

TIKI Navigator Pro £76 (€112)



WE LIKE

- ◆ Clear chart window
- ◆ Easy operation
- ◆ Intuitive nature

WE DON'T LIKE

- ◆ Small data window headings
- ◆ Price increase

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Verdict ★★★★★

An excellent navigation program with clear displays and simple operation.

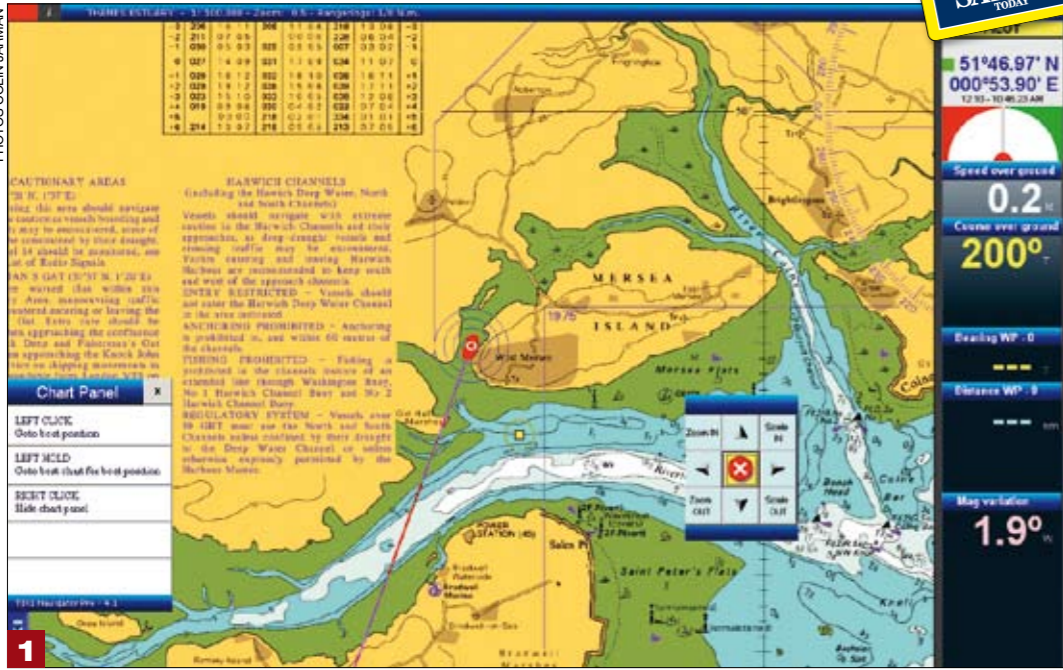
on any one of these you can bring up its data. (See photo 7.)

Each AIS target shows a 'bowsprit' representing course and speed. If the vessel is making a turn, the heading line carries a short pointer at its end, indicating whether the vessel is turning to port or starboard. These lines offer a very good, quick visual idea of whether the vessel is likely to cause you problems or not, because they relate to her predicted position in X minutes, with a default setting of two minutes. The targets change colour if they are expected to become a hazard within a defined time (default two minutes) by approaching to within a set distance (default 200m).

Because target positions would appear to jump about on the chart if their transmissions were relied on solely, due to the intervals between transmissions, Tiki cleverly undertakes some Dead Reckoning navigation and moves them smoothly.

Across the top of the screen in AIS mode there are buttons

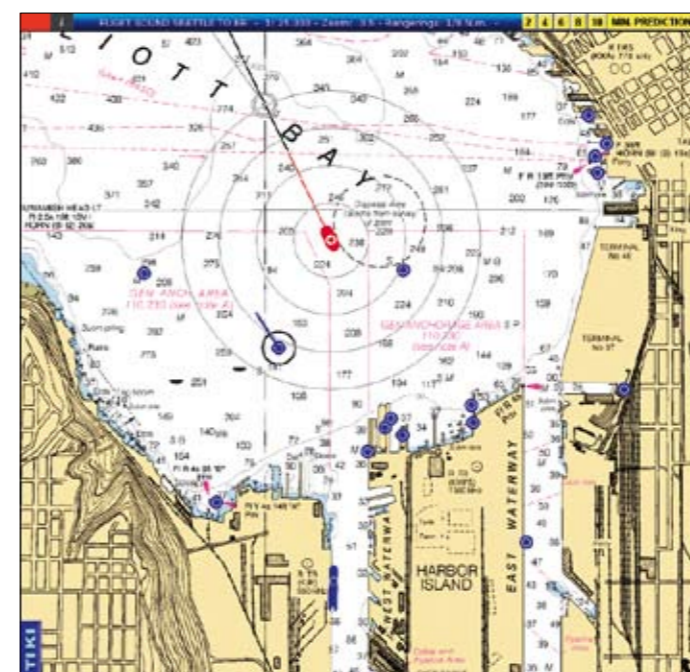
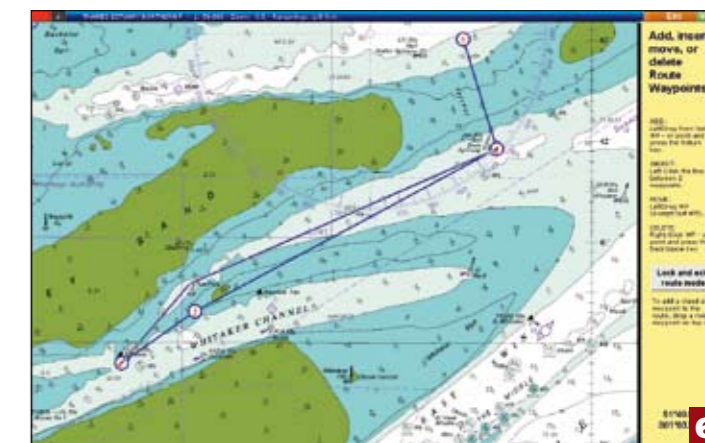
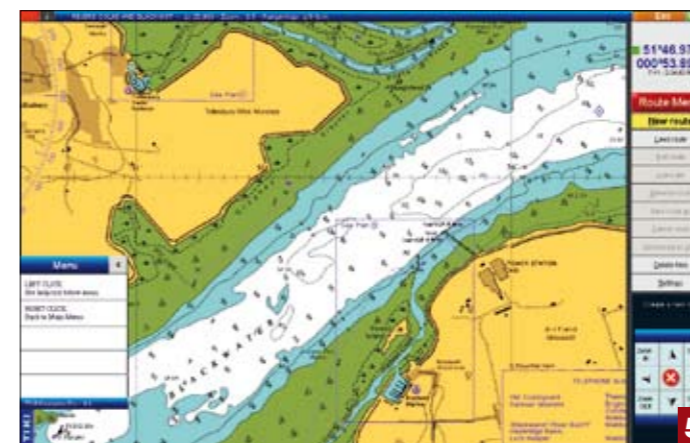
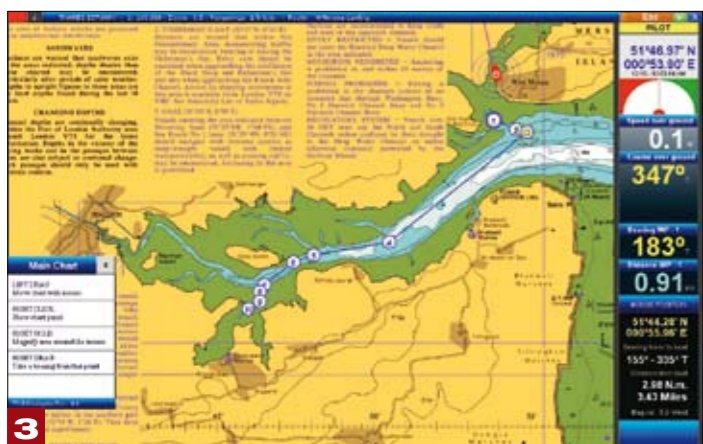
PHOTOS COLIN JARMAN



When we reported on the Tiki Navigator Pro program for the first time (ST118, Feb '07), we gave the price as £99.50, which converted at that time to £67.45. Now, with the release of the latest version,

v5.0, the price has gone up to £112, which currently converts to £76. It's not a big rise, but it is tied completely to the sterling/euro exchange rate, so be aware that you'll not know the exact price until the day you pay.

We have been using the version 4.1 of Tiki Navigator Pro and have only had a quick look at v5.0 in simulator mode, because the main development has been in the highly intelligent display of AIS data. If a suitable AIS receiver, such as the widely recommended SR-162 (www.trueheading.se and available in the UK from Pharos Marine Tel 020 8538 1100 at an unfortunately hefty £303 plus delivery), is connected to the computer, Tiki will display the targets on screen, overlaying them on the chart. By mousing over a target you pop up an information screen giving basic vessel details, such as name, type, SOG and COG/heading. However, if you click on a target, a panel pops up giving full information about the vessel (as transmitted by AIS), together with a list of all the other AIS targets in range. By clicking



1. Working chart display with control window and mouse function window. 2. Waypoint and its control panel. 3. Simple up-river route laid out at zoom level for overview. 4. Activated route. Be aware of need for self-navigation to WPT 1. 5. Route menu open down right hand side of screen. 6. Moving WPT 3 in a route. 7. AIS overlay and data panels, v5.0.

it mouse driven means that it can be operated from some distance away, either by using a long-tailed mouse or a wireless one.

In practice, we've found that the Unotron Washable M10 mouse (see ST118 Feb '07) is ideal, because it can be taken into the cockpit even on wet days.

One further feature I found useful is the range and bearing from your vessel. A 'mouse position' window in the right hand vertical panel of information shows the lat and long of the mouse together with its bearing from/to and distance from your boat. It took me a long time to discover how to measure ranges and bearings between two points, but once discovered it's easy – just right click and drag. A window displays the distance and bearing from one point to the other. A series of such ranges and bearings can readily be changed into a route by clicking create route in a bar at the top of the screen.

TIKI Navigator Pro a program I will go on using and will watch with interest as it develops. The latest version (5.0) with AIS should prove very good indeed. The only drawback to TIKI (and it's hardly that) is the use of raster scanned charts, but because these are free to download in America, it makes sense for the programmer to stick with them.

Pity we don't have the same kind of free access in Britain to Admiralty charts. Colin Jarman

marked 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. By clicking on any one of these, there is a short simulation of movement of your vessel and all AIS targets over the next selected number of minutes. The prediction, of course, assumes no changes to courses or speeds, but does give an excellent view of how close a vessel is going to come to you if you don't do anything to avoid her. This is a very clever and useful feature.

So much for the developments in the new version of Tiki Navigator Pro, now back to our trials of the program. Whether at sea, navigating a route, or at anchor planning one, we have found Tiki to be a pretty easy program to use. It's designed to be intuitive and, once you've found where the apparently absent menus are, it is very user friendly indeed. These operating menus lurk unseen at the edges of the screen and pop out at you when you mouse over them. By moving the mouse towards the upper right hand edge you bring up the main menu. By moving towards the bottom of the screen

you pop up 12 function buttons; hover over each and it displays its description (function). Taking the cursor up to the top left hand corner reveals the means to change charts, split the screen or change the level of screen illumination for day or night navigation.

One of the handiest pop ups is found by right clicking anywhere on the chart. This window has nine buttons for zooming in or out, changing to a larger or smaller scale, moving up, down or sideways and for centring the chart on your boat's position. The usefulness of this window is closely followed by a floating one – reached by pressing F1 from the row of function buttons hidden at the bottom of the screen – that tells you what will happen if you left or right click the mouse with the cursor in its current position. We found this feature particularly useful when learning about TIKI and as a reminder when we'd not used it for a while.

Planning a route is straightforward from the main

menu. You can set it out, move, delete or add waypoints (each of which is automatically numbered), name it, save it and activate it. We have had problems with moving waypoints, which should be done by right clicking on them and dragging them. When it works it's dead easy, but rather often the point was not picked up and instead the whole chart was panned about the screen. On the other hand, adding a waypoint, by clicking into a leg is easy. So too is deleting a waypoint, either by clicking and holding on it, pressing the backspace key and then confirming that you do want to delete it in the pop up window or by right clicking on it and confirming in the same way. Very neatly, in each case, the confirmation button appears immediately under the cursor, so without movement you can simply click again to confirm.

This is very much a mouse driven program; in fact naming routes is one of the few times you need to use the keyboard. Making