

Agage 100 - 2014

After two weeks of IRL slow cruising from Venice to Biograd, I was looking forward to a bit of rapid racing on the virtual waters of SOL, and a 100nm equilateral triangle in a SOTO30 (once again a class I hadn't SOled in yet) looked like just the ticket. But ouch, the start was going to be at 22:00 Summer CET and winds were going to be in the 5kn to 8kn range. Oh well, nothing like time on the water to get your racing hand back in, and with corners, WXs, gybes and tacks all set to follow at regular intervals, I decided I might as well stay at the helm for as long as it was going to take (which tuned out to be seventeen hours!)

So, three equal legs. For me things started badly, as I sailed too straight a course on leg 1. Rumskib, as so often, did things better, basically keeping a degree or so more left for a few 100th knots more TWS, then coming back late onto the lay to the waypoint as the wind freed. Rumskib was not alone and I rounded in the 20s or worse, but obviously a fair few SOLers had already fallen asleep as quite a flotilla just carried on.

Leg 2 went much better. I gybed immediately and then quickly hotted up a bit as the course was into a heading windbend. Others did the same, but generally over did it just a little. I gybed, gybed back, and then at 04:30 UTC gybed back again, as the new WX seemed to suggest that was the thing to do. knockando60 had read it all much the same, no slightly better, and I gybed to windward of him on the outside of a long freeing bend South. I tried to soak down in front of him, but knock was having none of it. No can do, eheheh.

At the round up onto the fetch to the finish, the pair of us had a clean lead. However, we both rounded poorly, and what might have been comfortable was anything but, as Rafa, Rumskib and Tyger were immediately hot on our heels, and a final challenge lay before us. Sail down into a header for more wind and more VMC and then put in a short hitch half way down the line before a wind reverse, or... keep up and try to sail as straight as possible and avoid putting in that tack?

As knockando60 went for the straight line option and R, R and T directly behind me went low... guess what? I went low. It all made no difference; the places stayed as they were, although Rummy inevitably closed on knock and bonk ('s me), and regrettably Rafa set what looked like an aberrant DC and missed the line. Commiserations Rafa. Congratulations knock. And with thanks to Agage, who I never knew. The memory lives.

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