

VOLVO PENTA

Volvo Penta of the Americas

Press Information

Prestigious Fishing Resort Tropic Star Lodge Repowers Fleet of Classic Bertrams with Volvo Penta

(CHESAPEAKE, Va.) – Nov. 20, 2018 – Tropic Star Lodge, one of the world’s premier sport fishing destinations, is upgrading its fleet of 13 popular 1970s-vintage Bertram 31’s with modern, fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly Volvo Penta engines.

Built in 1963 and located in Piñas Bay, Panama, the resort is a globally renowned retreat for those looking to catch billfish, especially black marlin, blue marlin and sailfish.

The Tropic Star team began planning for modernizing the boats’ aging propulsion plants several years ago. After a comprehensive evaluation, they decided on twin Volvo Penta four-liter inboard diesels with ZF transmissions.

“We are very pleased with the result of our decision,” said Ursula Marais, operations director and CEO of Tropic Star. “Volvo Penta demonstrated a great deal of flexibility and a commendable commitment to customer service in meeting our requests.”

The first installation was completed last year, and the next two will be completed in 2018. The remaining retrofits will be completed on a phased schedule so as to minimize disruption to fishing operations.

“This successful fleet repower project for Tropic Star in one of the least accessible locations in the Americas is a great testimony to the reliability and efficiency of our D4 engine platform, along with the creativity of our application engineering team and our dedicated service dealer in Panama,” said Dave Brown, director of marine commercial of Volvo Penta of the Americas.

Volvo Penta applications engineer Guilherme Tait explained that Tropic Star had very specific criteria for the replacement engines, based on their unique situation. The most important consideration was reliability, since the remote Pacific location of the Tropic Star facility is reachable only by boat or charter plane and requires the staff to be self-sufficient.

All maintenance, service and repairs are performed onsite in the resort’s boatyard. The location also dictates the usage patterns for the boats. The distance to the fishing grounds is minimal, and the boats spend the great majority of their time trolling at slow speeds up to 12-13 hours per day. Since the engine compartment on the Bertram 31 is constricted, space was also an issue. As a final consideration, the environmentally conscious owners wanted to meet EPA Tier 3 emission levels.

Because the customer was looking for a top speed of 24 knots, it became evident that the four-liter engine was a perfect choice and easily fit into the restricted engine space, according to Tait. Volvo Penta also devised a custom trolling mode that permits operation at low RPMs and added an extra alternator pulley on the engine to drive an air conditioning compressor.

The installations were performed in the Tropic Star boatyard with technical support and advice from the Volvo Penta application engineering team and assistance from CDM, the Volvo Penta dealer in Panama.

The first boat now has over 1,600 hours on the new engine. According to Tait, fuel usage is averaging 39 gallons per each 11-hour working day, delivering about 45 percent in fuel savings.

“At Volvo Penta, customer service is at our core,” said Roberto Camacho, distribution development account manager at Volvo Penta of the Americas. “We have put a lot of effort into the improvement of our dealer network in this region, and we are pleased that Tropic Star is satisfied with their overall experience.”

The Volvo Penta-powered boat is in high demand among resort guests who appreciate the low noise levels and no exhaust smells on deck. It’s also the only air conditioned boat in the fleet. The captain said he can now easily talk with the crew from the flybridge – something that was impossible before.

Learn more about the Tropic Star Lodge at <https://www.tropicstar.com/en/>.

For high-resolution images, visit:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/rmj4mhlwklyla3j/AABH5V_l4e6L6g62bGm1LZbBa?dl=0

About Volvo Penta

Volvo Penta, with approximately 3,500 dealers in over 130 countries, is a world-leading and global manufacturer of engines and complete power systems for leisure boats, commercial vessels and industrial applications. Product offerings encompass diesel and gasoline engines with power outputs of between 10 and 1,000 hp. Volvo Penta is part of the Volvo Group, one of the world’s leading manufacturers of heavy trucks, buses and construction equipment.

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