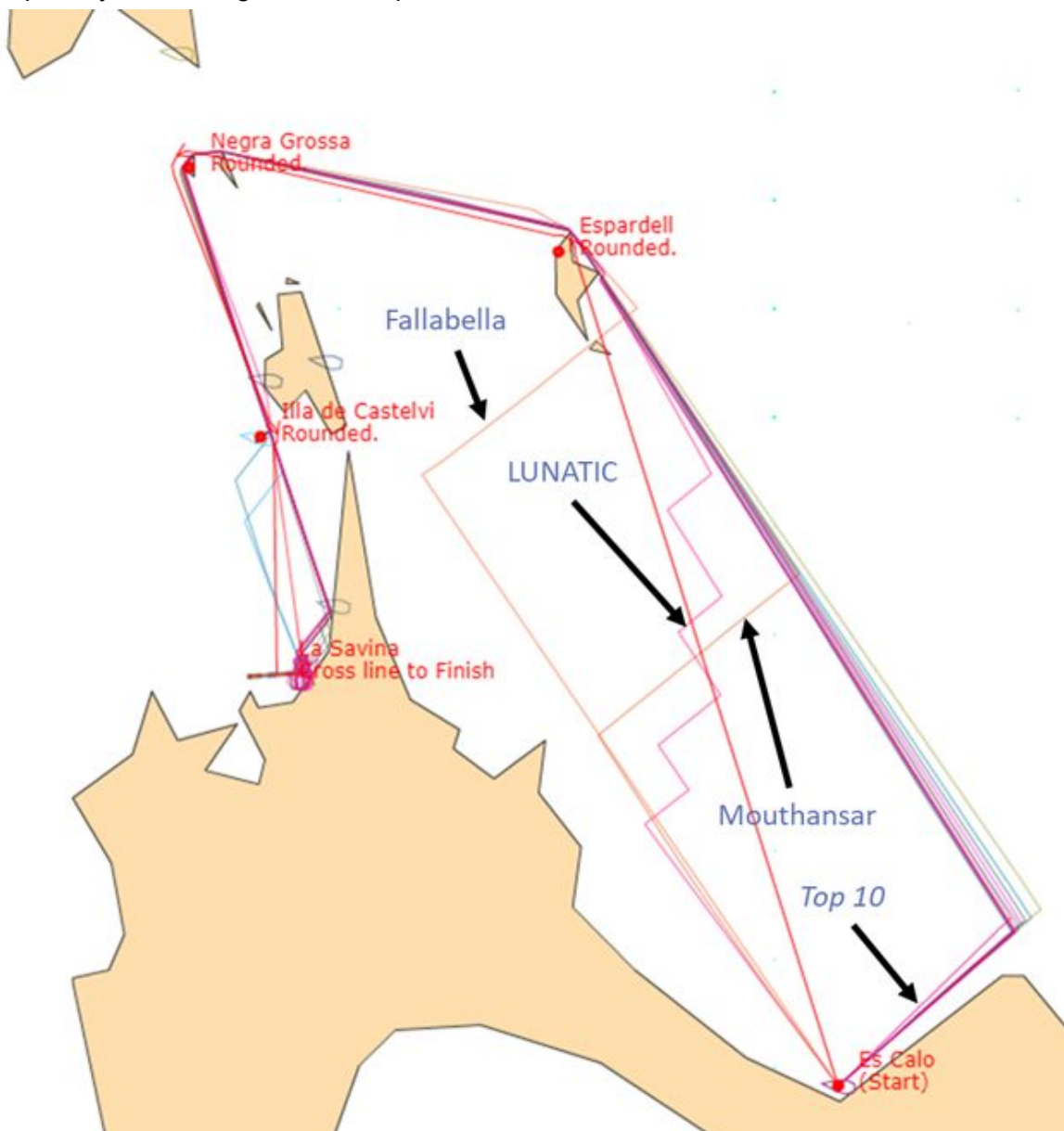
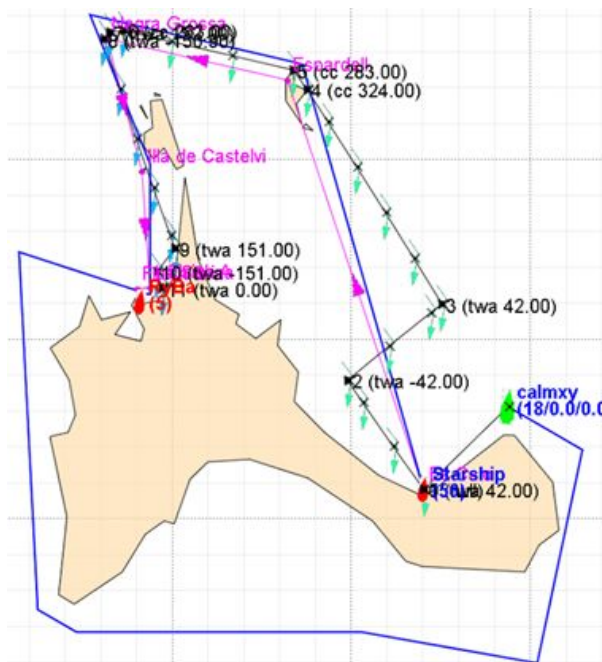


I remember that time when I parked for what seemed to be just a while as I hung out with friends, shopped, attended a concert etc. When I got back, I was quite surprised to see that the parking was 20 SGD!

Well, the islands of Espalmador and Formentera do have their own (more nature-inclined) attractions including pristine beaches, a mud bath and biking to explore the island. However, as the race description mentioned, anchoring is prohibited and those who opt for the moorings would need to pay at least 35 USD (~50 SGD) for their use. With that money, I could get quite a spread of food for a nice BBQ with friends and perhaps include a short swim as part of the island's activities. Or, as I have opted to do, sponsor the January Ocean race so that a fellow SOLer could gain SYC membership and have a chance to win a Cup/series through SMPF. It's a pity that a number of boats did BBQ along both of these islands during "Practice Sailing" and in the actual race. Appropriately, we were given the Delphia 47 cruiser to round these islands with.



The winds for this race came from the north and diminished from 12 to 10 knots as the race progressed. Generally, winds further east were stronger, although there were exceptions. Among those who didn't BBQ along the way, the optimal route from Es Calo to Espardell required heading east initially and then tacking once. Incidentally, that tack was almost exactly where I stopped my boat offshore after I completed the practice loop of the island. Although the winds were stronger along the 1.51°E line, performing a couple of tacks there would have been some 90 seconds slower (Mouthansar, Lunatic), as was heading west before making a tack (Fallabella).

Esperdall to Negra Grossa, passing Illa des Penjat to port, saw the straight line as the fastest route, as was rounding it to get to Illa de Castelví where the max downwind VMG angle was just right to make this possible.

The final stretch from Illa de Castelví to the finish allowed for some variation, as long as the finish line was crossed at its eastern tip. Among the top 10, WRmirekd and Starship gybed closer to Illa de Castelví, while NED_Arthur gybed twice. Otherwise, the rest of us made a single pair of gybes (one gybe would have been better, if not for the Formentera coastline getting in the way).

Earlier in the day, I had taken part in some fundraising activities. Perhaps because I participated too enthusiastically, I must have been tired and fell asleep right after the Towback. I woke up to find myself in 3rd place. But on closer inspection, the DC for the tack had fired a server jump too early, and I was a mere 30 seconds from a BBQ near Espardell. Hence, I had to quickly add a pair of tacks, costing perhaps 15 seconds but at least saving myself from the more costly BBQ. Given this happened without any alarm, I wonder if it's because of luck or that I'm just that much into SOLing. (Although come to think of it, if it's the latter then why do I still BBQ and miss marks in other races, including Practice Races.) In any case, the additional time as a result of this mistake meant that I dropped from a possible podium finish to 9th. Instead, bonknhoot took the honour of executing each tack, gybe and turn best, resulting in his win. Gefeliciteerd bonknhoot!

About the sponsored race (Abu Dhabi to Dondra): As of 14 Jan, 11.59pm UTC, here is the status of that race. Currently, rssailtexas has the apparent lead (by DTG) but given the windhole off India, FR_vostro or appelkrat is more likely to win that SMPF prize.

