Lake Ontario Challenge…"déjà vu"

First, thanks to Satori for hosting race and providing interesting links…and leading for part of the race too! Thanks to everyone for tolerating Bonk and I telling old sailor yarns from the 70's and 80's about Fireballs, 470's, and racing I14's. If you finished near the top, you did a great job, because of the

Déjà vu - In particular this race reminded me of a race in 1978 across Lake Ontario from the Niagara River to Toronto, then down to the west end of the lake in a Scampi 30. The Scampi 30 was a "piece of work" from the old IOR rule, it had a hard chine, carried a blooper, and had a single cylinder diesel engine that you could start by hand with a decompression switch.   I still remember the fickle night breezes from that race as we approached the reflected glow of Toronto, then later reefing down for a sudden night squall, and using a radio direction finder to find the mark at the west end of the lake. This race was a throwback to the fickle and unpredictable sailing that would suddenly change the game and mix the leaders up.   Sailing in it's finest form is a unique convergence of luck and competence that turns into opportunity. This race did not disappoint if you were looking for those race attributes!

Shift Happens - This race was difficult because of substantial changes at several weather forecasts that had an immediate impact on the race. It was critical to not miss any routing updates if you were using a router. It was also critical to set up your marks and routing constraints for so that you could let the router determine the best course even if it was wide of the mark. I found this race had a lot of wind direction changes and the boat needed to suboptimize the immediate VMG or VMC course to sail fast to the next wind first and gain angular leverage on the competitors. I frequently bring up "Wally" in the chat. It's good to know when the router thinks a "Wally" is going to work because of a future shift or when it is telling you to VMG or VMC. A race like this makes you re-examine you relationship with your router.

Opportunity - The approach to M9 at the east end of the lake was the critical moment. I tacked earlier toward the likely new wind and the next forecast favored my move. After using leverage to gain a marginal lead; I found myself relying on the LT routing back down the lake to defend against some very well sailed boats like Bonk and WR. I found each weather drop particularly challenging because that was when SlideRule was at greatest risk and I needed to defend against boats that had opposing leverage. I was fortunate that the last few weather forecast drops were near marks which tended to bring the boats closer together.

Competitive Convergence - I will say that the "router" makes what the other boats do somewhat predictable unless they are SOP. This creates a "competitive" convergence in SOL. This is the phenomena where competitors tend to copy each other rather than innovate. I think one of the

challenges of SOL is to know when to optimize and then recognize moments to innovate and take risks with high potential payoffs.

Thanks for a great race! I hope we do it again, and we get more competitors.

SlideRule

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