

My route to **Texel** lighthouse was quickly set. There was no windshift or pressure difference that would be worth the extra tacks. I tacked right on the layline to the lighthouse, which brought me somewhere up in the top 10. I noticed a polar hop coming up to VC buoy. I had to quickly determine between what exact angles the hole in the polar was. I was right on time, maybe 10 seconds late. I turned. And a bit later I turned again, "hopping".

Then I rounded the VC buoy.

It was about that time I saw I was in first place. I plotted the layline for the next gybe, knowing the wind would shift a little, I plotted the line about half a degree off. Then there were two things to do: make dinner and decide whether or not to do two gybes between Oudeschild B and C. I started cooking and calculating. I found out that, if the gybes were done correctly, the second gybe would be done just before the performance loss had recovered to above 93%, so the second gybe would be without performance loss.

The layline to Oudeschild A was coming up, I noticed the wind had shifted a little more than I anticipated when setting the layline, but there was no time to plot it again, I had to guess, and I guessed wrong: I turned about 20 seconds too early. I had to sail a slower angle with a slightly slower VMG. But, with the lower boatspeed, my performance was recovering faster. Maybe my guess wasn't that bad after all. I continued calculating what to do between Oudeschild B and C. Not gybing was easy to calculate, assuming I started with 100% performance at Oudeschild B, I would end up about 15m15s later at **Texel** ZO boei. Then I thought, "What's that smell?". My paprika went black. When I finished taking care of the pots and pans I was just in time (or maybe a little late) turning for Oudeschild A, back first place. I didn't know yet what I had to do between Oudeschild B and C! I quickly continued my calculations.

About a minute or two later I noticed I wasn't in first place any more, I wasn't even in the top 20. I couldn't explain the weird ranking. Then I saw it, I missed Oudeschild A, I somehow thought I needed to be on the west side of it.. I turned around and finished my cooking. I saw Rafa going for the no gybe option, and many others for the double gybe option. As expected most of the others overtook Rafa at first, but because their performance was a lot worse than Rafa's, Rafa was able to get back in front. But not in front of Robert and Iomkiwi. Rafa had to do another perfect rounding to get in front of them again, in first place, and he did!

I still wasn't sure what would've been faster. In the last leg to the finish I finished the calculation: the double gybe would be about 15-20 seconds faster, provided that the second gybe would be free of performance loss, and roundings and layline were executed perfectly. In such a small space, getting the layline right would be hard, so that could cost the double gybers some extra seconds. It seems both options were about equally fast, but the double gybe was more risky.

/kroppyer – June 2014