

## START

This race was a good combination of beach hopping and slightly longer legs and as Fifi was busy plotting the downfall of rivals in the SF to NY race - I chose to do this one SOTP. A decision that was immediately apparent to any onlookers as I made the mistake of rounding the first major island the wrong side.

Sure this gave me a good angle to the first mark but the better initial angle and slight windshift saw the likes of Rummy reach the 1st mark well ahead of me. As a few boats stopped for a late night snack of jambalaya and Red Stripe the good boat MM rounded in the mid 30s.

Immediately after the mark I gybed as soon as I knew I was clear of the island. The wind was shifting round so I wanted to do that beat at the best angle possible. I was also aware of the performance loss and wanted to ensure I only gybed once as I felt this would allow me to make up a few seconds on the boats ahead of me.

By the time we reached the myriad of islands by the second mark MM was in 20th place. I had noted that a few boats had made better than expected progress down the leg by not putting in a gybe but sailing close to the wind. I decided to risk doing likewise through the narrow passages, only putting in 3 gybes in the entire system.

I should mention a big "hats off" to Karriv who navigated the entire system on DCs. I have no idea how the guy did it!! He is God of DCs for sure! Anyway, my gamble worked and I exited the system in 2nd to Rummy with Smo hot on my tail for 3rd. The rest of the 3rd leg was straight forward. I had planned to sleep this bit but toothache kept me awake so after a couple of hours spent cursing all thing dentist related I returned to find the 3 boats had spaced out a bit by the final mark with approximately 0.4nm between each.

After the mark I had a choice - either settle for a relatively secure 2nd place or try and catch Rummy. I decided to take the gamble again. I headed closer to the wind for a while to give me a better angle past some SLIs to the finish. By the time I eased back on to the wind I was in 6th. However my plan started to pay off as I passed a few boats but it soon became apparent that my gamble was doomed and I spent the rest of the leg hoping to catch Wolff for a podium place. Pain killers consumed I set a course for the line and hit the sack. Luck was on my side and I did ease past Wolff but the gamble was not good enough to get Rummy or 2nd back from Smo. Well sailed guys and well raced all.