

My generic strategy for the race was:

1. Do routing after each daytime WX (initially I decided not to get up for the 2230 WX): First a general routing to the next relevant mark, secondly a more detailed route about three days out, and lastly a short term route about 12 hours out
2. For reaching, rely on kroyper's excellent Spinnacer, which has improved my reaching performance substantially with the tool that maintains optimal VMC course to a desired bearing
3. As the boat is fast, minimize number of gybes (I was expecting high speed gybes, with minimum distance loss related to performance loss of 0,15-0,30 nm)

I managed to build a small lead before Prince Edward Islands, but just before the mark ghibli took a more Northern approach and closed the gap. Rounding the mark happened in the middle of the night, so I don't know the exact situation at the mark.

The pivotal point of the race came three days later when it was time to gybe away from the great circle rhumb line. Majority of the fleet decided to do three gybes a bit South of 50S. I decided to go for just one gybe, and that allowed me to build a small lead over the fleet. However, there was still over 2000 nm to go. A long way to try to cover.

Three days later I regretted not getting up for the 2230 WX. ghibli had made a move South, getting 20 nm of leverage. And for worse, my router told me he had the better position, so I was the chaser now! Unfortunately the following WXs were very favorable to ghibli and he started closing the leverage and there was nothing I could do. I thought the race was his.

But the WX gods had other thoughts. For about six WXs the upper hand varied from WX to WX between North and South, only to settle to favor the Northern route, my route. After that it was just covering the chasing group.

Right at the end I got lucky again. I had set up a DC to the finish line as I was supposed to be on the road, but had set it up in the opposite direction (used the ruler from the finish line to get the spot for the DC)! Fortunately there was a change in plans and I just happened to check my computer as the DC fired off!

One noteworthy detail of the race was the speed: hmm's statistics show only three one-hour data points where my speed was below 20 kn. Average VMC over the whole 6000 nm race was about 22,6 kn.

karriv /December 2015