

Cape Town to Lisbon - Leg 4

Due to the early start, I attempted to set a few "safe" DC's to get Renegade safely out of Cape Town. However the weather was not looking good, but skimming the coast North looked to be the best option. So I checked the Peabody apparatus (think Mr Peabody and Sherman), which is how I am referring to qtVLM lately because it can have moments of genius and disaster. Being 2 Wx away from start it confirmed a northern exit was still best.

I put in two DC's manually instead of loading via Kippers DC tool, I manually set an initial TWA, and a COG 2 hours later to skim the coast in what I thought was a safe heading.

When I finally got on deck several hours after the start I found Renegade had gone astray, with the winds leading to a westerly exit and was lucky to have missed Robben Island. This would have been acceptable except for the disaster that in my haste I had entered a heading of 127 instead of 327 as my second DC. The result was that Renegade heading back to Cape Town and was lucky to not have missed the headland and gone away into the southern ocean. I have had more BBQ's lately thanks to Sherman "helping". With the BBQ finished I found myself about 4-6 hours behind. This stayed that most of the way to Fernando. By then I had been able to pass about half the fleet thanks to Mr. Peabody, and was resigned to not making much headway on the leaders with very stable winds leading to days of almost due North sailing. The distance to the leaders only shifted based on wind speeds from 4 to 8 hours behind, but was not getting closer.

So how the heck did I end up in 8th??? That's the baffling part, and it all had to do with the approach to Lisbon. There was a lucky break for me not being online much over the weekend, and so Renegade went further North than the leading boats which had veered NE earlier. The winds now favored northern boats when turning to the NE to head for a corner that would lead to Lisbon. The Peabody apparatus had spotted it, and I checked it a few times over the 2 or so days, and it didn't move much. As the corner approached I was really surprised to find Renegade on the northern most vanguard of the fleet thanks to more wind. Wow! Totally shocking. Only a few boats around me at that time. Took the corner on a DC overnight and found Renegade amidst a small group. Kipper on one side, Rumskib on the other, Zoe a bit farther north. This was a fantastic place to be this late in the race given my start. Unfortunately all the important maneuvers to the finish line were offline for me. I had to settle for some conservative DC's to the finish. The Peabody apparatus helped with this and luckily I was able to sneak in a quick Android App check in the early AM and noticed Sherman was sending me slightly south of the line. Whew, no damage done, wiped out the last two DC's and entered a heading close to the top of the line and finished safely.

Aside from not having to steer much, I really like ocean races because they are very forgiving, and often a few disasters can be overcome. I'm glad to have been lucky this time and will take a top 10 any day in a race like this.

Renegade

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