

The start, in 8kts of wind, was a beam reach drag-race to the Browns Island Mark, some 2.6nm away.

It looked at first like the drag-race continued 12nm to the headland at the SE corner of Waiheke Island.

But there was a little bit of a polar hop available by heading below the rhumbline about halfway through the Tamaki Strait.

Javakeda was late to see that, and and trailed by 0.09nm [ranked #30] in a very tightly packed group approaching the mark.

The leg NE through the Waiheke Channel was a maxVMG downwind run .. with some islands to deal with.

Using wind forecasts from the starting time, the route called for leaving Rotoroa Island to starboard and Pakatoa Island to port.

But a new wind forecast arrived just before turning into the channel. It showed there was a choice on which way to leave Pakatoa.

Javakeda continued with the plan to leave it to port. This put a premium on timing the gybe to clear Kauri Point, Waiheke. Overstanding that gybe meant lost time and distance.

The wind was going from ~10kts entering the channel to ~12kts passing Kauri point.

That meant the Young 88 could sail deeper downwind, although the constantly changing TWA 'sweet-spot' kept the helmsman and trimmer busy.

Franci and rumskip went the other side of Pakatoa -- leaving it to starboard. Without looking at the detailed tracks, my gut feel is that leaving Pakatoa to port was the right decision. I couldn't overtake those two, but I did gain some ground. The leg was a nail-biter.

After rounding Kauri Point, Waiheke, and on a broad reach toward the Waiheke Mark, javakeda trailed by 0.05nm and ranked 10th. The leg from the Waiheke Mark to Rakino Light was an 80-minute close reach that came at the dinner hour here in SoCal.

I didn't see any polar hop opportunities on the leg, but I didn't look too hard. We had a salad of pesto tagliolini, arugula, grape tomatoes, and a perfectly ripe avocado.

This was lightly dressed with virgin olive oil and white balsamic vinegar ... and topped with freshly grated parmesan cheese.

"uhh ... just a taste of the chardonnay, dear, I have a boat to drive."

Passing Rakino Light and rounding Motutapu at Billy Goat Point [I love it!], the route to the first headland on Rangitoto was a very close reach. After that, we were on the wind until the finish of the race.

At first I thought one tack might do it -- just clearing North Point and then playing the puffs and the lulls to squeeze past the Orakei A buoy. But on the SOL chart Takapuna Head blocked the direct beat to North Head. It would be two tacks.

Just as I was getting that sorted out iomkiwi, hirilonde, and comocean tacked. They were staying closer to Rangitoto. They had a little better wind. They had a little better angle.

"Rats! I'm going to be passed up because of local knowledge."

BUT ... they would have to make two tacks -- and here is where it gets tricky.

Technically javakeda would have to make two tacks as well.

But javakeda's second tack would come less than a minute from crossing the line. The true comparison was this:

-- iomkiwi was looking at two tacks and two PERF penalties;
-- javakeda was looking at two tacks but only one and a fraction PERF penalties. I figure the difference was between 0.05 and 0.1nm -- and that was huge in this race.

Great Race! Great series. Can't wait for SSANZ 100 coming in September.

javakeda / August 2014