

Jakob's Birthday BBQ Race 2021

brewman

First off, I have to tip my hat to GREATSKUA and Calmxy, the first & second place finishers in this race. GREATSKUA sailed a virtually perfect course with Calmxy only seconds behind. Congrats to them!!

SOL is a curiously addictive pastime. Hard to believe I've been participating for 13 years and still look forward to the next race despite (or maybe because of) not once finding myself on top of the podium. For me, much of SOL's attraction is much of what I enjoy about IRL sailboat racing: trying to solve the complex problem of how to navigate a course the most efficient way through changing conditions. Kudos to SOL for providing a wide variety of race courses, some which favor those practiced and adept at using routers, and others, like Jakob's Birthday BBQ, that require one to pilot hands-on, navigating SOTP as I choose to do in all races. My SOTP navigating style results in some widely varying outcomes, vividly shown yesterday as brewman completed the Lima-Honolulu race in a leisurely 152nd place and then Jakob's Birthday BBQ on the podium in 3rd. But it seems no matter where brewman is on the racecourse, there are always friendly, familiar and competitive names nearby to accompany me to the finish.

2021's Jakob's Birthday BBQ turned out to be a very straightforward race. Neither half of the race required any radical course changes as the wind was fairly constant in velocity and direction. The most important strategy was finding the shortest route through the islands and executing that course without BBQ'ing (until the party after the finish, of course). The difference between 1st place and all the others was made at the very beginning of the race. The rumblin' from the start to the cut south of Bulleron was just below the optimal downwind angle. GREATSKUA started on port and jibed to starboard perfectly to lay a course to the cut. All of the next 4 boats started on port and gybed twice to traverse the cut. I believe the performance hit from the extra gybe was the difference between first and all the rest. The remainder of the race was merely(!) plotting the shortest course and executing the course changes.

Congrats to GREATSKUA for a well-deserved victory and a hearty thanks to the Jakob and the SOL administration for their tireless work supporting this fun platform!