

The main challenge here for us in Europe was the start time (0100 AM local at my coordinates). Thankfully enough the expected wind conditions were good (15 to 20 knots), and the course of AGage 50 looks like a dinghy triangle (of different magnitude of course ;)) , and therefore there are no nasty rocks to avoid all the time along the race.

Leg 1 – upwind

The plan was to start on a starboard tack and run for about 10 minutes towards better breeze, and then immediately tack north on layline to take advantage of the lifting left shift. So I did.

The boats that started on port tack stayed for couple of hours in lesser breeze. Must say I did not worry about them. I worried a lot during the two hours of north westerly run about rumskib and rafa, who had continued on the starboard tack sensibly before tacking. For a couple of hours I asked myself if they had made a mistake, or if they had seen something that I had not seen. It is very difficult to judge the positions when the result will be a balance of better angle and higher distance to the mark.

In the end I turned out right. Rumskib and rafa had lost approx. 0,2 miles by extending the initial starboard tack. 50% of that was instantly recovered by them at turning the mark, where as USUAL I went way too large. (I cannot complain about that though ...it is my determination not to risk throwing a full season in the dust bin basket just for forcing one single turn in one single race ;))))

Leg 2 – reach – uneventful

Leg 3 – downwind

Choosing the route here was a bit tricky. A long starboard leg before jibing was offering stronger breeze and lousier VMG, whilst the port northerly approach was offering exactly the other way around.

I and the majority did choose the southerly run, and I in particular maintained a VMC approach, running faster but losing leverage on the immediate opponents. Some of them were sailing 3 to 4 degrees beyond optimal VMG and I started being worried, as I was investing too much distance to run if compared to them.

One of these footing boats was simondo, who had always been in the top row for the entire race. Whilst I was keeping an eye on rumskib for tactical yearly series purposes, I also saw that AcmeRacing was coming strong.

At this point I was the most southerly boat, and decided to intentionally make a mistake.

LOLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL ... (I call it DRD ...damage reduction decision):

I wanted the Southern pin. To get there I should have extended my starboard run for another minute or two, but decided to jibe early to go and “see” what kind of hand the opposition had on the table.

It turned out immediately that simondo and I were at same level, and that I was right in fearing Acme a lot. Due to my early jibe I had to run to the finish line on constant manual VMG adjusting, and staying constantly 0,5 degrees lower than optimum VMG. (still without making as close as I wanted to the pin ;))))

In the end simondo, who had made the mistake to “trust” my jibe, and jibed under, found himself struggling to foot as much as I was doing, in order to reduce “his” distance to the line. All this whilst Acme, who had not trusted my jibe, and extended correctly the starboard run, was coming up like a rocket!!

In the end simondo managed to make it by two seconds on WIN.

I want to say one word about Simon: he is a SOL veteran, and always present in the front area of the race rankings, especially in sprints, but also in all other racing that he had undertaken. He claims this is his first podium. I claim this is the VICTORY he will remember! , and a super deserved one.

As everybody knows , when a long deserving Soler manages to win a race , the fact that I am behind him chasing and not giving any gifts makes me extremely happy because I feel I have made his achievement”better”

And it is not the first time I enjoy this feeling

BRAVO SIMON !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Ciao ALL!!WIN