

When I saw the course for this race, my first thought was how hard can it be? A couple of short reaches, one gybe and one turn to the finish line? Then I started thinking a bit more closely. This was going to be tight. I identified three key points that would decide the race:

1. What to do on the first broad reach towards the gybe?

Basically three choices:

- o Sail the optimal angle to the gybe,
- o head more lower for better angle,
- o head higher for better pressure.

2. Optimising the course to the gybe

3. Timing the gybe

After studying the polar I decided to go for the pressure, but not too much. So I headed slightly higher for the first two hours and after that concentrated to optimise the angle for an optimal approach to the gybe. In went a dozen DCs (the wind was extremely stable and the polar not particularly sensitive) and the skipper got some well deserved sleep after doing Tour de Belle Ile timed race the previous night.

In the morning I found myself in the lead, at least judging by the bearings to my competitors. As I foresaw the gybe at true wind direction of 63, boats between bearings 333 and 153 were behind me. At that point item number three above was solved for me, as rumskib was my closest opponent, and I was in a convenient position, I decided just to gybe in front of him. We gybed just before the wx, but with the wx the optimal time for the gybe moved to ten minutes later. I then decided again to see what rumskib would do, and when he gybed south for a correction, so did I. The rest was easy broad reaching.

Regardless of how fast our virtual TP52s are, the speed of the real boats was just astonishing.

Thanks again to all fellow SOLers, and especially my Finnish co-competitors, at some point we had four Finns in top-5;)

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