PIC Coastal Classic Yacht Race 2019

I missed this race last year when Kipper1258 also won it, but in 2017 I took the gun, beating Alexandria by a server hop, entirely as a result of a command error on Alex' part.

This year's race was very similar to 2017, excepting that the wind was blowing slightly more off the land on the leg from North Head to Takuta, so that the only PL-max gybe involved this time was straight after the start to clear North Head. What remained then was.

- sail a curve to Cape Brett keeping out to sea and in the breeze.

And as in 2017, this was very doable on DCs, whilst Europe slept. But we got there quicker, so that, given that it was going to be a tricky beat in to Russell, for me at any rate sleep was reduced to a short 3-hour spell.

The trickiness lay in the fact that there was a bend in the wind, which, if you could do that last leg in two tacks, would definitely require you to tack all the way to the inside of and then come bombing in on port tack with sheets eased for a finish at the port end of the line. However, a whole bunch of islands and indeed the whole damn Rakaumangamanga peninsula were going to be in the way, so that several tacks were going to be involved, each costing 5% to 6% of PL a pop.

As we rounded the cape, it was neck-and-neck between Kipper, Beliberda and bonk. My rounding wasn't great and Beliberda went ahead. However, I was first to tack in, to exactly lay the first set of cliffs that had to be cleared. This gave me a miniscule advantage. A choice now presented itself to either tack in again thus committing to several further tacks to weave a route through a bunch of islands, or to carry on out into open water. I had pre-set to tack in again and felt I had figured out a good route through, but nearly changed my mind when I saw Kipper and many others were choosing for open water and less tacking.

But Beliberda tacked in and I went with him. We were wrong. Kipper won. Well done.

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