

2015 Tasman Double race 1: Sydney to Hobart

After checking the weather forecast for the race, I was anticipating a very technical and difficult race. Furthermore, it seemed like the most challenging parts of the race were expected right at the end. And boy was I right... What made things even more challenging was the composition of the fleet. Most of the boats we are used to seeing at the top of the leaderboard were racing.

I saw no less than six pivotal points in my race, highlighted in the figure (red line is my route, blue is kenza's):

1. Right at the start I did not head out enough for the stronger breeze. That resulted in me about 0.5 nm behind the boats that had headed out by the first gybe.
2. After the gybe I sailed lower than the rest of the fleet. That paid off on the next tack when I had a small advantage on pressure (insignificant as the polar maxes out at around 18 kn heading upwind), and more importantly an advantage of about two degrees on TWD. I calculated that that should take me to a comfortable lead of about 0.3 nm by the next tack.
3. Unfortunately, due to a bug in my DC spreadsheet, I made a careless mistake putting in my DCs for the night. They were carefully calculated and otherwise excellent, but off by one day, so instead of Saturday morning, they would have worked on Sunday morning. Needless to say the bug has now been corrected. Anyway, due to the mistake I ended up running constant TWA, which cost me the lead I had calculated for, and I think in the end the race.
4. During the series of tacks, I managed to pass kenza, going from 0.05 nm behind to 0.05 nm ahead.
5. The most difficult part of the race was the next arcing reach to the tack towards Hobart. I must have spent an hour analyzing and planning the route. At the tack we saw two different strategies: kenza and rumskib went early, going for less distance, less speed, whereas I went a bit later (by design) for more pressure and speed.
6. My speed was enough to catch rumskib, but kenza was able to get out of the blue goo first and consequently sailed to a well deserved victory!

All in all, a very interesting and exciting race. I even had to flex on my rule not to lose sleep for racing, I just had to stay up for the 2230 WXs and the wake for the 0430 ones too. This was just too exiting with so close competition! Let's see if I will recover for race 2 of the Tasman Double!

And many many thanks again to SOL crew, hmm for his statistics site, and kroppey for SPINNACER;)

Karri, 28th Dec, 2015

