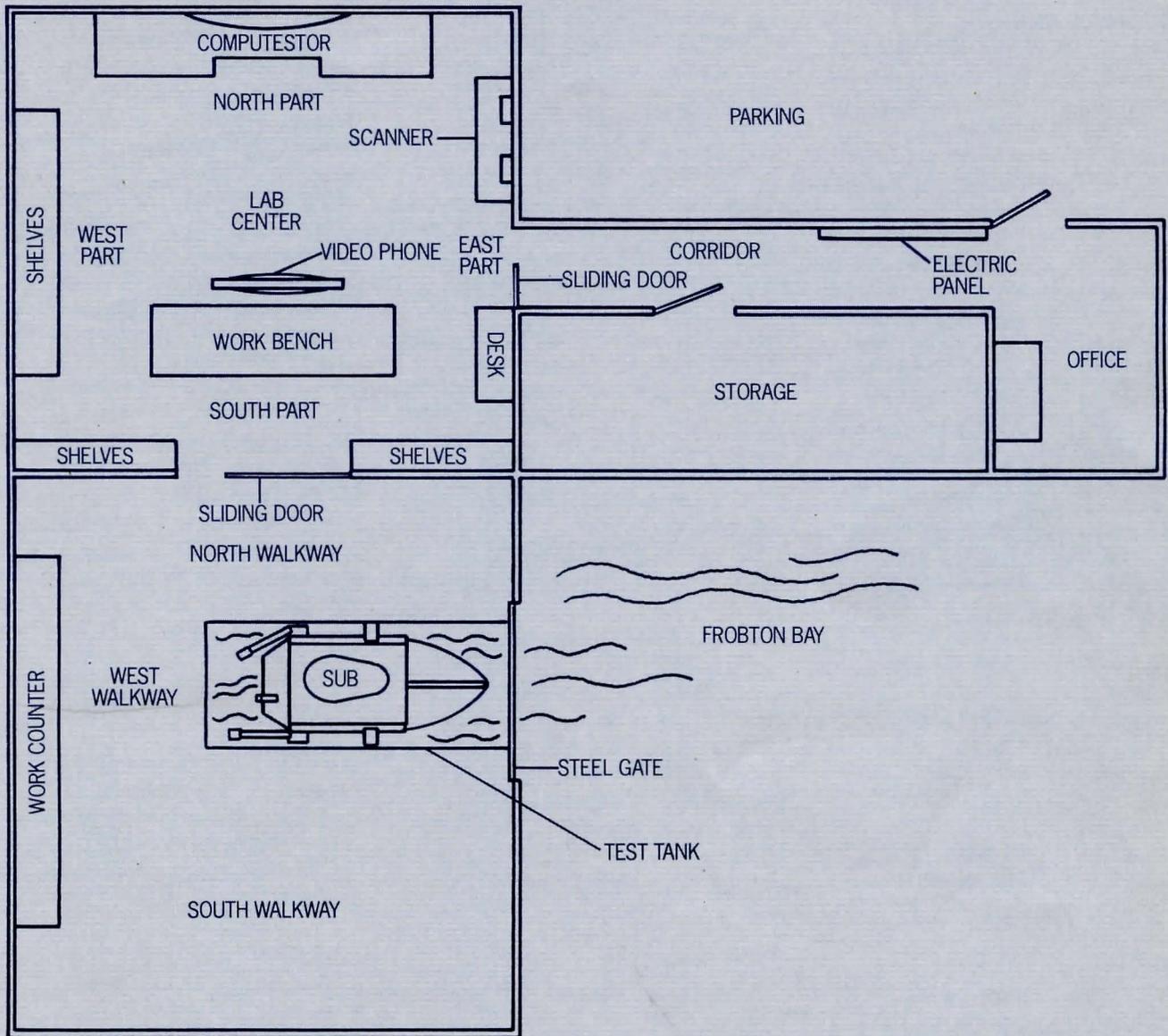
SCRIPT commands your printer to start making a transcript of the story as you play. (This feature does not work on all computers. See your Reference Card.)

SUPERBRIEF commands SEASTALKER to display only the name of a place, even the first time you see it.

UNSCRIPT commands your printer to stop making a transcript.

VERBOSE commands SEASTALKER to display everything about a place or thing every time you see it.

WAIT (or Z) causes time to pass in the story. Normally, between your commands nothing happens in the story. You could leave the computer, travel around the world in a sub, and return to the story to find that nothing has changed. If you are waiting for a person to arrive or waiting for something to happen, you can type WAIT or WAIT FOR (someone) to make time pass in the story without doing anything.



Inventions Unlimited		
Scale: 1:100	Drawn by:	Drawing number:
Date: 05-03-84	E. Parker	L-62-9
Private Lab and Test Tank		
Top View		

AVOIDING UNDERSEA MUTINY

Bad Commands

If you're making commands that don't make sense to SEASTALKER, explanations will come up on your screen that tell you what has gone wrong or what you might do instead. Here are some examples of SEASTALKER explanations:

I DON'T KNOW THE WORD "(your word)". The word you typed is not in the program's list of words. Sometimes you can use another word that means the same thing. If not, SEASTALKER probably can't understand what you're trying to do.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE WORD "(your word)" WHEN YOU USE IT THAT WAY. The program knows the word you typed, but it couldn't understand the word in the way that you used it. Usually this means the program knows the word as a different part of speech. For example, if you typed PRESS THE LOWER BUTTON, you used LOWER as an adjective, but the program might recognize it only as a verb, as in LOWER THE BOOM.

I COULDN'T FIND A VERB IN THAT SENTENCE!

Unless you are answering a question, each sentence must have a verb (or a command) in it somewhere.

I COULDN'T FIND ENOUGH NOUNS IN THAT SENTENCE!

SEASTALKER expected a noun and couldn't find one. This usually means

that your sentence was not complete, such as PUT THE LAMP IN THE.

I FOUND TOO MANY NOUNS IN THAT SENTENCE!

A valid SEASTALKER sentence has no more than two "objects." They are called the "direct object" and the "indirect object." For example, there are too many objects in PUT THE SOUP IN THE BOWL WITH THE SPOON.

BE SPECIFIC: WHAT THING DO YOU WANT TO (your verb)?

You used the word HIM or HER or IT, but SEASTALKER didn't know what you meant. You should answer by typing the name of the person or thing you meant.

I BEG YOUR PARDON?

You hit the RETURN (or ENTER) key after the prompt (>) without entering a command.

YOU CAN'T SEE ANY (thing) HERE!

The thing mentioned in your sentence was not visible. It might be somewhere else or inside a closed container.

THE OTHER THING (or THINGS) THAT YOU MENTIONED ISN'T (or AREN'T) HERE.

You used two or more nouns in the same sentence, and at least one of them wasn't visible.

YOU CAN'T GO THAT WAY.

There was no way to go in the direction you tried.

YOU CAN'T USE MULTIPLE DIRECT (or

INDIRECT) OBJECTS WITH "(your verb)". You can use more than one object only with certain verbs, like TAKE, DROP, and PUT. (This means objects separated by the word AND or a comma.) You can't use more than one object with most verbs, like ATTACK, so you can't ATTACK THE MONSTER AND THE ENEMY.

I ASSUME YOU MEAN THE (thing). You typed a word that the program knows as an adjective, like BLUE, without a noun, but it knew what you meant anyway. It's just telling you what noun it thinks you meant.

USE NUMERALS FOR NUMBERS, FOR EXAMPLE "10."

The program found a number word in your sentence, like TEN, but it understands only numerals, like 10.

PLEASE USE UNITS WITH NUMBERS.

The program found a number in your sentence without any units to tell what the number means. You should use a word after the number like METERS or TURNS.

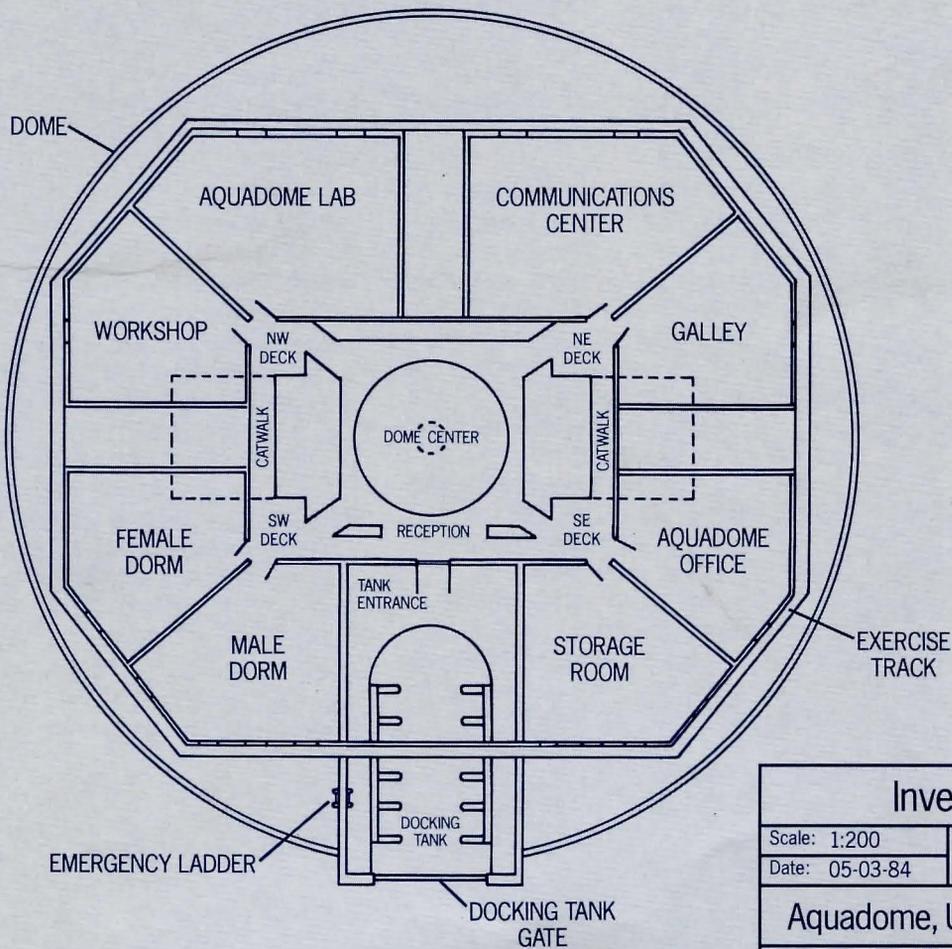
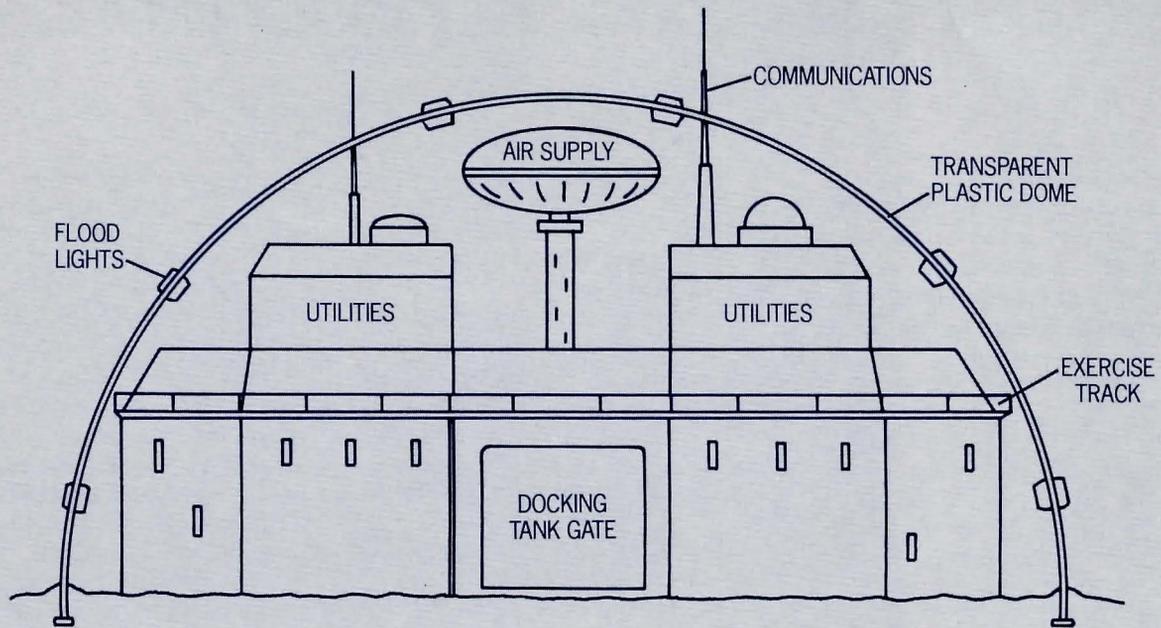
SORRY, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND. PLEASE REWORD THAT OR TRY SOMETHING ELSE.

The program thought your sentence was nonsense, such as GIVE HIM WITH TOOL. Or it didn't understand the syntax of your sentence, such as SMELL UNDER THE ROCK. Try doing what you want in a different way.

Command Summary

Here is a list of some, but not all, of the action verbs that SEASTALKER understands. Remember that you can use prepositions with these verbs; for example, LOOK can become LOOK INSIDE, LOOK BEHIND, LOOK UNDER, LOOK THROUGH, LOOK AT, and so on.

ADJUST	AIM	ANSWER	ARREST	ASK	ATTACK	BRING	CLIMB
CLOSE	CUT	DESTROY	DIVE	DOCK	DROP	EMPTY	ENTER
EXAMINE	EXIT	FILL	FIND	FIX	FOLLOW	GIVE	HELLO
KICK	KILL	KISS	KNOCK	LAUNCH	LISTEN	LOOK	MOVE
OPEN	POINT	PULL	PUMP	PUSH	PUT	RAISE	READ
SCREW	SEARCH	SET	SHOOT	SHOW	STOP	SURFACE	TAKE
TELL	TEST	THANK	TIE	TURN	UNLOCK	UNTIE	WAIT
WALK	YELL						



Inventions Unlimited		
Scale: 1:200	Drawn by: E. Parker	Drawing number: A-503-2
Date: 05-03-84		
Aquadome, Undersea Research Station		
Side View, Top View		

MAYDAY AT THE AQUADOME

It's Time to Boot Up

Now you know the basics of the game. And you're probably darn tired of waiting to begin your mission. Well, now it's time. To run SEASTALKER, follow the instructions on the Reference Card in your SEASTALKER package.

First the program will ask you for your first and last name, so it can use them in the story. Then it will display the title of the story, followed by the first bit of action and a description of the place where the story begins. Then, the prompt (>) will appear. The prompt (>) means that SEASTALKER is ready for your command.

Each time you finish typing a command, press the RETURN (or ENTER) key. The program will carry out your command(s), and another prompt will appear.

Shore Leave

You're probably going to need a break in the action to rest and decide how you'll finish your mission, or you may just want to quit at some point and start over from the beginning. If you want to stop playing, and you don't care about saving your place for another time, type the command QUIT. Just to be sure, SEASTALKER will ask you if you really want to leave the story, and you should type YES. If you want to start over from the beginning of the story, type the command RESTART. Once again, SEASTALKER will ask if that is really what you want to do.

If you want to stop playing for now, but continue from this same place at another time, type the command SAVE. Since it takes many hours to finish SEASTALKER, you probably won't finish in one sitting. The SAVE command lets you continue playing later without having to start over from the beginning. It makes a "snapshot" of your place in the story on another diskette. If you are

a cautious or careful player, you may want to save your place before you try something dangerous or tricky. Then you can return to the same place, even if you get "killed" or lost.

To save your place, just type SAVE after the prompt (>) and then follow the instructions on your Reference Card. Remember that most computers need a blank, initialized diskette for storage. Remember also that you may not be able to use that diskette for anything else.

To continue playing from any place where you used the SAVE command, just type RESTORE after the prompt (>) and follow the instructions on your Reference Card. Then you can continue playing. You can type LOOK to get a description of where you are. And you can use RESTORE on any "snapshot" you have made whenever you want.

A Final Word

There are lots of ways to accomplish your SEASTALKER mission. Some puzzles that you find along the way may have more than one solution, and you may not need to solve others at all. Sometimes solving a puzzle one way will make it harder to solve another, and sometimes it will make it easier.

The better you get at solving the puzzles and mysteries of the game, the higher your score will be. Watch it go up as you improve your exploratory skills.

You'll like playing SEASTALKER with a friend because you may find a puzzle hard while a friend may find it easy. So two or more players often can have more fun, and do better, than one.

Use the maps that come with your SEASTALKER package to help you decide where to move. Remember that there are eight compass directions, not counting IN and OUT, or UP and DOWN.

"Good hunting!"

Mail Call

Here at the Cambridge chapter of the Junior Adventure Story Writers Club (J.A.S.W.C.), we take great pride in the quality of our work. Even after our stories are in your hands, we still want to make them better.

Your comments are important. No matter how much testing we do, some "bugs" never crawl into view until thousands of you begin typing all those millions of sentences into the program. If you find a "bug", or if you think the program should recognize a certain word or sentence, or if you found a certain puzzle too hard or too easy, or if you'd just like to tell us what you thought of the story, then write to us! We love an excuse to stop working and fool around for a while, and a letter from you would be just such an excuse! Write to:

J.A.S.W.C.

c/o Infocom, Inc.

55 Wheeler Street

Cambridge, Mass. 02138

You can call the Infocom Technical Support Team to report "bugs" and technical problems, but not to get help playing the game, at (617) 576-3190. If your diskette fails within 90 days after purchase we will replace it free of charge. Otherwise, we will replace it for a fee of \$5.00 U.S. currency. Please mail us your registration card if you'd like to be on our mailing list and receive our newsletter.

A Sample of Interactive Fiction

This transcript is not from SEASTALKER, but it shows most of the usual things that you can do while playing. It shows several simple puzzles and their solutions, and it should give you a good idea of how interactive fiction works. (The comments inside brackets () are not real parts of the transcript. They explain what's going on.)

You are lying on your bed, trying to do your homework and listen to the radio at the same time. Suddenly your telephone rings!

>ANSWER THE PHONE

You pick up the receiver, but you can't hear who's calling because the radio is too loud.

>TURN OFF THE RADIO

That's better! Now you can tell that it's your mother, calling from her office.

>MOTHER, HELLO

"Hello, dear. Someone just asked me to go meet a visitor at the airport. Could you please drive here to pick me up?"

>MOTHER, RIDE THE BUS

"That wouldn't get me there on time."

>BORROW A CAR

You can't see any car here. (It can make a big difference if the program thinks you're not talking to someone.)

>MOTHER, BORROW A CAR

"I tried that, but I just can't find one. Won't you please do this favor for me?" (Answer yes or no) >YES

"Thank you, dear. I'll do a favor for you, soon. Goodbye."

>MOTHER, GOODBYE

If it isn't one thing, it's another—as soon as you hang up the phone, the doorbell rings!

>GO TO THE FRON

(I don't know the word "fron".)

>GO TO THE FRONT

(I assume you mean the front door.)

It's in the front hall. Now you're there too.

(front hall)

The front hall is bare, except for a coat rack and a rug. A door into the living room is on the east side, and the front door is on the south.

>OPEN IT

When you open the front door, your friend Pat steps in and says, "Hi! What's up?"

>MY MOTHER NEEDS A RIDE
(I don't know the word "needs".) (And that command doesn't begin with a verb.)

>COME WITH ME TO MY MOTHER'S OFFICE

(Sorry, but I don't understand. Please reword that or try something else.)

(The command looks okay, but the program doesn't recognize that form.)

>COME WITH ME

"Okay, let's go!"

>FIND THE CAR

It's usually parked in the garage.

>GO TO THE GARAGE

Pat goes with you.

(garage)

The garage is just big enough for one car, two bikes, and a bunch of garden tools. There is a car-sized door on the east wall and a people-sized door on the west. The family car, a snazzy convertible, is parked here.

>GET IN

(What do you want to get in?)

>CAR

Pat goes with you.

(car)

You are now sitting in the driver's seat of the convertible, and Pat is sitting beside you.

>START THE CAR

"Hey," says Pat, "why won't it start? Did you put the key in?"

>FIND THE KEY

You should know where it is—it's your house!

>PAT, WAIT HERE

"Okay." Pat settles into the seat and gets comfortable.

>GO WEST

You can't go that way while you're in the car.

>GET OUT

(out of the car)

(garage)

The family car, a snazzy convertible, is parked here.

>GO WEST

(If you're looking for something, you should probably go one room at a time.)

(kitchen)

The kitchen looks a lot like most kitchens: a stove, a sink, a fridge, shelves, and so on. The last of this morning's coffee is in a pot on the stove, and the faucet is dripping a little.

>DRINK THE COFFEE THEN FIX THE FAUCET

You don't have time for that.

You don't have time for that.

(Sometimes the computer will seem to act foolish or repeat things. After all, it's only a machine!)

>LOOK AT THE SHELVES

The shelves hold cookbooks, spices, knickknacks, a cookie jar, and so on.

>LOOK IN COOKIE JAR

It's full of cookies!

>TAKE A COOKIE AND A SPICE cookie: Taken.

spice: Don't be silly!

>FIND THE KEY

It's right here, on the shelf.

>LOOK AT THE SHELVES

The shelves hold cookbooks, spices, knickknacks, a cookie jar, and so on. A car key is also visible on the shelf.

(Sometimes you have to try hard to find something in a crowded place.)

>TAKE KEY. WEST. PUT IT IN LOCK

Taken.

You can't go that way.

(If one of your commands doesn't work, the program ignores the rest of your input line.)

>E

(garage)

The family car, a snazzy convertible, is parked here.

>IN

(car)

You are now sitting in the driver's seat of the convertible, and Pat is sitting beside you.

>INVENTORY

You are holding:

a car key

a cookie

>PUT KEY IN LOCK

Done.

>GIVE THE COOKIE TO PAT
"Hey, thanks!"

>I

You are empty-handed.

(The short word for INVENTORY is I.)

>START THE CAR

Vr-r-r-roooooom!

>BACK OUT

(I don't understand the word "back" when you use it that way.)

(The program recognizes the word "back" but not as a verb.)

>GO EAST

Oops! You ran into the closed garage door. It's a good thing you weren't driving very fast!

>GET OUT

(out of the car)

(garage)

The family car, a snazzy convertible, is parked here.

>OPEN DOOR

(Which door do you mean, the car-sized door, or the people-sized door?)

>CAR-SI

Okay, it's now wide open.

(If you want to save time while typing, you can always shorten words to six letters.)

>IN

(car)

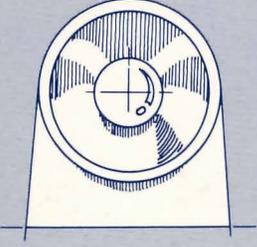
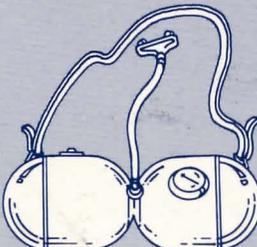
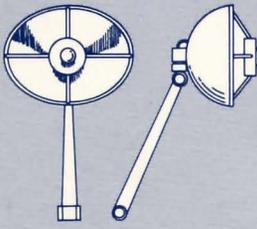
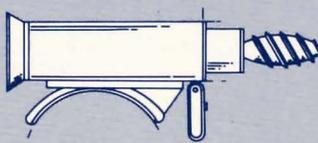
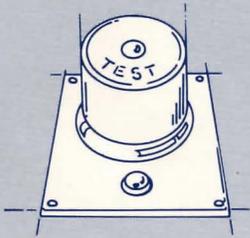
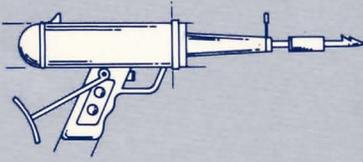
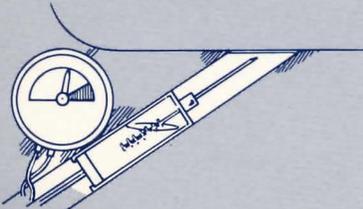
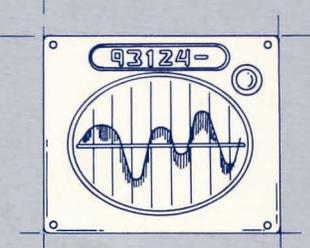
You are now sitting in the driver's seat of the convertible, and Pat is sitting beside you.

>E

The car backs out of the garage and into the street.

(This is the end of the sample transcript. Have a good trip!)

Important Submariner's Equipment

<p style="text-align: center;">HYDROPHONE</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">EMERGENCY OXYGEN GEAR</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;">SONARPHONE</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">THE "49er" PROSPECTING BAZOOKA</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;">TEST BUTTON</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">AQUATIC DART GUN</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;">EMERGENCY SURVIVAL UNIT</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">DEPTH FINDER</p> 

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