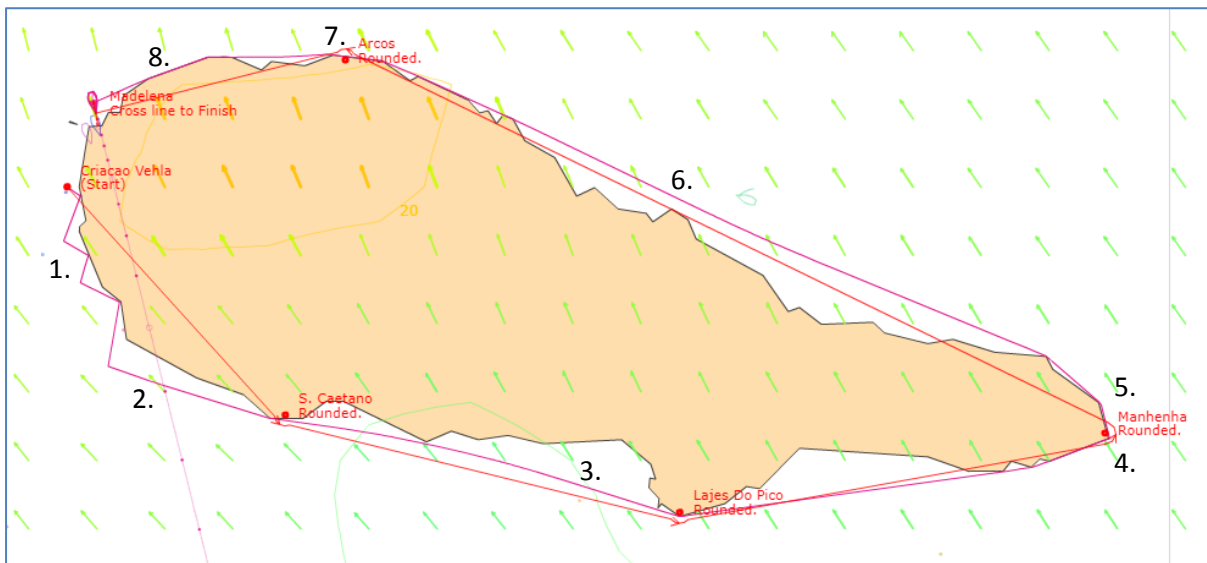


Pico Sprint – 2018

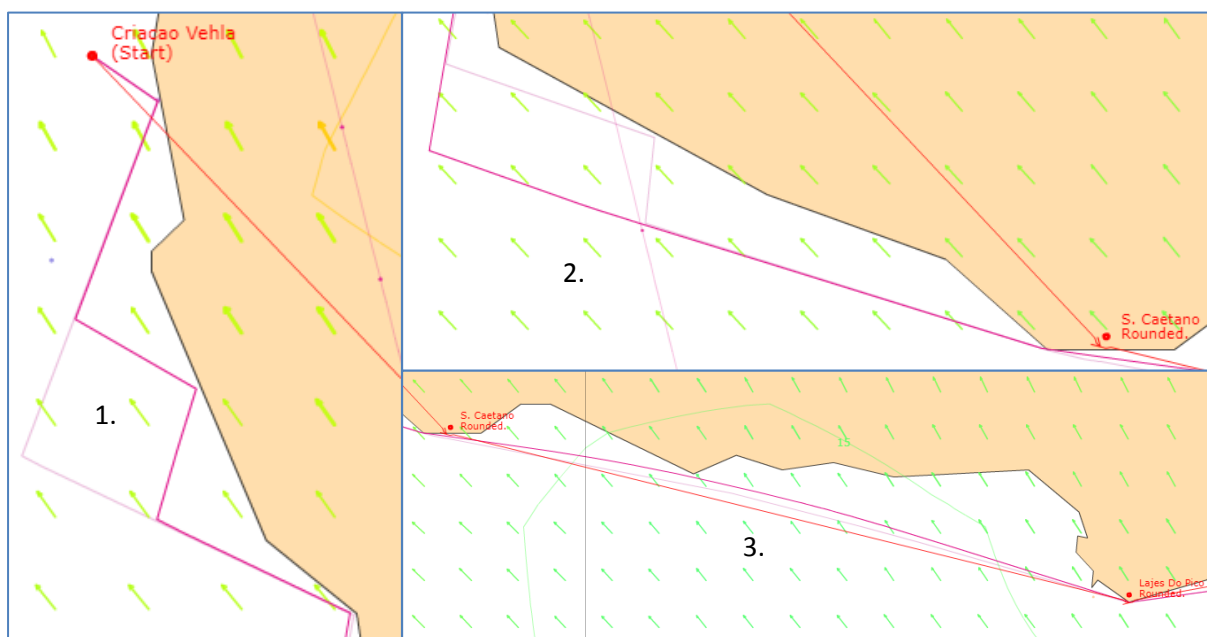
Six hours and a bit of intense concentration and you win it by 3 seconds; that has to be called a good race. And so it was, and more, as this particular sprint was subtly far from simple, with at least half a dozen opportunities to gain or lose some time, if only measured in mere single seconds:

1. Beating north east along the south western shore of Pico
2. Tacking for the lay to San Cataeno
3. Tracking across the bay from San Caetano to Lajes do Pico
4. Rounding Manhenha onto a short run north
5. Judging the gybe onto port to just clear Ponta do Castelete and harden up for Trombetas
6. Tracking across the bay from Ponta das Trombetas to Cais do Pico
7. Carrying on a fraction beyond Arcos to harden up onto an optimum hopping angle
8. Finally taking no chances rounding the last two headlands en route to the finish

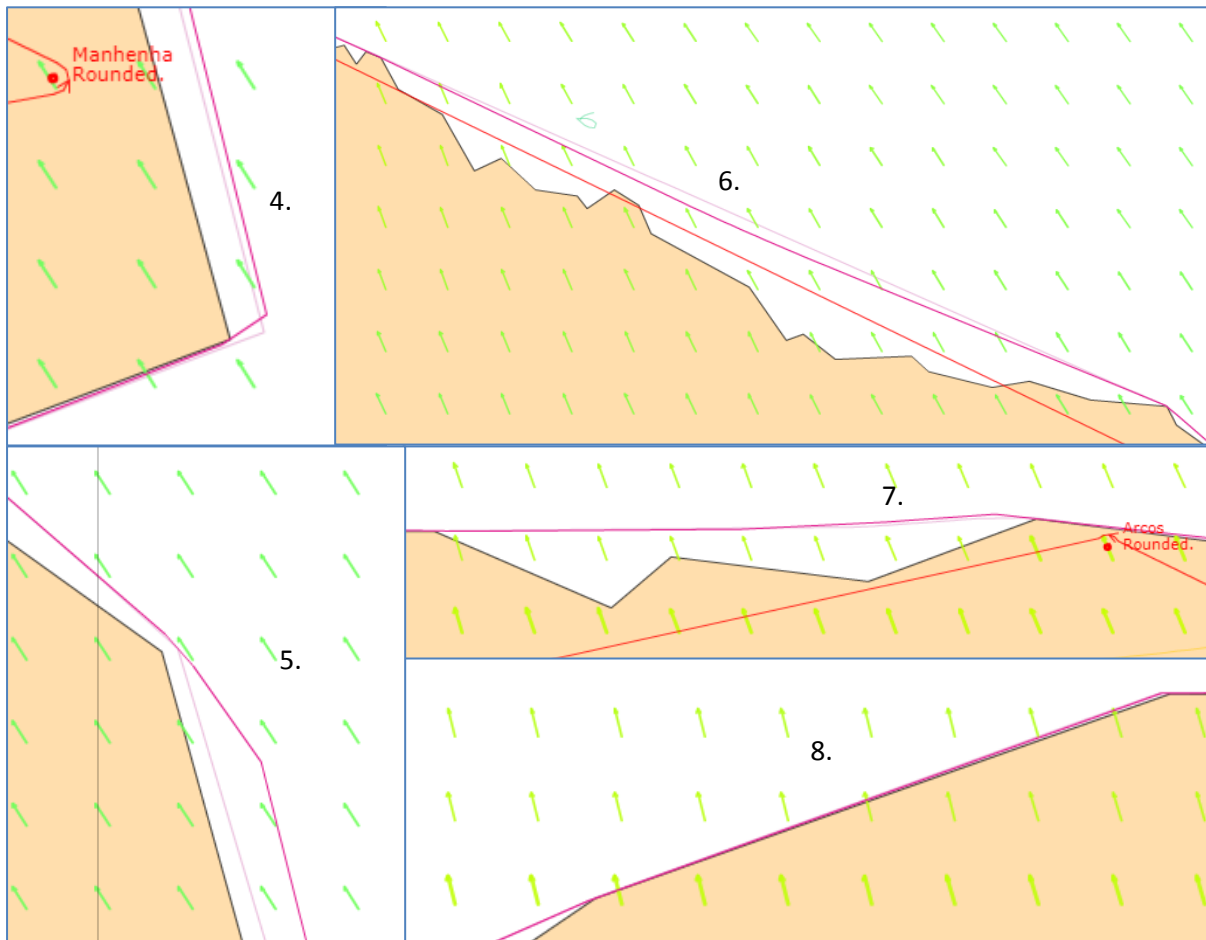


I guess nobody got that completely right, because if they had they would have beaten me, as you can hopefully follow from my diagrams with comment below.

bonknhoot's trace is in magenta; Frangipani's in faint mauve.



1. There was only one way to go off the start line – into shore to get inside the bend and tack. Perhaps 15 boats went for it for a small early advantage, and an extra tack in helped me get bonk into what seemed like an early lead.
2. However, by going out all the way to the layline for San Caetano (which pre-race I had planned not to do) I threw the lead away, in part also, or perhaps completely, by tacking slightly late and romping in with sheets eased 2 degrees or so. Down to P10.
3. There was more wind under the shore crossing from San Caetano to Lajas Do Pico and I went low for more speed to pick it up, switching to a 50 degree TWA or so after a while to curve back up onto the lay, thus recouping most of everything I had lost.



4. Rounding to run almost parallel to a coast is tricky. A fraction too early and you are on the beach. I round by DCs using the DC checker. Broadband in Tipperary is flaky, but DCs once set always fire. To be safe and still a little adventurous I went for two DCs; one to give me max BS that if it fired a server hop too early would see me land in water and one 11 secs later onto my proper max VMG course. The first one didn't fire early so I ended up quite wide, but not much wider than Frangipani.
5. Max VMG took me away from the coast which gave me the opportunity to gybe onto max VMG on the new tack (going slower and hence losing less P) before arriving at Ponta do Castelete. This worked well and probably got me back into the lead.
6. On the next stretch across open water, there was again more wind under land, and once again I sailed a curve. Not sure it made any difference. Perhaps a second.
7. A direct route from Arcos to the next ponta was going to take you on TWAs through a small dip in the polar. By carrying on a little after the cape, I got a tighter angle and more BS. Another second?
8. Not wishing to blow it all the death, I turned the last two pretty obtuse corners conservatively. If that was going to give me P2, that would still be better than P20, which was sure to be the outcome if I BBQ'd.