[Dive report           7 May 2018](https://overview.mail.yahoo.com/?.src=iOS)

Site: Valentine tanks - Studland bay

Dive boat: Viper (Swanage Boat Charters)

Skipper: Martin

Ropes off: 08:50

Note:

Swanage pier is being refurbished with major works underway. There are restrictions on diving beneath it. Check before you go.

Swanage Boat Charters:

Excellent online booking system and with lots of diver information provided. I found booking simple.

As you'd expect the boat is a well fitted out hard boat with lift, toilet, kitchen and safety kit. It can shift as well. Even with a full complement there was plenty of space. Twinsets, stages, RB users won't struggle.

Martin the skipper does a slick safety briefing and covered the dive details without wasting time. Professional and good humoured.

The other divers were from Southampton University Sub-Aqua Club. I think a few were doing their first UK sea dive of the year but everyone was pretty comfortable stowing the gear and getting on with kitting up. Nice bunch.

Dive details:

Max depth 14.4m, 43 minutes with 3 minute stop. Visibility good, 6m+.

Dropped in third, minor surface current. Wasn't an issue to reach the shot buoy. Martin had advised going neutral at 10m. This worked a treat as the line from tank #1 to #2 was clearly visible by then so I cut the corner and went off to tank #2 first.

The tanks are about 90 metres apart. So a gentle fin with the line in sight gives you a chance to look for marine life.

The shoal of Bib ahead of me gave away the fact I was getting near the wreck. The guide line runs through the turret to tank #2’s hull a couple of meters further on.

I was met by some very forward Ballan Wrasse and there were dozens of shrimp under the hull front.

I circled around the far side to begin with and spotted a Conger under the port side. Velvet Swimming Crabs and Edible Crabs in various nooks. Once back on the Starboard side I was treated to an almost posed view of the big resident Lobster and another Conger looking out from under the tanks Road wheels.

Most of the track sections have fallen off and scattered nearby.

Some of the other divers were now coming along the line so I headed back toward tank #1.

I kept well off to the side scanning for other debris and critters. There's various lost anchors, small concreted lumps and lost pots (I found one with a dozen Catshark eggs attached) along this route. I had plenty to nosey about and investigate.

By the time I was at tank #1 almost everyone had headed to tank #2 so I had a lot of freedom to mooch about.

There was another large lobster on this tank. It had chosen to dig in under some of the shed track at the stern. Maybe it had fallen out with this tanks resident congers?

A Tompot Blenny was showing off on the front track fender, doing what they are known for.

There were some sizeable Edible Crabs tucked into the drive shaft spaces and holes. I'm not sure all of them could actually get out anymore.

Tank #1's turret is in place and shot attaches here. A commemorative Poppy Wreath has been placed inside. Please don't mess with it.

By this time people were coming back to ascend the shot. I headed up to join in the shuffle between 5 & 6 meters.

The current was still minimal so coming up on a DSMB probably wouldn't have taken you far from the main shot.

Pick up was straight forward. Quick de-kit, chat with the others and a hot brew. Martin offers a wide range of hot drinks so no one should go away disappointed.

Individually the wrecks are small so 10 divers all on one is going to be problematic. But viewed as a circuit and looking around the vicinity everyone can find space.

A great dive in ideal conditions. Well run boat with divers who knew their business. I doubt there was any sign of disturbance on the site.



