Kipper1258 Auckland to Capetown Race Report

After 24 days 15 hrs 22 minutes and 59 seconds **Kipper1258** crossed the finish line all of 2 minutes and 52 seconds ahead of the formidable **kenza.** Very close and somewhat unexpected. Racing **kenza** in what turned out to be a two week match race, rarely ends well for anyone except **kenza.** I really did not think or expect that I would beat him, especially when he was ahead at one stage.

The race was essentially made up in two parts, Auckland to Heard Island and then to Capetown. The first leg saw and interesting split in the fleet where I headed west through Bass Strait and the majority of the fleet headed south. Initial thoughs where "what had I missed". In my early planning, that route was an option until I realised that I was routing beyond the 60th parallel. Once I added a barrier, it never came back as an option. Did everyone make that mistake? Surely not. So west I went. About two days into that path, I decided to check on how the southern fleet were progressing. The routing gave me a 5 hour advantage. "You beauty " I though, but only to see that evaporate over the coming days and then end up be several hours behind at one stage. When we finally came back together again bouncing along the 60th , I found myself in the lead, but only just. About 3 nm ahead of **kenza**, and the match race started.

So how did I manage to stay in contention? With great difficulty. Firstly, I will dispell a couple of myths.

1. You do not have to get up for every Wx which arrives at some unearthly hour. I only attended to two 2:30 AM Wx's at important stages of the race. Every other one I slept though.
2. You don't need the best router in the world. I used the latest version of Qt and spreadsheets for analysis (In my Melboure to Osaka race report, I explain my spreadsheets). It's more about understanding what the router is telling you and how it compare to previous routes and Wx's
3. You can beat **kenza**

I sailed this race the same way I do all longer races. One of the advantages we have with SOL, is that we live in a mathematically static world from Wx to Wx, and the Wx is the only variable we need to deal with. Crew competence, sail selection, sail trim, etc are always perfect and there is no variability. This means that there is always only one optimal path. Finding it is the tricky bit as there are billions of combinations to try – routers do a reasonable job, but they don't aways get it right. Blindly using each new routing without analysis and comparison will rarely see you at the front of the fleet (and when you are, it was blind luck). I'll typically have 5 or 6 active routes that I am looking at. With each Wx, I will run a new route to the target. Quite often, the routes cross and I look for the route that is the quickest at one of those crossovers. Quite often, its not the latest routing, but one of the earlier ones. I then choose and intermediate waypoint about a day out, and route to it. It may also not end up being the fastest to that point. I finally choose the route that gets me where I want to go the quickest, and then tune that routing into a set of DCs.

In closing, congratulations to **kenza** and **DIKKEHENK** and a special mention to **Alexandria** on the tactical break which I think yielded two positions. You can't win in SOL by playing follow my leader. Congratulations to the remaining top ten and thanks to all.

Kipper1258