SWOT* bathymetry and the search for small seamounts in the Porcupine Abyssal Plain

Peter Croker, The M Horizon (UK) Limited, January 2025

(*Surface Water and Ocean Topography mission)

References

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The wreck of *Bismarck* crashed into a seamount, sliding hundreds of meters down its side before coming to rest. Note the alignment of the turrets with the wreck of the Admiral's bridge.

A. "Bismarck seamounts area". These two seamounts appear in all recent bathymetry compilations and the EMODnet 2022 Source Reference shows a MBES track E-W across the box outlined in Slide 6. Details of the location have been kept deliberatively vague but Cameron et al (2002) included this detailed drawing of the slide down the flank of the seamount. The seamount is believed to rise some 1,000 m above the surrounding abyssal plain.



B. PAP-SO. This group of three small seamounts appears in all the recent bathymetric compilations. There are multiple SBES tracks from research vessels visiting PAP-SO as well as a R/V James Cook cruise (JC071, Lampitt (2013)) MBES dataset acquired in 2012. The central seamount ('Ben Billett') of the three in the group has a vertical relief of c. 850 metres and an average width of 6 km. See also Hartman et al (2021).



C. Unnamed seamount. This seamount does not appear on any bathymetry compilations e.g. GEBCO-Seabed 2024, EMODnet 2022, NCEI Mosaic 2024 etc. However, on the new SWOT VGG dataset (Sandwell et al, 2024) the feature becomes visible. On seismic profile PAD95-13 (Croker, 2011) top to base seamount is c. 1000 msec 2XTT which is equivalent to 750m of vertical relief (assuming a water column velocity of 1500m/s). Since only one 2D line is available, the x-dimension is unknown, but is a minimum of c. 3.75 km. Seismic section displayed with high VE.











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