



2016 SSANZ Triple



For some reason, Southern Hemisphere Races seem to be in my wheelhouse lately. My theory is that it has something to do with a combination of me being left-handed and the spin of the Coriolis forces south of the equator.

The first race of the SSANZ triple went very well. It started at a convenient time for those of us on the East Coast of North America. No serious hiccups or missteps, although I probably lost 2nd place during the dash for the line by not being bold enough as I came away from the last rounding. Oh well, sometimes you win, sometimes you learn.

The second race was interesting. I was already in the midst of zipping along in the Brisbane to Keppel race, trying to maintain a pace with the leaders, while at the same time struggling upwind in a Tall Ship off the coast of Portugal. But, I didn't want to miss an opportunity to Sprint in NZ, so off we went. The distractions of 3 races got the best of me in the first half of the sprint, and I spent much of the first couple of legs back in 8th or 9th. However, I made the best of an opportunity when we rounded Gannet Rock, and found myself looking at a possible podium position. Just a couple of roundings left. Looks like a good finish! Wait a minute, what's that noise? It's my pager!! We have a report of a forest fire that we need our local fire department to respond to!

The good news was that we got the fire out quickly, and less than a hectare was burnt... the bad news, is that I ended up BBQed on Motuihe Island for a bit, before I was able to get turned around and make a dash for the finish. Surprisingly, this is the first time that a fire call has interrupted this hobby at a critical juncture.



SAILING AND FIREFIGHTING DON'T MIX!

I also had visions of a podium spot half way through Race 3. Tight racing meant that there were only a few seconds separating the top 20 of us, but I was near the front of that pack. A momentary lapse of attention had me not realizing that I could make a tight rounding on the Southeast corner of Waiheke Island, and I quickly dropped out of the top 20. The second half the race, was spent trying to fight off the time lost from the sloppy rounding, however with such a strong field and a short race, I was only able to climb back to 10th by the finish.

Thanks to the SOL team for putting together this fun, Southern Hemisphere Sprint Series!

-longreacher