

sub**section**

by joe suszynski

.....NORFOLK,NORFOLK*

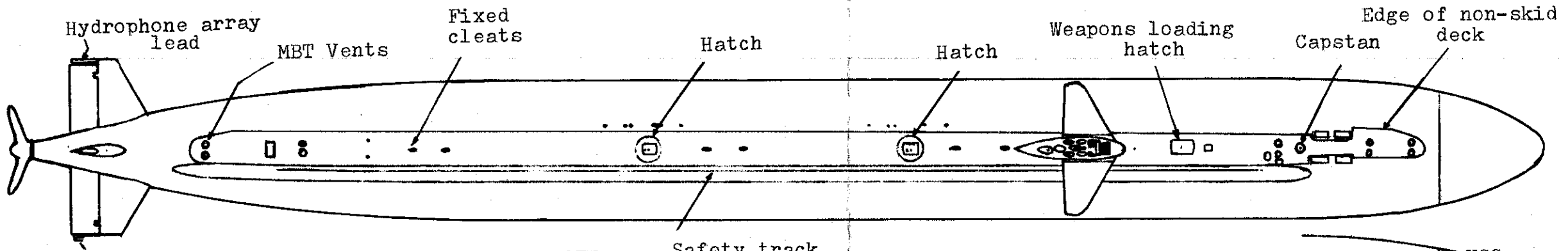
-or-

ALTERNATIVELY, THE CHICAGO

Once upon a time you could easily categorize a U.S. warship by just hearing its name: Battleships were named for states, cruisers for cities, carriers for insects (i.e., Wasp, Hornet), etc, and submarines for sea life. This system broke down after WW II, and now most attack subs are named for cities or for important people, such as legislators working on military appropriations committees. Sprue Stretchers have been present at both the launching and commissioning of the Los Angeles (SSN 688) class submarine, the U.S.S. CHICAGO (SSN 721), making it a fit subject for this last SubSection.

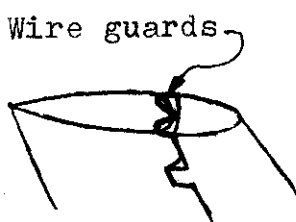
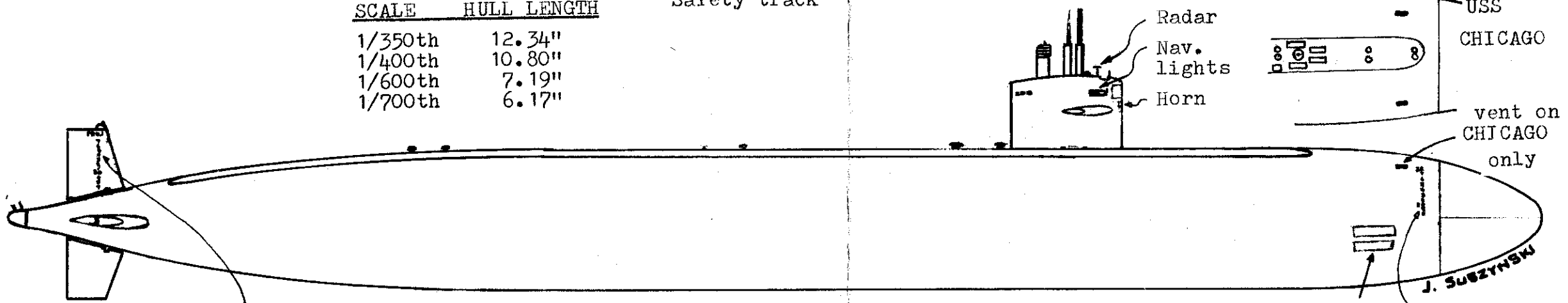
There really wasn't much of a problem in getting enough information on the L.A. class of subs, even though the U.S. Navy refuses to give out plans. The hull shape was taken from plans of the Submarine Control Test Vehicle, which is a 1/20th scale working model of a 688. Details were added as measured from various photos and from a builder's model of the U.S.S. NEWPORT NEWS. The photos that I took at the CHICAGO's commissioning were ruined, alas, so the differences incorporated in that boat could only be drawn from memory. The plans were drawn to 1/350th scale since that seems to be the up & coming scale for modern warships and because the large scale minimizes the effect of my poor drafting skills. A chart is included to give you the proper length of the model in various scales.

The hull is covered (on the real thing) by welds that remind me of the raised panel lines on the Monogram Skipjack. The dots on the hull to the left of the C.L. (Center Line) are attachment points for miscellaneous hardware such as safety stanchions. The MBT (Main Ballast Tank) vents are plates of metal sticking out about an inch thick from the hull. I sharpened the end of a piece of aluminium tubing to make a punch which I used to punch out discs from a sheet of thin plastic. The circular areas around the two hatches aft of the sail (or conning tower) are falt in order to allow for the mating of rescue subs (in the event such an operation is necessary). The fore hatch is used only on the surface, so it follows the normal curvature of the hull. Once you've finished the hull you can drill



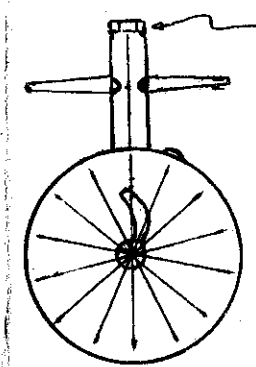
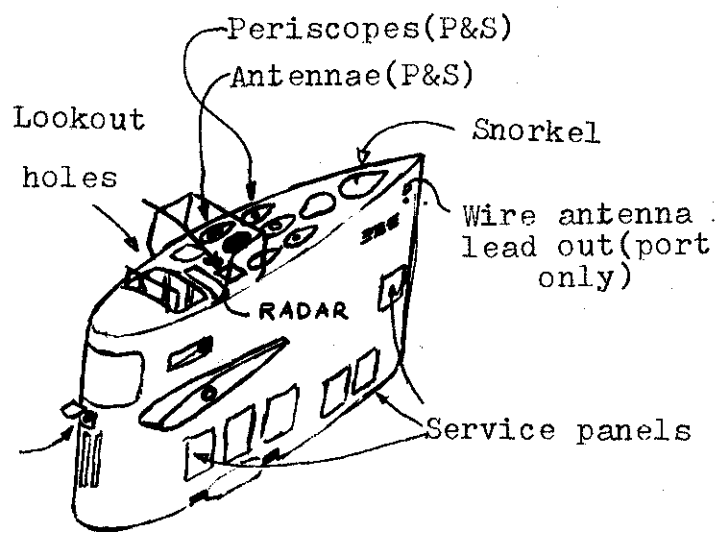
SCALE	HULL LENGTH
1/350th	12.34"
1/400th	10.80"
1/600th	7.19"
1/700th	6.17"

Safety track



Diving Plane Tip Detail

PROJ
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
30
9
8
7



Torpedo tubes

28
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
20
9
8

USS NORFOLK & USS CHICAGO

55(N) 721

1/350

shallow holes that are the diameter of these flat spots and set these discs of styrene into them. A little putty will fair them in.

The surface of the sail was seamless(I guess they use putty on the realthing) except for the inspection panels. By using plastic rod, small drafting pencil lead, and biplane strut stock you can simulate these antennae. The various periscope antennae have tops which match the shape of the sail's top in order to preserve streamlining. The optical periscopes are the only exceptions. Because of their tapered tips, small(5 inch diameters) holes remain when they are retracted. The bridge cockpit and lookout positions are closed before diving, and the windshield removed to improve streamlining. The navigation lights are inset into the sail and covered by clear windows. The base of the sail between the two flooding holes is noticeably bulged. In front of these holes there is a small diameter fillet, however aft of these holes the sail makes a sharp edge with the hull.

The typical paint job nowadays seems to be a black top half and red below the Center Line of the hull. The only markings carried normally are the draft markings on the bow and the rudder. For obvious reasons the area above the waterline is painted more often, but all of the subs at Norfolk exhibited some weathering topside, mainly a slight streaking caused by the flowing water on all areas that had not been painted since the sub had last sailed. The paint had been patched up rather than being a homogeneous black. The rudder sonar domes on the bow and the front of the sail were slightly contrasted from the surrounding hull. Most of the subs had a very prominent band of marine growth just below the waterline, ranging from one to several feet wide. And lastly, streamlined portions of the periscope were usually light grey with dark grey splotches.

*For those of you ex-Navy-types who remember this popular ditty about the local area girls.