

## HOW WE TESTED

# Wax On, Wax Off

Testers applied the same 11 test products to three different boats in the course of this test. For our long-term test, we applied the waxes—following each product’s instruction—to 6-inch by 6-inch, taped off sections at the sheer work of a 25-foot 1980 Hunter sailboat with moderate oxidation. For comparison, the remainder of the hull was compounded with a mild rubbing compound and then waxed with Collinite 885, the winner of the PS 2003 wax test.

To test the one-step products’ cleaning ability and ease of application over a larger area, we applied them to our 21-foot Parker powerboat, which had a healthy dose of rust stains, yellow-brown waterline stains, and even tire marks—post hurricane scars. Finally, to see whether any products were more effective on colored hulls, or a severely oxidized hull, we applied each one to 3-foot-long topside sections of a 1974 O’Day Javelin that is about one season short of a paint job. All three test boats were left to endure the Florida sun and rain, either at a dock or on a trailer.

To evaluate initial gloss, five observers, two of them professional polishers, were asked to rank the top five finishes. After three months, three PS editors evaluated each section’s glossi-



*From left: Collinite 870, Meguiar’s 50, Restructure Marine Polish, Meguiar’s 67, 3M Fiberglass Cleaner Wax, 3M Clean & Shine, Interlux Premium, West Marine One Step, Star brite Cleaner Wax, and Simoniz.*

ness. The hulls were sprayed and dried repeatedly with a fine mist sprayer to check for beading (oil or dirt on the surface may prevent beading of an otherwise intact wax). Each of our test products is designed to bead water, so beading—or lack thereof—is a good indicator of the wax’s integrity. However, it is interesting to note that water beading is not necessarily the mark of a good finish. Some automotive finishes deliberately inhibit beading so as to prevent watermarks.

