

Slow and difficult race, this one. Three windholes and weather conditions variability have characterized the strategic choices to be made.

And here is my race.

After the start, given the high weather variability on each update, I decided to be conservative, maintaining the highest VMC and getting off as soon as possible Southward, no extreme choices to do, nor too much to the west or to the east.

Well, in the first blue-area (38°85N), I preferred to anticipate the tack and exit immediately toward the SE, and regain the distance to the rhumbline. So did Gilles too, while the group of rumskib, rafa, javakeda, Dingo and others, continued a little more towards W-SW.

Once out of the high pressure, max boatspeed, I decided to go straight to the second hole, at 37°06N.

I got there pretty all together with Gilles and the group of the West, spreaded over a front of about 7-8 miles east-west aligned. There, getting out of the windhole, the Westside boats have chosen to stand more in the W, just to be higher in a future, and get a better angle towards the finish.

The third hole, 35°78, has been the most challenging. At that point we still were compacted (always on a rising 7-8 miles from W to E); on the west, the bubble was deeper and seemed to move more slowly; while the W-group searched max speed towards the SW, once again I chose to come out as soon as possible from the bubble, even taking the risk of being too far to the east, surely sacrificing the angle for the approach to the finish line.

But I've considered this: following and marking the ones to the west would not have helped somehow, soon I'd slowed down and I'd sat on their sterns.

But guys, this windhole was really asphyxiating like a nightmare! It moved nearly the same speed of the boat and the 9-10 knots of wind a few miles straight ahead..... seemed like a mirage!

(and now, while I'm writing – 6 hours passing the arrival - almost the whole fleet is still there, from 18th onwards, and far from 180 miles to the finish line!we all are very sorry for them!)

Well; I shipped for long on the border line of the blue-area's front, and routing the max speed at the beginning and then the max VMC, it took over 2 hours to get into the new wind and sail regularly with more than 12 knots SW-wind.

This made me gain about more than four miles on the group from the third onwards And hope now for the podium!!!

My compatriot Gilles has been very good and did a great job to get out of this bubble earliest, but also on the west side, making sure for the leadership with about 18 hours in advance (unless large changes in the last weather update, of course!)

So my final effort, at this point, was to defend the 2nd place from Dingo. But routing to Bermuda, by then, was short enough to manage the lead I had taken, even though I was sailing with unfavourable angle.

After last wx, made my calculations, I saw that Dingo could not recover more than 2.5 miles on me..... and he was 3.5 late; so I closed ahead on its rhumbline until I found the upper windward site for sailing in total control to the finish line.

And now I really would take a swim in the sea of Bermuda!

Neuroman

June 2014