



# Finland-Sweden Archipelago Raid 2021

WSGUERIN: 67 hours 9 minutes 34 seconds

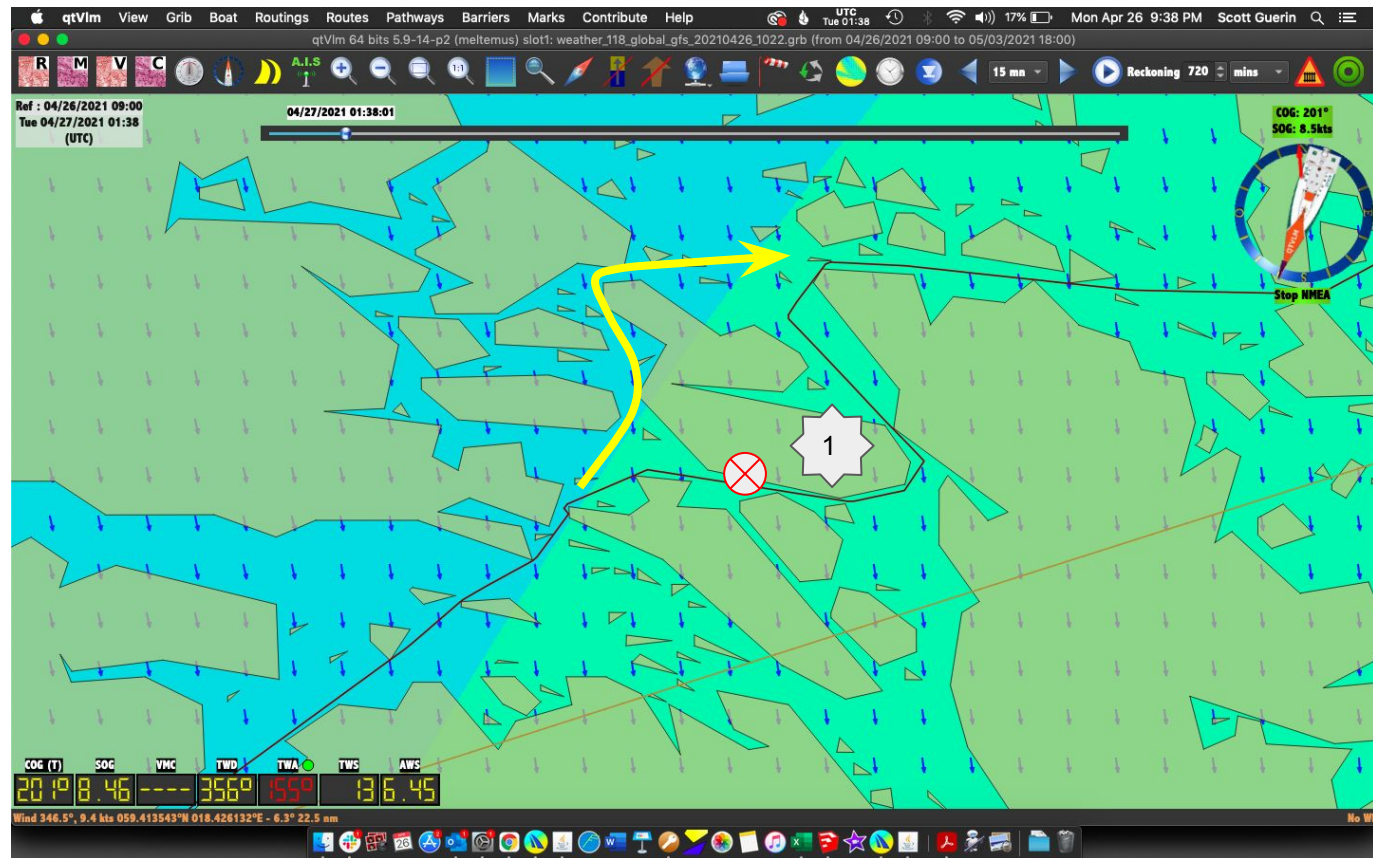
The Start: Monday April 26 1800UTC / 2pm ET

*WS in chat pre-race: Is this the way our Scandinavian SOLer's spend their winters? Designing courses such as this? Madness.*

I recall many other similar opinions, this was going to be a meat grinder.

The race for WS began so inauspiciously, I didn't record SOL screens. I vaguely remember a premature podiumization. No QT routing was possible so I felt that the course east gave me better angles and less tacking north. But it was a longer route and I and dropped back into the 40's right away. The leaders at that time headed along the yellow track.

I recall a drunken lunch with Smo at the X, luckily the first of only a couple BBQs.



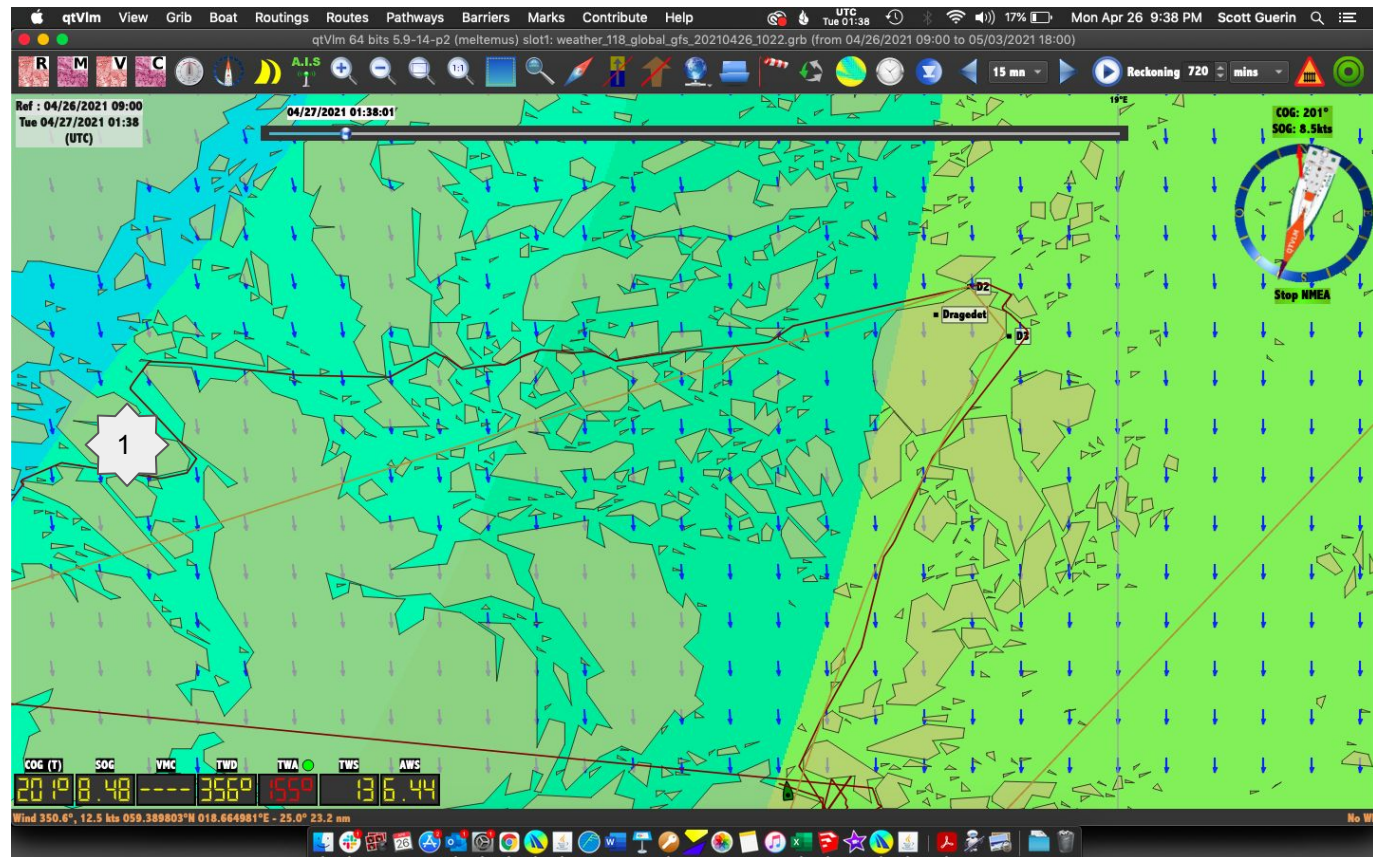


## First Leg

We fell into rhythm of the race by now, and it was pretty much follow the leaders, there were changes, SWE\_rossy2 stands out as having their nose out early and I'm sure many others were in the mix. I think all star WRmirekd BBQ'd early on. With luck, other reporters captured the early stage of the race.

I'll use little numbers to track landmarks across the slides so #1 is that "shoe" containing the toe I stubbed right off the bat.

There were 22 rounding in this race, everyone of them offered pain or gain.



Tuesday 0311 UTC Monday, 11:11 PM ET

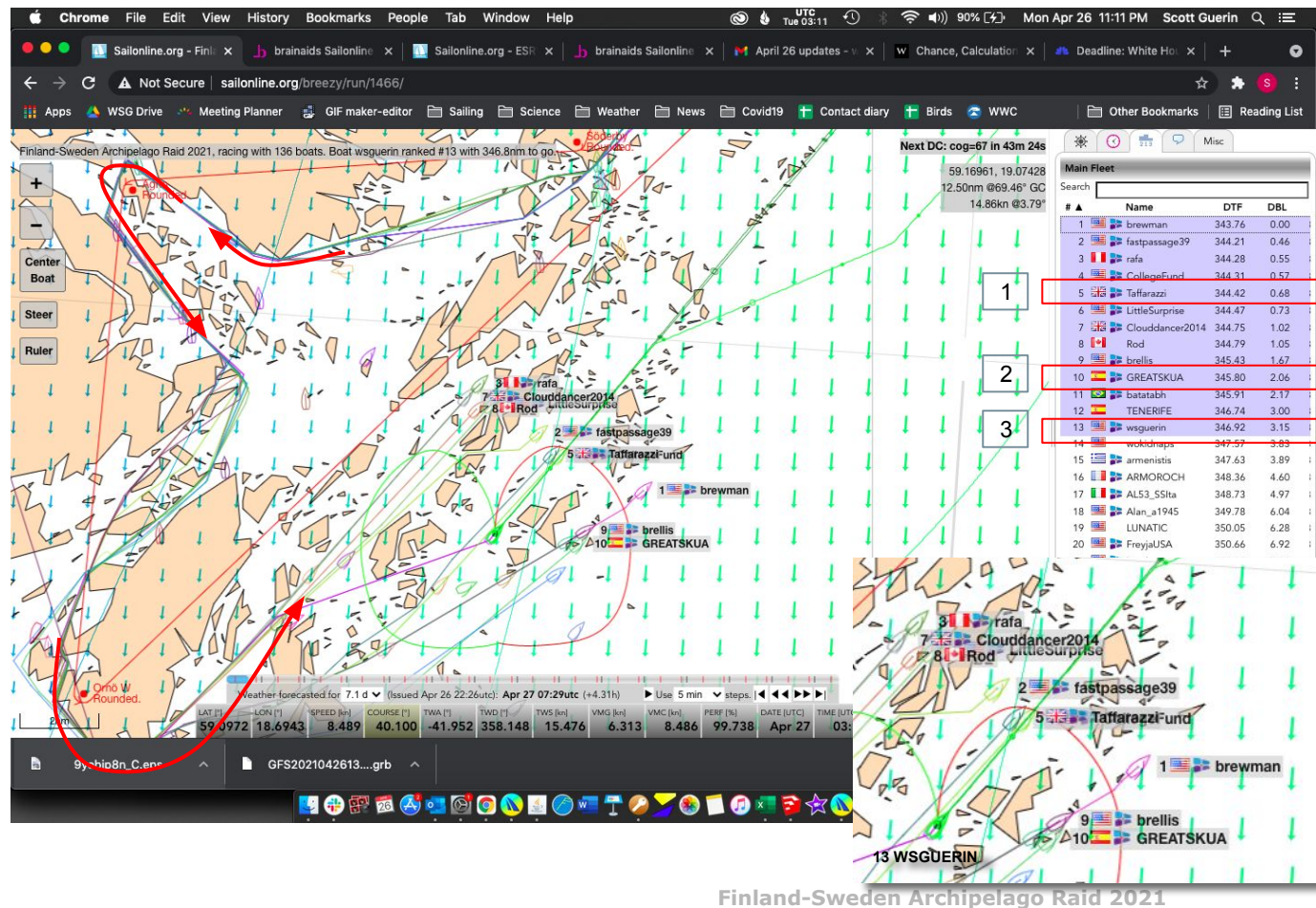
WS saw a glimmer of light and here, at 11pm local, I was setting up for the overnight more offshore in better wind.

The podium is magically already in sequence although separated by some miles.

It is unusual in SOLraces that things get so spread out, and greater spreads were to come.

An oddity in the leaderboard: Out of the top 20 boats, 12 were North Americans and I wonder if it had to do with the timings of roundings or archipelago threading that we were usually awake for.

It was noted that Rafa was just simply not sleeping!

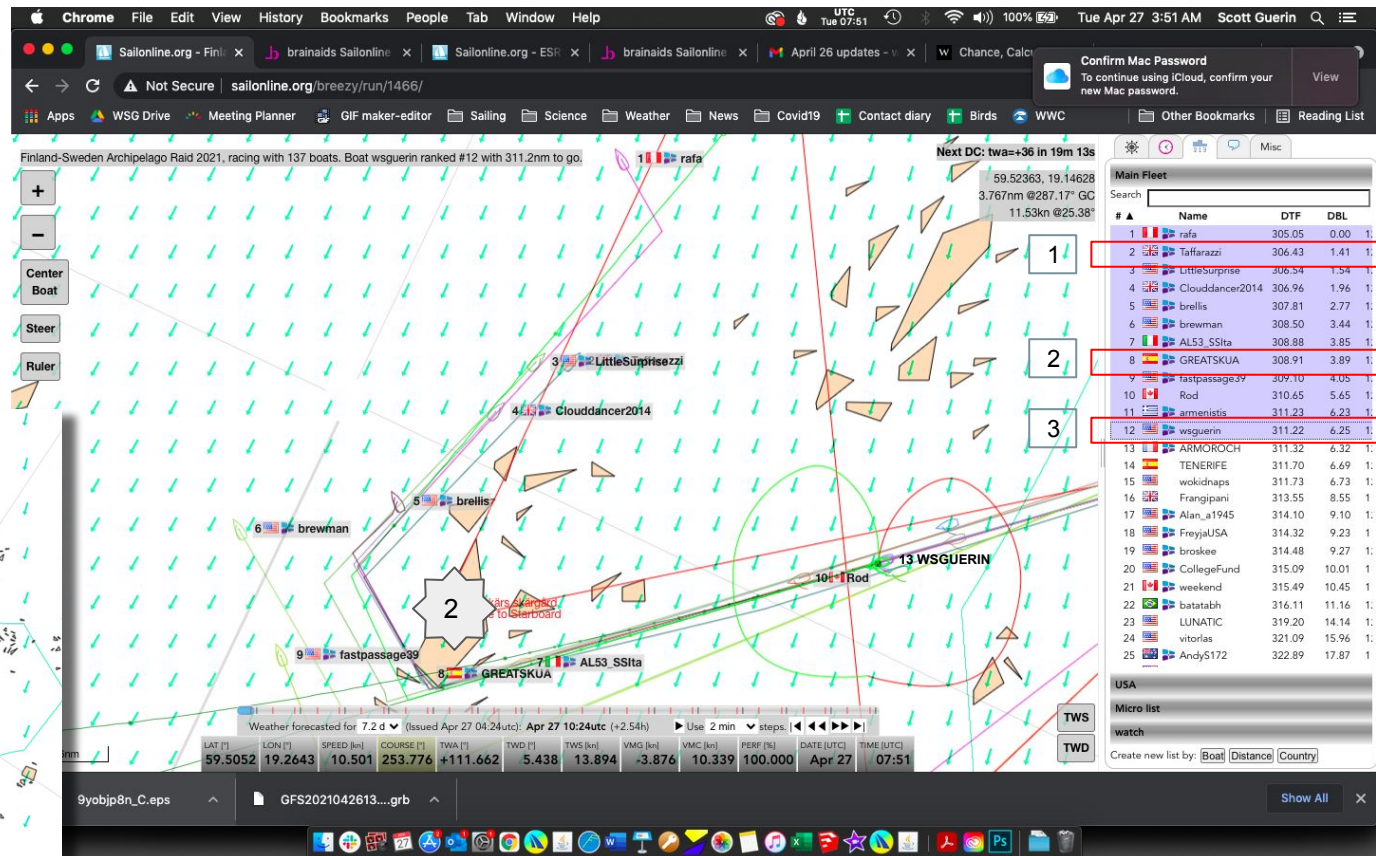
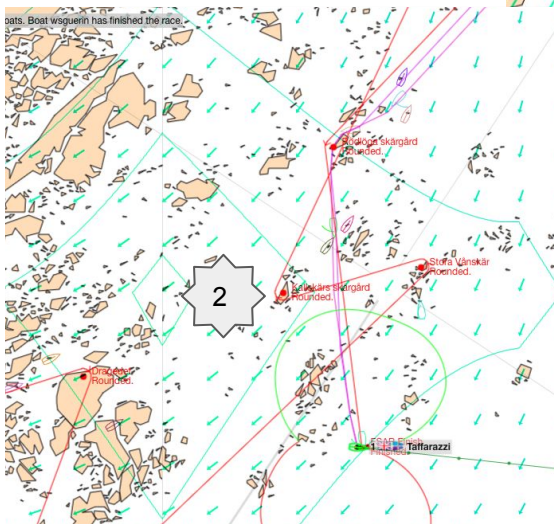




Tuesday 0751 UTC Tuesday 3:51 AM ET

The winds were amazingly steady for most of the race. Here WS wakes up for a rounding which was routine. Rafa extends his lead.

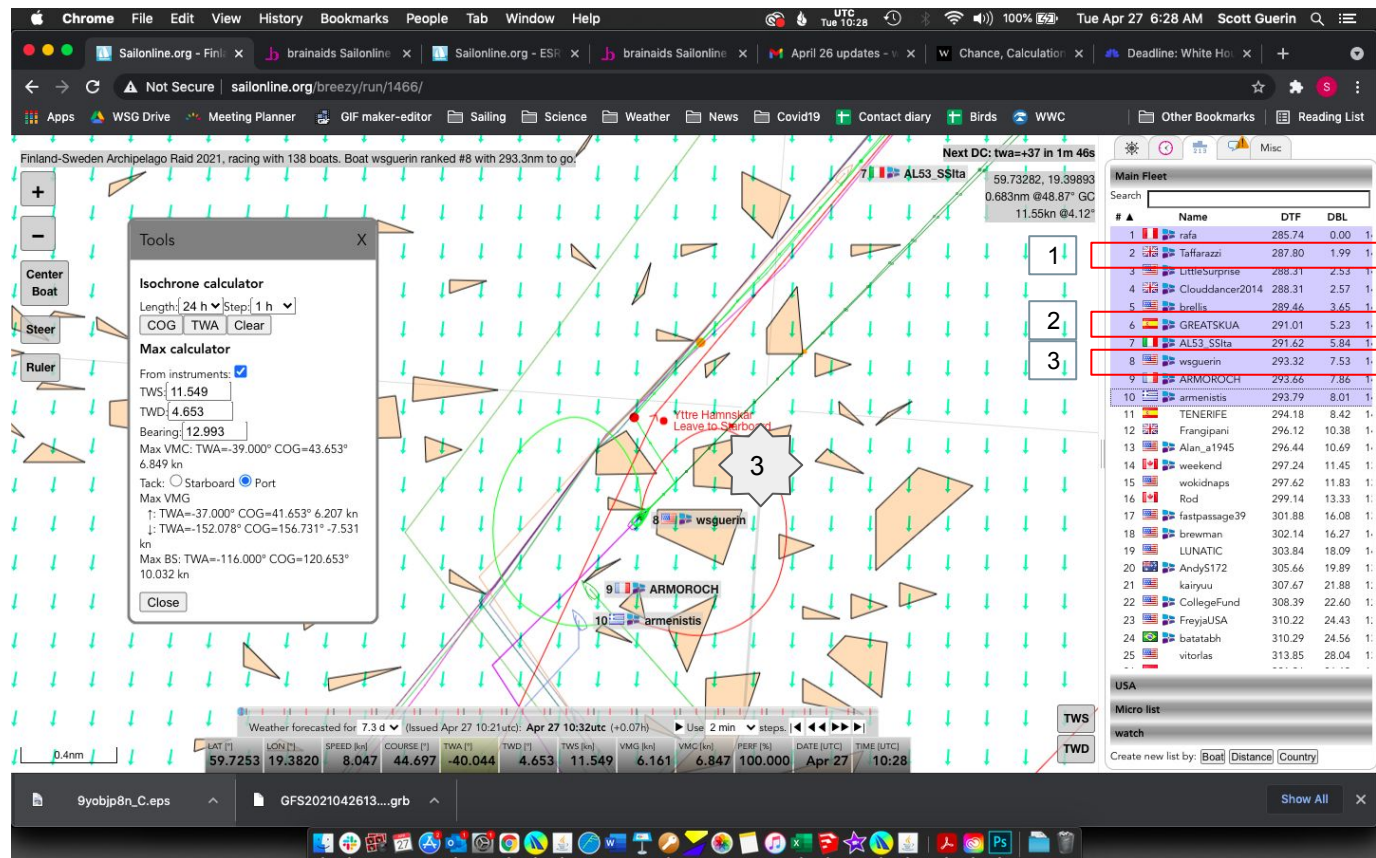
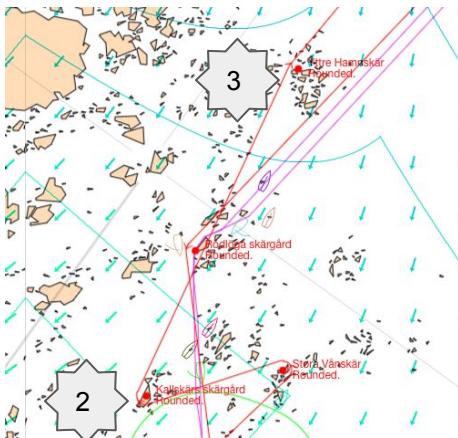
Inset shows where in this cat's cradle we are.



Tuesday 1028 UTC Tuesday 6:28 AM ET

I set my DCs overnight and found that I'd arrive in the early morning at a devious rounding: the mark set like a King protected by his pawns in chess. So I played it safe. Better to anchor at TWA 0° than to BBQ or sail off into the Gulf of Bothnia.

It worked, I was up early enough that I'd been there only a few minutes. I lost little and carried on.



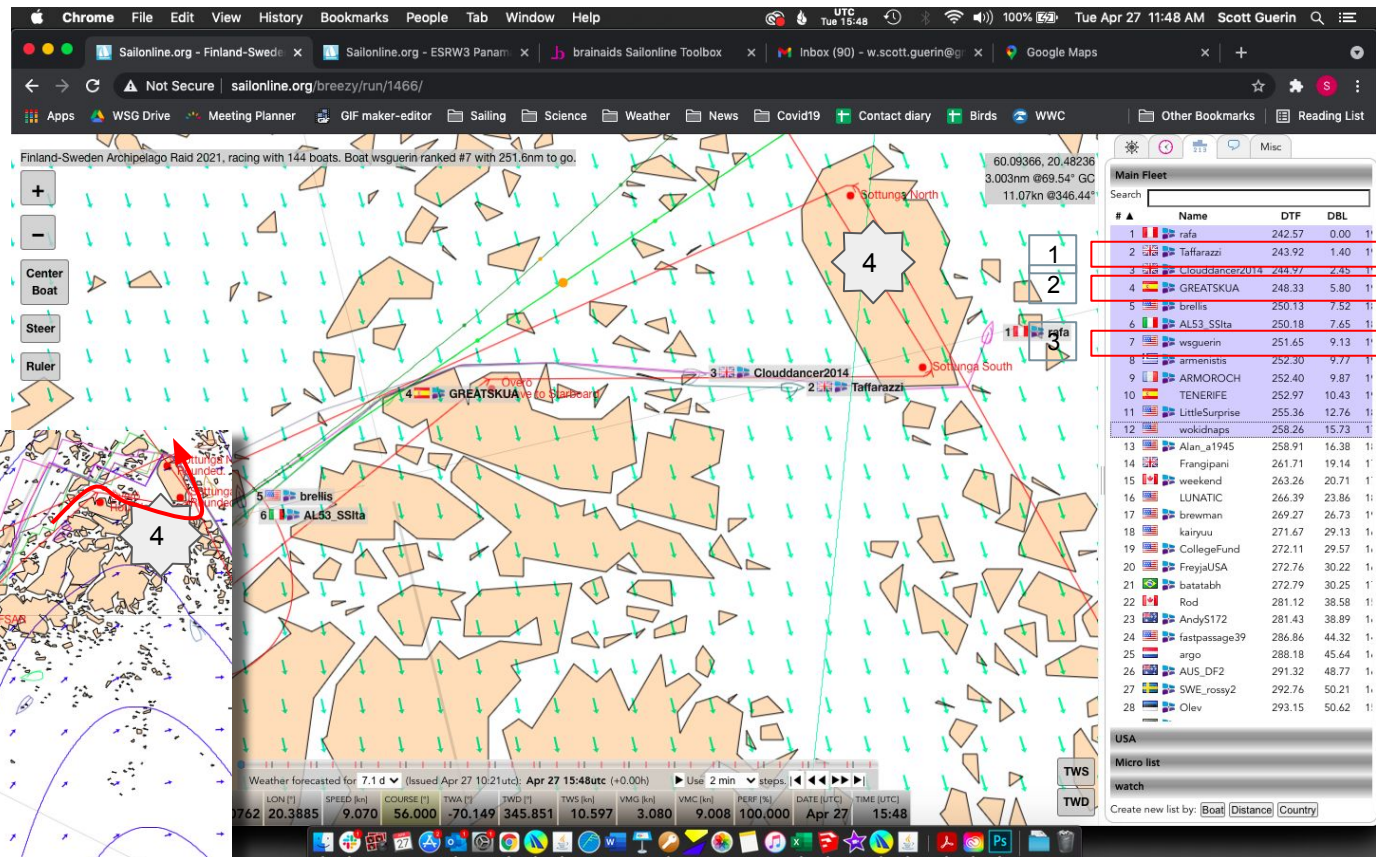
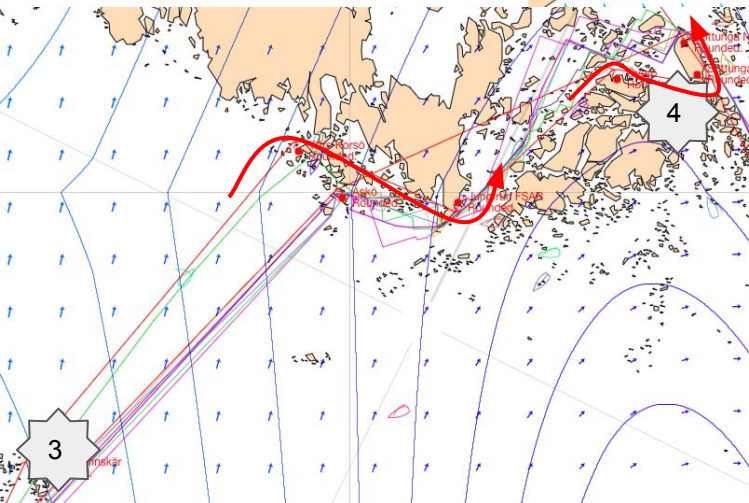
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It's still Tuesday 15:48 UTC Tuesday 11:48 AM ET

We're all still tracking each other with not many options to find a better wind lane or shorter course.

The but course ahead was so convoluted, I think I chatted that the horror author H.P Lovecraft designed this course.

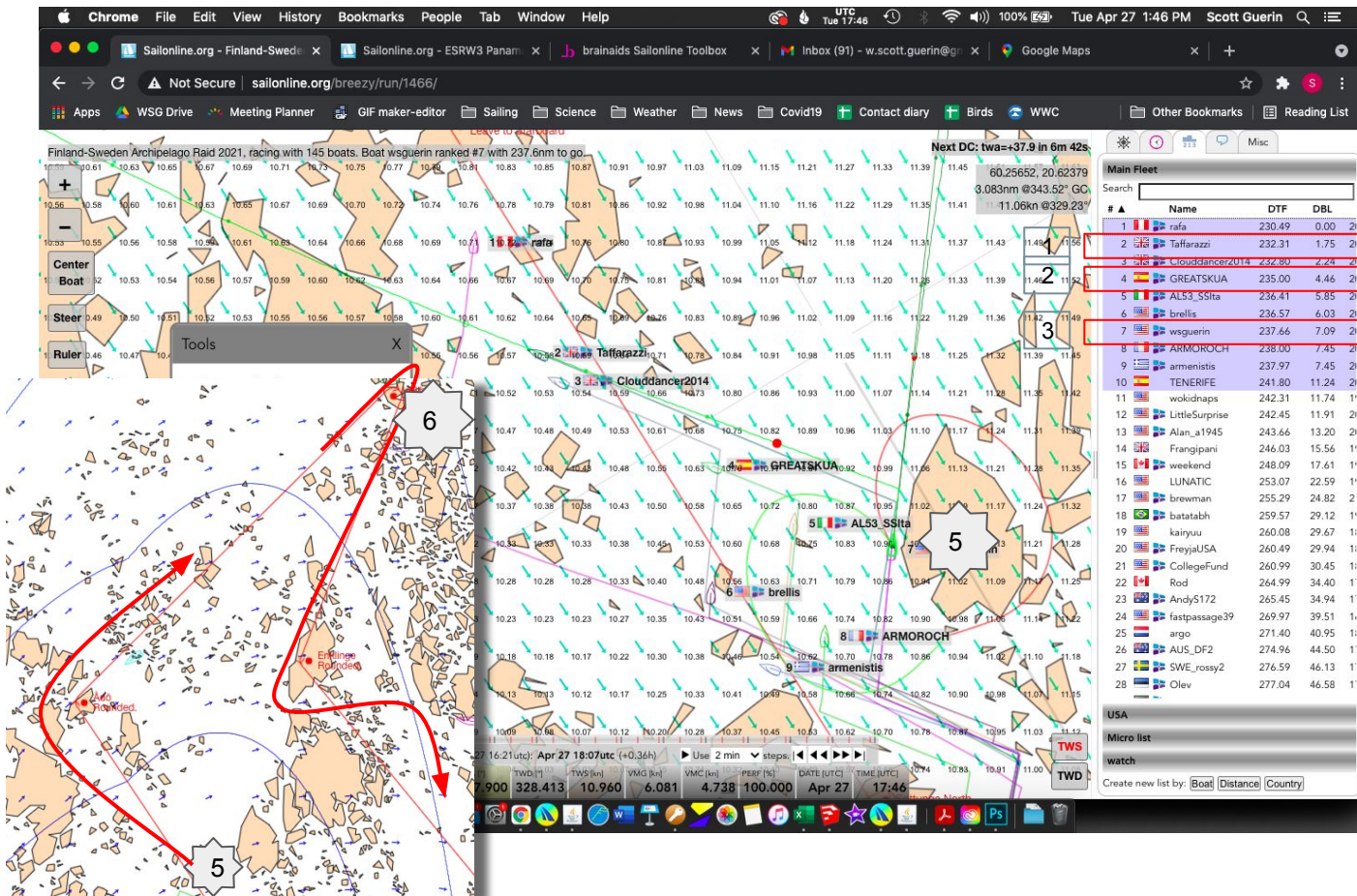


Tuesday 17:46 UTC Tuesday 1:46 PM ET

Memories are fuzzy at this stage but there are some options in the tracks.

I work from home and in the midst of designs, budgets, proposals, and zoom calls I peer over at my race laptop to see what I've missed.

I always set my phone timer and safety DCs so if an emergency came up, I could be reminded or be somewhat assured I'd still be in the ballpark, even if BBQ'd.



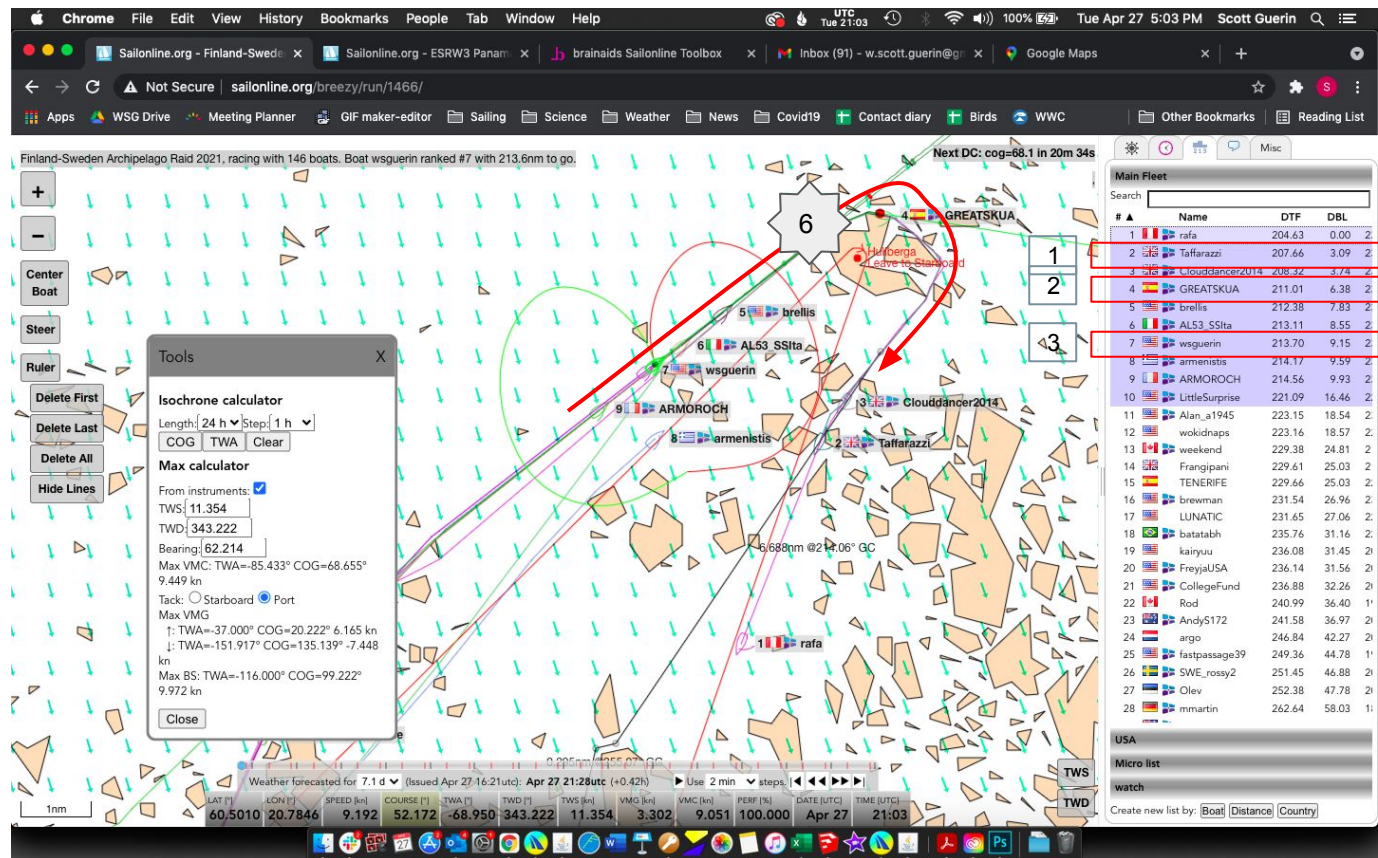
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Tuesday 2103 UTC / Tuesday 5:03 PM ET

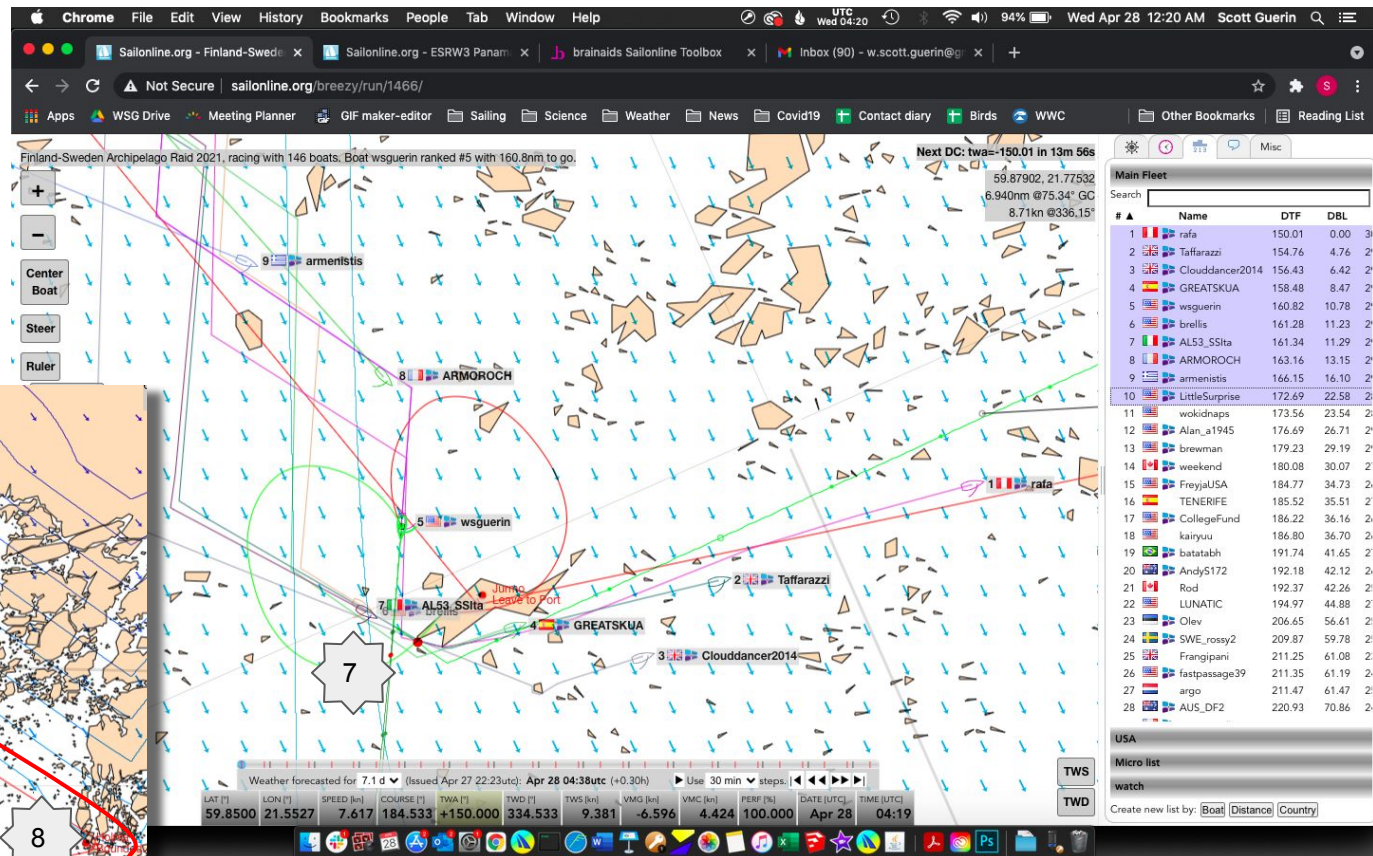
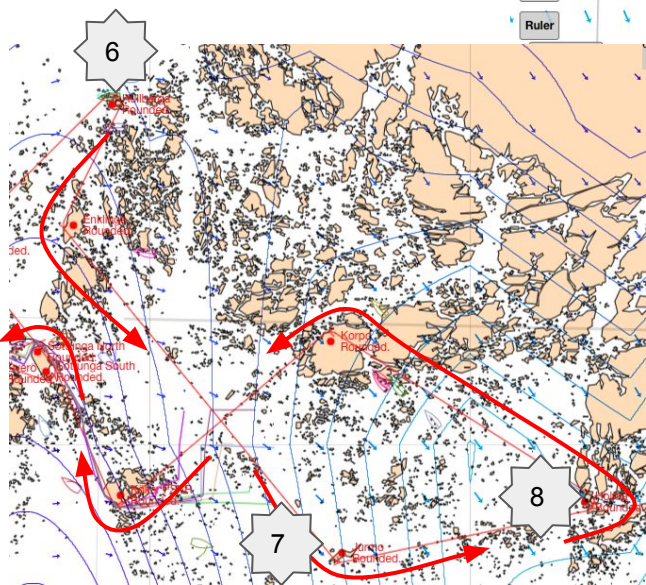
How could it still be Tuesday? The legs aren't too long and boat speed in in the +9kt range so the turns come fast.

I'm as bleary doing this report as I was racing!



Wednesday 0420 UTC / Wednesday 1:20 AM ET

The leading group is remarkably spread out with the top ten 22nm apart.



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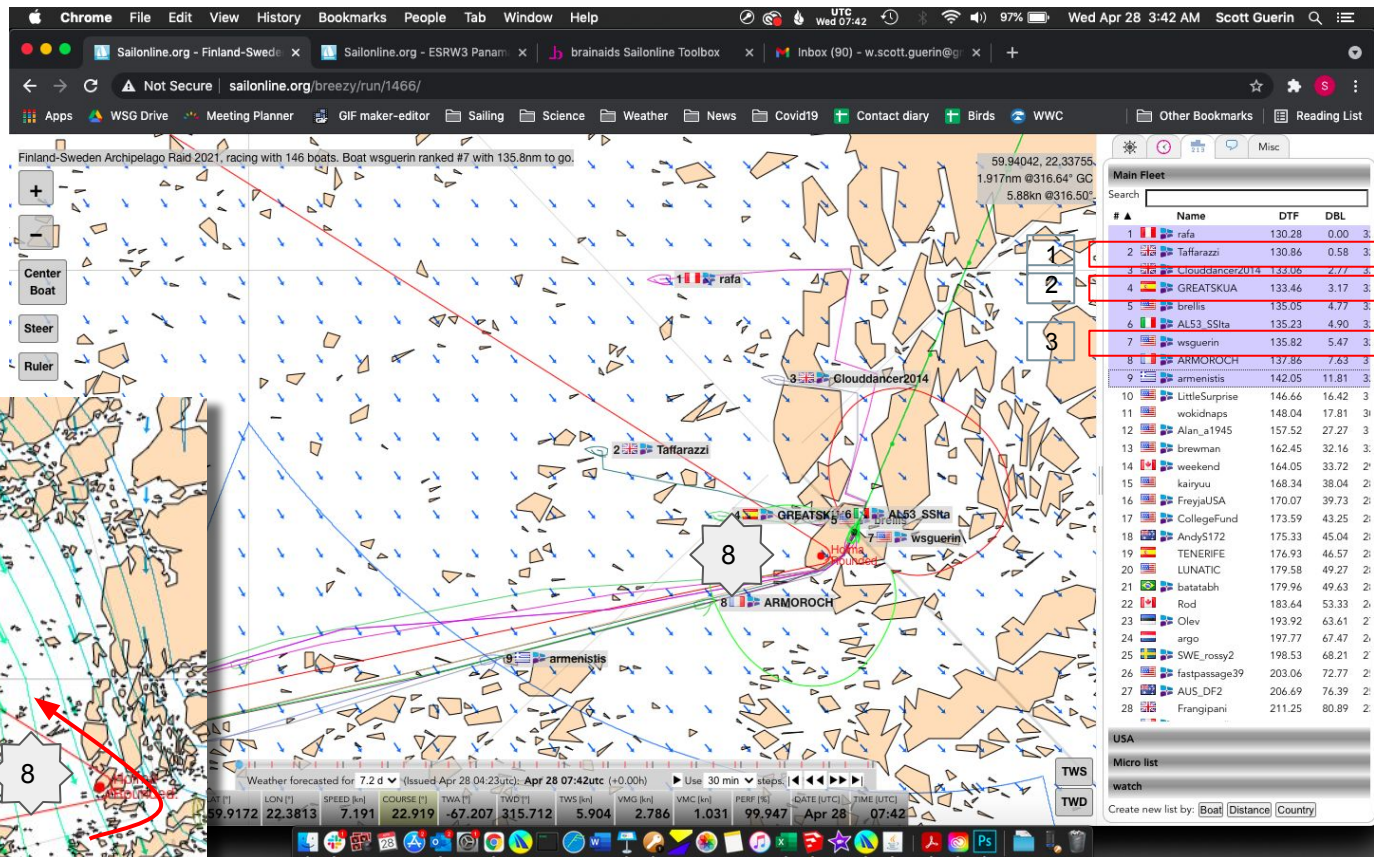
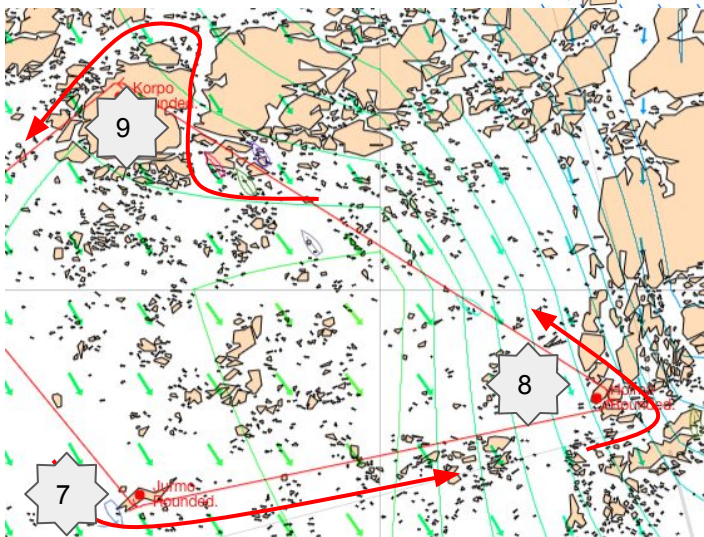


Wednesday 0742 UTC / Wednesday 3:42 AM ET

A crucial leg took place between points 8 & 9 after the eastern most Holma Rounding (#8) heading towards Korpo (#9)

**+ - WS chat:** This has been follow the leader to date

**Rod:** if you follow you cannot win  
**Someone else:** Truer words never spoken



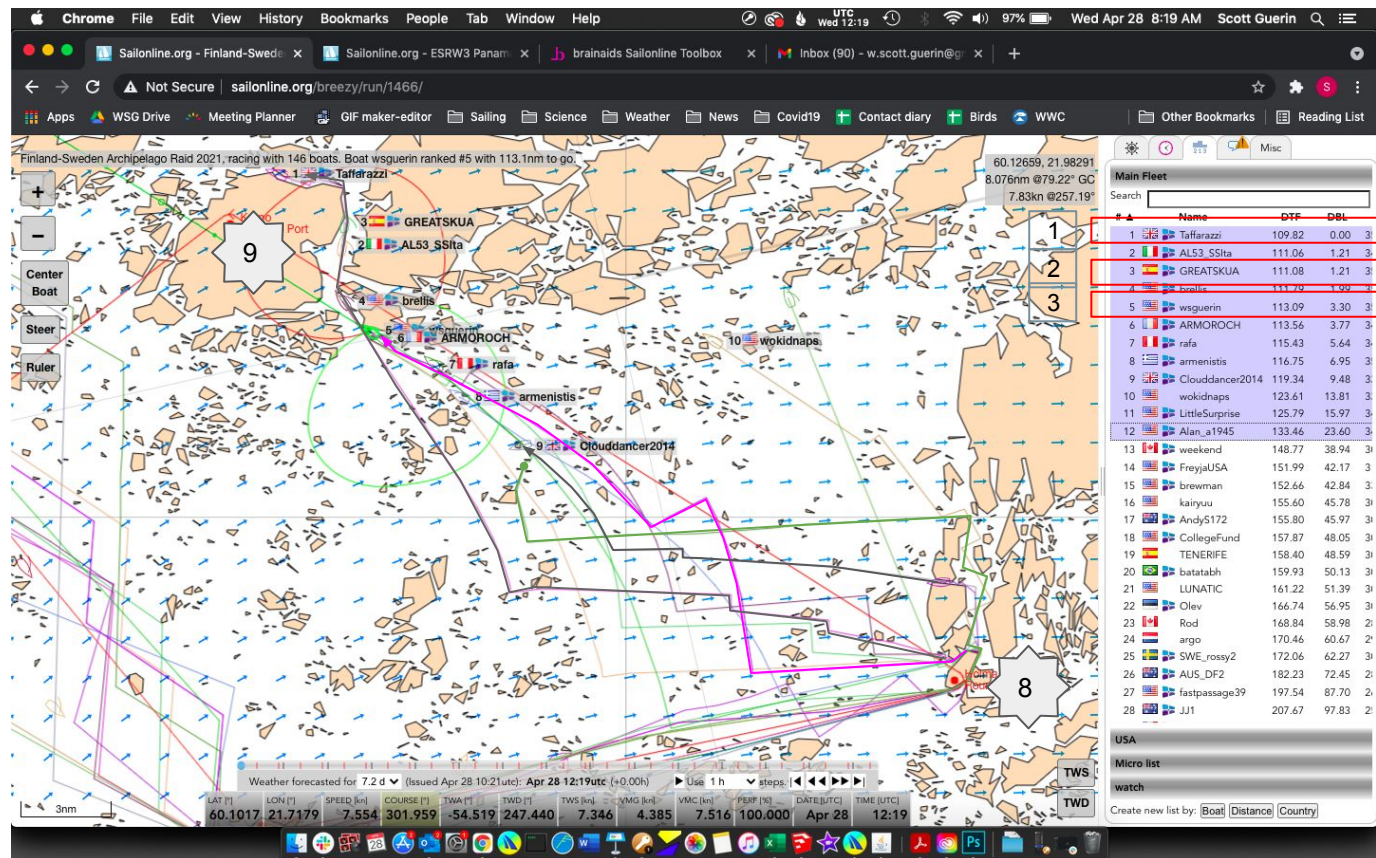
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Follow the leader we did not, and this sieve of islands took its toll, particularly on Rafa who must have collapsed from exhaustion.

Note the route taken by Rafa to the North, but who BBQ'd at the end of the green track. WS and Taffarazzi took the Southern exit and CloudDancer, then in 3rd, took the middle. This was a point when the wind was shifting left as clearly seen in WS's pink track.

I recall this being a difficult crossing with my wife finding me "face planted" at the table with my laptop on...we've all been there no doubt.

Skua, Brellis, AL53SSlta, ARMOROCH, and WS followed Taff, the new leader, who had a comfortable margin.





The Korpo rounding.

But you know the scene in Blade Runner where the replicant Roy Batty says to Deckard *"I've seen things you people wouldn't believe."* That's me admiring ARMOROCH's shortcut.

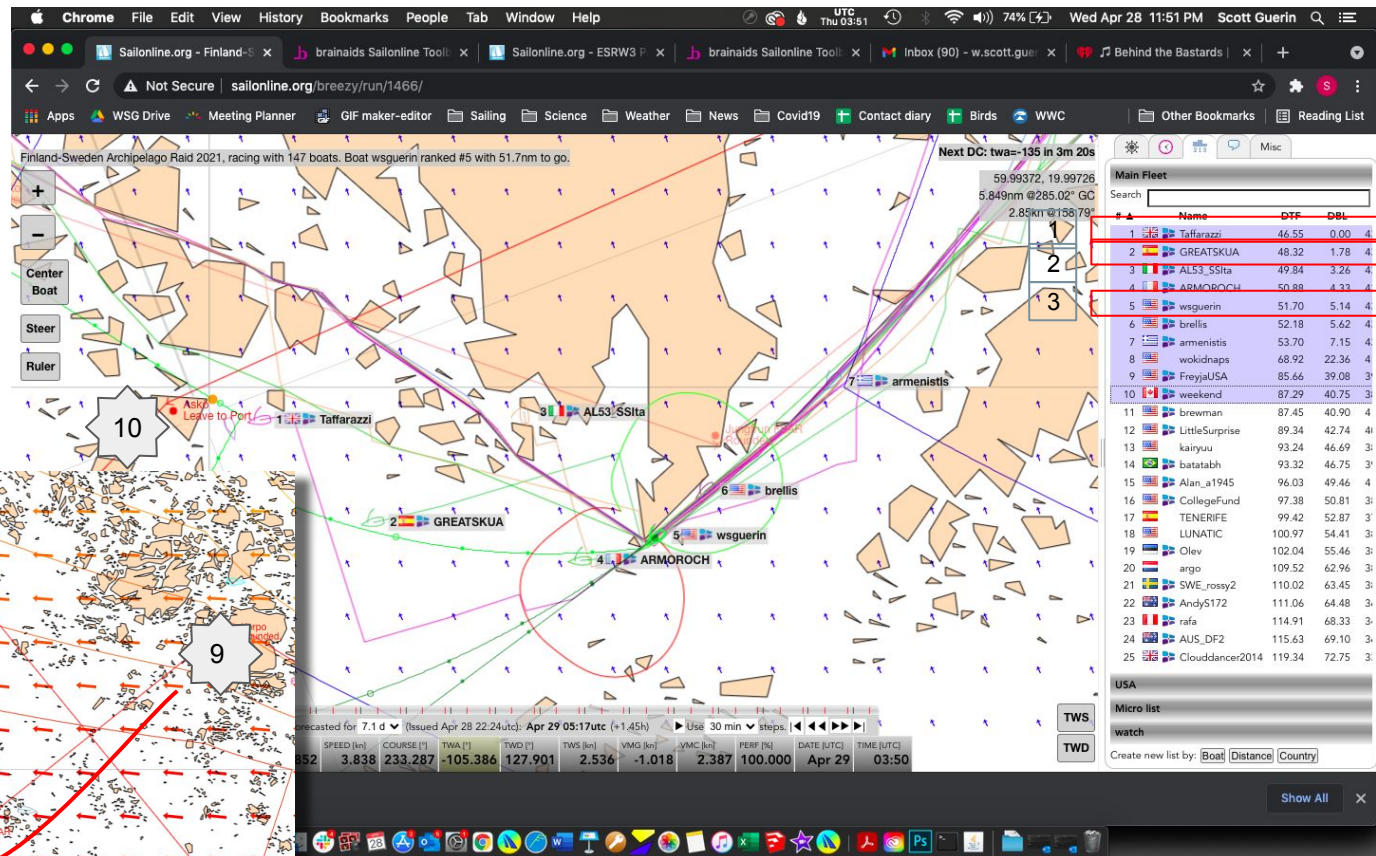
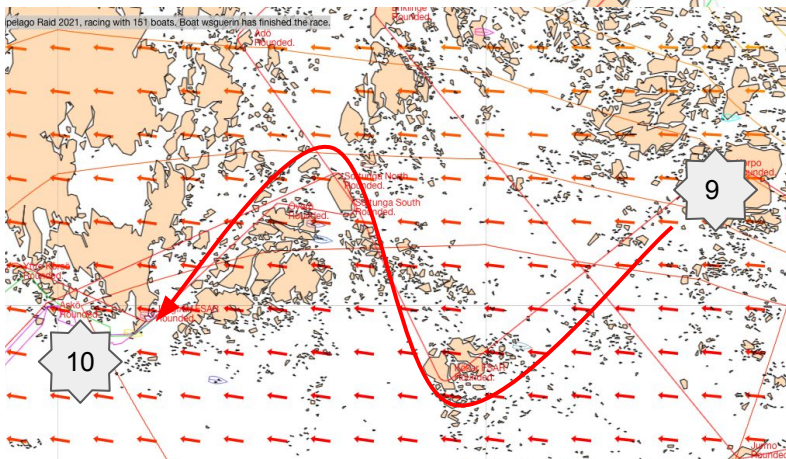
I considered it, you can see my ruler lines, but he did it and leap frogged into 4th ahead of me.



Thursday 0351 UTC / Wednesday 11:52 PM ET

A big zig zag through a near 100° degree windshift pushed the leaders South toward the Asko rounding (#10).

It was the leg that cast the podium.



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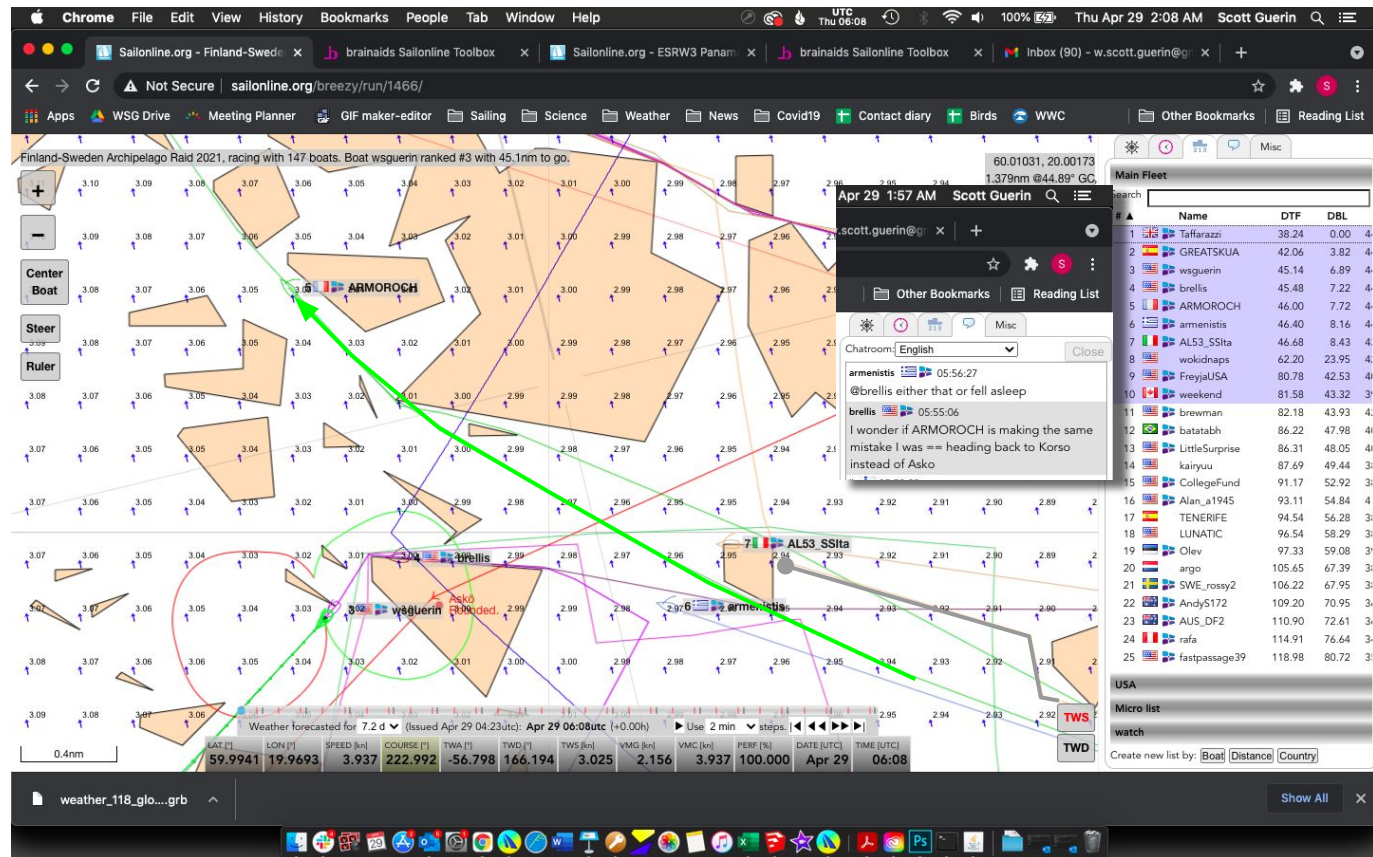


Thursday 0608 UTC / Thursday 2:08 AM ET

As Brellis chatted: ARMOROCH may have set their sights on Korso, a rounding made earlier in the race, as the course was so dead on, but they sailed out of contention heading there.

I think AL\_#SSIta BBQ'd at about the grey dot and fell back too.

WS was awake for this critical rounding and it paid off moving from 5th to 3rd as my comrades took their eyes off the ball.



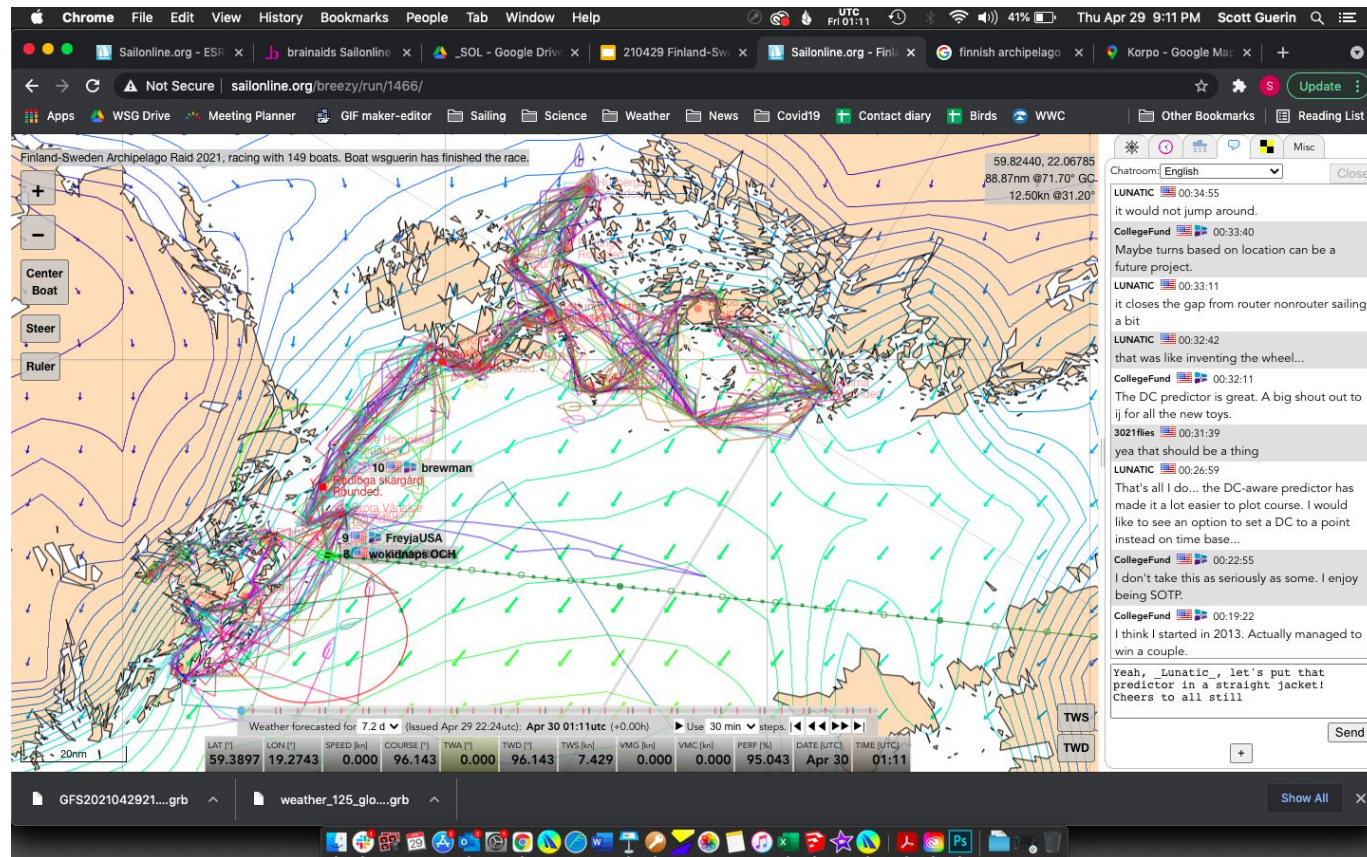
Finito

Thanks to Smo for his commentary, and to others for so many funny chats. They are like outtakes from a movie.

Thank you SOL for engineering such a great community and welcome to all newcomers such as the talkative 3021Flies, hope you stick around!

This was a satisfying first podium for me but it was an oddball race requiring such different skills than an ocean race where I've not done so well.

And congrats of course to Taffarazzi, it's hell to be in first place and hold on! And to GreatSkua who sailed steadily and assuredly for the Silver.





## Outtakes

WRmirekd 04/29 15:31:36

Freyja, I recently found information that this year's virtual sailing regatta will be the new official Olympic discipline. I showed it to my wife and said that in my old age I have a chance to become to become an Olympian. She allowed me to continue training :-)

FreyjaUSA 04/29 15:40:37

mirek, Another thing I can learn from you! How to get my wife to understand this is more than a game. This is important to keep the mind strong and active!

wsguerin 04/29 15:41:46

It's a SIMULATION not a game I keep telling her. Doesn't cut the Poupon though.

