

Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition 1914 – 1917

This gives Sir Ernest Shackleton's third visit to the Antarctic its correct title and reminds us that it was over a century ago when technology was far less advanced than nowadays.

Whilst SOL has attempted to replicate the challenges faced by Shackleton and his men, our challenges were negligible compared to what they faced and any success is miniscule compared to Shackleton's achievement in bring all of his men home, although three men did die on the other ship establishing the food camps and forming the return ship on the far side of Antarctic.

As for SOL's efforts, your SRC selected this race as it had been on the shelf for far too long and was ripe for use as the ships were a Tall Ship Class B (not used before) and a whaler/lifeboat where SRC substituted our Drake Longship.

The first two legs were sailed in the tall ship, the nearest that we could get to Endeavour and a tall ship that had some upwind performance as that may have been needed on Leg 2. For legs 3 and 4 our Drake Longship pretended to be a whaler/lifeboat and actually did a very credible job. All legs had reasonable wind and the only hiccup was a discrepancy with the Antarctic continent land mass as perceived by SOL Vs qtVIm.

As for our racers, there was far from any clean sweep with the podium only claiming one 1st and one 3rd. The balance of the podium results reflects our sailors trying to avoid disasters, as no doubt Shackleton had in his mind at all times, but even the Series winner counted a 17th, 2nd overall counted a 26th and 3rd overall counted a 41st on their score cards!

The Shackleton Challenge appears to have appeal to our sailors with 124 boats starting leg 4 from the 140 that entered the race. I suspect the non-starters may not have fancied the weather when it came to racing!

I am not going to go into Go4iT's tactics save to express my sincere appreciation for the assistance that comes from qtVIm and AGL.

SRC will consider rerunning this Expedition in a couple of years' time, when we have thawed out.

Seasonal best wishes to all.

Richard Hardcastle

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