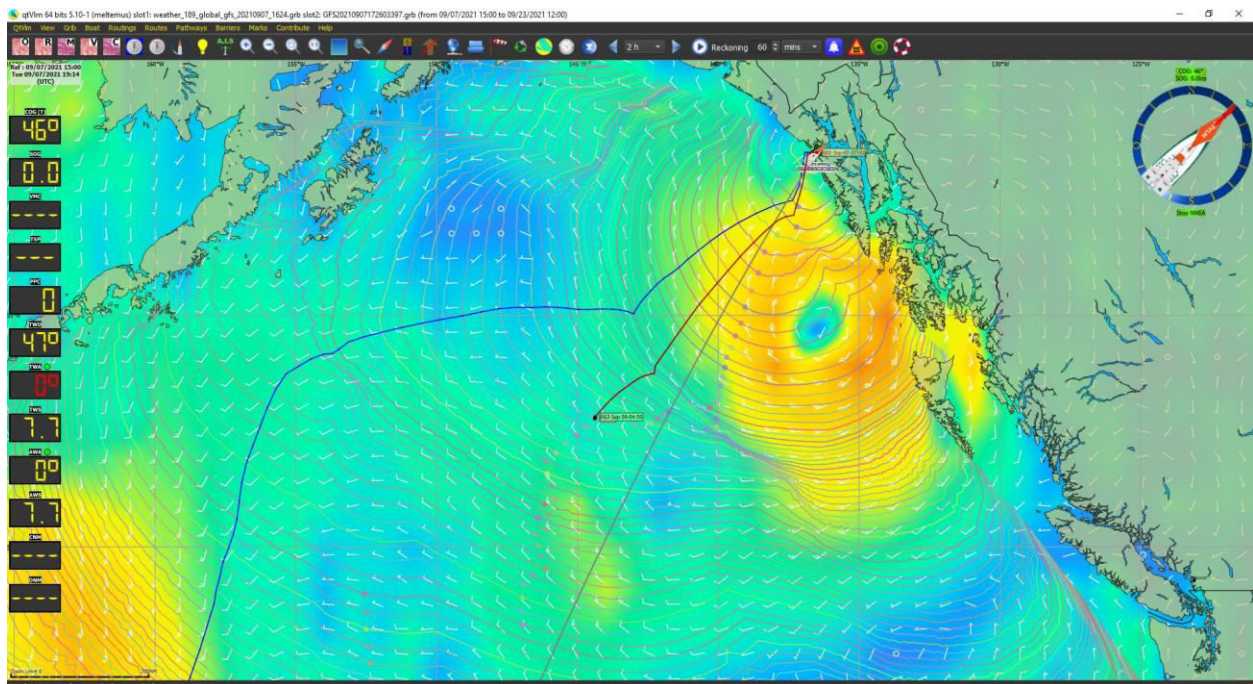


Report for race 1500 - PAC6 Elfin Cove Alaska to Kaneohe Hawaii 2021

This is a shared report by Thomas of HastySlug and Scott of SlideRule

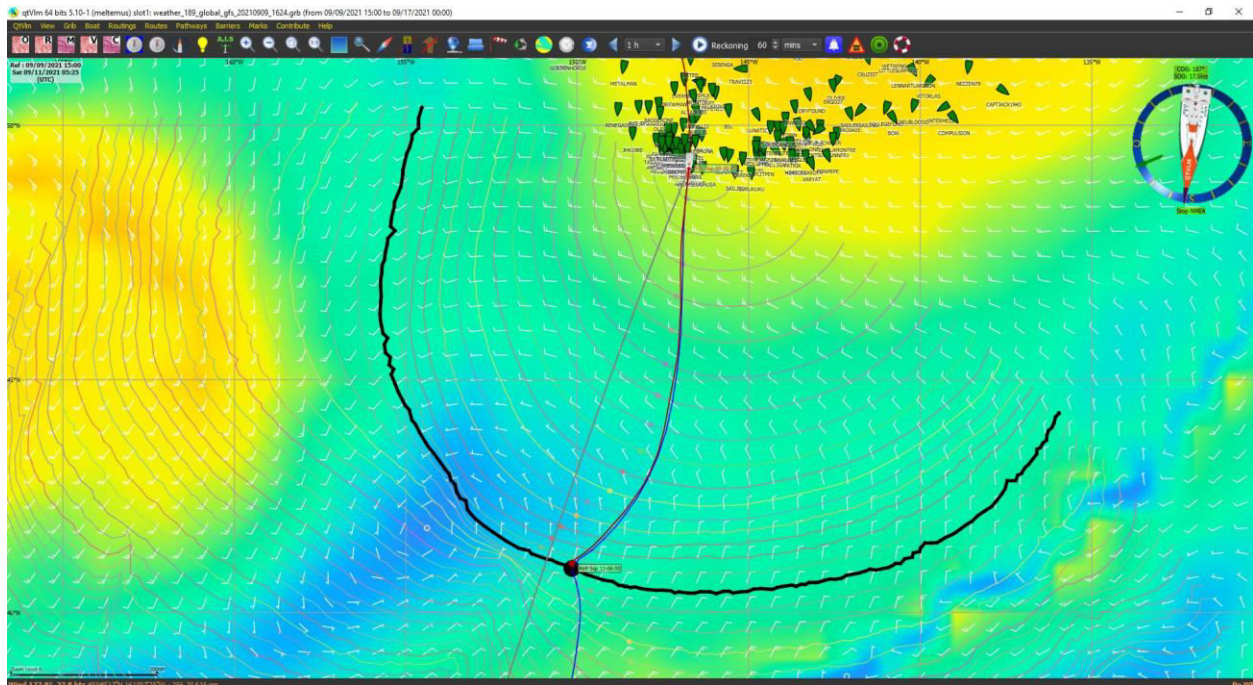
The start

The weather routings just before the start of the race suggested to go very far west in view of the favourable long term weather (blue line). Instead, I followed a route closer to the rhumb line (red line). This was a critical decision which put HastySlug in the lead from the early days of the race. In several successful longer races, both Scott and I have frequently said that the “tail should not wag the dog”, the uncertain, longer term weather predictions should not dictate the shorter term routing decisions with more certain weather. This has been particularly true in long north south races that cross the unpredictable horse latitudes or the intertropical convergence zone.

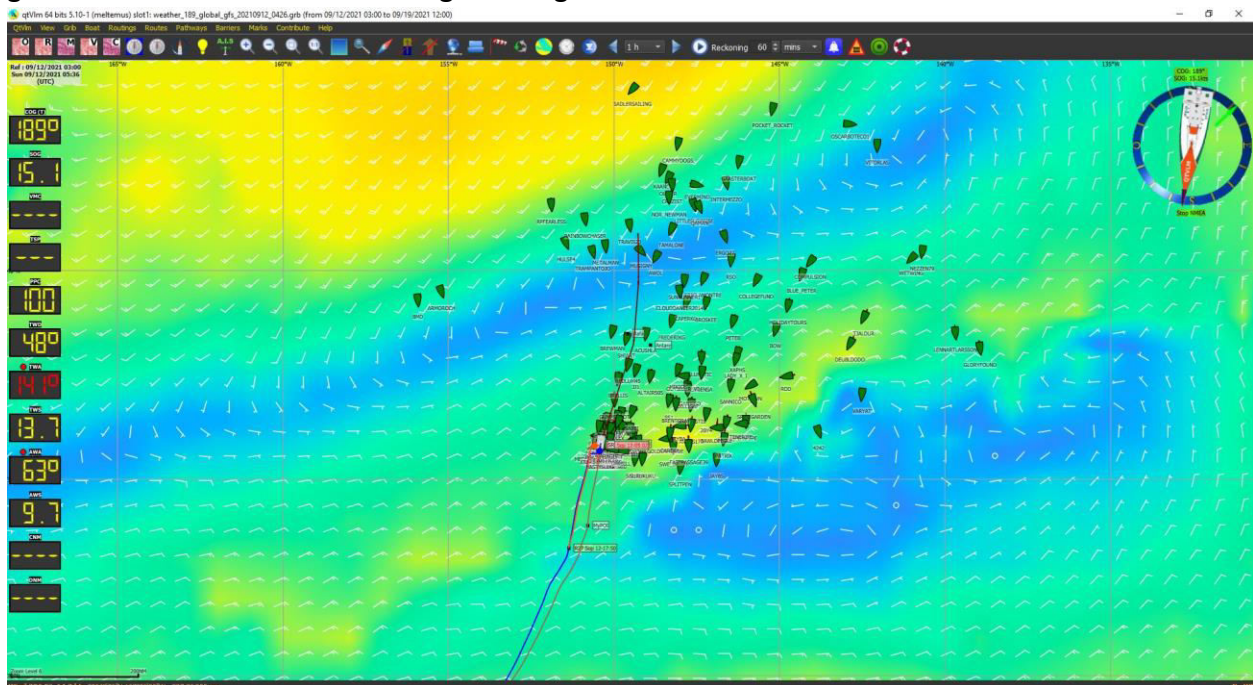


The horse latitudes

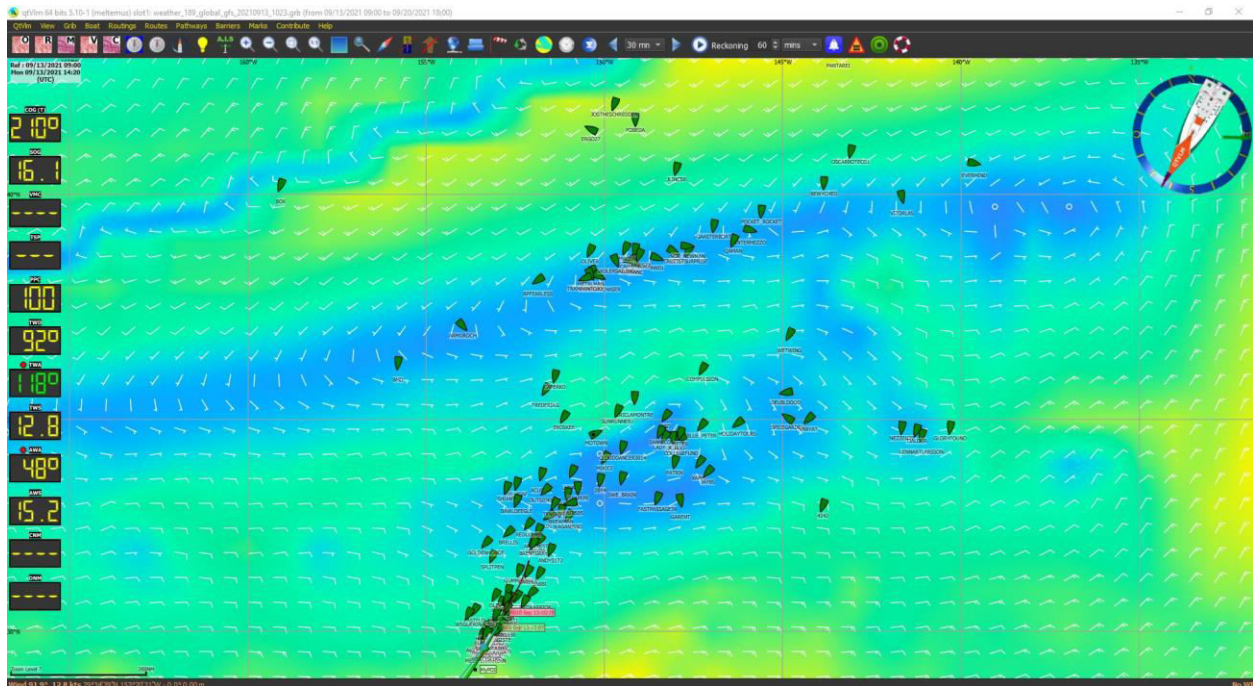
Going through the horse latitudes was the trickiest part of the race. These had the form of two horizontal lines of little to no wind, the first coming from the west and the second further south coming from the east. As we were approaching, it seemed possible to make it before the first one formed and blocked the route.



The second part of the horse latitudes seemed more persistent and pushed the fleet to the west. Finally, a rather stable opening appeared and I used that to go through. At this stage of low winds, up to date selection of the timing of the tacks and gybes was critical. This was guaranteed with off watch routing exchanges with Scott of SlideRule.

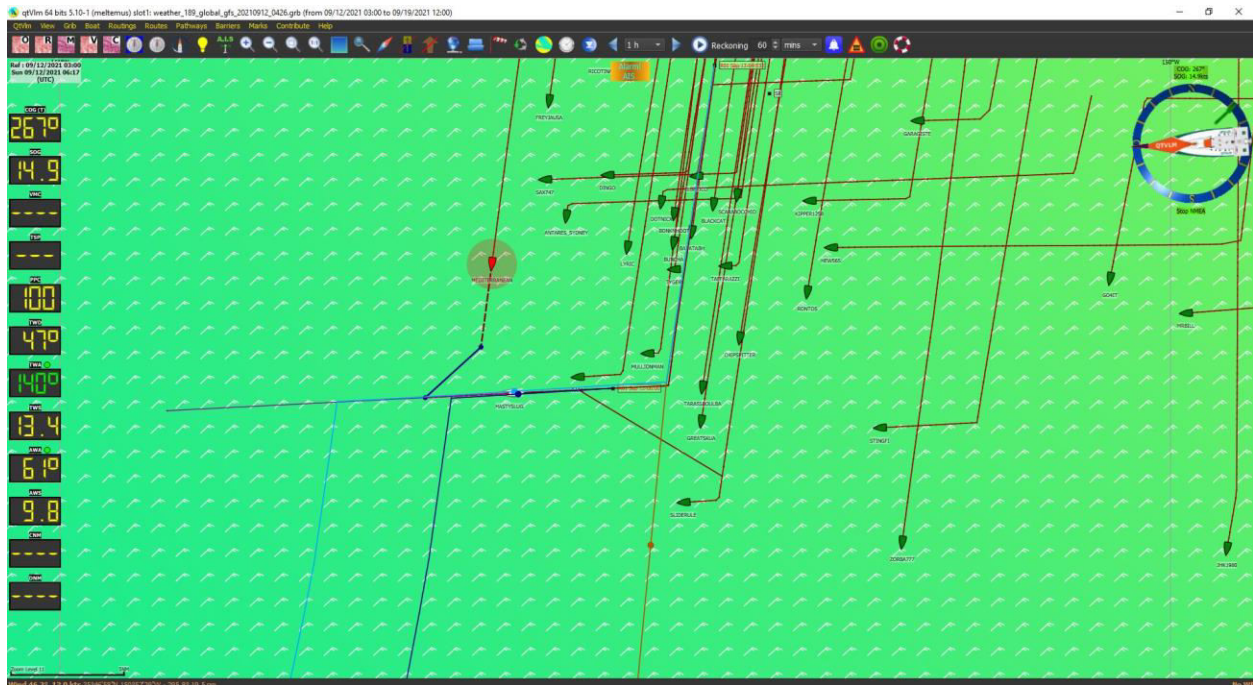


Eventually, the boats caught in the horse latitudes were severely affected. On the other hand, those in the lead got out easily and caught the trade winds to Hawaii making way fast.



The competitors

Offering to Poseidon by pledging the wine over the correct shoulder was tried by Zorba777, granting them the lead for a short period. Rafa and Dingo came fast from the west between the horse latitudes, but they soon converged behind HastySlug. Mediterranean was also persistently close, increasing my stress. Staying between the finish line and Rafa and Mediterranean seemed like the most reasonable strategy during the last two days of the race.



The conclusion

Offerings to the Aeolus, a lucky early lead that granted fast passage though the horse latitudes, careful decision on the tacks and gybes together with not missing a weather update seemed to have worked well in several races this year. Getting in the lead particularly when stronger wind is ahead is very important. The off watch boat sitting collaboration with Scott of SlideRule has guaranteed that the weather routing was optimized at every weather update, and the shared discussions on strategy shed light on the difficult parts of the race.

Congratulations Rafa and Mediterranean! You sailed very well. Congratulations to all top finishers! Good competitors make us learn more in each race!

Thomas of HastySlug

September 2021

In memory of my father