

Log Shackleton Leg 2 2018

I've been afloat cruising the seas of Italy IRL most of the Summer, trying to keep my hand in on SOL via my much-travelled laptop. The Android app is handy, and some people remain incredibly competitive using it. But not me. But I guess it would be fair to say "I was holding my own" with the laptop afloat until, after anchoring outside the breakwater of Anzio Harbour on Wednesday evening 12 September, two terrible things happened. We ran out of water so we couldn't shower down with fresh after our swim, and, the Gods, having an evil sense of humour, then drowned us in a proper thunderstorm at around four a.m. the next morning while we slept. It had been a warm night and many windows had been opened, including the one over the chart table by my young nephew (obviously I hadn't been insistent enough to never, ever, never open the window above the chart table!), and much drying out was required when we realized what was happening, but alas my laptop (on the chart table) only recovered briefly to become quite incommunicado until revision work in Malta two weeks later got the White Wizard talking again, black eye in the screen and loss of finger control notwithstanding.

Although I managed to finish Leg 1 of 'The Shackleton', I did lose some ground subsequent to the described enormity, to finish 8th, which in the circumstances wasn't bad at all really. Back home, and with a prosthetic keyboard, setting off on Leg 2, I was determined to do better and after two days or so of broad reaching northward, bonknoot appeared to have a narrow lead. But then, a big change in the weather forecast four or so days ahead gave Fifi cause to propose a radical swerve off course to the left of the direct GC course. It seemed to make sense as it meant more BS and a gain of height in anticipation of a big header those four days ahead. I followed Fifi, but nobody else really did, and many not at all, and at the next WX Fifi changed her mind. The header ahead was going to be so severe and the blue goo it was going to be part of ditto, that keeping well East to tack on it and lay the finish on starboard was now preferred. Typical!

There are times when it is better to be hanged for a sheep rather than a lamb, and this turned out to be one of them. I switched Fifi off, kept the hard-earned height to the West and sailed SOTP at basically max BS from then on. Imagine my surprise to find that six hours out from the finish the blue goo and the associated severe header had drifted further north beyond the finish line and I could romp in on a TWA of 60 odd for a very satisfying win. All to row for then in Legs 3 and 4!

bonknoot / October 2018