

## Van Isle 360 - 2016

This was, without a doubt, the most challenging race of my short SOL career. I knew roughly what I was signing up for from the start, with the narrow channels and lots of opportunities for BBQs, but I also thought there was an opportunity for a good finish, as the tricky landscape might keep competitors at bay.

For me, the race was roughly divided into 4 sections, each with its own challenges and pitfalls.

### Leg 1. Nanaimo Start to Campbell River

The course designers took it easy on us for the first day or so, giving us lots of open water, fair winds and following seas. I reached Campbell River in about 5<sup>th</sup> place, and thought, "This isn't so bad, and I'm doing well. I'm going to go for it!"

### Leg 2 Campbell River to Cape Scott

Here the fun begins! Wind on the nose, lots of islands, and a new weather update in the middle of the night. I set a course that would keep me (I hoped) in the middle of the channel, and wondered where I'd find myself when I woke up. Fortunately, with only one exception, my DCs went well, and I rounded Cape Scott in 6<sup>th</sup>.

### Leg 3. Cape Scott to Race Rocks

Sleep! Glorious Sleep. It's a great feeling to set a course and go to bed without worrying about a weather update or a possible grounding! The open ocean portion went better than I could have hoped for, and I arrived at Victoria in 3<sup>rd</sup>.



Bit of an overshoot here at Chatham Point. Oops.



More wind east (**longreacher**) vs better angle west (**limesinferior**), the better angle won the battle.

### Leg 4, Race Rocks to Nanaimo Finish.

OK, third place... less than 60 nm to go. This should be easy! Wait, what? We have company coming over to visit tonight? And the wind is down to 3 kts? And it's back on our nose? And my ETA at the finish is not until 6AM tomorrow morning? Argh!!

The first challenge was not beaching while our guests were visiting, while still trying to be a good enough host to keep the Admiral happy. That was solved by putting the boat in **bonkhoot's** wake and following along for a few hours. Turns out, if you've got to follow a boat, **bonk** is a good one to follow. By the time the guests left, I was up to 2<sup>nd</sup>. From there, it was coffee fueled, all night marathon to try to outmaneuver **limesinferior** to the finish. I was doing OK, until I saw more wind north, and went for it, while **limes** saw better

angles to the west. Turns out the better angle won the day, and I ended up coming home a close 3<sup>rd</sup>.

2 BBQs, one overshoot turn and one bad strategy call. Plus, one very tired longreacher, groggily celebrating as the kids wake up to start their Saturday!

*longreacher*  
May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016