

YACHTING

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FOR THE CRUISING SAILOR
ESTABLISHED 1906



SIRIUS 35 DS



NEW BOAT TEST

Is this the best boat ever built?



NEW BOATS TRIED & TESTED

Sirius 35DS



Chris Beeson challenges you to see

beyond the somewhat individual looks and explore the most impressive cruiser we've ever tested

You might think these are looks only an owner could love, but I urge you to read on. This is one of the most painstakingly designed and built semi-custom yachts in the world, from a German yard that inspires near-fanatical loyalty in a growing European community of owners.

The deck saloon principle knows no better exponent – eyelines are immaculately executed and your height is factored into the build. You also have a choice of three different deckhouse styles, three different fins, twin or swing keels with triple rudders – one aft of the prop for better steerage – and five different interior options. She's not one for the indecisive, you need to

know exactly what you want.

Like most yachtsmen, Sirius owners tweak their boats and enjoy inspecting the tweaks of others. When they gather en masse – the yard's workers arrange an annual sailing week – Sirius's owner, Torsten Schmidt, picks the best and they end up on the options list, hence the dazzling ingenuity evident throughout.

Torsten's father founded Sirius Werft in 1971 and today 48 staff produce 12 to 14 yachts per year. He has tried expanding the workforce but says it was like trying to recruit new family members. It felt wrong. If you want a Sirius, you usually need to wait 18 months but there are two 35DS slots available next year. Rest assured, they won't be for long.

Performance

We went to Ancora Marina in Neustadt in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, to test the Sirius 35DS. Sadly, the Baltic could muster just 6-10 knots of true wind from the south-west, so hauling such a solidly built boat around wasn't going to be too thrilling. We unfurled the big genoa and fetched along at 50-60° to the 8-12 knots of apparent wind, making 4.3-5.2 knots. Hardening up, she logged 4.6-4.9 knots at 30-40° with 11-12 knots over the deck and tacked through 120°. Coming down onto a beam reach, we eased along at 5.2-5.4 knots with 7-8 knots ghosting over the beam. It's not stellar performance but it's better than I expected for a boat that displaces about the same as a Rustler 36 or an X-40.

There wasn't a huge amount of feeling in the Jefa steering system – no surprise in such light airs – but the main talking point with the wheel is that it cants. Press a lever at the base of the pedestal and the wheel disengages and can be moved to port, starboard or left central. This means you can use a sensibly sized wheel but still sit

on the coamings or stand to steer – a big plus with a deckhouse. Standing behind the wheel, I could see the bowsprit but not much else. Sit at the wheel or on the coamings and you can see through or around the deckhouse, so views forward are surprisingly good. Sitting outboard is comfortable and the stainless steel guardrail makes an excellent armrest.

Other benefits include canting the wheel to starboard to clear a path through the cockpit to the transom door to port. Also, when manoeuvring astern you can stand at the wheel facing aft with a clear view of the transom, to position yourself perfectly. If the throttle is

'The helmsman, navigator, cook and crew in the saloon are all at the same eye level'

engaged in reverse, as it might be while sailing, the wheel can't be canted. Torsten advises engaging forward gear, probably a decent solution with a folding prop.

Living below

Open the washboard door and slide back the transparent polycarbonate hatch, with its own Oceanair blind, and there are stainless steel hand-holds on either side. One of Sirius's central principles is that of eyes meeting. The seated helmsman, the navigator, saloon guests or galley cooks, are at the same eye level and in sight. To starboard is the chart table, which has all-round visibility and a swivel chair. The chair raises and lowers so you can plan your passage, then elevate and join the conviviality in the saloon eye-to-eye. The chart table itself extends under the sidedeck so it's a decent size and has a day/night light. There's a plotter forward but otherwise instrument space is a bit pinched. Stowage is universally good, including a vented, self-draining oilskin locker behind the chair. Our

She's not a classic beauty but the Sirius 35DS may well be the best 35ft cruiser we've ever tested



THIS PICTURE AND FACING PAGE: GRAHAM SNOOK © ZIPPphoto



With the big genoa set, she performed better than expected

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIRIUS



The centre cabin's hull ports make it a remarkably tranquil place to sit and watch the miles unfold

PHOTO: GRAHAM SNOOK



The sumptuously fitted out forecabin has an amazing amount of stowage

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIRIUS



Torsten Schmidt power steering, but note the views and the eye-level theory in practice, it's panoramic and inclusive

PHOTO: GRAHAM SNOOK



The workshop, under the aft saloon seating, extends aft below the cockpit

PHOTO: GRAHAM SNOOK



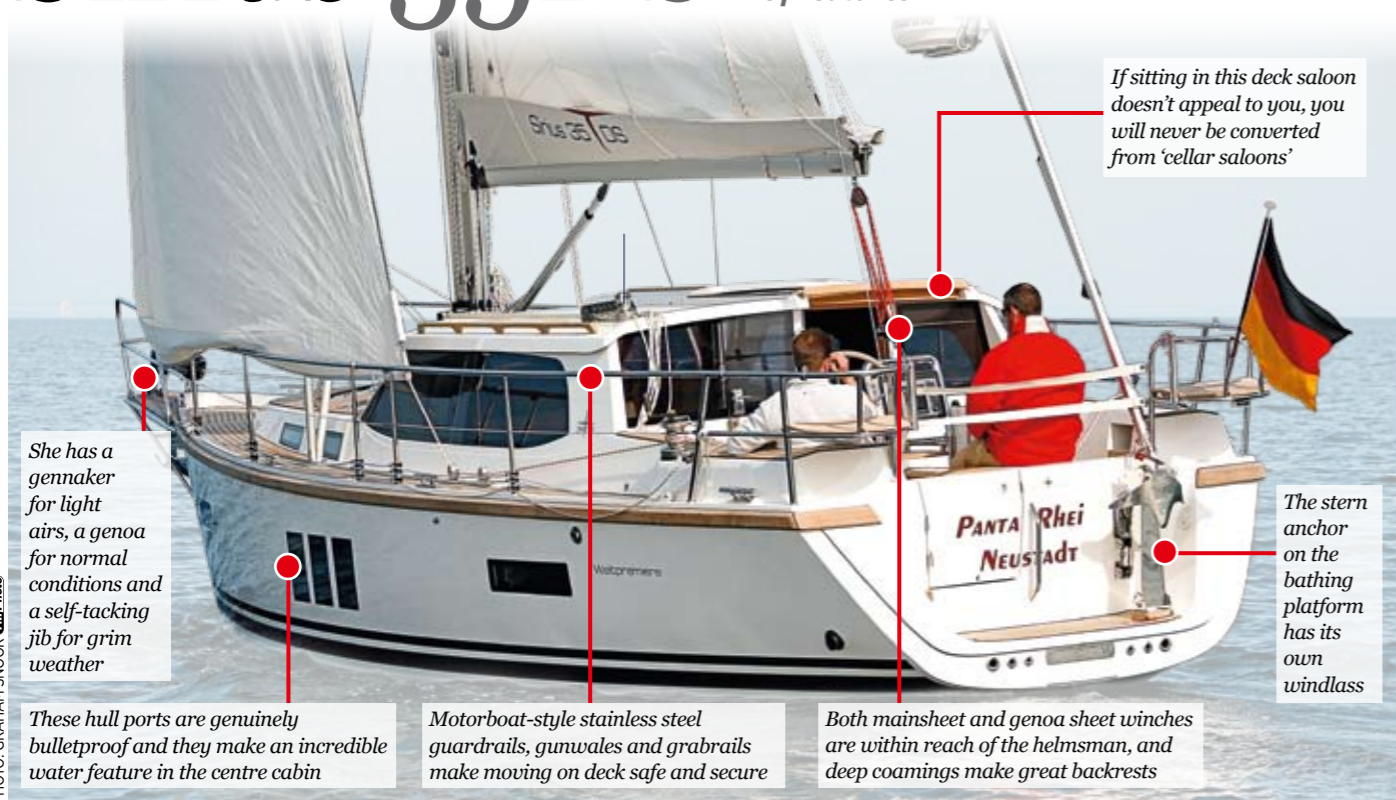
Stowage throughout is mind-boggling, with 1,600 litres in the saloon and galley



PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIRIUS

The Sirius 35DS in her element. Note the neat, midships mainsheet horse, sturdy steel guardrails and useful halyard stowage

Sirius 35DS Key features



If sitting in this deck saloon doesn't appeal to you, you will never be converted from 'cellar saloons'

She has a gennaker for light airs, a genoa for normal conditions and a self-tacking jib for grim weather

The stern anchor on the bathing platform has its own windlass

These hull ports are genuinely bulletproof and they make an incredible water feature in the centre cabin

Motorboat-style stainless steel guardrails, gunwales and grabrails make moving on deck safe and secure

Both mainsheet and genoa sheet winches are within reach of the helmsman, and deep coamings make great backrests

PHOTO: GRAHAM SNOOK

test boat's autopilot was linked to Raymarine's Smartcontroller – power steering, essentially – so, with a self-tacking jib, you can tack from below.

The saloon seats six comfortably, with no shortage of headroom, around a table that lowers to create a 7ft 2in by 4ft 7in double berth. Views are panoramic. Lift the inboard aft seat and you'll find a workshop, complete with bench, storage, batteries and engine access. If you want a utility room, a sauna or something else, just ask.

The linear galley, down a step to starboard, has 6ft 5in headroom. Again, the amount of stowage challenges the laws of physics – 1,600 litres in the galley and saloon. Drawers have soft-close catches and teak partitions built to the dimensions of your crockery. The two-burner Ono stove and oven has a sliding cover but there's no shortage of workspace because the 100-litre fridge is front-opening. There's yet more stowage in sliding door lockers outboard and the downlighting creates a

nice effect. Two overhead lights and an opening port ensure the saloon is well lit and ventilated.

Below the saloon, there's a double cabin with 6ft 3in headroom and a 6ft 7in by 6ft 3in berth. It's located midships, so would make an excellent sea berth. There's a hanging locker forward and two drawers below the berth, with more stowage below the seat and berth. The fuel tank is below the foot of the berth.

Two dimmable LED lamps provide light at night and during the day there's an opening hatch, a skylight into the saloon and the three hull ports, with recessed blinds, which make this an amazingly relaxing place to sit and watch the water go by. The hull ports are made from the same polycarbonate used by the German Army for bulletproof staff cars – except the army uses 6mm and Sirius uses 15mm for hull ports and 10mm in the deck saloon.

The forward cabin has an en suite heads, with 6ft 2in headroom and a 6ft 10in by 5ft 3in berth offset to port. A lot of daylight

'The heads looks like it belongs in the Ritz'



This is the most salubrious heads we've ever seen

floods in via two opening Lewmar hatches, two hull ports and a coachroof port, while dimmable LEDs provide a warm glow at night. Stowage is abundant in lockers and drawers and there's more below the berth, where you'll also find the water tank, the bow thrusters and a safe.

Just aft to port, the heads looks like it belongs in the Ritz. It's mahogany with maple trim, like the rest of the interior. The electric toilet has its inlet and

outlet near the centreline, so it works on either tack. A manual pump empties the holding tank. There's 6ft 2in headroom and stowage, as you might have guessed, is plentiful. The light panel behind the sink looks a bit special and a frosted glass hatch provides ventilation. Opposite the heads is a separate shower room with 6ft 2in headroom, along with temperature and flow controls and sump pump switches. Inside the mahogany door is an acrylic shower door that holds closed magnetically to protect the woodwork and a removable rail turns the compartment into a huge wet locker.

Design

The hull was drawn by Marc-Oliver von Ahlen, who also designed the deck saloon Degerö 31 and two popular Etap models, the 24i and 46DS. She has next to no overhang, slab sides, a squared-off transom and sweptback spreaders, but this is Sirius's most modern-looking yacht. The 32DS, designed by Herbert Streuer, has very traditional lines with in-line spreaders, tumblehome, a long overhanging bow and a pinched wineglass stern. ➔



She has a sturdy cockpit table and a clever canting wheel

The later 38DS, by Georg Nissen, has no tumblehome, less overhang and a rounded transom.

There's a good 12in of immersed forefoot and fairly flat underwater sections forward of the bow, with quite a sharp turn at the bilge, so she should take heavy weather in her stride. Aft of the keel there's much more rocker, with squarish



Plenty of stowage and a gutsy windlass in the foredeck locker

curve shows that she nearly always has a positive righting moment, thanks to the deck saloon.

Construction

The hull is vacuum-infused with vinylester resins, foam-cored to the waterline and solid laminate below. Parts of the deck are foam-cored. Bulkheads are laminated into place and hull and deck are laminated together. The lead keel is attached to a stainless steel plate by eight bolts, with massive lamination in the floor to disperse the load. The semi-balanced rudder hangs on a half-skeg.

Sailplan

The standard sailplan is mainsail and self-tacker on a fractional Seldén rig with swept-back spreaders. This would leave her a bit underpowered, so it's as well that our test boat had the self-tacking jib – and builders often quote actual sail area rather than mainsail plus foretriangle. Our test boat also had the overlapping 430sq ft genoa, which gives her 770sq ft of actual sail area, more than the next best canvassed, the Nordship 360DS with 721sq ft.

Deck layout

Speed potential looks good as she has the second longest waterline length at 31ft 9in, again after the Nordship with 32ft. She's towards the heavier end of displacement (16,314 lb), similar to the Nauticat 351 at 16,500 lb. The Nordship and the Regina 35 displace 14,330 lb but the heaviest is the Degerö 36 at 18,700 lb. The ballast ratio, 35%, is the second lowest of her peers after the Nordship's 34%, and that's without any fuel, water or kit on board, but the hull adds form stability over and above the ballast ratio. The GZ

of the Andersen 28 halyard winch and there's a neat sheet bin in the port forward corner of the cockpit. The coamings curve and the 6ft 6in seats are contoured for comfort and sheltered by the deck saloon and coamings. There's a stainless steel footbrace and a small cockpit table just forward of the binnacle, onto which the larger cockpit table fits. The 6:1 mainsheet tacks onto a loop on the binnacle bar and the Andersen 46 primary winches are within the helm's reach. A Raymarine C90W plotter is mounted on the binnacle and the rest of the Raymarine ST60 instruments are on the deck saloon bulkhead. Autopilot and engine controls are in the port coaming and the throttle is to starboard of the binnacle. The split backstay is mechanically adjusted.

There's a whopping 3,000 litres of stowage in the two cockpit lockers, plus a liferaft locker and a gas locker beneath the helm seat. The port section of the helm seat lifts and a transom door opens onto the bathing platform, where there's also a shower and a stern anchor with its own windlass. On the pushpit are two quarter seats and a tube into which a davit fits, making child's play of heavy lifting.

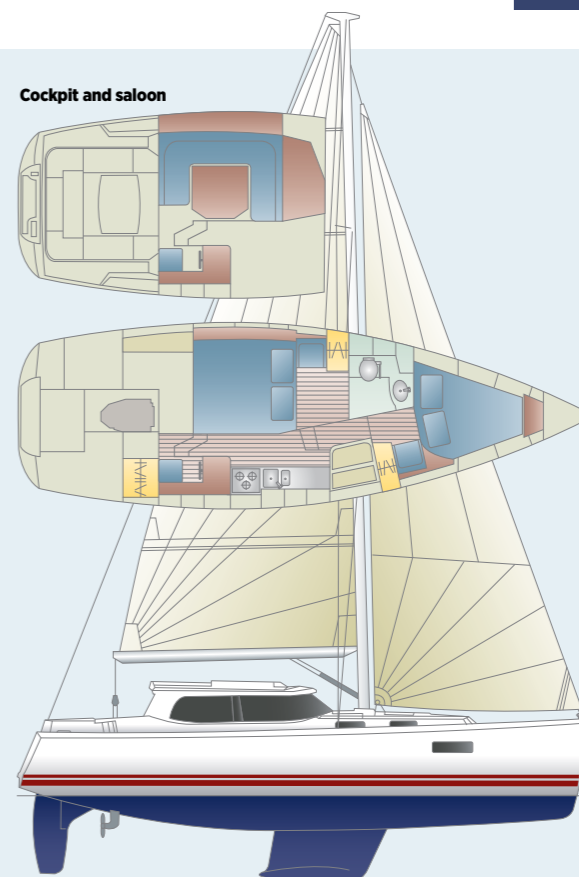
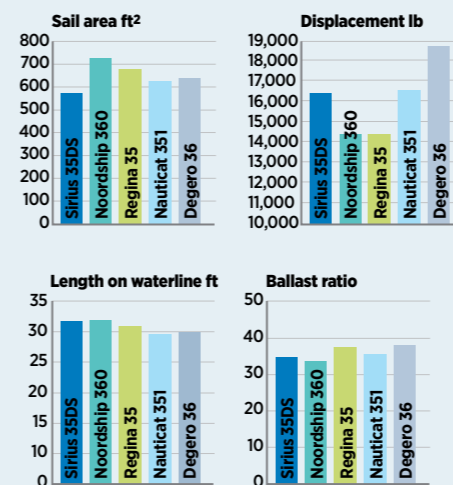
Under power

Her 38hp Volvo engine drives a two-blade Volvo folding prop. It's just a metre forward of the large-chord rudder so there's hardly any prop walk and the prop wash over the rudder makes turning all but instant. She'll cruise at 2,200rpm making 6.6 knots and 7.9 knots flat-out at 3,200rpm. Ahead, she almost turns in her own length and within two boat lengths astern. ▲

TECHNICAL

Sirius 35DS

Comparative data



- LOA 10.6m (34ft 9in)
- LWL 9.7m (31ft 10in)
- Beam 3.48m (11ft 5in)
- Draught max. 1.9m (6ft 3in)
- Displacement 7,400kg (16,314 lb)
- Ballast 2,600kg (5,732 lb)
- Sail area 53.5m² (576sq ft)
- Engine 38hp Volvo Penta D2 40 Diesel from 150 lit (33 gal)
- Water from 220 lit (48.4 gal)
- Displ/length 226
- Sail area/displ 14.3
- Ballast ratio (%) 35
- RCD category A
- STIX 37
- Designer Marc-Oliver von Ahlen
- Builder Sirius Werft
- Tel 0049 4522 4565
- Website www.sirius-werft.de

YACHTING MONTHLY'S 100-POINT RESULTS



UNDER SAIL	ON DECK	BUILD
PERFORMANCE We couldn't push her at all in the conditions but she slipped along easily, if unspectacularly, with what we had. Bearing in mind the amount of stowage she has, loaded displacement could make a fairly big dent in performance.	AT THE HELM Not much feel at the helm, again down to the light air, but Jefa steering systems are the best I've experienced so it should be good. The canting wheel means there are lots of comfortable helming spots and visibility is surprisingly good.	DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION She loses a point for not being easy on the eye, but the design is excellent – a huge amount of experience has been designed into this yacht. Build quality is as good as it gets, so it's not just the windows that are bulletproof.
8/10	9/10	9/10
MAINTENANCE Access to steering, electrical, propulsion and water systems is first class and the workshop will be a huge boost, a place to store all your spares and make any repairs.	DECK LAYOUT The cockpit is an excellent example. Safe, dry and comfortable, with plenty of stowage and easy transom access. Up at the bow the anchoring arrangement looks simple and effective, only the narrow sidedecks prevent her picking up 10 points.	CHART TABLE Stowage is very good and the panoramic views are a delight. There's not much instrument space, preventing a 10, but it's secure, comfortable and the table is a decent size too. The swivel seat gives a real sense of command too.
10/10	9/10	9/10



"The deck saloon is brilliant"



"The central cabin...if I could give 11/10 scores, I would"

BELOW DECK
GALLEY Again, stowage is phenomenal. Lots of work space, twin deep sinks, good light and ventilation. The basket system in the big front-loading fridge keeps its contents secure. Custom-made teak partitions in the soft close drawers are a delightful touch.
9/10
HEADS It's a genuinely impressive heads, very stylish, spacious but safe too. The basics of stowage, bracing, light and ventilation are all well covered. Creating a separate shower room also means that it's much easier to keep clean.
10/10
LIVING BELOW The deck saloon is brilliant and the eye level principle connects crew on deck with crew below. The central cabin's windows are a great feature and there's standing headroom throughout. If I could give 11/10, I would.
10/10

TOTAL SCORE

It's the highest score we've ever awarded, by some distance, and it reflects the wealth of ideas, craftsmanship and pride built into this extraordinary yacht. She's expensive, but for a yacht of this quality, she's actually very good value. For some, her looks will be an issue, but yachts are built to sail – if you want something to look at, buy a painting. As a custom-built, luxury cruising yacht, you'd struggle to match her.

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You have a choice of three deckhouse styles, three different rigs and four interior layouts



The lead ballast swing keel delivers perfect performance and stability and three rudders ensure easy manoeuvrability



As well as three different fin keel draughts, twin keels are also available

