

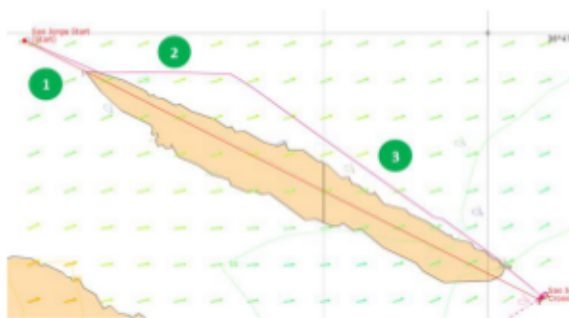
2016 Sao Jorge Sprint

The first time I took a look at the upcoming PYOC sprint, the choice of route seemed trivial, go North. On Saturday morning that was the only trivial thing left. I saw a multitude of factors affecting the race:

1. Very wide hop in Soto 30's polar smack in the middle of where we were heading
2. Big variation of wind pressure along the course, from 15 kn up to almost 23 kn. The change of pressure would conveniently move the hop around.
3. Decision between going along the shoreline or wider, pressure vs. angle.

Normally routers are of little use in sprints as their accuracy is limited and I resort to other methods in deciding my strategy. This time out came my trustworthy BWR and gave me a general idea on how to approach the race. Basically the race consisted of three legs:

1. Short stint to the North-Western tip of Sao Jorge, going on the upwind edge of the polar hop. That one was quite easy, constant two 108. That was fortunate as I had to take my son to his orchestra practice and was offline at the time of the start.
2. Heading out from Sao Jorge on an Easterly course, on the downwind edge of the hop. This was getting a bit more difficult as the wind eased and the correct angel kept changing. Hand steering all the way, making small (0.2 degree) corrections along the way.
3. Heading for finish (or actually the small gap between Sao Jorge and the small island East off the tip of Sao Jorge, which does not seem very sailable according to GE;), again on the upwind edge of the hop. I carefully calculated the time to head home and managed to time the turn perfectly. Again, the wind pressure varied and the hop kept moving, so there was a constant need for hand steering. Unfortunately, I had to go out to get some groceries for Mrs. karriv and drifted a bit too much upwind, so I had to make a small correction towards the end of the leg. Fortunately the small advantage I had gained on the first two legs was enough;)



All in all, a very entertaining race, managing the polar hop being more or less the decisive factor in the race.

Karri, 16th Jan, 2016