

SEALINE

T46

Proven once already, Sealine International's combination of an aft cabin, an aft cockpit and a flybridge on the same cruiser has moved into a second generation. Is it a real improvement?



The 450 Statesman served the Sealine marque well as their flagship until the launch of their T51 last year, whereupon they turned their attention to developing an all-new replacement for this highly practical cruiser.

The result, the T46, retains the clever layout of an aft-cabin coupled with a slightly raised aft cockpit and a flybridge, but adds the T-series look and a little more space all round.

We took the very first boat off the production line out in a lively autumn chop to see how it has moved on from its well proven predecessor.

Design & layout

Although badged along the same lines as their flagship T51, and echoing the same conservative but more expensive fit-out, the T46 follows in the footsteps of its elder sister the 450 (see MBM Jun 91 p42) and Sealine's

Decks



Guardrails run right back to the cockpit, and we like the way that, from the break of the bow onwards, they step up even higher and incorporate a solid mid-rail for extra security.

Helped by the chest-high handrail along the superstructure and the good depth of toerail, which increases to a mini-bulwark on its run forward, it is a safe and easy matter to get along



the 8.5in (22cm) side decks.

The good-sized foredeck offers plenty of room to work if you are tending the half-sunk vertical windlass or using the sensibly designed bitt-like cleats fitted atop the bulwark; 12in (30cm) versions of these are located fore and aft, plus two 10in (25cm) jobs on each side for springs.

The only disappointment is that the large chain locker at the bow is not segmented, even though its good-sized hatch makes it easy to pile warps and fenders down inside.

Cockpit

As well as the sole, the cockpit's horseshoe-shaped bench is also laid to teak, which alleviates the preponderance of white GRP and makes it more comfortable to sit on if the cushions are stowed.

Furthermore, with teak tending to show dirt less and take knocks

better than mouldings, it allows the seating to double as decking, with people boarding from alongside or nipping over the coaming to attend to fenders and lines. However the overhang appears to extend further aft than on the Sealine 450, so you must watch your head when stepping up on the seat to negotiate your way over the transom.

The aft cabin steals the voids within the seat moulding to augment its headroom, so there are no seat lockers, just a rope bin let into the port coaming

and a liferaft stowage.

Sealine have done their usual trick of moulding the flybridge overhang with a couple of hinged hatches, one of which neatly allows the cockpit canopy to be rolled up and tucked inside while the other provides stowage for the cockpit table.

The wide, easy, teak-laid stairs which lead up to the flybridge can themselves be battened down to keep out the elements, with the aid of a sliding hatch and half-height door.

present 43-footer by

incorporating both a flybridge and a full-beam aft cabin.

Inevitably this means that the saloon ends up a few steps down from the cockpit, rather than at the same level, but the wide sliding door between these areas means

they are not isolated from each another. One advantage of the raised cockpit is that it offers a better view; given a good length of flybridge overhang, incorporating Sealine's usual integral canopy stowage, it can also be well protected from the elements without resort to acres of canvas.

Having a cabin right aft means there is plenty of privacy between this and the forecabin, especially with both having en-suite facilities.

The area in between is fitted-out for easy, comfortable living, with a sociable arrangement of facing settees in the saloon, an excellent dual-seat helm layout, and a lower area incorporating a sensible sized galley. Opposite this you can specify a dinette or a third cabin, the latter configured either with a pair of single bunks or with a double berth; you can also pay extra to furnish this cabin with its own en-suite basin and toilet, at the

expense of some dressing room and stowage.

The T46's hull is medium-to-deep-vee in form, having a deadrise of 21° amidships and 16.5° at the transom. It is devoid of tunnels, with the engines driving conventional shafts. The underwater sections have two sets of sprayrails which fade by mid-length, whilst above the chine the topsides feature a number of soft knuckles which help to break up the bulk.

Compared with the 450, the T46 has grown an extremely broad chine flat, especially at the bow, where its outer edge breaks out from the flair of the topsides to give a distinctly drier ride. As with the T51, the bow is kept very clean, with a

Bathing platform

The bathing platform is laid to teak as standard, as are the steps running up the transom to port to give access to the cockpit, and the ones outboard of the platform itself which enable you to get forward while the canopy is in situ.

The platform runs full width, for ease of boarding, and has plenty of associated handrails, including



one at the waterline for grabbing when you return to the mothership by dinghy.

To help get the dinghy itself aboard, it appears the neatest option is to sign up for the optional Cooney crane/passerelle, which simply swings athwartships across

the transom when not in use, although ordinary davits can be fitted if preferred.

A large locker will take a couple of fenders, as well as allowing the cradle for the tender to be hinged out of the way and stowed, keeping the area clear of obstructions. A bathing ladder and a shower are also provided as standard.

Flybridge

The flybridge has a roomy L-shaped settee, coiling in part round the helm station, plus a sunpad covering the area of the overhang. The sole is laid to teak as standard, but stowage is restricted to just one large locker within the starboard hand run of seating.

The coaming is only moderate in height, but the builders have run a good height of guardrail around it and the forward part is topped off with an effective

wind-deflecting screen.

The helm seat to port is a double affair, with the skipper set just off the centreline and his companion outboard. The console is clearly laid-out, with the throttles and wheel falling easily to the hand and instrumentation and navigation aids well placed for both occupants.

Standard fit-out includes a comprehensive line-up of Autohelm electronics, including log, depth-sounder and autopilot, together with a VHF, all of which is doubled up at the interior helm. There is also a bow-thruster.





Saloon

A wide, curved sliding door leads down a couple of stairs from the cockpit into the saloon, with the top tread of these steps hiding the

fuel shut-offs and changeover manifold.

Alpi consistently grained cherry joinery and Alcantara, with matching leather trim to items such as the helm seats and fascia, give the saloon a smart feel,

rather like that of an executive boardroom. Headroom is a generous 6ft 6in (1.95m).

The large semicircular settee to starboard is equipped with a two-size, adjustable-height table. It faces a two-seater to port, along with a sideboard incorporating a fridge, a drinks cabinet and an entertainment centre.

When seated in either of the settees, the window line allows a good view. Sections of these windows and side portions of the windscreen can be opened electrically. The seat cushions lift to give access to stowage areas which are for the most part moulded-out.



Galley

The U-shaped galley is a good size and well appointed, with plenty of Corian work surface and cupboard space.

Fittings include a pair of inset stainless steel sinks, a three-ring halogen hob and a combi grill/microwave, set at a sensible height. Overall the stowage is fine, although some more drawers would not go amiss.



Our main gripe, one which applies to a fair number of modern boats, is the lack of any lip, let alone a fiddle to the worktop, leaving nothing to stop things sliding off the ultra-smooth surface. The flush fit of the hob leaves it open to similar criticism, so that even the wash you can encounter at your berth is sufficient to cause havoc.

More sensible is the use of teak and holly flooring, so at least you can easily clear up any spillages.

Interior helm

Although catering for the usual twosome, the inside helm arrangement does so with a pair of individual seats rather than the usual mini settee. This works well because either party can move out without disturbing the other, and the throttles are located centrally so that if the skipper leaves his station his companion can readily get to them.

We would have preferred to have the leather trimmed seats contoured rather than flat, as there is a tendency to slide about slightly. Also legroom in front of the navigator's seat was short, although we were told this is being improved on future boats.

The console is well thought-out, with the angled wood wheel set almost on the centre-line, 'immediate' gauges and electronics grouped clearly around it and along the skipper's

armrest, and room for larger navigation aids in a double tier biased towards the co-pilot's side.

The comprehensive standard fit-out doubles up all the electronics found at the flybridge helm station, with a Raytheon

R10XX radar added for good measure.

Some of the ready-use switches took a bit of finding,

until we spotted that most of these are set in an overhead panel. This is fine for items such as navigation lights, which you want either on or off, but less so for others such as the screen's two self-parking wipers. These are often required intermittently, and to have to keep looking up to lay a finger on the switch is somewhat annoying.

On the plus side, we liked the provision of handholds within the seat-backs, offering a grabhandle for anybody standing behind, or attending to the main electrics panel, which is readily accessible outboard.



flush-mounted anchor at the head of the stem rather than a distinctive nose carrying the ground tackle.

Back aft, the transom area is also considerably reworked, incorporating a large bustle of a locker within the built-in bathing platform, and access steps leading directly to the side decks.

Heights throughout the boat have been carefully worked out to give plenty of standing headroom. Rather cleverly, the builders still manage to eke this out to a full 6ft 3in (1.91m) between the raised cockpit sole and the flybridge overhang.

Performance & handling

Two engine options are offered at present. The less powerful one is a pair of Volvo Penta TAMD 71Bs, producing 380hp apiece, but the boat we tried had a pair of the electronically managed 73P EDCs, based on the same block, which ups the horsepower to 430hp.

Given a forecast threatening southwesterly gusts of up to 45 knots, it was a pleasant, if chilly, surprise to find instead a Force 5-6 northwesterly teasing the waters of the River Hamble and Solent beyond.

Departing from Moody's Marina in Swanwick was easy enough, the stiff breeze blowing the T46 off a generous berth. The shoreside crew were able to step aboard via the bathing platform without difficulty, working the forward deck proved safe and secure, and visibility from the flybridge helm was good all round, save for the starboard quarter where the overhang intervenes.

Volvo Penta's EDC electronic single-lever controls can be moved by the merest twist of the wrist, almost too easily, and the 73Ps dropped into gear smoothly, although as soon as the props bit it was clear that brief applications of power are the order of the day around the marina: the T46 clocked a shade over 6 knots at idle with both engines in gear.

This is the only slight handicap at slow speed, however. The bow-thruster seemed effective, although we did not use it for any serious purpose all day. The boat tracked down the Hamble very

Dinette

This area opposite the galley offers a choice of three no-extra-cost options. The first two are either a twin bunk or double-berth cabin (with the further extra-cost option of adding a small en-suite toilet compartment); the third is an open dinette, as on our test boat.

This particular version, on what was the first T46 built, allowed only perhaps four people to sit around the table, even if the seating itself is generous. Subsequent fit-outs have incorporated a larger table, and there is



no reason why this should not act as an infill for an occasional extra berth.

Tucked along the after bulkhead is a long run of two-tier sideboard, which incorporates a section of extremely deep cupboard space. The portion closest to the galley houses a fridge and freezer.

The stowage areas beneath the settee are moulded out, and there are lockers set at chest height above. Further bulk storage is provided under the sole, in a locker fashioned clear of the bilge, whilst a second hatch allows access to the actual hull and seacocks.

Aft cabin

Allocating headroom betwixt an aft cockpit and the cabin below it is a fine balance, but the designers have done a good job here.

There is full standing room everywhere but above the actual berth, which is set low due to the well of the cockpit, and sitting headroom here is still

generous. Aft-facing, the berth is a good size at 6ft 4in

(1.93m) long by 4ft 10in (1.49m) wide. Stowage is



excellent, with an interesting combination of wardrobe space and dressing tables, and drawers built-in to the curved work surfaces. The latter include a sideboard towards the foot of the berth on which you can stand a television. Alternatively you can do without the telly and let the round window in the transom give you a good view of the world.

A lifting panel beneath the mattress gives access to the 6kVA generator set fitted as standard, with plenty of room to get at its service points.



Another sideboard beneath the transom allows good access to the steering gear.

The en-suite facilities are split between the two quarters. The starboard compartment incorporates a basin and toilet

(finished in the same contrasting marble-effect as the forward WC), while the fully moulded port one serves solely as a shower cubicle, complete with shelving for shampoos. Both are fitted with extractors.

Day toilet



The toilet compartment en-suite to the forward cabin can also be accessed from the lobby.

Its fit-out is smart but practical. Bulkheads have a white marble-effect finish, with other areas, such as the under-sink cupboard and mirrored cabinet, picked out in a contrasting darker colour. As in the aft cabin's en-suite WC, the toilet is electric.

The main compartment is itself roomy, and the separate shower cubicle, square in shape, is of a good size with plenty of elbowroom. An extractor is fitted here to augment the opening port.

Forward cabin

There is plenty of dressing room around the central berth, which is of generous proportions at 6ft 5in (1.96m) x 4ft 9in (1.49m), and has been kept on the low side for a



forward sleeping area.

The split mattress makes it easy to get at the storage void beneath, although a couple of drawers towards the foot of the berth would be advantageous. Another slight disappointment is that what appear to be pairs of drawers to each side of the berth are in fact false fronts.

That said, clothes storage is still satisfactory, by way of a couple of wardrobes, two drawers and a set of shallow cupboards to the head of the berth. There is also a dressing table with a jewellery cache and cupboard underneath.



easily, with no work on the wheel required despite crosswind gusts, and a straight course could also be held on one engine at slow speeds with the application of only 15° or so of the boat's T51-sized rudders. The latter bite so well they deserve to be remembered when manoeuvring.

Once clear of Hamble Spit, the T46 could be brought onto the plane without any effort. The 73Ps' turbos take their

time to spool up, providing a moment's hesitation, but when it arrives the power is smoothly delivered, rather than dumped in a rush.

Nosing into the northwesterly, we went in search of relatively flat water below Hythe for our performance trials. Here we recorded a maximum pace of 30.8 knots at 2700rpm, which is 50rpm over the rated maximum — a good indication that this lightly loaded

Engineroom

For a visual check of the engineroom, and a pull of the standard dipsticks, it is simply a matter of lifting the centre portion of the saloon sole clear and dropping down onto the treadplate between the engines.

From this vantage point you can also inspect the fuel/water separators on the aft bulkhead, although actually getting at them is a bit more of a struggle, as it means negotiating your way past the exhaust elbow of the starboard engine and the air filter of the port one.

Also back here there is access to the sternglands and bilge pump; in all there are four submersibles on board, as well as a couple of manual units with the pumps located in the cockpit.

For anything more than a visual check, you have to clear away the furniture, all of which can be moved,

and lift some further areas of sole. This reveals a clear space across the engines, and gives reasonable access to most other service points, especially given that the fuel tanks are sited outboard.

The only slightly tricky item on our test boat was the oil filter of the starboard Volvo Penta TAMD 73P, which is mounted low down so there is a lot of ironmongery in the way. However, there is plenty of room to the head of the compartment, so that could be the best approach to this particular job, as well as allowing access to the belts and pumps.

The installation is tidy, with as many surfaces as possible covered with a foil-faced foam insulation.



boat was propped correctly.

More interesting, though, were our figures of a shade under 13.6 knots at a lazy 2200rpm and 27.3 knots at a still unfussy 2400rpm. As can be seen from the accompanying table, these engine speeds bracket the 1mpg mark, indicating a safe range of 260-300 miles, not bad at all for such a large cruiser at this pace.

Heading back towards the livelier llop of the Solent, we chose that same 2400rpm setting, a pace at which the T46 felt like it would cruise all day.

This feeling is assisted by noticeably low noise levels for an aft-cabin boat, with little excessive cavitation or exhaust sound evident other than at 1600rpm in the aft cabin, where a

harmonic creeps in. Also contributing to this unstoppable feeling, surely, is the substantial fit-out of the T46, two tonnes heavier than the 450.

Waves seemed to have little effect on the boat's momentum, and the hull threw most spray well clear as it shouldered its way through, accompanied by the odd solid thump from the chine but no creeks from mouldings.

We did not venture far, but had little doubt there was a lot more left to give, especially as the Sealine has no noticeable hump speed and can be teased back down to 14 knots, or even a shade less with some trim tab, if an easier speed is prudent.

One tangible difference from the 450 we tested back in 1991

is that the T46 has a tighter turning circle when on the plane, provided you are prepared fully to use the manual hydraulic wheel, which has six turns from lock to lock and becomes heavy and a little notchy as you wind it on.

Another difference is that the boat is not greatly influenced by crosswinds, so the trim tabs, though effective, were not needed very often to correct lateral trim.

Finally tiring of the northwesterly's bite, we retired to the interior helm for the gallop back to the Hamble. The driving position here is almost as commanding as that above, with a clear view all round except for a small sector on the port quarter. The wipers easily cleared playful samples of Solent that splashed the screen, and the low noise levels and solid ride provided a sense of isolation that made us recheck the log more than once.

Conclusions

If you liked the greater privacy, and indeed the overall room, that the Sealine 450's aft-cabin concept brought to cruising, then the T46 will in no way be a disappointment.

It offers all the same benefits, maintaining a flybridge and a protected cockpit, while shifting the fit-out and overall look of the boat up a level. And yet the improvements are not such a quantum leap as to make them inaccessible to the wallets of existing customers.

There are detail points to be addressed. Those used to cruising with a belts-and-braces inventory of gear will find the lack of deck stowage a bit of a tease. And we would hazard a guess that some of the clever touches for which Sealine are known will appear only on later T46s off the production line.

But the evidence is that the builders have remembered that their customers are often big users of their boats, both on this side of the Atlantic and also in America, where owners apparently think nothing of planning a summer cruise from Miami to New York, just for kicks.

Sit at either helm, thottle up to the mid 20s and cast your eye around the substantial deck layout forward, and you get the feeling that a one-day test cannot carry you anywhere near as far as you would like to go on this boat, especially on a blustery day in October.



BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

DIMENSIONS

LOA

45ft 6in (13.86m)

HULL LENGTH

43ft 3in (13.18m)

BEAM

14ft 1in (4.30m)

DRAUGHT

4ft 1in (1.24m)

AIR DRAUGHT

16ft 2in (4.93m)

DISPLACEMENT

13.9 tonnes

FUEL CAPACITY

355gal (1614lt)

WATER CAPACITY

100gal (454lt)

ENGINES

twin Volvo Penta
TAMD 73P/EDCs
6cyl 6.73lt diesels
430hp at 2600rpm

PRICE

£276,732 ex VAT
as standard

SUPPLIERS

Sealine Sales UK,
Hamble River Boatyard,
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BUILDERS

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SEALINE T46

PERFORMANCE & CONSUMPTION							SOUND LEVELS dB(A)			
rpm	knots#	gph†	lph†	mpg†	range*	trim	cockpit	flybg	saloon	aftcab
1600	12.1	6	27	2.02	572	4.0	76	66	76	79
1800	14.9	10	45	1.49	423	5.0	78	66	73	77
2000	20.0	15	68	1.33	379	6.0	80	66	76	78
2200	23.6	22	100	1.07	305	6.0	79	68	77	78
2400	27.3	29	132	0.94	267	5.5	80	69	78	79
2600	30.1	36	163	0.84	237	5.0	81	70	79	80
2700	30.8	43	194	0.71	203	5.0	81	71	79	81

* Measured by radar gun. † Calculated from engine manufacturers' figures. * Allows 20% margin.

ACCELERATION ~ 0-20 knots, 13.4sec

CONDITIONS ~ wind northwesterly Force 5-6, sea slight

LOAD ~ fuel 50%, water 100%, crew 3