

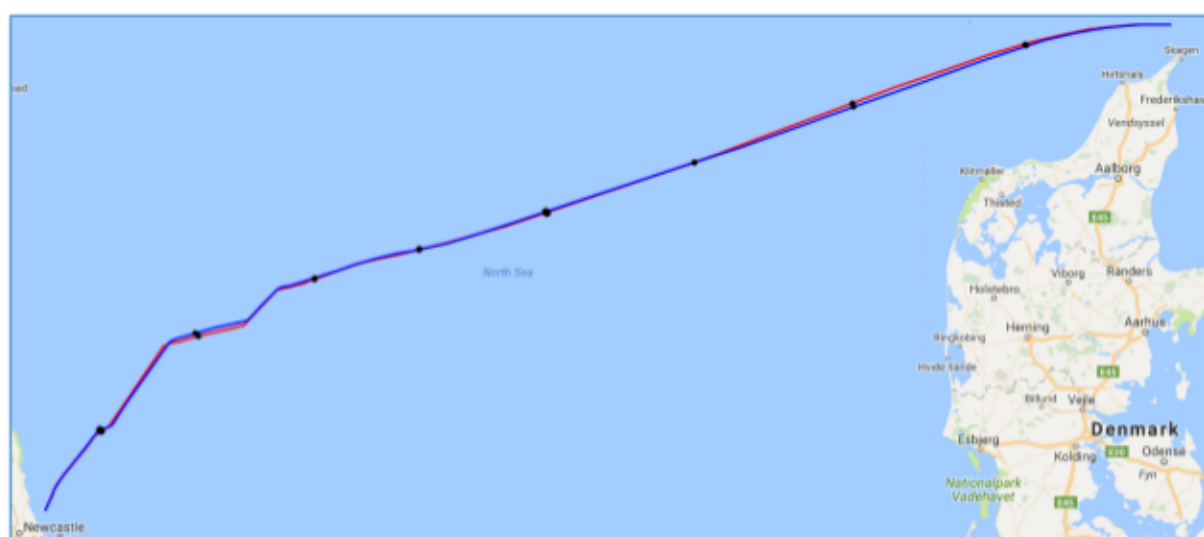


Avast and close race that one been! Just picture the scene; four score and ten four-masted barques broad reaching abreast into the Kattegat at 10 knot o'r the sea from points North. 't Would worry the King of Denmark, aye.

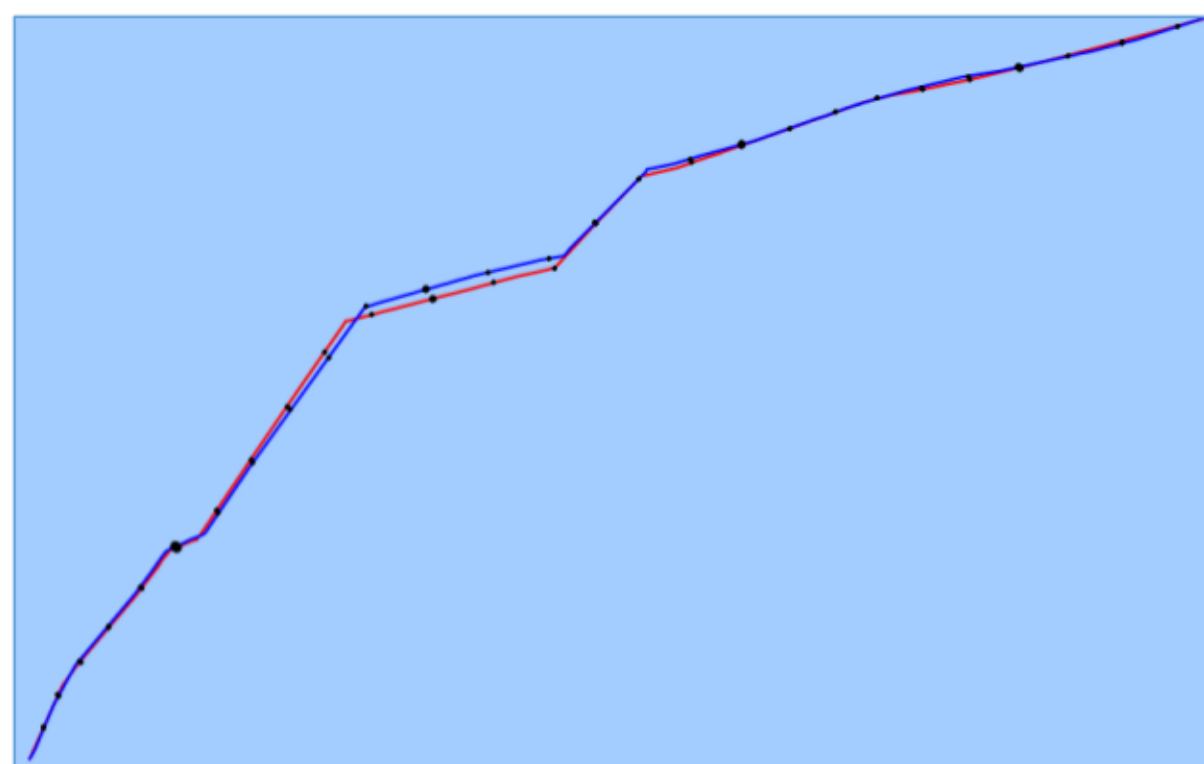
't Be odd, but these barques can quare climb to win'ard. Slowly mind, but I'd given my right leg (the only one be left, roight) for this ship when last we sailed to A Coruna. And that old F'rigger could have done me near as well for this downhill ride from Blyth.

But such is the life of the SOL-faring seaman, even if it has taken him till now to make a podium. There were excuses. I was two hours late getting away from England for the passage to Lisbon; you see I'd got lost in the docks in Antwerp. Then when I took the helm in Lisbon for the second leg to Cadiz it took me a few spells before I realized I was on a different vessel altogether to the one that had got me there! And then of course on my way to A Coruna I nearly took the ship over the edge of the World; if it hadn't been for a purple barrier (the colour of Rome, so I took it serious) I might not have lived to tell the tale.

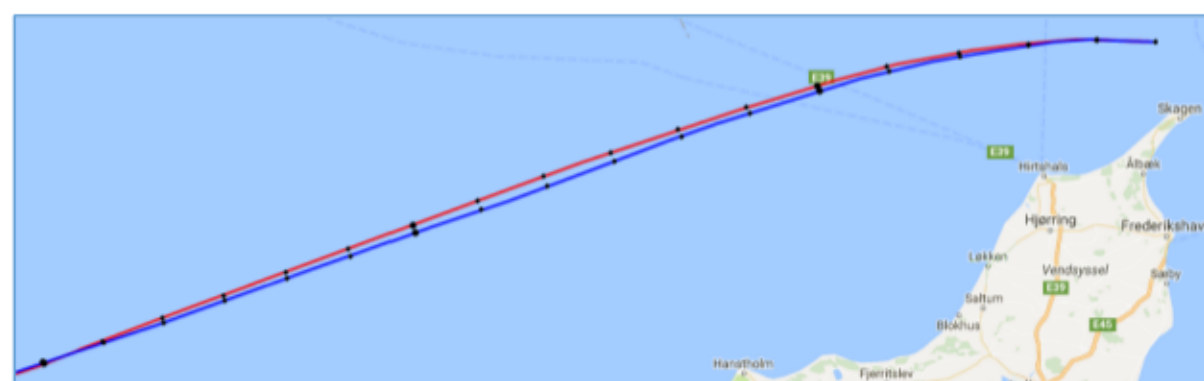
Well this race, then! Below you see the tracks of Aner59 (blue), our eventual winner, and bonknhoot (red), our eventual loser. Not much difference, huh? At a guess, I'd say we both paid close attention to our router! But obviously, some differences there must have been, 'cause Aner won by 17 secs.



Let's zoom in and look at the first 18 hours out of Blyth first. Aha, so we both headed NNE on what at the time was a broad reach with the wind freeing in the direction of more breeze, and after a few hours of this we both bore off onto a near max VMG course towards a first gybe point. What to say, we gybed almost simultaneously, and six hours later we gybed again, and this time bonknhoot gybe a little earlier. But it made little difference. Others around us were doing much the same thing.



There now followed 18 hours of straight line sailing. Half way across the North Sea, I had the bright idea to route for both ends of the line, which, to my surprise (another thing I got wrong in this Tall Ships Regatta Series) were very very far apart (10 naughty miles!!). The northern end it turned out was half an hour closer and rumskib, Dingo and the returning peskasail were further North, and so I was pleased to see the router giving me tracks to hold North for more breeze on the approach to the Finish that would loose cover those bohyos, and rather thought that Aner was getting it wrong taking a straighter line to that much preferred northern end.



But I was wrong to be pleased. Apart from VMG and VMC, there is also VMH and VMX. VMH is Velocity Made Hopping and of no interest here, but what's VMX? That's Velocity Maximus, the fastest you can go in any given windspeed and Aner's course had more of that (and slightly more wind) when he held South, and slightly more of it as well coming into the Finish.

Nice race, Team Sol, and nice to finish an exasperating series for bonk on a little high.

bonknhoot, October 2016