

#### Part One: The Magellan dilemma

The first stretch of this race was clearly a game on who makes the decision first. In actual facts for the first time if I am not mistaken, the SOL fleet has been offered the possibility to round South America without going as south as the mythic Horn, but instead going through the Magellan Strait.

Must be honest here: I had decided to go around The Horn several days before start. I am not any longer (if I have ever been....well yes ...Dieppe .....It was 2009 was it? ;))))))... ) capable of steering the boat for as long as 24 hours without sleeping etc. I only preyed that the Magellan Strait would not give excessive advantage to the competition, and, more importantly, that my two immediate competitors for the annual BIG goal would go through The Horn as well.

In the end a few brave and daring boats went through the Magellan straight led by IRONMAN ...(sorry ....NEUROMAN is the name ;)) ), and this was for some of them the key turning point of their result. To my total luck instead of being me constantly staying close to my two competitors it appeared that they were staying close to me ( same routing answers I guess ), so in the end I was quite relaxed , and did not bother too much about the dilemma.

#### Part Two: The exception One in Ten

Some may remember that when we raced from SFO to NYC early this year three boats approaching the Horn disregarded one single 2230Z update that was wild and sent a big pack jibing south. The result was that the following morning the WX was back to previous normality and those three boats had a lead of nine hours at the Horn.

It happened here as well, but with the one in ten opposite result: Approaching the Falklands/Malvinas (to stay politically non-aligned ;) ) a 2230Z update gave a huge change in WX pattern, that pretended stopping the southerly course, and steer west. I disregarded it and continued south. The following morning the 0430Z did not put things where they were before, and I lost contact with the front end of the fleet. From that moment and for many days I navigated between 10<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> position (from the top 10 I was in till then)

#### Part Three: Those times when Sail racing can be really hated

I am not talking about myself, but I know the feeling when all your efforts are destroyed by very unlucky WX. It happened to those boats that were in front by a few hours after the Horn, both in the Horn pack and the Magellan pack. High pressure holes in the Pacific this time played like walls against the front of the fleet, halting their efforts and not remunerating at exit. The top end of the fleet re-compacted again after a couple of days into the Pacific, and I could continue with my efforts to stay close to those two, as well as trying to achieve a good result. The Magellan pack in the meantime showed that the daring move was paying, but their separation was too much yet to confirm clean leadership.

#### Part Four: All in one direction and two more south westerly.

The final turning point of this race was about four days before the finish. All of a sudden the front end of the fleet took different routing decisions: the quasi totality of the pack did steer slightly north westerly, as if they were to go around the next high on top of it. Kenza and I did steer slightly south westerly and found ourselves alone down there. One very smart skipper, not leading but belonging to the Magellan pack, probably had seen the same kenza and I saw, and set for a whole day a straight CC south westerly course to intercept the two of us, and after 24 hours he was comfortably in front of us and with us. This is the moment longreacher won the race. Of course when I say that kenza and I saw something I mean our routers .....(apparently ours only though ....)

#### Part Five: approaching the finish

No story there, just matter of endurance after so many days of difficult Pacific crossing in the wrong direction. The fight really was behind the podium. I made a few mistakes of not covering when beyond the first New Zealand piece of land, and Alexandria managed to close the gap a little, but in the end it was a podium spot for me.

I said to myself that I should have stayed with the opponents , but I felt at comfort to accept separation some three days prior to finish , because by that time I was confident that ahead or behind I would end up not too far from them in terms of "points " .

Another matter is the fight with Viktor for the 2016 Ocean Championship:

This time he gained one point on me, and before the final race that will take place in December there is only three points between us (accounting for one discard). My money is ALL on kenza .....BUT he will have to fight till the end. As everyone knows this is the only way to win.....

So he does and he will .....;))

Piero

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