SWR 17/18 Leg 4 - Melbourne to Hong Kong Race Report

Whereas the rest of my advice
Has no basis more reliable than my own meandering experience
I will dispense this advice now…

(Everybody's Free To Wear Sunscreen (Class of '97)) - Baz Luhrmann)

Don't rely on routers in the Doldrums.

Based on my prior doldrums experience, especially in these waters, from last year's Melbourne to Osaka Race, even before the Race start I decided to pass the Doldrums the shortest way, straight North.

IMHO although routers are valuable tools for course planning, in the Doldrums they are more a distraction than a help. Since wind changes are faster than you can sail, soon you find yourself chasing The Ghost of Wx Past, the router pointing you into an area it has strictly avoided 6 hours before.

So, after Santa Ana Mark, I gave my Qt a few days off and used only excellent AGage's WxInspector (http://solfans.org/wxinspector/) for advance in desired direction as much as possible, Wx by Wx.

I'm not claiming that the straight N direction is the best (in fact *hmm* made the best pass with course slightly E) but important is you stick to your direction once you chose it. Perhaps the best way to review it is to use *hmm's* great race data page: (http://soldata.hmm.iki.fi/sollog/races). Thanks, *hmm*!
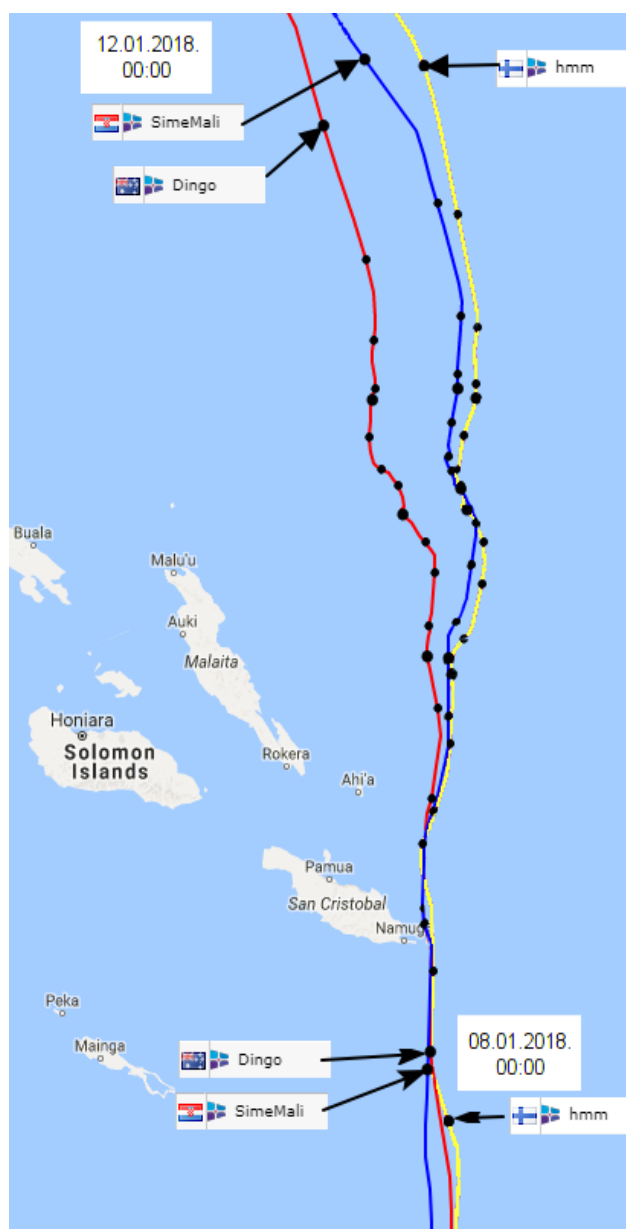
Once you get through the Doldrums…
...the rich get richer!
(rule M4 of the ingenious '*Italian Team Accademy lessons*' (http://gaidano.eu/page4.php), the guide I return to every now just to remind me of the many deep truths about SOLing it has. Thanks, *Giles*!)

To be honest, the fastest Doldrums crossing was that one wide detour by *JakeS*. He had the game but dropped the ball, staying to low South after passing the Equator. Hope better luck next time for him!

The touchstone for my considerations will be in a few weeks' time, when we will be returning South, this time against the wind.

Till then…

FW all!

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SimeMali
January 2018.
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