

Studying routes and weather before the start, I said to myself: run to the south and go fast towards more pressure and angle wind. Maximum speed. The more you stay ahead first you will take higher pressure and better angle, then, as you can, make the boat running fast.

Well, I like to split the race into three parts characterized by different technical choices and moods, and then:

Part one - from Anversa to the North Sea: Fun.

We started with light stern wind: we had first a small but significant shift to the left, then the rotation would reverse to the right. So the key was to go immediately toward the left and go gybing along the coast (in such little wind the performance was regained in one or two steps and so no problem in doing many closed jibes).

After the NW arm of the Schelda's estuary, the rotation became very important and then running fast toward the south, I had to try to jibe in "cheerful" twa and get out as soon as possible in the North Sea.

Part Two – The Channel: Suffering!

The navigation in the Channel still was sailed downwind till the extreme SW of the UK.

We sailed with fair wind quite constant with alternating left and right little shifts; but a treacherous shift to the left awaited us in the last 30 miles!

The temptation was to remain high-side in max vmc (whoever was there, in fact, climbed up the ranking) but the strategy of being low-side would pay in the end, in approaching the last headrock with best twa.

Leaving the boat with some downward dc's all night long (in Italy it was night!) it was a difficult choice but then it paid off.

Part Three - Irish Sea: Calm and Cool.

Once we left the Channel passing into the Irish Sea, the strategy seemed to be quite simple (except for the unknown final doldrum in Belfast approach). Wind was from N-NE, first turning to the left and then to the right; ok, then let's go fast toward the rotation and control the opponents (nacrr, karriv, aner, rafa, rumskib, javakeda, ghibli and so onFor once let me list them all as followers!!) but concentrate on the tack's points.

I had a delay of 0.2/0.3 nm from ITA (the Prof) and a lead of 0.3/0.4 nm on nacrr; Needless to say, the Prof didn't give me room and hope for recovery even though I've tried occasionally to reach him during the first half routing towards Belfast. So during the second half in the North Sea I have sailed in control on the trackers under the basic rule in dinghy racing: stay between the opponent and the mark, and you will armour your position.

That's all.

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