SlideRule finished 5th in this race roughly .5 miles behind the winner Rafa and very close to the other leaders. So small differences in tactics and strategy decided this race. My SOL philosophy since I joined last June has been that failures and mistakes are all low stakes learning opportunities and the leaders are my "teachers", all to improve my real sailing.

Learning Opportunity #1 Reach to Robben Island (I got this one wrong) - Hard lesson to learn, but every boat in SOL is different, and things that work with one boat (polar) don't work with another. I did a "constant" TWA solution figuring that it would be faster on average to the first mark. Sometimes this is true, but this time it was not true because there was no change in relative performance for different sailing angles in the "relevant" range of the polar. So the shortest distance (rhumb line) solution was the best answer. If I had run a short interval routing solution I would have seen this, but I was too lazy and thought I knew the answer. Notably my loss during this first leg was greater than my final margin of losing. Pay attention to the rate of change between the angle and the wind. There must be an "ROI" to invest in a solution other than the rhumb line. Run a router solution to check your intuition no matter what!

Lesson #2 - I am still not good enough on turns. This race had enough turns that the margin of success between the top 10 boats could probably be overcome from turn precision. SOME racers are WAY better at turns. The server refresh rate makes turn precision difficult. It's clear that Maximum Zoom and using deferred commands is a key to calibrating the precision of turns. I noted that Rafa's turns were almost perfect! I need to work on better methodology for precisely calibrating my turns.

Lesson #3 - I need to learn how to use my router (Expedition) even in short races and short legs. I still have to manually set up my routing solutions after each WX because I can't get Java to run the boat interface with Expedition (not ideal). I've used Expedition for really long races, but mostly SOTP for short legs and races. Expedition will run for short legs, but it is necessary to reduce the step intervals significantly to get actionable results. It is sometimes difficult to get the Expedition results programmed accurately into the DC's. I really wish it would pick the Gybe and Tack times for me and not do it exactly on the step interval. Usually I am approximating my Expedition results using either the COG or the TWA. Cape Point to Dassen was an overnight sleep shift for me and I get compromised results when the boat is unattended and using a long set of DC's. I usually pick the value that has the least variance between intervals, but my boat is always someplace else 6 hours later. I get the impression that other racers have better methodology for interfacing their router to their DC stack for the known WX (i.e. Dingo, Zorba, Rafa). During these long runs requiring course and TWA tweaking they run marginally better. I need to improve my router use and interfacing to my DC stack! I NEED to run my router whenever race conditions produce "tradeoffs" over time that my brain can't process. I did that "more" as this race went on. I NEED to understand what logic my router is using to generate a solution (what is it optimizing). WHY is it not using a VMC or VMG solution for a particular interval. Is it using the less likely "tail" of the WX to make a big

decision (i.e. Cascais Race). I think I need a good autopilot that will optimize particularly when I am sleeping or working.

Nuff said for now! Good race, and I was happy to be in contention at the end against really excellent SOL racers. Congratulations to Rafa, Jawz, Henrys, and Pit for their excellent sailing. SailJ29 almost had me at the end when I made yet a few final errors on the last leg, but saved it by getting the final tack right. I would welcome comments or advice!

Respectfully submitted by "SlideRule"
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