



The Synchron Marauder

Dr. Peter McClean Millar

This book is dedicated to all the people who thought that the Millar Edition of the Synchron Marauder was a cool watch and bought one.

Health to enjoy it!

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My brothers and sisters Michael, Martin, Bronagh and Nuala and my children Katie and Kieran and my wife Stephanie. The Marauder really was made for them.

Finally, my friend Rick Marei. We have been talking watches for almost 25 years now. I think we hit the top of the tree with this one!

Foreword

When I wrote the book: DOXA – A History of the Vintage SUB, I considered it to be my last book. I felt I had reached the end of the road writing about the history of dive watches. But I did mention the phrase: “never say never” and it was at a time before I designed the Marauder dive watch. So, what do you know? Here I am again writing another (small) book on a dive watch. However, this watch is not a vintage watch, it doesn’t have a storied legacy from the 1960s or 1970s, it’s just something I came up with after writing about and reviewing watches for over 20 years. It also means that this time, I get to write the foreword to one of my books.

The watch business is a rough game and even rougher now at the beginning of 2026. The global economy is in a bit of a downturn and there seems to be more and more watch companies chasing a shrinking, watch purchase, money supply. The watch buying public has become much more aware of just how inflated prices have become for what amounts to the “name” on a dial. They have also started to realize that “Swiss Made” is economical with the truth at best and out and out deceit at worst. Thanks to the availability of cheap and robust movements like the Seiko NH35 and the rocketing improvement in the quality of Chinese watch manufacturers producing excellent timepieces at a fraction of the cost of a “Swiss Made” watch, many buyers are gravitating away from the traditional watchmakers.

However, I do feel that people are still willing to buy and feel proud to own watches like the Marauder that try to break the mold and represent a culmination of years of effort in bringing them to fruition.

As you will see, I made the initial prototypes of the Marauder using components from a cheap Chinese DOXA clone. If it hadn’t been for the availability of those parts, I doubt there ever would have been a Marauder. The production version of the Marauder will be made in Europe and it’s not a joke when I say that I considered adding: “Proudly Not Swiss Made” to

the bottom of the Marauder dial, however, I went for the more self serving and cooler to me: “Millar Watches” and then “Millar Edition”.

My initial thoughts about the watch were that it would be a really fitting end to my DOXA journey to have them make it and carry on producing it as a new modern take on the vintage SUB. I explain why that was never going to happen later in the book. But if I was being totally honest, I really wanted the watch to be made by Synchron and from the start it was always my intention to give my new NoDeCo bezel design to Rick Marei to use on a new generation of Synchron dive watches.

The initial concept of the Marauder was based on a 3rd Generation Synchron Era SUB. The bezel look was based on that same Synchron Era watch and the final Marauder case design borrowed heavily from the DOXA SUB 600T from 2003 which was one of the “best” watches from the Marei Era SUBs. It was more than fitting that the watch would become known as the Synchron Marauder.

My hope is that people like what I did with the initial bezel and watch design and what Rick and I achieved with the final production version of the watch. I have no delusions of grandeur for the watch. To most people it is just another dive watch competing for their purchasing dollars, but to me it is a pretty cool way to end what has been an incredible journey in the world of dive watch history.

In 20 years will the Synchron Marauder be considered an iconic dive watch? Maybe not, but it sure is nice to dream that it could be.



Dr. Peter McClean Millar
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The Inception and Design

Life has a funny way of turning out. 24 years ago, I bought a watch, a DOXA SUB 300T Reissue. I never would have thought that it would have led me to writing 6 books on DOXA history, 2 books on Aquastar history and a book on legendary divers. I also never would have thought that I would end up designing what could become an iconic dive watch.

Many people reading this will know of my books and the stories behind them, but at the time of writing few will know the story behind the watch I designed. The full name of the watch is the Synchron Marauder – Millar Edition.

Here is its story.

Probably not a surprise that I consider the DOXA SUB one of the "best" dive watches ever invented. The Initial Vintage SUB 300 from 1967 and the SUB 300T from 1968 are considered iconic and rightly so. In 1969 DOXA was absorbed into the Synchron group where they remained for almost 10 years. During this time The SUB design changed very little. Synchron engineers introduced a slightly modified bezel, a more robust clasp and a slightly thicker case. They also released the yellow dial Divingstar model. I also believe that they started to use red paint instead of orange for the NoDeCo numbers. I have no documented proof of that but so many of the 3rd generation Synchron Era SUBs have red NoDeCo numbers that it is a distinct possibility. The majority of vintage SUBs available today are the Synchron Era versions. Although now separate companies, DOXA and Synchron will be forever inextricably linked and in an amazing twist of fate the modern DOXA and Synchron dive watches were resurrected by the same man: Rick Marei.

Although the SUB design has stood the test of time, there are a few things I would have changed, so I set out to come up with what I consider a better SUB. I think I achieved this.

Image 1 | Synchron Era SUB 300T



Image 1 | Vintage SUB 300T Sharkhunter

When I was writing the Synchron Chapters for the Vintage DOXA SUB book, I included a 3rd generation Synchron Era SUB 300T photo which James Lamdin allowed me to use. The watch was a Jamician Defense Force issue and it was a spectacular looking watch and was just exactly the look I wanted.

What I loved about the watch is that the dial is matte black, contrasted with white hands which have old degraded lume. The bezel is almost brushed with no polished areas in sight. The NoDeCo numbers are red and the endpieces are flat. I'm normally a big fan of glossy black dials as they definitely give a deeper, richer black, but I wanted "my" SUB to have the same matte finish as the vintage Sharkhunters. On the beach and just below the surface, a colored dial, orange or yellow, is eye catching but colors disappear quickly with increasing depth and it then becomes a matter of contrast. Black dial and white hands give the best contrast so my watch was always going to have a black dial.

I'm giving a lot of the game away here but there is no good way to discuss the parts of the design and save the reveal to the end so the next photoshopped image shows the second version of what I initially called the Millar Marauder. You will have to read to the end to see the first version and then the final version. Spoiler alert, there is a HEV involved!

So, let's look at what I did. The bezel. At first glance the bezel looks like the DOXA NoDeCo bezel. It has the classic inner and outer rings / tracks, but look closely. Things have changed and I believe they have changed for the better, both in terms of design aesthetics and diver safety.

The outer ring is now a standard 60 minute implementation with longer lines indicating each minute, similar to how they were done with the Synchron Era SUBs. The inner ring is the NoDeCo track. Look at the numbers. They are different to the standard DOXA bezel, they indicate both Imperial (feet) and Metric (meters) depths and they are much more conservative than the vintage US Navy dive tables that the modern SUBs still show. Also, they are laid out symmetrically on the bezel. The standard DOXA bezel has areas where the numbers are grouped together and other



Image 2| [Marauder Bezel Design](#)

large areas of nothing. I wanted to fix that. I filed a patent for the bezel design.

Why did I change the bezel? Well, I wanted a bezel that used more modern Non Decompression table data which was more conservative and safer. The initial work on saturation and decompression was done by Haldane using goats. The US Navy tables were devised using fit, healthy young men and when you look at the original data to validate the tables you find that they only used 2 repetitive dives, not the multiple dives over several days that a resort diver does nowadays. Scuba diving is now enjoyed by millions of people world wide who are literally 9 to 90. Men, women and children of all ages and sizes. NoDeCo dive tables try to be a general one size fits all, but divers still get bent. There is a huge difference between the body mass, blood volume, metabolic rate and a plethora of other physiological measures between someone 6.2 feet tall and 200 pounds and someone 5 feet 2 and 90 pounds.

What always struck me about the NOAA and PADI tables was the message printed on them. It said:

WARNING: EVEN STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH THESE TABLES WILL NOT GUARANTEE AVOIDANCE OF DECOMPRESSION SICKNESS. CONSERVATIVE USAGE IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

I wanted my NoDeCo bezel to be as safe as possible and I wanted the numbers to be in both feet and meters. I looked at tables from the US Navy, DOPPLER, PADI, NAUI, SSI and others and took the most conservative numbers from them to arrive at what you see being used on the bezel.

I also wanted the bezel to be 60 clicks. Yes 120 clicks are smoother but there is nothing as satisfying as the solid click and sound of a 60 click bezel. Yes, I know there will be people who say, 120 is better because there tends to be less possibility of bezel movement. Well, my answer is that this watch is the Millar's Marauder. It's my watch. I wanted the watch to look and feel like it had been used for a couple of years and left in a drawer since 1976. The watch is designed as a true diver's tool watch, used under water in low visibility with gloved hands. One solid click is one minute. With a 60 click bezel you know what you are getting and can feel it.



Image 3 | [SUB 1200T DWL Sharkhunter Proof of Concept](#)

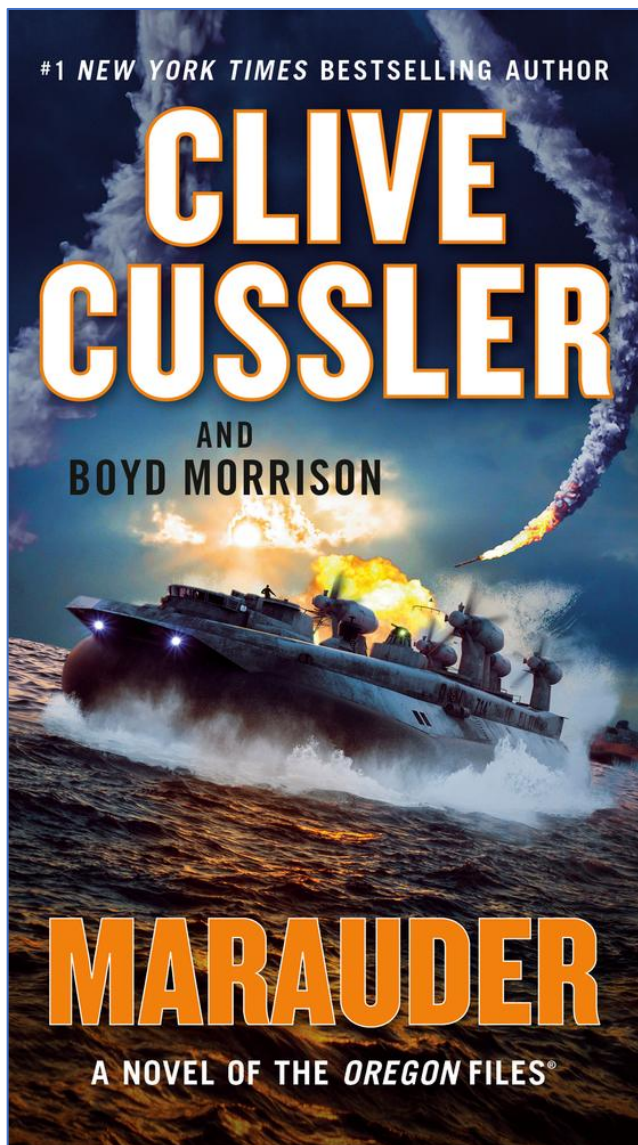
If you look at the dial you will notice a few things that will be recognizable to many people, especially when you see the lettering: Millar Edition.

The KMK logo at the top is what I use on my books. It was done for my kids, Katie and Kieran. I just stylized it by making the first K backwards.

The Diving With Legends logo is from my book and the orange dial SUB1200T DWL limited edition DOXA. Rick Marei had planned to make a black Sharkhunter version of the watch but it never came to fruition. I ended up making a proof of concept watch myself and many people liked it.

As for the name: Marauder, well, I just wanted a name that harked back to the 1960s and 1970s when the innovation in dive watches was at its

height. I was talking to Andy Bard and he agreed saying I couldn't call it something daft like the Sea Slug and we started throwing names back and forth. I liked the name Interceptor from the old British Jensen car and I thought Eddie Platts did great calling his watch the Dreadnought after the British battleship. I wanted something that would resonate with what the watch meant to me and that people would remember.



I've been a fan of Dr Clive Cussler and his adventure novels for over 30 years. It was actually one of those books which re-introduced me to the DOXA SUB. In almost every novel, the hero Dirk Pitt looks at his orange dial DOXA dive watch and proceeds to save the world.

I had first seen the orange DOXA in 1988 while running a subsea pipeline inspection off the coast of Abu Dhabi, but had pretty much forgotten about the watch until 1994 when I read SAHARA. There was that DOXA again.

"Pitt held up his Doxa dive watch and studied the luminous hands."

Cussler also released another Oregon Files series book by him and Boyd Morrison called MARAUDER. I really liked the title name and thought it would be a great name for my watch.

Marauder just seemed like the perfect name to go with my new NoDeCo bezel design. It was available so I trademarked the name. My hope is that the Marauder will be seen as not only a modern iconic watch, but also iconoclastic and a disruptor. It says, the Marauder is not following the easy trend to just remake a vintage watch, but is taking the whole design forward and creating a new icon which makes the old ones look tired and bereft of any real modern thinking. The name: Marauder, embodies "I'm firing a shot across the bows of all you companies who think adding a new color or diamonds to a tired design or making it out of plastic is the way forward. I'm cutting a path through that type of thinking." Also, my family watches will be known as the Millar's Marauders. It doesn't get better than that!

I wanted a watch based on the thinner cases of either the Initial Vintage SUB 300 or SUB 300T / 1st Generation Synchron version of the SUB 300T (they both used the same case, crown and (almost) caseback. The 300 and 300T can be seen in image 5.

I always considered these the best wearing of all the DOXA SUBs, because of their flat casebacks and height of 12.6mm for the 300T. The 1st Generation Synchron version had the modified NoDeCo bezel with the larger minute markers.

The Marei Era SUB 600T from 2003 was a good candidate. Not totally perfect as it had a rather thick caseback to accommodate a medallion inserted into it and used a slightly domed crystal. I wanted my watch to have a flat crystal. The 600T also had a 60 click bezel and the crown positioning was exactly center on the curved side of the case. Image 6 shows (bottom to top): Vintage SUB 300T, Vintage SUB 300 and the Marei Era SUB 600T.

Image 5 | SUB 300 and 300T



Image 6| SUB 300T, SUB 300 and SUB 600T



The one major difference to the modern DOXA case I wanted was that there were to be no polished areas at all. The vintage cases did not have polished sides. I wanted the top of the case, the case sides and the bezel to be brushed. Many modern dive watches have gone down a path towards more bling and more glitz. Everything is polished and pretty much every color available has been used on dials along with a sunburst effect.

The idea was that the new Marauder would look like a tool watch that had been used as a tool watch and any polished areas were long gone due to the passage of time, so the polished bezel and Beads of Rice had to go, replaced by lightly brushed versions. The SUB bezel has always been known as a scratch magnet, not so the Marauder's!

Then there were the endpieces. They had to be flat like the vintage endpieces, not the modern faux BOR look that everyone seems to use now. The vintage endpieces look so much better. Yes, I know there is an argument that to get the brushing to perfectly match the case then the end pieces have to be installed when the final case brushing is done. However, once again, this is the Millar Edition. It's a tool watch. My family or anyone else who is lucky to be able to buy one will be too caught up looking at the HEV and new bezel to give a care about whether the endpieces have parallel brushing or a 1.5 degree curvature. (Oooops, did I say HEV again....) There are only supposed to be 10 of these watches made for my family... but more on that later!

I also wanted the watch to look like it had been used and left in a drawer and forgotten about so I went with Light Old Radium luminous compound. However, it is the newer X1 formulation which is said to provide a brighter and longer lasting glow. And talking of Lume, I wanted more lume on the hands and dial so I increased the lume area. I actually took a cue from the DOXA SUB 1200T DWL, it has the most hands lume area on a modern SUB other than the 750T which is a bigger watch. The following image compares the lume area on the DWL, a SUB 300T and the Synchron Military.

I also wanted the crystal gasket to be a dark red, not only to match the numbers on the bezel but also as subtle pop of color and a nod to the look



Image 7 | [Minute Hand Lume Comparison](#)

of the vintage 3rd generation Synchron SUBs. There is just something about black and red which really appeals to me. You can see how the reddish colored gasket looks in the next image showing a Synchron Era 3rd generation 300T.

Image 8 | [3rd Generation Synchron Era SUB with Red Gasket](#)



Then there is the HEV. I'm actually not a great fan of a HEV. In fact, when I wrote the chapter on the HEV development in the Vintage DOXA book I said that the HEV was the greatest non event in dive watch history and I meant it. They are only useful to Saturation divers and when you are decompressing from Sat, just unscrew the crown! But, I wanted the Marauder to be a better SUB and so I thought maybe it would be better to include one, but with one proviso..... it had to be centered. I have wined on relentlessly for the last 10 years about how the SUB 1200T and 300T (which uses the same mid case) have a badly offset HEV. It drives me crazy and DOXA seem unable or unwilling to fix it!

Obviously the HEV positioning depends on the midcase design. There are a few things that come into play. Case thickness, diameter of HEV / shroud, depth of caseback screw threads, depth of Rehaut and angle of the "scalloped" area on the underside of the case.

The iconic SUB 300T Conquistador couldn't have the HEV centered so approximately 1 / 3 of the bottom of the valve shroud protruded below the line of the case side with that part of the valve showing underneath. It was actually a good look and if centering the Marauder HEV wasn't an option, I'd be very happy with that.

Hold that thought on the HEV, I'll come back to it.



Image 9| [First Caseback Design](#)

As this watch was really a vanity project for me and my family, I wanted the "Full Monty" (google the expression, if you don't know it) for the Millar Edition Marauder so I came up with this caseback.

Up to this point I had basically just made multiple photoshopped images of what



Image 10| [SUB 300T Conquistador with HEV](#)

I wanted the watch to look like. I had the bezel patent filed and I'd applied to trademark the name Marauder. How could I get the 10 watches I needed for my family made?

Obviously, Rick Marei and I have been friends for over 20 years and he was my first thought. I knew Rick was focusing on several new Aquastars he was about to release and had a few other watches in the pipeline. I wasn't sure if he would have the time or resources to make a vanity project for me.

You are probably all thinking, why not ask DOXA if they liked the concept and would consider making it a completely new line of SUBs? However, that was a non starter for several reasons. One trivial... I did not want "my" SUB bastardized with a Jenny fish on it. If this was to be a DOXA it was going to be a "pure" DOXA. The not so trivial reason was what happened after I sent DOXA a copy of the Vintage SUB book, or should I say, didn't happen. Sadly, DOXA showed little to no interest in the book. It took months before I even got a thanks and even with it they spelt my name wrong! I can't begin to describe the disappointment. Most watch companies would kill to have their history resurrected and documented the way I have done it for DOXA. Unfortunately, to me they just don't seem to care about the history that made them. In my naivety I considered that the Marauder could have been the new modern line for DOXA. They could go on changing the classic SUB into the fashion watch it has become, but the Marauder would be their modern take on the iconic SUB.

However, I was so done with DOXA that there was a bigger chance of me becoming the next king of England than of me asking them if they were interested in the Marauder. That left the question: could I make the 10 watches myself? Definitely not with a HEV, but maybe.....

Seestern and Maranez were making SUB clones, so getting an actual case and bracelet was no problem. They wouldn't be the exact same specifications I wanted for mine but they would do for a prototype. So, I chose the Seestern case for my prototype because it has a NoDeCo insert which I could remove and that solved a massive problem. But what about

the dial and bezel? That's where my friend: David (IG: @odokadolo_industries) comes in. David had made me the DWL Sharkhunter dial seen above, so I asked if he would make me some Marauder bezel inserts and dials. With his help I was able to prototype the watch in a matter of weeks. In a very short time, I could actually get to see and wear what I had drawn and photoshopped thanks to David. I couldn't have done it without him. The following image is the first prototype. I initially considered using squared off hands which I was going to file to increase the lume area so I cut the points off the DOXA style hands. Also you will notice the NoDeCo marking alignment is slightly off.



Image 11 | 1st Prototype



Image 12 | 1st Mock-up

The watch was based on the first mock-up I did, which you can see in the image above.

When I put the watch together it looked too new, so I used coffee to stain the hands and dial lume. That transformed it to looking like the vintage watch I had imagined. The last thing to do was implement the red ring just below the crystal. The Seestern uses a thin white plastic crystal gasket so I used a red Sharpie to color it, but it just wasn't big enough, so I ended up coloring the metal rehaut.

The Seestern Beads of Rice (BOR) bracelet was polished so I took a green pot scrubber to it and the end pieces and brushed them. Good but not good enough. I had a Suppaparts BOR bracelet which comes with flat endpieces and polished and brushed sides. The brushed side and flat endpieces were perfect and fit on the Seestern case. Finally, I ground the Seestern caseback flat to remove the image on it and I ground off the logo on the crown and brushed the case sides. I was so happy when I put this watch together. It was a dream come true.

Image 13| [1st Prototype with Flat Endpieces](#)





Image 14| [2nd Prototype](#)

Although I liked the look of the square hands, the minute hand just wasn't precise enough and it is a dive watch after all so I made them pointy again, but now they were shorter. I didn't have any more white hands. They are actually hard to find so I ended up painting and staining some red ones I had. I asked David to adjust the bezel markings to align the NoDeCo segments and increase the thickness of the lines and when the new insert arrived, I put together my second prototype.

When I compared the actual watch with the design mock-up I had done, I knew that I could make the 10 for my family. Even if it never made it into a formal production, I had designed and created something I was really proud of. My bezel was new and not just the same old 60 minute dive bezel everyone else uses. I had taken an iconic bezel and updated it and made something I considered far better. I was ecstatic. Hell, I needed 3 lemons to suck to take the smile off my face.

Of course, I had to get dials with the 4 primary Synchron era SUB colors:

Image 15| [4 Synchron Era Dial Colors](#)



black, orange, silver and yellow so I asked David to make more dials and inserts. I did make a few changes to the dial. My friend Predrag commented that all the fonts were different and that there needed to be something under the word: marauder to balance it, so I used the same fonts, capitalized DIVING WITH LEGENDS and added 300 meters. I didn't get an updated black dial made.

I initially used red minute and second hands for the silver and yellow dials, but I really didn't like the look so I settled on black hands.

Image 16| [Yellow Dial](#)





Image 17| [Silver Dial](#)

I did try a few other hand combinations as I was interested in getting as much hand lume as possible. Sword hands definitely have a larger lume area, especially on the minute hand.

The following image shows a combination I did for the yellow dial version. There were things I liked but more things I didn't and as my Marauder was



Image 18| [Different Hands](#)

really an update of a vintage Synchron era SUB, the hands had to be the traditional SUB style ones.

Besides, as far as I was concerned there would only be the black dial Millar's Marauder. The other dials were just for me to play with. I believed the chance of them or even the black dial version ever getting made were slim to none.

No matter what happened I knew that I could make the 10 watches I needed for my family. They would be cheap and cheerful and pretty unique.

Then I sent Rick Marei photos of all the watches and he called me up. "Pete, I want to make the 10 watches you want for your family."

Things were about to get real serious.

There are another 74 pages to the story where a famous literary and movie character makes an appearance and include these.



All based on my final design mock-up.



Oh, and this makes an appearance.....



It's an AI generated version of my final caseback design.