

October 2nd 13:00 - And we're off! Huge fleet in this one, looks like about 135 racers at the gun, most have headed south, while a small group of us have headed east. Lots of names I recognize in this group, hopefully that's a good sign!

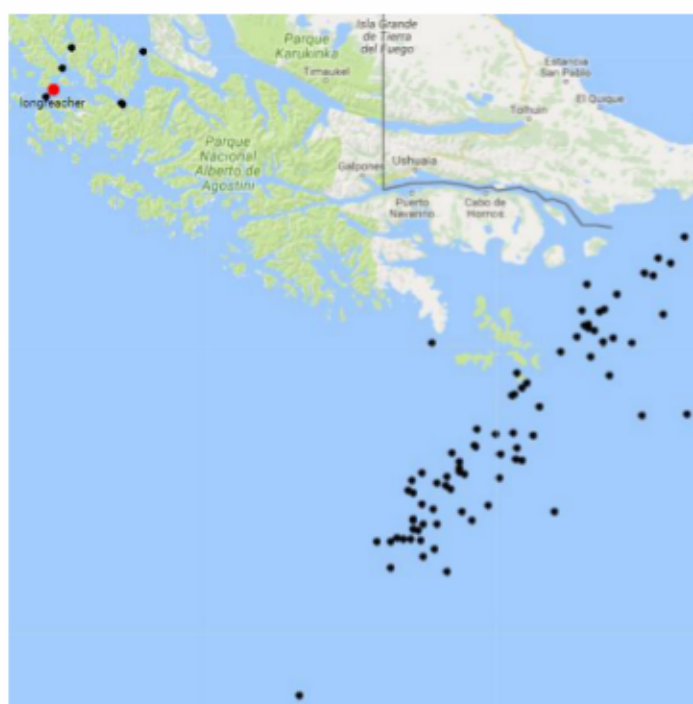
October 3rd 10:00 - First mistake, less than a day in. Not a good sign. I got overambitious with my tacking last night, the performance loss has put me about 6 minutes back. Still a long way to go.

October 4th 23:00 - Strait or Cape? Most of the fleet seems to be headed out to the Falklands. I'm liking the shorter distance through the strait. Winds look to be about the same for both options. Hopefully I can make it through without landing on a beach somewhere. The first part doesn't look too bad.

October 6th 10:00 - Strait it is! Not many of us took this option. The timing should work well for me.

This first bit isn't too bad, and I should have some time this afternoon when I have to sail through the smaller channels on the West Coast. Chasing Neuroman, with some others chasing me.

October 6th 19:00 - We're in the Pacific. One short BBQ, (Only a few seconds, I tried to cut a tack too fine). The bad news is that we're well behind Kipper, who bailed on the Strait option and went around instead. He's got a 50 mile lead over kenza. Impressive! Hoping that we have a better wind angle for the next few hours. Still chasing Neuroman.



Emerging from the strait. Note Kipper at bottom centre

October 7th 10:00 - This is going to seesaw back and forth all the way across the Pacific. Kipper & the Southern Fleet ran into some blue goo, while we northerners have lots of wind. My little boat is up to 3rd. However, we're coming up on the goo now, so we'll see how it works out.

October 9th 10:00 - There's a pattern developing here, as we're stretched out so far from north to south. As one end hits the blue goo, the other surges ahead, only to be caught up in the same weather system a few hours later. It's going to come down to whoever can pick their way through this stuff the best.

October 10th 10:00 - I've temporarily managed to get ahead of Neuroman, who I've been following since the Straits of Magellan. Some other good news, the fleet is beginning to collapse from the long N-S line into a tighter pack. If they'll just be content to follow Neuroman and me for a bit, that'd be very helpful.

October 13th 10:00 - Good news, I slept well last night. Bad news, I think I may have thrown away my lead. Miss one weather update and you wake to find yourself out in "no mans" land. Ugh... The next few hours are going to be stressful.

October 13th 18:00 - Survived that bit of blue, but I think I've lost most of the advantage that I'd gained by taking the shortcut through the strait. Seeing some familiar boats chasing me down, including kenza. Whose bright idea was it to race all the way to NZ anyway?

October 16th 18:00 - Kenza is a machine! Every time we separate, he gains on me, even when I think I'm in more wind with a better angle! I don't know whether to try to cover, or sail my own line. We're still a couple of days out though, there is no way for me to cover effectively for the rest of the race.

October 17th 10:00 - I've run out of lead before running out of race. Kenza is slipping past me, and I'm in meetings for the next 2 days. Frustrating, after 10 days of pretty much having the race my own way. I don't know how I could have sailed this stretch much better except for that one missed Wx. Ugh.

October 18th 10:00 - Maybe? This is going to be close. Found a bit more wind last night. If I don't hose things up today, I just might hold kenza off. More meetings today, and then running kids around to sports tonight. Don't beach it somewhere!

October 18th 23:00 - Whohooo! I am so glad that this race was not 100 nm longer. I'm sure that kenza would have had me in 1 more day. Heck, I was sure that he had me yesterday. This was way more stressful than spending the race trying to chase someone down. Thanks to the SOL team for putting this on. However, I don't want to do another one like it for a while. I think Mrs. LR is ready to murder me for flopping out of bed in the middle of the night for the past two weeks. Looking forward to a good night's sleep tonight. ZZzzzzz....