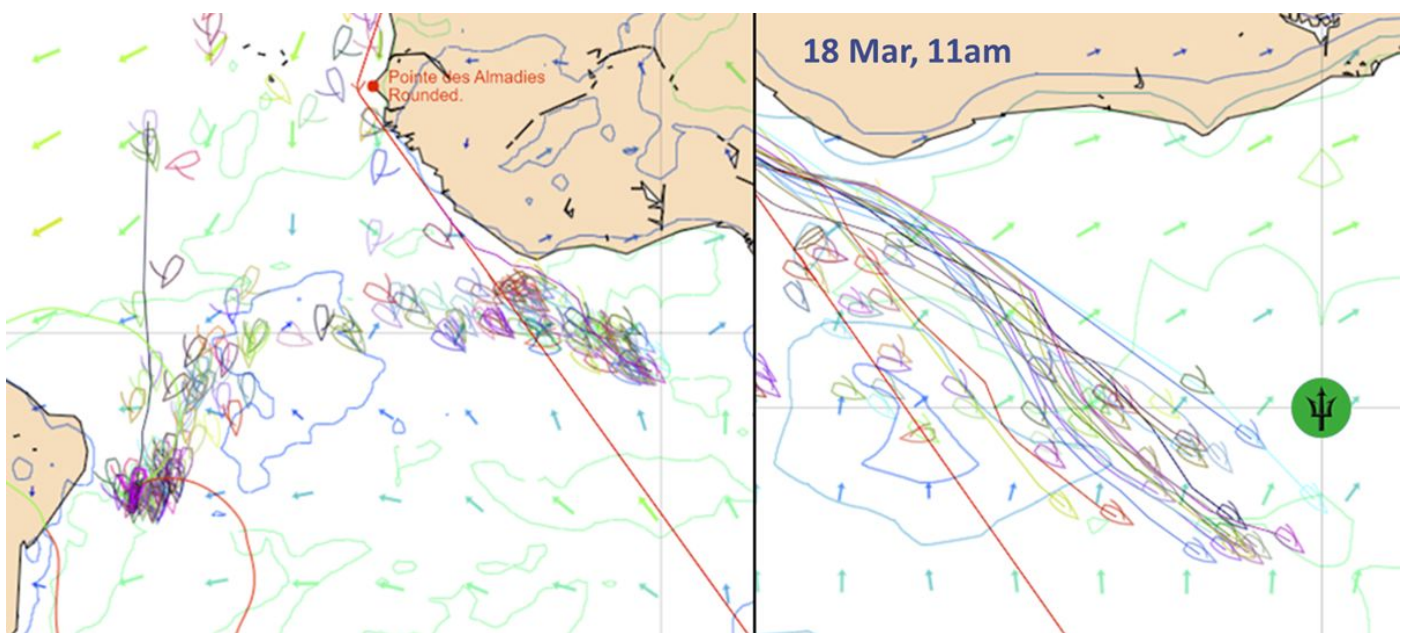


Last year, I came across the Golden Globe Race, which is how I found out about Sailonline in the first place. This sub-series RTW 2020 within the Ocean races would enable me to get some of this experience, albeit in the much faster Orange catamaran and with several weeks between each of the 4 legs. Maybe in 2022, if Sailonline gets to host the race in Rustler 36s, I could get the full deal and aim for a ranked finish.

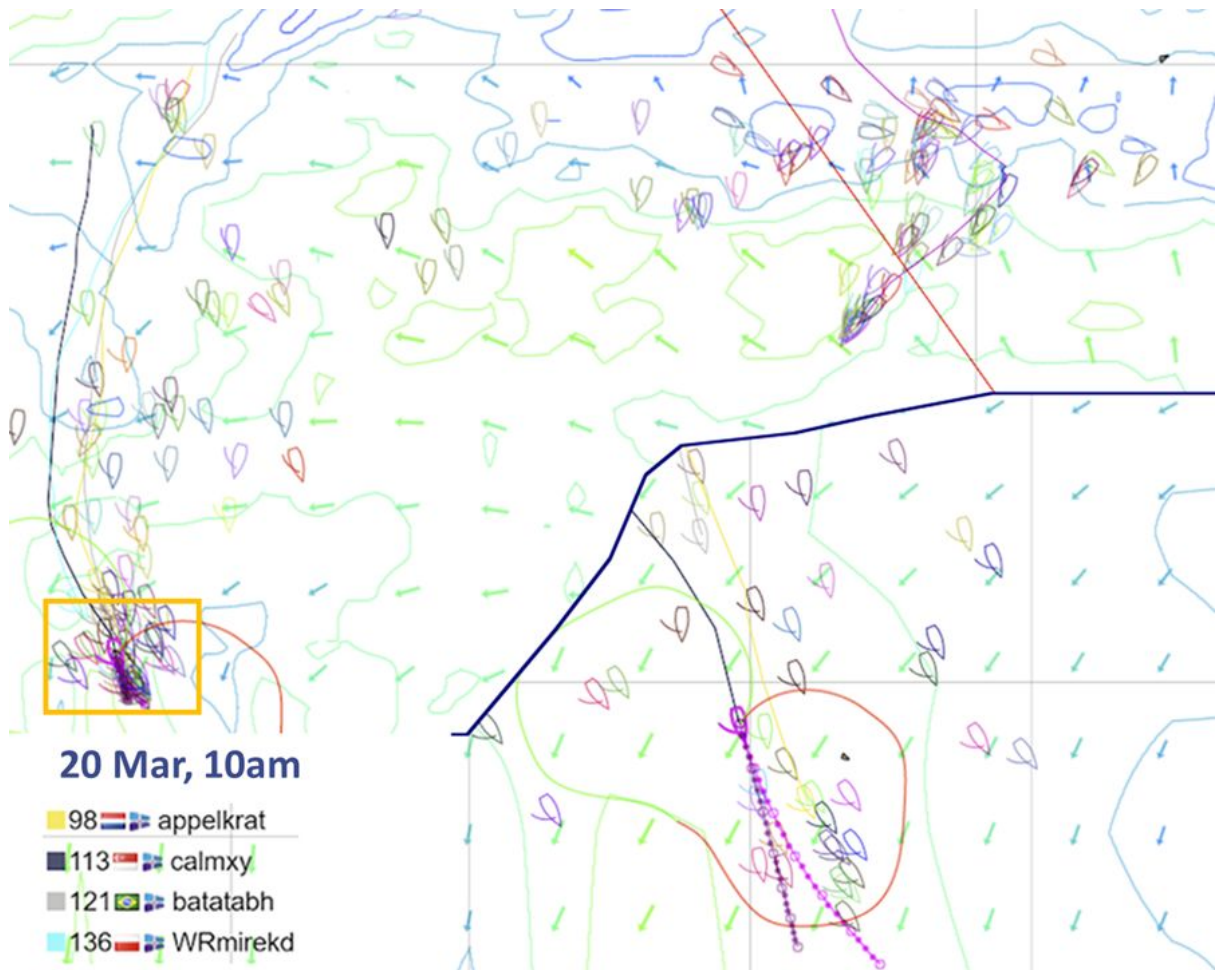
I realized that for the SuperSOLer series, I am allowed six discards among the SPRCH, TRCH, SYCCH and OCCH series. In my case, this would almost certainly be six of the Ocean races. However, it did mean that I still needed six relatively decent results from the other Ocean races. Would this be one of the required six?

The first few days of this race saw me gybing near the Moroccan coast until the Canary islands, where I BBQ'd for a couple hours. Then I gybed out into the Atlantic Ocean and only gybed south much later as I headed towards Brazil. It was anyone's guess (at least initially) as to where the equatorial doldrums would enable a relatively fast crossing. It would take several days to reach there, during which the Wx could change and favour a different path. Hopefully I would avoid get trapped in the blue; my first two Ocean races this year were ranked 97 and 83 and I didn't want to discard a third Ocean race so early in the season.

When we approached the equator, there were two gaps in the blue that straddled across the Atlantic. One group took the gap closer to Brazil; the other took the Emerald Shellback route. Notably, all the leading boats passed to the southwest of the actual 0°N 0°E coordinates. I'm not sure how much tolerance is permitted in crossing 0°N 0°E to earn the Emerald Shellback badge; if it's large enough, some in this group would have obtained this badge.



While I was still 1,000nm behind the race leader at this point, I noted that I was only around 4 hours behind Dikkehenk and 4.5 hours behind Mullionman. My group was also expected to have a more favourable wind direction as compared to the Emerald Shellback group that was expected to close this gap. The forecast indicated that Dikkehenk and Mullionman would reach the finish significantly before anyone in the Emerald Shellback group. However, I wasn't sure how many in the Emerald Shellback group would place in front of me. In the end, a few of them did get ahead of me, but I remained ahead of most of that group.



A gutsy move by Mullionman to deviate from the pack and gybe south for stronger winds paid off. By the time I realized what had happened, it was too late: attempting to perform that gybe would only get me trapped in the windhole, as there was no longer enough wind to outspeed it. That windhole would also affect the wind direction, resulting in a “the rich get richer” effect. While Mullionman would be sailing in a beam reach, I would complete the final 500nm at a significantly slower average TWA of 70°, finishing 23 hours behind Mullionman. Luckily, the inverse also held true, limiting the competition that could potentially overtake me. Keeping rafa, Chipspitter and FR_Vostro at bay, I was able to come in 29th for this race.

I must admire appelkrat for their wonderful performance in the Ocean race series, especially since they effectively have only one discard for the 2020 OCCH Cup (the other discard is used on the DNC in Abu Dhabi to Dondra where they won my SMPF prize).

OCQ1 results for 2020

	R1	R2	R3	Total
appelkrat	20	18	13	51 (202)
calmxy	97	83	29	209