

Soon after starting the the first decision had to be taken. There seemed to be a coastal route with some risk. The other option was to head south first and turn east later. The coastal route soon lost its advantage, some boats (including me) switched from the coastal route the the southerly route taking some loss. Some skippers decided to continue and see what would happen.

While the fleet got closer to the Mauritius mark it became more and more clear that the coastal route was quite a bit slower. Even before rounding the Mauritius mark a second big decision had to be taken, east or west? The westerly option was not available in the previous version of this race, since that version had piracy exclusion marks to prevented boats from getting too close to the Somali coast. This year however, it was possible to profit from the fairly constant wind under the east coast of Somali and Oman. This was a longer route than the more easterly route, but it would mean more wind and a better angle for most of the trip.

I chose to go for the westerly route. Within this route there were some options as well, shuffling the fleet from time to time. It was this group that would grab the top 10. Dingo, ita and Henrys were rolling dice for first place, with at one point Henrys grabbing the first place, but in the end, ita came out on top with Dingo second. javakeda and outlaw were battling for third place, two gentlemen racers throwing everything at each other to win, but eventually outlaw gave his third place back to javakeda. And finally, elbetico and tejo need to be mentioned for sailing a great race on the west side of the field. They were leading the fleet that chose, what later turned out to be the wrong side of the coin.

/kroppyer