



# THE DISPATCH DISK



SOUTHERN DISTRICTS  
COMMODORE USERS  
CLUB INC.

February 1989

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	Library open 7:00 pm - 7:30 pm each general meeting.		
Newsletter	: John Hancock - see above.		

Next meeting : MONDAY 27th March at 7:30 pm.

Location : Salvation Army Hall, Elizabeth Rd. Morphett vale.  
Subject : Superbase

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# DISK MAGAZINES

## - PART 2 -



I've been a subscriber to Commodore computer magazines ever since I got my first VIC 20 almost five years ago. Needless to say, I read these magazines from cover to cover. In fact, these magazines and the programs published in them have been instrumental in helping me learn to write my own programs for both the VIC and the COMMODORE 64. I have learned many tricks and techniques from studying the published programs.

Of course, I'm a bit (no pun intended) lazy when it comes to typing in programs myself. Most useful programs are somewhat long, and I don't exactly enjoy doing the typing. It's just the means to get the programs into my computer. Then, after correcting all my typing errors, I'm ready to check out the program.

So when I saw in an advert that "LOADSTAR" would provide me with all the programs from two Commodore magazines, and that I could get a trial subscription of 3 issues plus a "Best of Loadstar" disk, I sent off my \$27US to Shreveport, L.A.

When the disks arrived, I was really surprised. The Loadstar disks were much more than I expected. I have got "disks" from other magazines that contain the programs from the equivalent paper magazines. These can only be accessed through the menu and all the instructions must be obtained from the printed issue. I expected something similar from Loadstar.

Loadstar itself is a magazine, a disk magazine, with all the features found in any printed magazine.

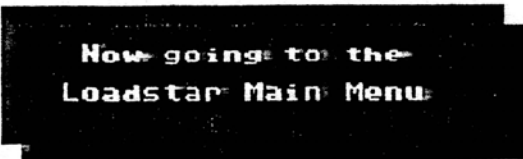
In addition to the magazine programs included on it, Loadstar contains its own programs, called Payload programs, as well as several feature programs. Loadstar also includes features, editorials, columns, question-and-answer sessions, hardware and software reviews, a help column, tutorials, and even some (just a few!) ads.

Lets take a look at a typical issue, number 45.

### STAR GAZING

Loadstar 45 consists of 2 disks (i.e. 4 sides) which is typical of recent Loadstar issues. It gives you 2248 blocks of programs including type in programs from a recent issue of "Commodore Magazine" (U.S. version).

An important feature of Loadstar is the documentation that accompanies each program. Of course you'd expect the Payload and feature programs to have documentation, but even the magazine programs have enough documentation on the Loadstar disk to get you started. And most programs, when you're finished running them, bring you back to either the main Loadstar menu or one of the sub-menus.



## STARTING OUT

After inserting the disk in your drive, type LOAD\*\*8 (that's how the disk got its name) and press RETURN. After some introductory screens, you arrive at the main menu.

The main menu is set up like the drawer of a filing cabinet with a number of folders in it. These folders group the programmes on the disk e.g. magazine programmes, fun & games, etc.. Using the cursor keys or joystick, you take a folder from the drawer and the screen displays the contents of that folder. You choose the programme in which you are interested and you are given four options "Read it" (which describes the features of the programmes), "Run it" (which enables you to run the file immediately), "Copy it" (which enables you to copy the file to another disk). Although the Loadstar disks are copyright, it is accepted that you may wish to copy a game programme to a disk of games which you are accumulating or utilise a "utility" programme in a programme which you are writing yourself. The fourth and final option is to put the folder away and return to the main menu. In the "menu" and "Read it" modes you have access to a series of help commands to ensure that you know how to proceed.

In many cases, after you have run the program, you can return to the main menu without having to reload the Loadstar disk. However, certain programs reconfigure memory and so therefore you will not be able to return to the main menu and will need to switch off your computer and then reload Loadstar.

# LOADSTAR

The Loadstar Files	
Commodore Programs	
	Harned's Art Hotel
Hel	Read It
Musical	Run It
Brai	Copy It
Fun an	Put File Back

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## PAPERLESS PAGES

As well as the programmes included on the disks, there are "Paperless Pages" which include, an introduction to new Loadstar readers, "Diskussion" - an interactive discussion between the readers and the editors on various aspects of Commodore computing, some adverts from Loadstar and Commodore magazines, a comprehensive "Table of Contents" and a simple word processor to enable subscribers to write back to the magazine.



## DISKUSION

Dear LOADSTAR,

I have recently bought sever different magazines on disk. LOA is by far the best value for the unbelievably low price of \$9.95.

The "All Smiles" game on #40 worth the price alone. I only ha problem with the disk. BIG LEAGU BASEBALL in #40 is a great progr with one exception. After enteri all the team stats, I could not a game. Every batter struck out

## MUSIC AND PICTURES

For the music and graphics fans, Loadstar 45 contains some excellent art pictures in Harned's Art Hotel" and a number of excellent "Sousa" march tunes. Quite a number of Loadstar disks contain graphics which can be used in Print Shop type programmes and the avid Loadstar collector will considerable increase their range of available graphics.

## THE BAD NEWS

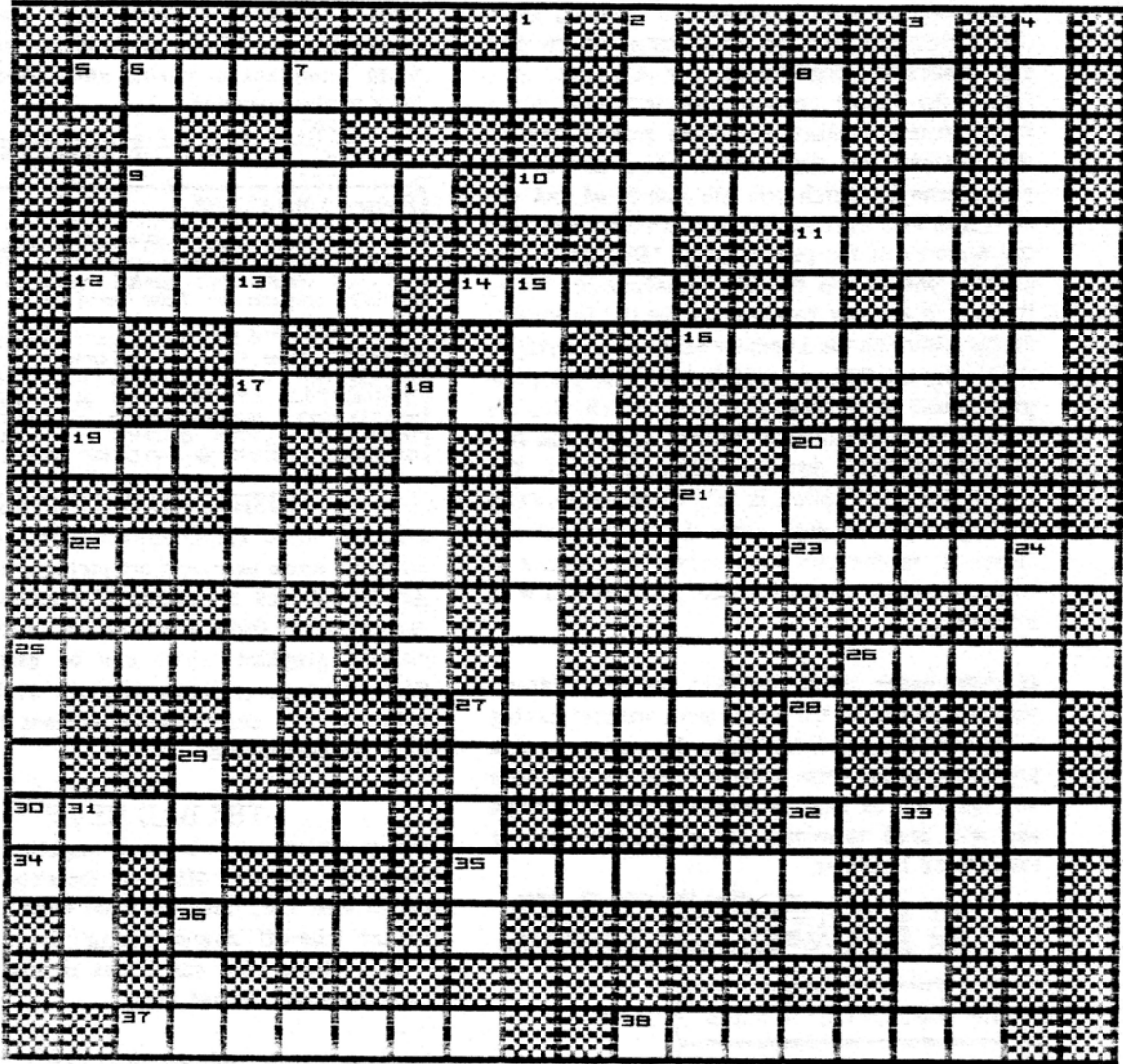
Every review must have its negative comments about the product. Mine are the extremely slow initial load and, until the most recent disks, the rocket take-off sound during the initial load (which blasts your ear drums if you happen to have the sound turned up!).

Loadstar can be ordered from SOFTDISK, P.O. BOX 30008, SHREVEPORT, L.A. 71130 - 00008. Mastercards, Visa Cards and American Express cards accepted. Details of the special offer appear in the most recent issues of U.S. magazines.

Written by Jeff Carey with assistance from Ross Edwards  
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FEBRUARY CROSSWORD



ACROSS CLUES

5. U.S. arm of G.M.
9. Japanese car maker.
10. This supplies the power.
11. Type of fuel.
12. Car of the decade.
14. Lotus made this one!
16. French car maker.
17. Classic American sporty car.
19. The Falcon has more of this than a Mini.
21. Number of Cylinders in the Datsun 240K.
22. Japanese car maker.
23. A nice compact car, a bit sporty.
25. Holden's zippy small car.
26. All cylinders have these, (singular).
27. Top Toyota.
30. French car maker.
32. Used in the wet.
34. Antonym of out.
35. Classy car this one!
36. Describes the VW's looks!
37. Land .....
38. A famous Buick.

DOWN CLUES

1. Much used initials.
2. Old *Japanese car maker*
3. English car maker - old.
4. A classic U.S. sports car.
6. Japanese car maker.
7. Holden's suspension system.
8. Pillarless Ford Falcon.
12. Number of cylinders in an MGA.
13. Car of the year.
15. 4WD.
18. Japanese car maker.
20. Nissan's sporty car.
21. Generic term for a four door.
24. A famous Buick.
25. A sporty Ford.
27. Generic term for a two door.
28. A Falcon has more than a Mini.
29. English car maker.
31. Ferarri's first name.
33. You need this to tow a heavy load.

GLOSSARY OF COMPUTING TERMS  
(JUS-MUL)

- Justify To align the left (left justify) or right (right justify) margins. This text is left justified. Center justify is to center all text with ragged right and left margins.
- k This is an abbreviation for kilo which is a prefix meaning 1,000. In computing a k usually refers to 1,024 bytes which is about 1k bytes. The 24 byte difference is usually ignored. For example the Commodore 64 is said to be a 64k byte machine but it is in reality a 65,536k byte machine.
- Language This a way of telling the computer what you want it to do. It is possible to give the computer instructions in machine language but this skill is only achieved by very few and only after a lot of practice. Even then it can be quite tedious for complex tasks. Usually it is much more desirable to use a language where each task can be written with one instruction. For example to print a message to the screen in BASIC  
PRINT "THIS IS A MESSAGE"  
is similar to most higher level languages. In machine code this may take up to a dozen instructions. High level languages are ones where each instruction may perform quite complex machine language tasks.
- M This is an abbreviation for meg which is a prefix meaning 1,000,000. In computing a meg usually refers to 1,048,576 bytes which is about 1M bytes. The 48,576 byte difference is usually ignored.
- Mainframe Computer  
Computer types are denoted by their physical size rather than their processing power. A mainframe is the largest of computers usually occupying a number of racks of equipment. The earliest mainframes were less powerful than some modern pocket calculators. Many modern mainframes such as the supercomputers with parallel processing can perform many complex tasks, for example image processing, with remarkable speed.
- Magnetic Tape  
There are a number of different sizes and formats of magnetic tape. Many home computers like the Commodore 64 use an audio compact cassette as a mass storage medium. This has proven both slow and unreliable. Machines such as Hewlett-Packard use a mini cassette with a format and directory structure similar to a disk drive. Larger machines may use up to 76mm wide tape.



#### Machine Code Programme

This is also called native code. Each line of machine code is one basic step in the operation of the computer. This is the fastest operating programme available. A machine code programme may be created by writing directly in machine code or assembly language, both of which produce similar results, or by using a compiler which is not as efficient as but much easier than assembly language programming.

#### Mass Storage Memory

This is usually disk driver or tape drives. This is where a computer stores large amounts of data that can not or need not be stored in the computers main memory.

#### Memory

This is where information is stored that is used by the computer. There are three basic types of memory, read only memory (ROM), random access (read write) memory (RAM) and erasable programmable read only memory (EPROM).

#### Micro Computer

This is the smallest of computers. They range from the handheld computer to smaller rack mount computers. The personal computer like the Commodore 64 come within this range.

#### Mini Computer

The mini computer is a large free standing or rack mount computer. They can typically handle several users and several tasks at once.

#### Modem

This is an abbreviation of the two words modulator and demodulator. The signals on the output port of a computer are unsuitable for placing on a communications system like a telephone line. For this reason they have to be converted into an audio signal. Varying tones are used to represent the digital signal and these tones are placed onto the telephone line. This is the modulator part. At the receiving end the demodulator converts the tones into the correct form for the computer to accept.

#### Modified Frequency Modulation (MFM)

Also called double density this was the successor to frequency modulation. This effectively doubled the capacity of a given size disk. The other way a disk capacity was increased was to double the number of tracks from 48 tracks per inch (TPI) to 96 TPI.

