

Charlton Island RTI Sprint 2017

I try to put in a bit of extra effort whenever the SOL circuit lands in Canada, sometimes to my sleep's detriment, like in last year's Van Isle. However, this race fell on a snowy Saturday afternoon when I would have some time to steer and putter around the house at the same time.

Off the start, one wrench in the works, *hmm's* awesome site was out of commission, which I (and many others) use quite a bit in sprint races. After a bit of scrambling, I found the desktop version of Aaron's Optimal Angles program on an old hard drive, and got that up and running.

Much of the fleet was taking the shortest possible route to Danby Island, but there was a bit more wind south, and about 20 of us took that option. As we gybed north, that proved to be a good move, as we had opened up a bit of a lead on the field. From Danby Island to Charlton E, *rafa* and I exchanged the lead about 10 times. At the Carleton E mark, I thought I'd made an awesome rounding, until I saw the next server update that *rafa* had made a better one, and I spent the trip back west chasing him again.

In the end, it came down to the leg between the NE and NW marks, this would be out to sea, with a tack in the middle. I had stayed a little further south than both *rafa* and *rumskib*, favouring distance over angle, this is usually my downfall in these races. So, when I made the tack early, and saw both *rafa* and *rumskib* still to my windward side, I thought I was a goner.

Somehow, my little boat held onto its position. We reached the small headland to the west of the island. Now the only thing left to decide was how far east to run down the finish line. More east meant more speed, but it also meant more distance. I took the speed. I'm still not sure if it was the right choice, but in the end it was just enough, as I got across the line 2 seconds ahead of *rumskib*, and 7 seconds before *rafa*.

Thanks to the SOL team for bringing another race to Canada. I don't know that James Bay in December is the best sailing we have to offer, but I'm glad to be able to defend here on my 'home waters'



At this point I was sure that I was going to get run down

-longreacher
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