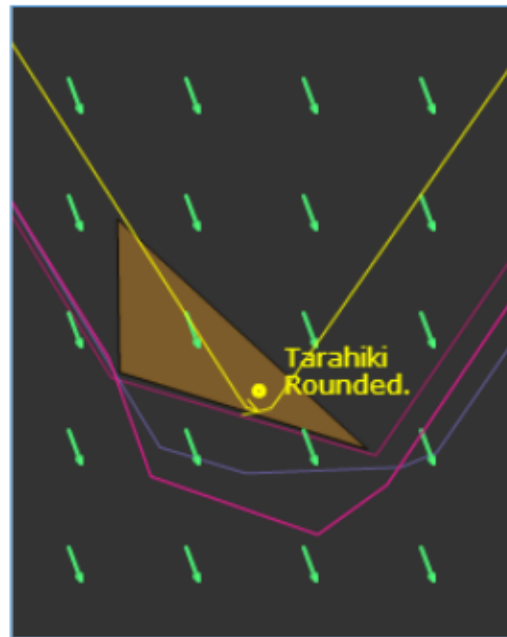


This 100 is 80.2nm long and like the other two Safety at Sea races takes the SOL fleet around the inner reaches of the Hauraki Gulf off Auckland. A beautiful part of the world and great to be virtual racing it, in concert with an IRL buddy fleet.

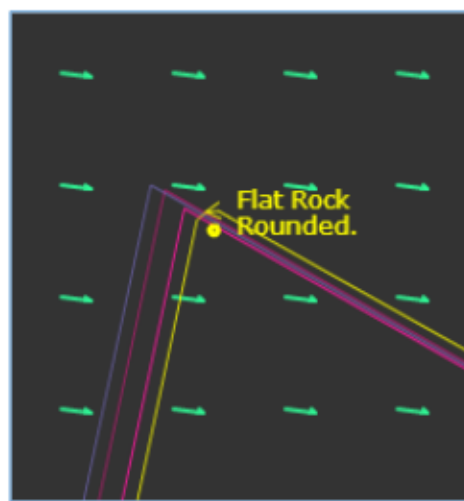
Of our 102 SOL entries, 73 got off the starting line, and at time of writing pipapepa and Borabora are just short of the line, heading to finish P42 and P43 respectively. Disappointing numbers really for what together with the other S@S races provides a tidy Series of what essentially are Sprints-requiring-Stamina; marathon Sprints if you will, rather than Sprints that are morphed into Marathons by weather conditions.

In recent weeks, my BRR (Bonk Ranking Recovery) programme has experienced considerable interference from a highly stochastic BBQ signal. Race 1 of S@S saw this interference drop bonk from a potential T5 finish to what ultimately became a P17 and in this latest race, a dreaded BBQ again found bonk, this time as she negotiated the rounding of Tarahiki (see adjacent).



Bright pink is how bonk negotiated the islet, faint pink is the track of the eventual winner karaoke (neat, huh) and grey blue that of Lunch, who finished third. Of course this fiendish fate that befell bonk not only cost her extra sailing distance, but also stopped her for a server jump or two and dropped her performance to 80%-and-building for a while. In short, it converted her P1 at the time to P15 or so after 5 more minutes of sailing.

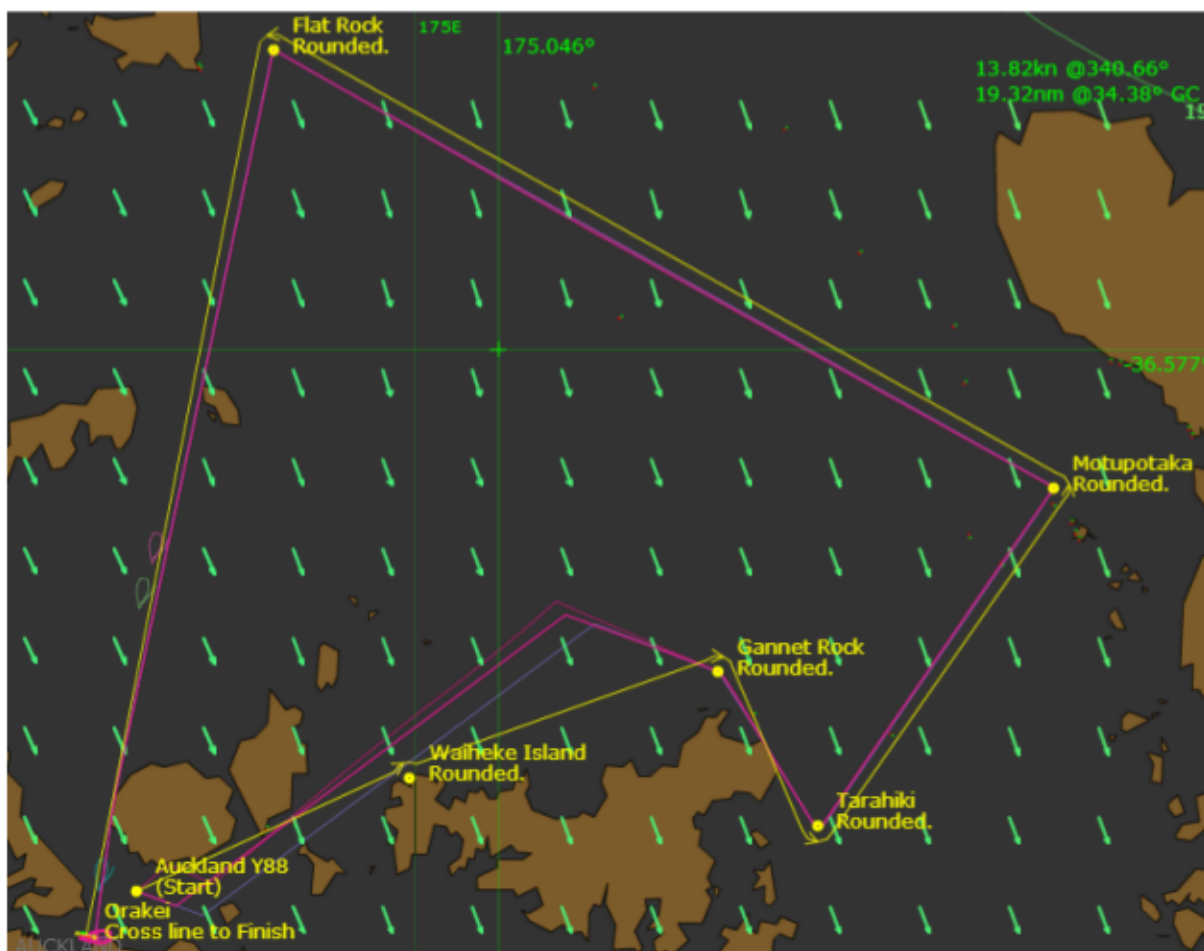
60nm were left to sail from Tarahiki to the finish, so three quarters of the race, but it was going to be mostly tramlines, which left better rounding (which wouldn't be difficult) and natural attrition of course for catching up. Hah, so bonk's patent DC roundings don't always backfire (see below), and at the start of the long reach south to the Finish, bonk was intermittently showing in P1 again (but karaoke was in fact always those few metres ahead).



Keeping high on a constant TWA course for the long slowly heading fetch from Motupotaka to Flat Rock had also helped.

So how had bonk achieved her lead prior to her Tarahiki trouble? Well, apart from getting the TWAs just right for the prevailing 20kn breeze, bonk and Lunch started on port whereas karaoke was in the group that headed in towards the Rangitoto shore, where there was marginally more breeze. The karaoke strategy obviously required an extra tack and the resultant perf loss was too costly.

On port, Lunch carried on till a tack would just clip the NE corner of Waiheke, whereas bonk tacked as soon as she could clear Motutapu, to discover that a lift on starboard would reverse before the tack point to Gannet Rock. Bit of luck! So, I curved bonk a little up and then sailed her free-and-fast towards the header.



And that was that. Good race. Thanks all.