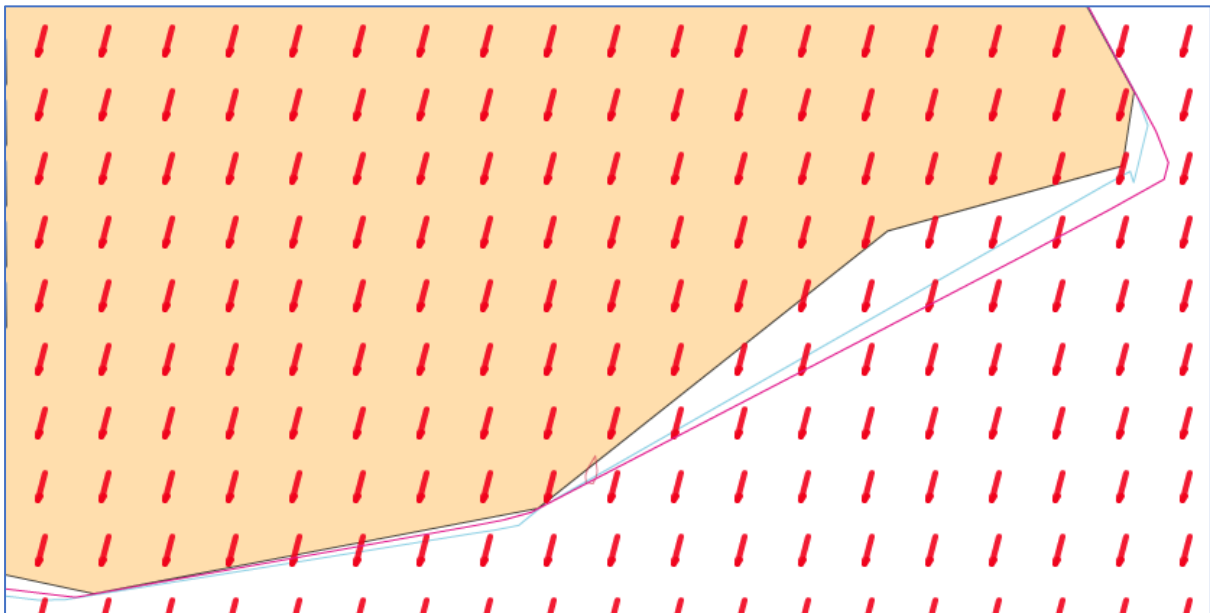


To have a southerly of 30kn plus blowing out of the north, clocking steadily from just east of north to well west of north within a matter of hours I imagine is unusual in the South Sandwich Islands. Whether or not, it certainly helps a VO70 get round SOL's triangular course down there, PDQ.

So, having picked my ETDs quite well – my late morning 16th start having replaced my early morning 14th run to stay top of the pops – I was excited but apprehensive when it started to look like the 17th was going to provide an opportunity to sail the course in three straight lines. Alas, as I went to bed on the 16th, the best ETD was going to be first thing after the 0430 WX update the next morning. Nothing for but an alarm clock then, and a final 'quick quick' look to decide when to set off.

05:17 was the answer I got, and only just-in-time, and I was off. All straight lines, but with boat speed hitting the mid 20 knots, the changes of tack rounding Visokoi and the Iceberg were going to be tricky to execute whilst keeping performance loss above 92.5%. Kipper1258 is a doughty competitor and when I saw him taking the risky option of gybing onto a close-hauled course under the cliffs of Isokoi and bearing off without hitting the rocks (blue track below), I thought it was going to be his day. I didn't risk it, kept wider and just gybed onto +179.9 (red track) for a slightly worse PL, which I then corrected at the luff-up a couple of minutes further down the track, where, alas for Kipper, he got it wrong and BBQ'd.



Next was the Iceberg, and knowing of Kipper's misfortune I took no risk and gave it a big wide berth (see adjacent).

It was a good run, but you never know, back in 2014, Varmint had won the first edition in 4:39:26. My run took 4:47:06; it could be bested and so I spent the last nine days the race was open nervously following the weather. A window nearly opened just before 00:00 on the 25th, but at the last WX it faded, and it was time to write up a brief report!

Thanks for the racing guys!

bonknhoot / January 2020

