

## **AUDI Hong Kong Kettle 2014 – Around the Islands Race: Race Report**

The inaugural Hong Kong Kettle Around the Islands Race started in light winds of 7 knots which did not vary much from nor'nor'east for the duration of the race.

Once through Lei Yue Mun Gap the first decision was whether to go north or south of Tung Lung Chau on the way to the first mark at TCS1 beacon. The majority of the fleet went south but in the end no significant advantage was gained by either group. After TCS1, the boats that did best were those that stood out to the east a bit longer before tacking onto the long starboard beat to lay the next mark, Steep Island. From Steep Island, the course to Po Toi was a classic downwind run with a gybe at about the halfway point. In hindsight, I gained a few places by being one of the last to gybe and approaching the north shore of Po Toi I found myself in 1<sup>st</sup> place. In the excitement, I overshot the SSE layline to thread my way around Po Toi. It was at this point that bonknhoot gained the lead and did not relinquish it to the finish. Rounding Po Toi was a test of who would make fewer mistakes and picking the right time to change course. Gain a bit at one turn and lose a bit at the next seemed to be the case for all competitors. From this point on, our course was straight to the NW corner of Beaufort Island, across Sheung Sze Mun to get under Bluff Head and then to the finish off Round Island with little chance of overtaking.

The essence to doing well in this race I believe was down to three factors – getting around Steep Island and Po Toi without covering extra ground, the gybe point on the run from Steep Is to Po Toi and being at the helm for the whole race as concentration was required.

This was a very enjoyable race in the fast Class 40s with bonknhoot winning in 4hrs 12m 26s. The top 10 positions kept shuffling around right to the end with JakeS completing the podium. The closeness of the racing is shown in the fact that only 1min 16secs separated the top 10 with some very narrow margins.

Thank you all for a great race.

Tyger