

To arrive just after the big boat and in front of the IRL fleet is always a good sensation.

First day was typical start with "go south" approach, complicated by the first blue parking lot.

Having set the DCs 12 hours in advance and no access during the day I was going in the wrong direction for a while.

I found myself on the back with all the routing saying to go W perpendicular to the rhumbline to avoid the blue.

Tell the router to go there and work my way south with a series of tack to be in first line with free air again.

Next weather give me the comeback chance I was hoping with rums kib & Co screaming from West to pass me again.

In light air was then VMC toward the choosed point (along 70° W) to cross the next blue band and enter into the strong W driven by the Bermuda High.

Reaching the band I found myself between Neuroman and rums kib on the east and Rhino on the west.

A lot of boats were around with all having a ticket to win the blueband lottery.

Thanks to Javakeda for the excellent explanation regarding the influence of the Gulf Stream on the local wind and general analysis. It helped me to see a little better what I was guessing.

The key was to tack south anticipating everyone without waiting the wx. At this point I was 2 nm behind rums kib and 4 behind Neuroman.

A few boats went immediately south following the same idea.

There were only Rhino with a good leverage to W and Neuro on the E keeping me worried.

Both had about 20 min advantage on me at this point.

Starting finally the acceleration in a classic rich get richer situation and favorable wx update I continued S to close the leverage with the boat W on me and positioning upwind to scramble on the final with the better angle buying an insurance on WX surprise.

(for the router friends: my routers were saying to go W when I went S day one, E when I went S earlier day 2 and finally SE when I went S.... routers are very helpful but do not know tactics and the general WX situation and probable evolution)

Lucky enough the last day was a 10 hour straight line.

Having left the fleet well behind confirmed that everyone on the top pack was in a very strong position and had excellent chance for victory.

Good wind and see you soon.

Gilles  
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