

Nisi Astypalaia Sprint 2021

A beautiful day dawned here in Southwestern Florida for the Nisi Astypalaia Sprint. I found myself with a good start time for my time zone and only one commitment that day: hosting a birthday celebration for a friend 4 hours after the start. Should be able to squeeze this race in with the fair winds predicted.

brewman got off the start line on time (a refreshing change from recent races!) and sailed the fetch to the first mark at Chilous with the entire fleet. Then it was upwind to Taliaros. The wind was shifting right this entire leg which dictated tacking up the shore on the right, balancing performance losses of tacking with advantage of getting farther right. Sadlersailing, rumskib, bonknhoot, Wolff among others showed the way to the beach. In brewman, I slightly overstood the tack off the beach and had to bear off slightly to clear the next headland. Any chances of a top ten looked dim given that mistake early on.

The fleet kept tacking into the beach to gain advantage from the northerly shifting breeze. I skipped the last jog north to Taliaros as the performance loss of two additional tacks didn't seem worth it. Rejoining the fleet after Taliaros put brewman in the top ten. We continued to tack up the beach on the west side of Astypalaia as the wind kept shifting right.

It was during this leg that the Admiral notified me we needed more wine for the birthday party and that it was my job to procure it. So where in this race am I going to find 20-30 minutes to run to the wine store??? In 70th place it would be easy, but brewman is in contention.....

The next decision was whether to pass east or west of Katergari Island. East through the narrow channel between it and Astypalia was a shorter route and was more favorable to the shifting wind, but required two additional tacks. West of the island was an easier navigation, but left one slightly overstanding the next headland. I wrestled with this decision all the way up the west side of the island and decided at the last minute to take the easier west route. I immediately began to regret this decision as I watched Sadler, rumskib, and most of the rest of the fleet take the eastern route.

Fortunately, my fears were unfounded as brewman rejoined the fleet rounding Pounta in 3rd place behind Sadler, rumskib and barely ahead of Likendeeler and NagaJolokia. A slight dip south to avoid the Island after Pounta and then a straight shot along the rhumb line to Flouda as the wind direction stabilized. Just enough time for the run to get a supply of wine for the party!!!

Returned to the race with about 10 minutes to Flouda. Rounding Flouda was my most problematic spot. The point of land was almost exactly midway between server jumps. I would have to make a tight rounding to maintain 3rd position in fleet as I was only .01 ahead of Likendeeler. I set a DC and checked it 3 times on the way in using the time tested foot tapping method of judging course change time. 2 minutes to DC and I was satisfied it was correct. I watched horrified as the DC fired exactly on the early server jump aiming brewman directly to the beach with no time to correct course. The top ten finish going down in flames on the shore off Flouda. ☹

But wait! Apparently the brewman crew reacted quickly and arranged portage across the beach! By some miracle brewman continued down the east side of Astypalia toward Poulan, still in 3rd place. Fortunately, there was no change of position, but perhaps brewman should be awarded the Rosie Ruiz award for the dry land sailing....

After that harrowing event there was only the jibe toward Poulan and then a straight shot to the south end of the finish line. All eyes were on Sadler and rumskib as they were in an absolute dead heat for first. In the end Sadler edged out rumskib by one second!!!

Congrats to Sadler and rumskib for a great race and thanks to the SOL administration for running a fun and somewhat addictive (ask my wife) platform!

brewman / February 2021