

The first big decision was which way to pick around the islands. The start is hidden behind Thirasia, my early routing had suggested going south, but that flipped on race day. I picked north, halfway into the upwind leg I realized that north of Folegandros might be in play, that made for some hectic calculations. I still went south, some of the very fast boats had the same route, so far so good.

Milos was the final island, I rounded around 18:30 with a small lead, the next 18h would be in open water. The wind would do a 180, I projected a tack around 23:30, then a long arc to the mark. Unfortunately with the shift I was sailing into lighter wind. This leads to the second big decision, run a bit hotter and attack the shift, or go higher and stay in better pressure?

I generally like more wind and decided to point a bit higher than the router output, and then watch the competition. Most of the fleet went even higher than I did, but kenza went for the hotter route. This was a dangerous situation. Give him some weather help and he's gone. The log shows him at 213 degrees for 22:00, with a projected tack at TWD 305 this gives me very little margin. The rest of the fleet was under control, and I got a bit closer to kenza before the wx.

Kenza didn't get help, and at 22:30 my position looked perfect. Now it's up to the router to set the perfect arc to the mark. With 130 degrees of shift to go, I know this is really hard without software. Anyway I get some good sleep.

At 04:30 it's obvious that rumskib has aced the overnight bit. He's awfully close against my target bearing. With only one wx close to the mark it's too late for tactical games. Full speed ahead. At the mark I have a good lead.

The home stretch is laid back, rhumb line in a moderate 'rich get richer' situation. Congrats rumskib & StingFI for the podium, kenza (4th) for pushing me in the middle part, and peskasail for the generous prize! Thanks everyone for another enjoyable race!

outlaw / May 2015