

Right off the bat, I loved this boat. Big round polars with good performance on a run. This is my kind of sailing. Keep it simple.

When it came to the race, the first decision made turned out to be the most important one. North or south around Motutapu Island? I initially thought south would be the way to go, but changed in the last moments before the start. Once underway, I found myself in the company of *kenza* and *bonknhoot*, which I took to be a very good sign!

From Motutapu to the Cape Coleville waypoint, both *kenza* and *bonknhoot* ran a slightly straighter and faster course than me as we closed the ground on the group that had done the southern rounding. By now, we were a small group of 5-7 boats that were doing our usual 'chase *kenza*' routine. *Rumskib* had a brief BBQ, and *Kipper1258* was away from the tiller for most of his roundings, requiring him to set some delayed commands which worked really well, but did allow us to get a little distance on him.

From Cape Coleville on, we all did our darndest to chase down *kenza*. I thought I was making some inroads on the downwind legs as we approached White Island, but when we got to the mark, the gap remained about the same.

Chasing me around the course was a relatively new American boat, *bmd*. We swapped 3rd & 4th several times from White Island to the finish, and at the end there were only 11 seconds between us. I was pleased to get my first podium finish in a non-timed race.

Great race that required a lot of attention, especially in the second half as we raced close to shore. Thanks to the SOL team for putting it together.

Longreacher /November 2015