

This race was much harder than it looks. For starters it cost me a lot of sleep - and I wasn't aware of the San Clemente rounding when I decided to start - and the forecast turned out a bit unstable. Fun!

The upwind leg to San Clemente is the easy part. Clean VMC with the goal of just brushing Catalina, then rhumbline to the mark. I round San Clemente at 1:30, now it gets tricky. I get two possible routes, stay offshore for the most wind or gybe back to the coast to play the windshift. The second option is favored, I set up a course with a tentative gybe at 5:30, and hope that I can stay west of the fleet. That seems to work, honestly people pay too much attention to VMG. I nap a bit before the wx.

The 0430 wx brings what I had hoped for, offshore now wins big. The bad news is a couple boats have slipped west of me, Jepsom seems to have the best position. Around 8:00 he's able to gybe in front of me. I'm not sure how I feel, he could cover me, on the other hand this cuts down his advantage to only a boat length, I should beat him on pure speed.

I make one critical mistake. With no real threats left to the west I should have gybed earlier to control the fleet. A late gybe means more TWS and a hotter angle to the finish, but other boats have a much shorter distance to sail. Sure enough the 1030 wx brings rafa back in the race. Oops.

The rest is a pure drag race. The finish is super close, Jepsom holds on and wins by seven seconds. Bravo! Rafa has some trouble dodging islands and needs to gybe just before the line. He gets beat by A2 for the final podium spot, but finishes inside one minute, that was dangerous. Anyway it's a good result and my plan mostly worked. Thanks all for this great race!

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