

### A3 2016 - Leg 4 - Sydney to Gold Coast

I've said it before, and I'll say it again here. I love SOL racing in the Southern Hemisphere. I don't know why, but my results always seem to be better when we're in the half of the world where everything is upside-down.

This race had a particularly bad start time as it fell right at supper hour, on the Admiral's birthday! I was not the most popular swabbie as I lit candles on the birthday cake while keeping one salty eye on my little boat.

As a result, it was not the smoothest transition out of Sydney harbour, but a safe one, and as we made our way out into the Pacific, I was still in touch with the leaders.

I think that this is the first time that I've sailed this stretch of New South Wales in my time with SOL, but I have spent a bit of time on the water here IRL. We have friends on Lake Macquarie, and a few years ago, we had the opportunity to spend some time with them, and I had a chance to spend some time on the waters between the lake and Seal Rocks to the north. Beautiful stretch of coastline, and I hope to have the opportunity to go back. In the meantime, thanks to the SOL team for the opportunity to virtually revisit this part of the world.



***Nobby's Head Lighthouse, Newcastle, NSW***

Back to the race! As we made our way past Newcastle, things were looking good for a strong finish, there were about 5 boats that were all in a pretty tight knot, but a couple of wind shifts and an unfortunate grounding for ***Dingo*** meant that it was going to be a nail biter between ***DIKKEHENK*** and myself. The winds were dying and there was going to be a new forecast just before we got to the line. I had a slight lead, DIKKE was in more wind, but I held the better angle as long as the forecast held true. Fortunately, it did, and I made it across the line a few seconds before DIKKEHENK.

Thanks again for hosting this race. Thanks to Aaron for all the work that he put into the site and the tools that he developed that help us to get from start to finish as efficiently as possible.

***-longreacher***  
October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016