

SIO takes delivery of research submersible

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UCSD's Scripps Institution of Oceanography has taken delivery of Star III, the General Dynamics Electric Boat Division's two-man research submersible having a 2,000-foot depth capability.

Dr. Fred N. Spiess, acting director of Scripps, said the submersible, conveyed to Scripps as a gift, had been shipped from Electric Boat's Groton, Conn., headquarters and is now based at Scripps's Nimitz Marine Facility on San Diego Bay.

Technicians from Scripps's Marine Physical Laboratory (MPL), which Dr. Spiess heads as director, are readying the submersible for eventual operations that currently await funding.

Star III, which can cruise up to four knots over an extended range, is designed for underwater mapping and recovery work, operations which fit into Scripps's research plans.

Windows in the trunked hatch and five viewports in the main hull are supplemented by two television cameras to provide visibility.

Although a 12-hour dive is considered a maximum operation, Star III's life support system is sufficient to maintain an operator and an observer for 60 hours.

The boat weighs 20,000 pounds in the air, is 24.5 feet long, and carries a payload of 1,000 pounds.

Star III's forward area can accommodate the latest tools of underwater technology, including manipulators, lights, and photographic and electronic equipment.

The boat's communications system incorporates radio and underwater telephone. Its main propulsion system is a 7.5-horsepower, stern-mounted motor.

Star III has a rudder and a reversible thruster in the bow for horizontal maneuvering and another in the sail for vertical movement or hovering.

The boat is equipped with advanced navigation and tracking systems and a sophisticated bow manipulator with interchangeable "hands."

Star III's pressure hull, of HY-100 steel with a high strength-to-weight ratio, is capable of withstanding pressures of 100,000 pounds per square inch.

Star III and Star II, also built by General Dynamics, were launched in ceremonies May 3, 1966, at the Navy's Underwater Sound Laboratory, New London, Conn.