

## Gray Whale Migration 2018

The start, at 19:00 UTC, was at my bed time, so decided not to have my usual & regular disagreement with Qt. & set a course towards the middle of Nunivak Island to afford the option of going W or E around later

I should mention that I sleep at night, & route past the 20:30 wx & most times only pick up the 4:30 wx about an hour later. This is not ideal, but it is what it is for me

Next day, well behind the usual suspects, I thought I saw a lift developing, which would favour the Eastern side down to the mark at Mount Westdahl, but continued more or less down the middle. A few wx later my suspicions seemed correct & routed to the E of the Island, despite Qt

That proved decisive, in my opinion, as the wx continued to favour the eastern fleet, fastpassage being one I remember. I did not know or notice the eventual winner, batseba, at this stage

Arrived at the mark 1<sup>st</sup>, with the western fleet quite far behind, and "the rich got richer" heading for Middleton island, with a patch of good pressure moving in the right direction.

For the first time in memory, a successful rounding of the mark on DC's was accomplished. I normally lose out in these situations. I would say at this stage a lead of some 9 hours from the Western fleet was held

Arno & fastpassage chose to remain closer to shore, on the run down to Rose Spit, and right to the finish. The lead changed hands and I then noticed batseba on a similar off-shore track with me, but some way behind

I thought we were going to be stuck on the wrong, Western side of a huge long sausage of blue goo, stretching way down towards the finish. This continued for several days, with us gradually losing ground to the in-shore boats & the chasing pack. A time later (I don't keep notes, but will do so in the future), a road towards the finish, and more direct, became available, both batseba & I tacked Eastward, almost at the same time. Then came another decisive move, where Sebensa tacked South and batseba held East for a few hours longer. Again, no excuses, but overnight wx's had changed while I was asleep. When I woke up the boat was sitting at a poor twa & had been for some time. Sebensa had lost significant ground, speed & direction

The road opened up for batseba, between all the rather fickle winds & he vanished towards the finish!

The chasing pack closed (aner, psail SKOVSER, DIKKEHENK et al) to 48 miles, before the blue got in their way, and they slowly fell back

This finally resulted in a remarkable Podium: the gap between batseba(first), Sebensa(second) was 10hrs, and SKOVSER another 12 hrs adrift of Sebensa. DIKKEHENK ended 4<sup>th</sup>, just 44 seconds behind SKOVSER

Mention & many thanks must be made to the back- room crew who continue to keep SOL going, often unacknowledged, may they continue the good work! There would be no meaningful SOL without them

Sebensa

25<sup>th</sup> November 2018