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45 Convertible Boat Test Report



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BRIDGING THE GAP

By Captain Patrick Sciacca

With the success of its 42- and 50- foot convertibles, this New Jersey builder adds a 45 to ease the transition into big boat ownership.

I was sitting on my boat at my hometown marina in Freeport, New York, when a voice called out from down the dock, “Hey kid, you gotta see dis” in a distinctly Brooklynese tone. It was the captain of a Silverton 48 Convertible dubbed *Caribbean Queen*. The boat was spending the summer in my marina, and since Captain Joe and I had exchanged hellos and shared dock talk over the season, he was inviting me onboard to see his boat. I took him up on the offer, especially knowing that I had an upcoming sea trial on Silverton’s prototype 45 Convertible just a few days later, and this would give me a good opportunity to understand the look, layout, and philosophy behind this New Jersey builder’s bigger boats.

The 2003 48 was impressive. I especially liked the electric panel behind the flat-panel LCD TV, to starboard just as you enter the saloon from the cockpit. I simply flipped up the TV, and there it was. I also liked the galley-up, large dinette to starboard, and L-shape Ultraleather settee to port. In addition, the 715-hp Volvo Penta D-12s were housed in an engine room that gave me stand-up headroom (I’m 5’7”). After spending about an hour onboard listening to the captain praise the virtues of this 48, including how he ran her in six-plus-footers from New York City to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, last season without issue, I was ready to see what her new little sister had to offer. That is if you consider this 45-footer, which bridges the size difference between Silverton’s 42- and 50-footer, little.

The minute I spotted her at the docks of New York’s Tobay Beach Boat Show, I was struck by the 45’s lines. Her wraparound windshield allows light to flood into the saloon, narrowing at the sides and accenting the raked flying bridge and curvaceous pilasters, which are equipped with sturdy stainless steel handholds. They not only complement the boat’s lines, but they come in handy when transiting the two 15-inch steps from the cockpit up to the side decks. And there’s another handhold under the flying-bridge overhang, a detail that makes me suspect a well-versed boater had a hand in this vessel’s design. Silverton added more handholds along the flying bridge and a bowrail that was thigh high on me and starts just forward of the house. Consequently, you’re never left without something to hold onto. Combine this with an aggressive molded-in diamond non-skid, and you get a secure feeling maneuvering around all points.



The bluewater heritage of the 45 Convertible shines under bumpy offshore conditions.

Her build is just as sturdy, as she's comprised of a solid fiberglass hull bottom with balsa coring to add rigidity, and her modified-V hull (12-degree aft deadrise) was well matched to her optional 715-hp D12s. On the flat-calm backwaters behind Tobay Beach, my 45 got up to plane in about 15 seconds and topped out at 39.7 mph at 2360 rpm, according to my radar gun. At this speed she burned 71 gph. When I dropped her down to a comfortable cruise of 2000 rpm, the 45 hit an average speed of 32 mph while burning 46 gph. That's admirable fuel economy, and if conditions allow, you can cruise at that speed for 382 statute miles.

So the 45's got the range and build for transiting north for the summer and south in the winter, as well as doing weeklong cruises to your favorite ports of call. If you're going to make those kinds of trips, you'll need a comfy, homelike interior layout, and to that end Silverton offers a standard sit-and-melt-into-it L-shape Ultraleather® settee that's immediately to port upon entering the saloon via the cockpit's hefty sliding door. The living area is on one level while the galley is up, just forward of the settee, and complete with standards such as Sub-Zero® under-counter 'fridge and freezer, Tappan® microwave, and three-burner EuroKera® electric cooktop. All countertops are Corian®, which is durable and easy to maintain, and as with the 48, the dinette, which seats five, is opposite. One difference from the 48 is that electrical panel and TV. The standard TV, a 26-inch Solé® LCD, is in a similar spot, aft in the saloon and to starboard. On the plus side, it retracts for easy stowage. However, unlike the 48, the electrical panel is located at sole level. You have to kneel down to flip breakers on and off. I surmised the reason was less bulkhead space compared to the 48. While I understand the space constraints, I'd like to see that panel come up to eye level.

As efficiently as the saloon/dinette/galley is set up for cruising and entertaining, so is the below-decks area for catching Zs. The forepeak master features a queen island berth and en suite head. There's room for all your traveling clothes in cedar-lined closets that flank the foot of the berths as well as in overhead stowage compartments. This room, like all the staterooms and spaces related to this boat's interior, sports rounded bulkheads. Not only does this look offer a smooth transition from one space to another, but it also maximizes available room in the 45's 15'4" beam.

In addition to the master, just aft to port and starboard are guest staterooms. The port stateroom is offered with twin berths that can be filled in to make a single full-size berth. Access to the day head is also from this stateroom. The starboard-side guest stateroom features an athwartships berth for two and also houses the optional GE® stacked washer/dryer. The closet here has a clothesline but no space below to hang jackets, pants, dresses, etc. I'd sacrifice the washer/dryer in lieu of more space to hang longer clothing. Space allocation is well done below decks; however, this doesn't transfer to the engine room, which is tight

even for my 160-pound frame. Let me clarify. The space between the engines allowed me to turn between the big Volvo Pentas with ease, but access to the top of the engines is about two fists high. On the inboard side of the port engine, oil filters and the like are readily accessible. But on the starboard motor, they're outboard, and because I had to kneel to get around in this space, I had to crawl over about 15-inch-wide space to the onboard side and squeeze between the hull and the engine to access the filters (see above). By contrast, on the 48 the filters were mounted on the aft section of the starboard engine, which is easily accessible. Being that the genset is here on the 45, that was impossible. Still, it seems those filters need to be as accessible as those on the port side.

Another thing I noticed here is that the two I-beam engine bearers are mounted through the fore and aft bulkhead with six heavy duty bolts per side. And the bearers sit several inches above the stringer. While I'm used to seeing the bearers also secured into the stringers, Silverton says that this is a tried and true build method it's been employing for nearly eight years. The advantage, says the builder, is that it's easy to accommodate different engine sizes by simply adjusting the mounts fore and aft on the beams. It also reportedly reduces build time, and when you're cranking out 500-plus boats per year, that's important. Taking into account that this was a prototype vessel, I'd say Silverton has done a good job with the 45, combining performance, style, and livability. And with so many 42 owners out there and the 50 being a bit of a big step up in size from the 42 for some, the builder has a boat that I think should successfully bridge the gap between those two models. In fact, she should help owners graduate into a boat that offers more room and more comfort and that should ultimately translate to even more fun on the water.

Perhaps you're into cruising more than fishing, but with nearly 100 square feet of available cockpit, the Silverton 45 convertible can be fished effectively. Besides, who wouldn't like some fresh fillet fried up on that three-burner galley cooktop? To this end, Silverton offers what it calls a "Fish Pak" option for your 45 for around \$6,000. The fishing amenities include six rocket launchers, four in-gunwale rod holders, interior cherry rod holders, in-transom livewell, tackle locker, and salt-and-freshwater washdowns. All you need to do is add a couple of rods, pick up some bait, and find your favorite fishing spot. All in all, it's a well-rounded package that should get a newbie fisherman going in the right direction and make an experienced angler smile.

**POWER
& MOTORYACHT**





The 45 Convertible salon is roomy and well-lit.

Double Duty

by John Clemans

Silverton's 45 Convertible can troll for bluefish or blue marlin, but it also draws heavily on the builder's motoryacht expertise

You've heard of the gentleman's runabout - a boat with some speed, but whose emphasis is on soft leather and hard wood. Well, Silverton has produced a family "fishabout" - a boat with some fishability, but one that draws heavily on the firm's cruiser and motoryacht expertise. It's not the first such hybrid in the Silverton fleet; 33, 36, 38, 42 and 50-foot convertibles also are in the lineup. This new 45 is the missing link. Owners of 42s can now step up without having to make a \$500,000 leap to Silverton's flagship.

The 45 is a hybrid only in the sense that, as Mike Usina, Silverton's vice president of sales and marketing, says, "It's more cruising than fishing-oriented." Hard-core tournament types may find it lacking. But trophy fish can be hooked, fought and released with ease from the cockpit of this soft-core battlewagon. Stairs to the bridge don't deter strikes, even when the carpet is snapped in

place; and the pocketed, Donald Blount hull is smartly maneuverable with the standard electronic controls. It backs down smoothly, too.

The bridge is high off the deck (eight steps), so the generous overhang that provides plenty of shaded real estate in the cockpit and space to easily move behind the twin pedestal helm seats doesn't keep a skipper from seeing an angler's rod tip. As for styling, the 45 has a classic sportfish profile with a sport bridge touch - an arch-style hardtop. "Buyers want a convertible that looks like one in the traditional sense," says George Wynne, Owner of Boater's Landing, the Silverton dealer in Ft. Myers. Wynne was along for the ride during our test of the 45 off Captiva, Fla.

The bottom line, however, is the amount you get for \$686,395 (w/500-hp Volvo D9s). Shop that price against a similar-sized Riviera, Cabo, Ocean, Viking or Bertram, then look at the options lists, and you'll get the picture.



A second stateroom provides a full size berth and stand-up room to change.

Baitwells are standard on most battlewagons, but Silverton has targeted the 45 at Owners who fish only occasionally or even not at all. For anglers and divers, the transom door is standard. More to the point, so is a sunlounge with drinkholders on the bow. One trade-off - in order to gain interior volume - is narrow sidedecks.

Cruisers take note: This is a 45 with three double berths - two of them queen-sized - and two big heads. There are optional stereos and flat-screen TVs for each stateroom. The layout provides privacy and comfort for the long haul. The hull carries its forward beam down fairly straight for extra width in the master stateroom. Most boats seem to "settle in" to specific cruising speeds; they just feel right at certain rpm levels - easy and content. This one really savors 2300 (27 mph; 40 gph), and purrs along (74 dB-A in the salon) economically (0.75 mpg) at 1800 (19 mph). Tracking is superb. I let go of the wheel and stayed in the

ICW channel for half a mile before having to correct. Construction is basic and strong, with a full-glass bottom, balsa in the sides and decks and a hull/deck joint that's bonded, bolted and glassed. Standard power is twin 500-hp Volvo D9 diesels. In addition to the 540-hp Cummins diesels in our test boat, Volvo 715-hp D12s and 720-hp Yanmars are also offered.

With sleeping room for at least three couples, seating for eight on the air-conditioned bridge and a serviceable cockpit for fishing for species from bluefish to blue marlin, the Silverton 45 is about as all-inclusive as a boat this size can get. If you're looking for a cruiser with serious fishing potential, this is it.



The forward master stateroom sports an island queen berth with loads of storage underneath

Warm Welcome by Kevin Falvey

Civility meets ability.

Crash pumps, straight-shaft diesel inboards, and surge tubes on the exhausts are just some of the features that make the Silverton 45C at home a hundred miles from shore – just like any good convertible fishboat. Yet its large swim platform, relatively low horsepower engines, and opulent three-stateroom, two-head accommodations make its cruising mission as large and clear as its expansive cabin windshield. Oh, this boat will hunt, but it's also happy romping around a field.

And then there's the cost. Most fishing convertibles this size displace about 25 percent more – so the Cabos, Oceans, and Vikings of the world need twin 700-hp motors. More displacement makes a boat more expensive to build and to run. If you don't need to crush waves for a hundred miles with a ton of fish and ice aboard, then you don't need the extra displacement. With the 45C, Silverton offers a cruising boat that has many of a battlewagon's best qualities, allowing it to stand a head above the cruising boat pack in terms of seaworthiness and machismo.

If you think the above qualifies the 45C as the perfect boat, don't. You should have heard me bellyaching about the lack of sealing compound on bonding and electrical terminals in the bilge. But that's where my engine room gripes stopped.

The twin 540-bhp Cummins MerCruiser QSC-8.3 diesel inboards were installed on powder-coated steel I-beams. Each of these spanned bulkheads fore and aft. With beds like these, engines and shafts will stay aligned through all but the most abusive operation by the most inexperienced owners in rough seas. And even then, they're idiot proof.

Limber holes are sealed, clamps are double, and all seacocks, filters, and dipsticks are at hand. I liked the battery box, a beam-width fiberglass cabinet against the

forward bulkhead. Its lid keeps things clean and service doesn't get easier. If you don't work on your engines, know that access to the engine room is fishboat style: a cockpit hatch against the cabin bulkhead. Greasy-footed mechanics won't be tramping through your salon (and you won't have to leave the boat unlocked when you schedule service).

To see how all this gear makes the boat go, take the stairs – yeah, stairs; there's no fishboat ladder here – to the flying bridge and grab the controls. My test boat surged onto plane. Visibility is good – inclination wasn't excessive – and Silverton thoughtfully notched the boss at the front of the bridge. That gives the captain and any crew seated at the forward lounge a view across the pulpit at all times. The standard EZ2CY panel that connects between the hardtop and brow enhances visibility even more.

Wide open, the 45C made 32 mph with half fuel, canvas up, and the bottom painted. I found 2300 rpm and 25 mph an ideal cruising speed – the engines weren't being overworked and the boat was responsive to helm commands. During one of my passes, minimum plane, what I use to assess a boat's ability to maintain positive steerage in rough water, was a confidence-inspiring 12.6 mph at 1490 rpm, tabs down. For me, any speed under 15 mph is the mark of a boat that can remain comfortable in steep, short seas. Many cruisers with aft-mounted V-drive power can't make this benchmark.

LUXE DIGS

The 45C's 87-square-foot cockpit sports space for fish fighting – or a slew of chaise lounges. There's a rigging center with tackle stowage and an icemaker against the bulkhead and a livewell at the transom. A gated tuna door leads to the swim platform. Macerated fishboxes are in the sole. The rodholders drain to the bilge, hence the rubber caps. There's no toekick, hence the rubber caps again. There are coaming bolsters, but they were

likely installed after the cockpit shower. How could I tell? The bolsters overlapped the shower door, preventing it from opening – a gaffe that has no place in a convertible’s cockpit. Silverton said this would be corrected in production.

In the cabin, you’ll find a mix of fixed and opening windows, a TV that rises from a burlwood console, and an overall luxuriousness tempered by ruggedness. For instance, the counters are a custom solid-surface pattern you can get only on a Silverton. A luxury. Yet there are no hull ports in the forward stateroom. The reason? They eventually leak, which is why most fishboats forgo them. A queen island berth and a private head with beveled mirror, Amtico® faux-wood flooring, and shower complete this master stateroom.

Port and starboard guest staterooms are also behind solid-framed doors. Portside, two twin berths can be filled to make a queen. Private access to the day head, with its shower, is here. To starboard is an athwartship queen berth. The laundry is in this room, not in a bilge space beneath the passageway stairs. More convenience: it’s a stacked washer/dryer, not a combo unit.

There’s no reason why you couldn’t shop the 45C against fishboats, such as Ocean Yachts’ 42,600-pound 46 Super Sport (\$866,500, with twin 710-bhp Caterpillar C-12 diesel inboards). But I’d bet that if you like the 45C, you’ll look at Sea Ray’s 44 Sedan Bridge (\$630,781 with twin 500-bhp Cummins MerCruiser diesel inboards), a straight-shafted, 28,500-pound displacement inboard cruiser.

EXTRA POINT

A standard isolation transformer prevents stray current corrosion from sneaking aboard, regardless of voltage. The more common and less expensive galvanic isolators only eliminate stray current below 1.2 volts.

BOATING®



DUAL COOL

By Chris Caswell

A convertible for the family and the fisherman

Silverton Marine, which has long been a price-point competitor in the marine industry, recently faced a serious gap between its 42 and 50-foot Convertible. The jump in size wasn't that great (the 42 is really 44 feet, 6 inches, and the 50 is 51 feet, 7 inches), but the price gap was about half a million dollars.

That's how boats are born: To make it easier for Silverton owners to move up the line, the 45C was commissioned. Its design brief: to provide the interior of a larger yacht with three staterooms, two heads and a galley-up arrangement like the 50C. The layout is classic convertible with a large cockpit that is equally at home fishing or cruising, and a tourney-style flying bridge with the helm aft and lounge seating forward. Again, this is ideal for keeping track of the cockpit action, and it allows the skipper to socialize with his guests on the bridge. A thoughtful touch.

The accommodations are surprisingly large, with the owner's cabin forward with a double berth and private head, another double cabin aft to starboard and twins in a portside cabin. The latter two cabins share the day head with shower. The interior is finished in cherry with a raffia wall covering, and Silverton provides innerspring mattresses on all berths.

To shoehorn all this into a nearly 48-foot hull requires some sacrifices, however, most notably in the saloon where the raised sheerline places the windows so high that guests seated at the couch or dinette cannot see out (except aft).

Standard power is the new Volvo Penta D9 with 500 hp (options include Volvos to 800 hp plus 720 hp Yanmars), but our test boat had a pair of Cummins QSC diesels of 540 hp each. The engine installation is clever, with a pair of powder-coated steel beams that serve as engine beds suspended between the fore and aft engine room bulkheads. The more usual procedure is to bolt the engines to stringers integral with the hull, but this

suspension method not only allows Silverton to easily switch between optional engines, according to the company, it also serves to insulate vibration. Plus, it enables access under the engines with room to clean up the inevitable oil drippings.

Fit and finish are commensurate with a price-competitive yacht: Silicone is used to fill seams, and I found some rough joints between panels. On the other hand, handrails were solid and plentiful, and the steps to the flying bridge make for safe passage even in rough weather. I liked the lighted steps to the side decks, but the piano-hinged transom door was a bit shaky.

Underway, we topped out at 32.6 mph and though the 45C weighs in at just 38,000 pounds, the deep 13-degree transom deadrise means that she's going to be comfortable in a seaway. Although we had flat water for our speed runs, the boat had a solid feel that I expect would continue even in rougher seas.

Built for the growing family and the casual angler, the Silverton 45C offers a lot of space for a lot of fun at a reasonable price.



SPECIFICATIONS

Length Overall - w/o Swim Platform	47'8"	14.53 m
Beam	15'4"	4.67 m
Draft	44"	1.12 m
Deadrise	12.5°	
Approximate Weight (Dry)	38,000 lbs	17,237 kg
Fuel Capacity	612 gals	2,317 l
Water Capacity	120 gals	545 l
Holding Tank Capacity	72 gals	273 l
Sleeping Capacity	6-8	
Headroom	6'6"	1.98 m
Clearance Height-DWL no light	16'10"	5.13 m

Power Options: Diesel:

Twin Volvo D-9 500 HP - 373 KW

Twin Cummins QSC 8.3 533 HP - 398 KW

Twin Volvo D-9 575 HP - 429 KW

Twin Volvo D-12 715 HP - 533 KW

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

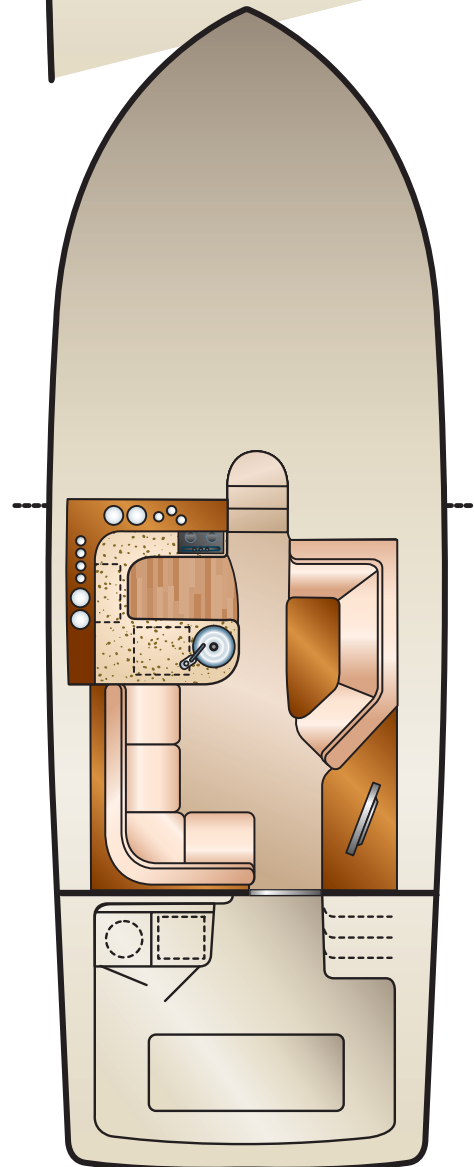
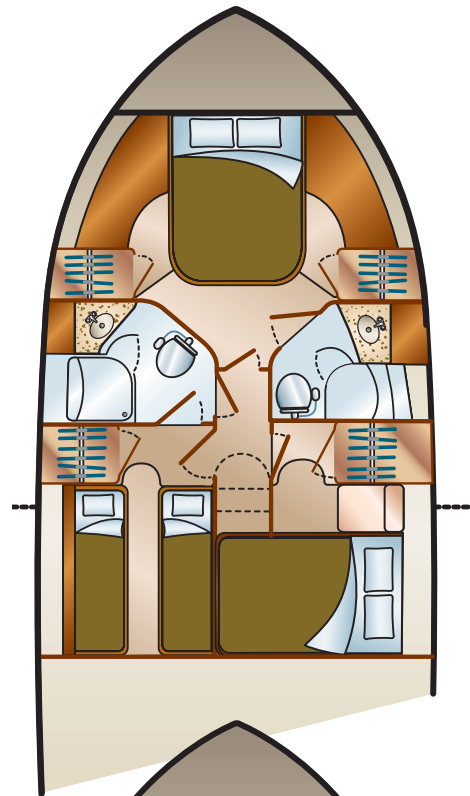
(Major items): EZ2CY front and Strataglass side enclosures on flying bridge; hardtop with spreader lights; Ultraleather settee and dinette seating; Solé 26" retractable LCD TV in saloon; 2 VacuFlush MSDs; Amtico galley sole; Scotchgard® carpeting; Bose® 3.2.1® sound system in saloon; 44,000 btu three zone A/C; innerspring mattresses for all berths; cherrywood tabletop and doors; 4 cedar lined hanging lockers; 10kW Kohler genset with soundshield.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Central vacuum system; Norcold® fridge on flying bridge; 15" Solé flat panel TVs in master and guest staterooms; 4 rod holders; in-transom livewell; swim platform; linen package; Volvo Penta bow thruster (standard w/Volvo Penta engines; Glendinning® Cablemaster; ACR spotlight, Maxwell® windlass, 3-side EZ2CY flybridge enclosure; GE washer/dryer

COMPANY HISTORY

Headquartered in Millville, NJ, Silverton is one of the leading builders of aft-cabin family cruisers. Innovations such as the SideWalk, a molded stairway on the side of the flybridges, and newly designed interiors have brought the company into the new millennium with style and elegance without losing sight of value. The company employs over 450 people, and has been in business for over 37 years.



POWER & MOTOR YACHT

Test Performance Data

RPM	MPH/KTS	GPH	MPG/NMPG	SM RANGE	NM RANGE	Db	Trim
1000	10.5/9.1	11.0	0.95/0.83	526	456	68	1.0°
1250	12.0/10.4	21.2	0.57/0.49	312	271	73	4.0°
1500	17.3/15.0	28.4	0.61/0.53	336	292	75	5.5°
1750	24.6/21.3	37.4	0.66/0.57	362	314	80	6.0°
2000	32.0/27.8	46.2	0.69/0.60	382	332	81	5.0°
2250	37.2/32.3	62.0	0.60/0.52	330	287	83	4.5°
2360	39.7/34.5	71.0	0.56/0.49	308	268	84	4.0°

Conditions: Temperature: 70°F; Humidity: 73%; Wind: 0-5 mph; Seas: Calm; Load: 160 gallons fuel, 120 gallons water, 4 persons, 200 pounds of gear. Speeds are two-way averages measured with Stalker radar gun. GPH with Volvo Penta electronic fuel-monitoring system. Decibels measured on A scale. 65 dB is the level of normal conversation.

BOATING

Test Performance Data

RPM	MPH/KTS	GPH	MPG/NMPG	SM RANGE	NM RANGE	Db	Trim
900	6.9/7.9	3.0	2.3/2.6	1260	1450	74	0°
1200	8.6/9.9	8.3	1.0/1.2	571	657	82	2°
1500	9.2/10.6	17.8	0.5/0.6	285	328	83	4°
1800	16.3/18.7	23.8	0.7/0.8	376	433	86	5°
2100	21.1/24.3	33.3	0.6/0.7	349	402	85	5°
2400	24.9/28.6	44.6	0.6/0.6	307	353	87	4°
2680	27.8/32.0	56.8	0.5/0.6	270	310	89	4°

Advertised fuel capacity 607 gallons. Range based on 90% of that figure. Performance measured with three persons aboard, half fuel half water. Sond levels taken at helm, in dB-A.

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