

Satori's Report on the Sea of Cortez Race 2022, May 3rd 2022

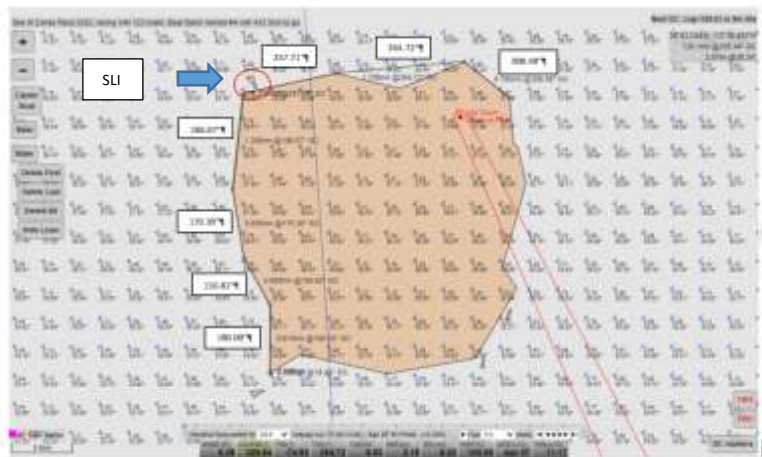
First let me compliment **Zorba** on a really terrific race with challenging winds, slow as they often were, that I will look forward to doing again. I expect that it is likely to be different each time. On behalf of all of us SOLers, thank you **Zorba**, and the RC for putting the race on the Calendar.

As I have said before I still consider myself as something of a beginner since **Satori** was only introduced to SOL by the N2B Race in June 2020. So to finish 3rd and be on the Podium for the 2nd time has only been accomplished with the help and advice of many SOLers. I would particularly like to thank **Dingo** and **bonknhoot** and of those SOLers who collaborate with me, **FreyjaUSA**, **wsguerin** and **FreeNeasy**.

I use QtVlm and AGL which were essential to my placement in this race. However, there was a lot of intervention, which put me at the helm, because of the conservatism of the Qt algorithms looking long-term versus potential short-term gains. As I said in **Satori's** Report on the B.A. to Rio Race I create a routing to the Finish with each WX and, as I have learned from my collaborators, I plot to shorter off shore marks for potentially faster routes to these closer marks using the routing to the Finish as a guide. I also watch the competition closely, just like IRL, but here we have the advantage of infinite long-distance vision! Of course, with the now common use of Trackers, you sometimes have long-distance vision IRL

Notwithstanding my preparation in looking at wind trends in the Sea of Cortez I ultimately relied on Qt in choosing the west coast going north and the east coast going south. In my planning I created routings to Isla Turon up both coasts using the race start time and earlier WX's before deciding on the west coast north. I waited until I was at Isla Turon before finally deciding on the east coast south. That decision was largely influenced by winds at the front of the fleet. As you know the 5 boats up front, **Pit8008**, **Sax747**, **Satori**, **HappyHour** and **bonknhoot**, took the east coast south and **rafa**, followed by many, took the west coast. The farther back in the fleet you were the more likely the west coast would have looked like and been the right choice.

I rounded the Isla Turon with good preparation for a close rounding using SOTP's DC's and some intervention to avoid that SLI on the north-west corner of the Island. Passing between the SLI and the coast was going to be essential to stay up front.



It has become quite clear to me that given the closeness of the SOL finish times **Satori** needs to become more aggressive in its "hugging" of coastlines and mark roundings. These aggressive tactics by other high ranking SOLers are often the difference in whether **Satori** makes it into the Top Ten.

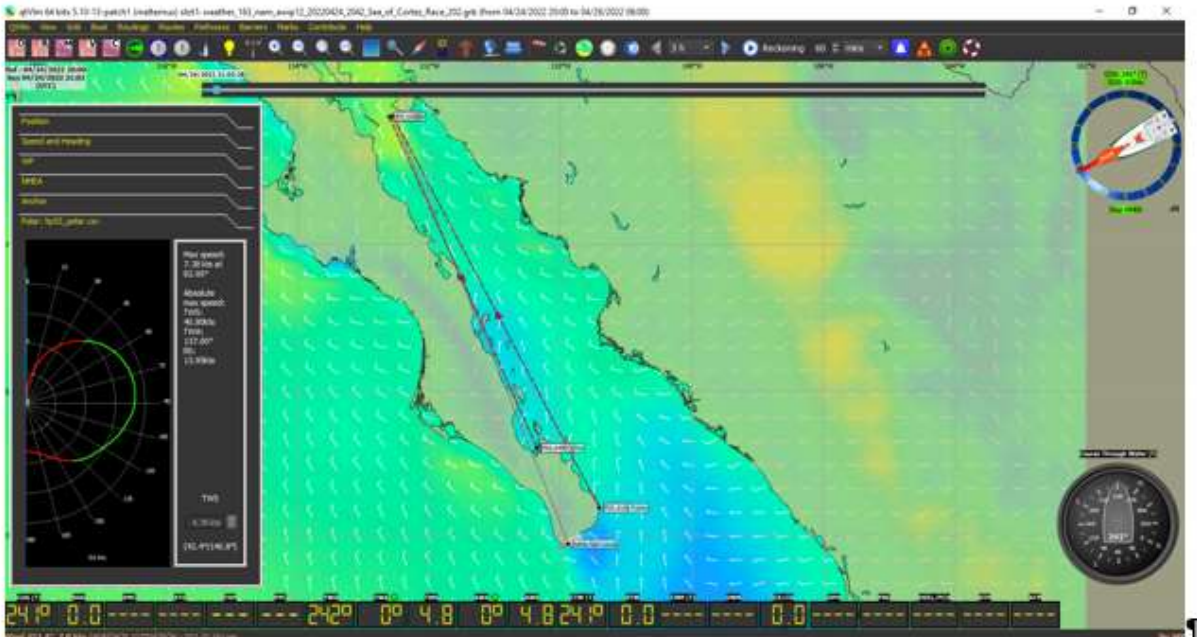
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I will share my approach to the Race with the hope that there will be something in it for others still learning how to make effective use of Qt and AGL like me. Probably the high-ranking SOLers will sit back and smile and say **Satori** still has a lot to learn, which of course is true!

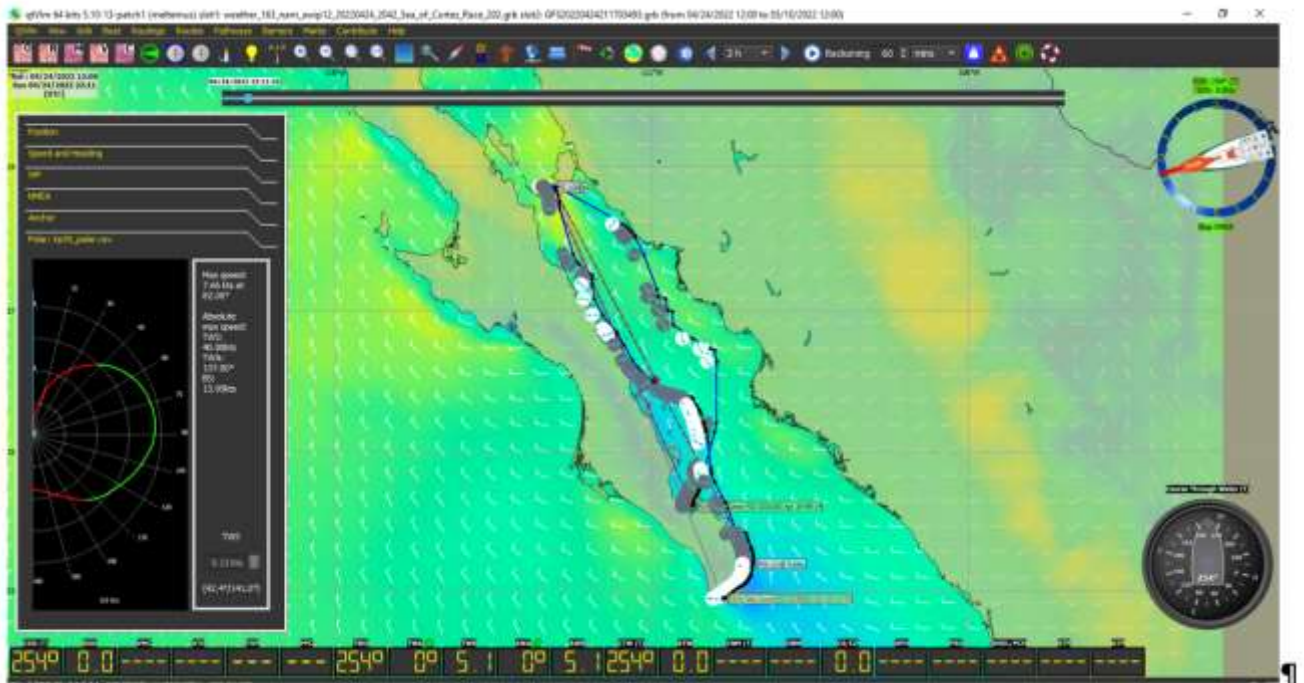
Pre-planning

The day before the race I did a Qt simplified routing to the Finish using a Pathway to the Finish and the race start time to get a sense of the routing. I did not optimize the route because it would have taken too long. North along the west coast and south first over and down the east coast and then over to the Finish. This Route had an ETA of Apr 30th 09:14 UTC compared with **Satori's** actual finish time of Apr 30th 07:17:34 UTC, only 2 hrs difference!

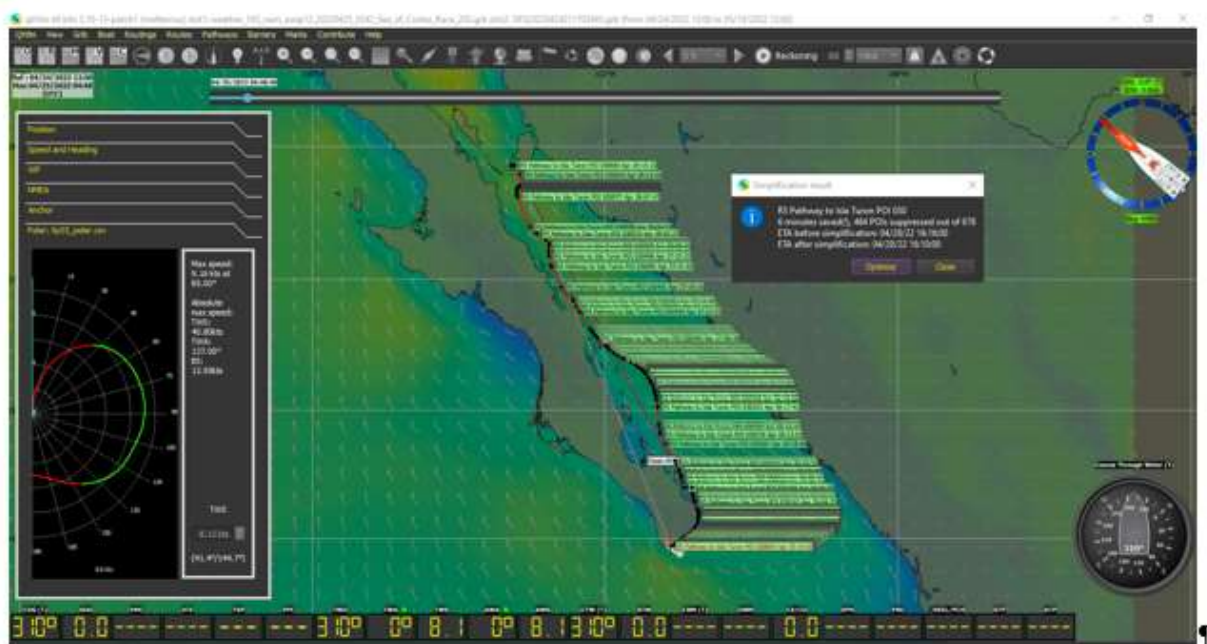
Pathway necessary for routing from start to Isla Turon
POI 010 – Cerro Los Frailes to Port
POI 020 and 030 – Rounding Isla Turon to Port
POI 040 – Finish at Bahia de La Paz closer to PRT Mark



I particularly wanted to get a sense of whether Satori needed to be farther off shore rounding Cerro Los Frailes which would influence where to place the first Pathway POI



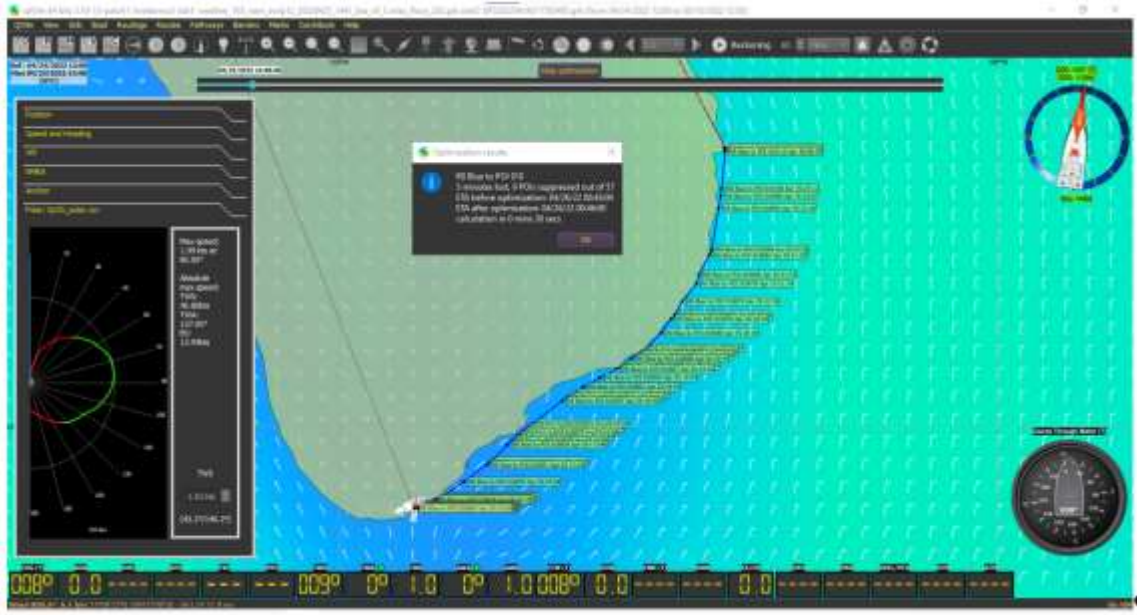
Using the last WX before the Race I did a simplified routing to Pathway POI 030 which was on the north-east corner of Isla Turon to get a sense of where I might put a shorter off-shore mark to do my initial routing to. Again I did not optimize the route and made sure that the 1st Pathway POI was not unnecessarily pulling **Satori** in shore to that POI.



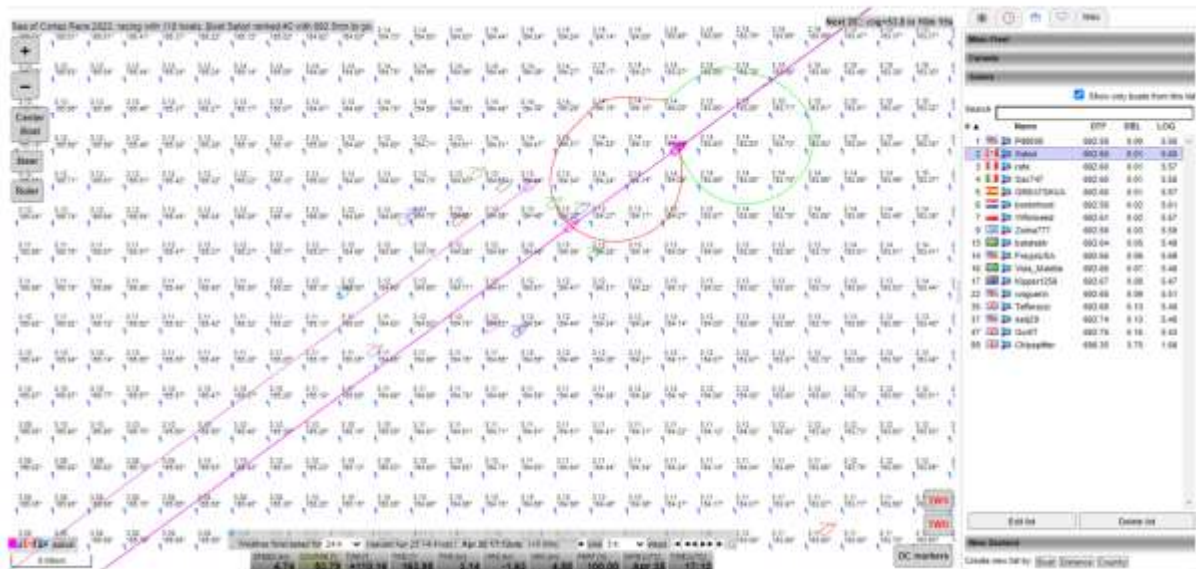
The start of the Race and Day 1

With the last WX before the Race being just 15 mins before, I created a routing before this WX using the race start time and up-loaded the DC's to the SOL command centre as a precaution. Wicked planning by SOL!!

I was able to create a route to the first Pathway POI just off Cerro Los Frailes using the WX just before the race, which I edited in AGL and extended to go up the west coast past Cerro Los Frailes and up-loaded it to the Command Centre replacing the previous route for **Satori's** start.

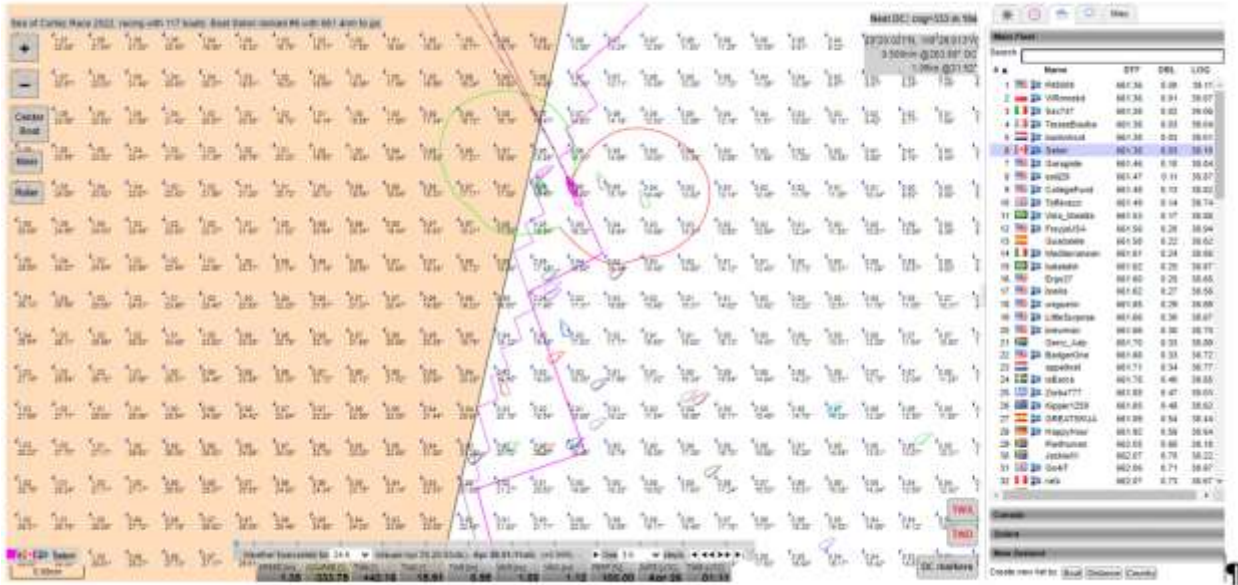


Here we are 2 hrs and 12 mins into the Race with only the high ranking SOLers shown on the screen. **Pit8008** is 1st, **Satori** is 2nd, **rafa** is 3rd and **Sax747** is 4th. As you know not much changed after that as they remained the leading boats throughout the race.



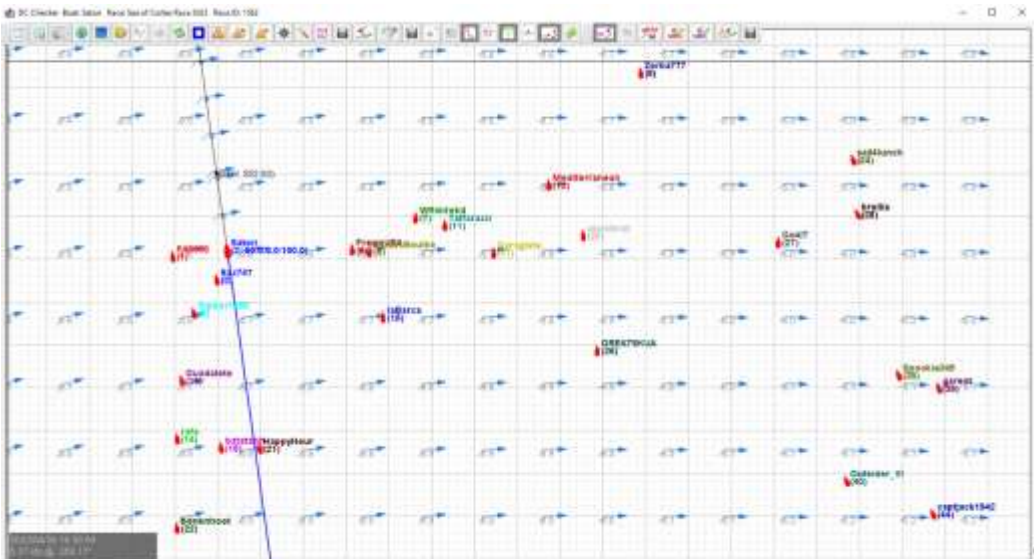
Day 2

10 hrs and just 35 nms in these winds below 1 knt Qt had **Satori** doing a number of tacks along the east south-east coast of the Bahia Peninsula which caused me concern and I edited them down to 9. Meanwhile **Pit**, who remained in 1st place and 0.2 nms ahead, put in 18 tacks staying close to the coast. I actually think he BBQ'd on one but the winds were so light and pretty well on the nose so you could not tell if he paused for but a moment! At this slow BS no PL and less distance counts.



12 hrs and 43 nms into the race **Satori** was past Cerro Los Frailes with a confirmed rounding. **bonknhoot** did a weird 180 and dropped from 5th to 27th! I presumed that Qt had him sailing back to a passed but undeleted POI but in the Chat Room **bonk** says he awoke to a phantom DC.

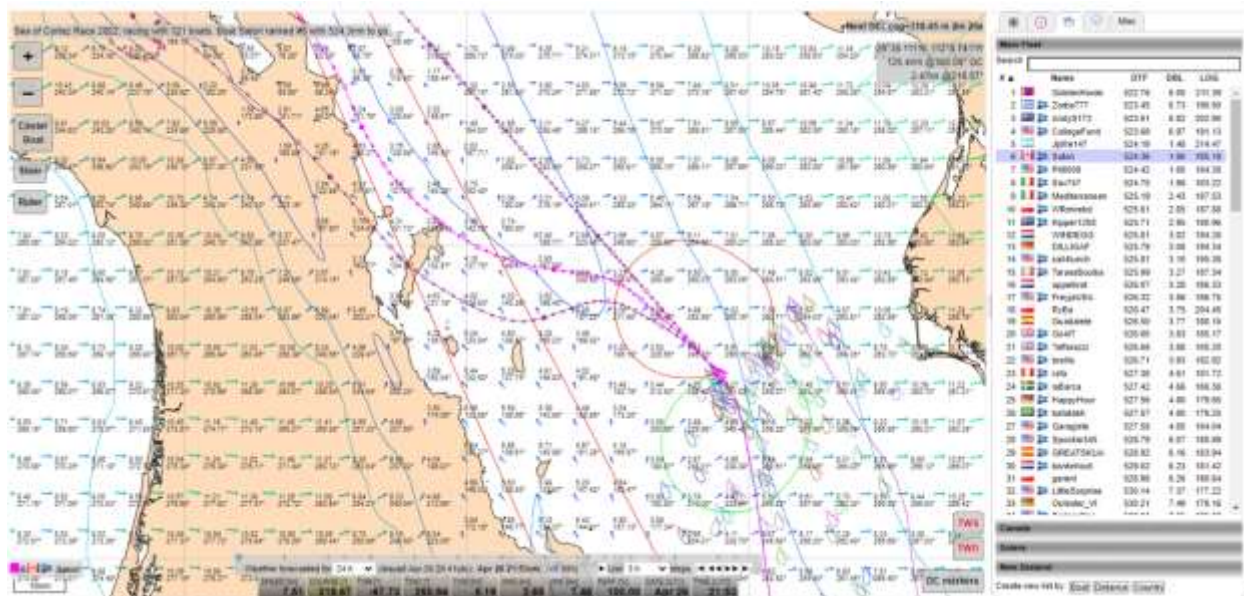
Apr 26th 16:30 UTC the fleet has spread out over to the higher winds in the middle of the Sea of Cortez. By now I have placed 9 off shore marks to sail to.



Apr 26th 21:53 UTC – 31 hrs and 185 nms into the race this is where there is a dramatic change unfolding. **Satori** and the eventual Leaders are heading over to the west coast to get to the west of blue goo forming ahead while a major portion of the fleet are attracted to the higher winds on the east coast. **GoldenHorde** on the east, followed by **Zorba**, is clearly in the lead on a north/south axis. [Unfortunately, days later **GoldenHorde** ended up BBQing on that SLI on the north-west corner of Isla Turon.]

As I have mentioned before I use Qt's AIS NMEA information on competitors to test their ETA's. At this point, notwithstanding the Server's placement of **GoldenHorde** based on DTF, I had him arriving at POI 030 at the north-east corner of Isla Turon 6 mins behind **Satori**. Actually closer than I expected and of some concern because there are 6 more WX's before the rounding of Isla Turon and there was the risk that the wind trend might favour those in east just as they were anticipating!

Mirek's ETA at Isla Turon was 51 mins behind **Satori** and **Pit** who both had the same ETA



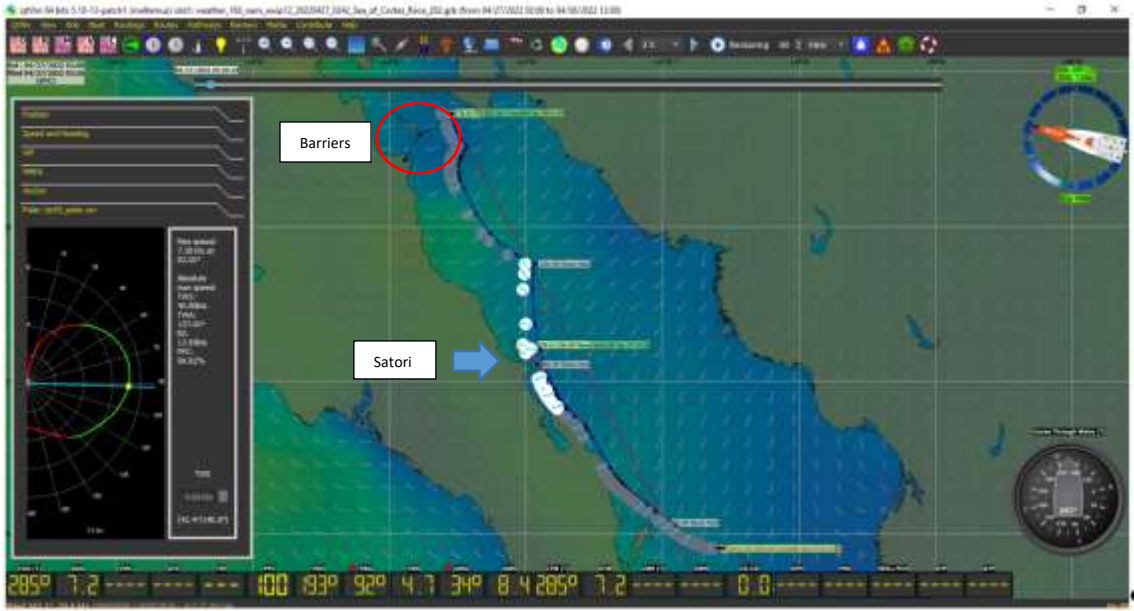
WX Apr 27th 04:45 UTC saw **Satori** gain 50 mins is 6 hrs with a BS of 5.7 knts which was anywhere up to 2 knts better than the boats in the east who had sailed into blue goo with winds of 0.3 to 0.6 knts.

Testing of **Zorba** who the Server has in 1st place ahead of **GoldenHorde**, based on DTF, I have arriving at Isla Turon 25 mins after **Satori**.

Now you cannot make out **Satori** on the screen on the following page except for the red projection line near the 9th Off Shore Mark but I particularly wanted you to see the Black Barrier lines I have placed from the west shore line across to Isla Turon to force the routing to round the Island counter clockwise.

I use Qt Barriers a lot including from a shoreline to a Race Mark to force the routing to properly pass the mark to Port or STBD. Something I learned from **Dingo** that is extremely useful. It is a 2 step process. The first attempt to place the end of the Barrier on the Race Mark is stopped by the red and blue circles for moving the Race Mark. Stop the Barrier outside the red/blue circle and as a 2nd move extend the Barrier to the Race Mark and the red/blue circles do not appear to stop the Barrier ending on the mark!

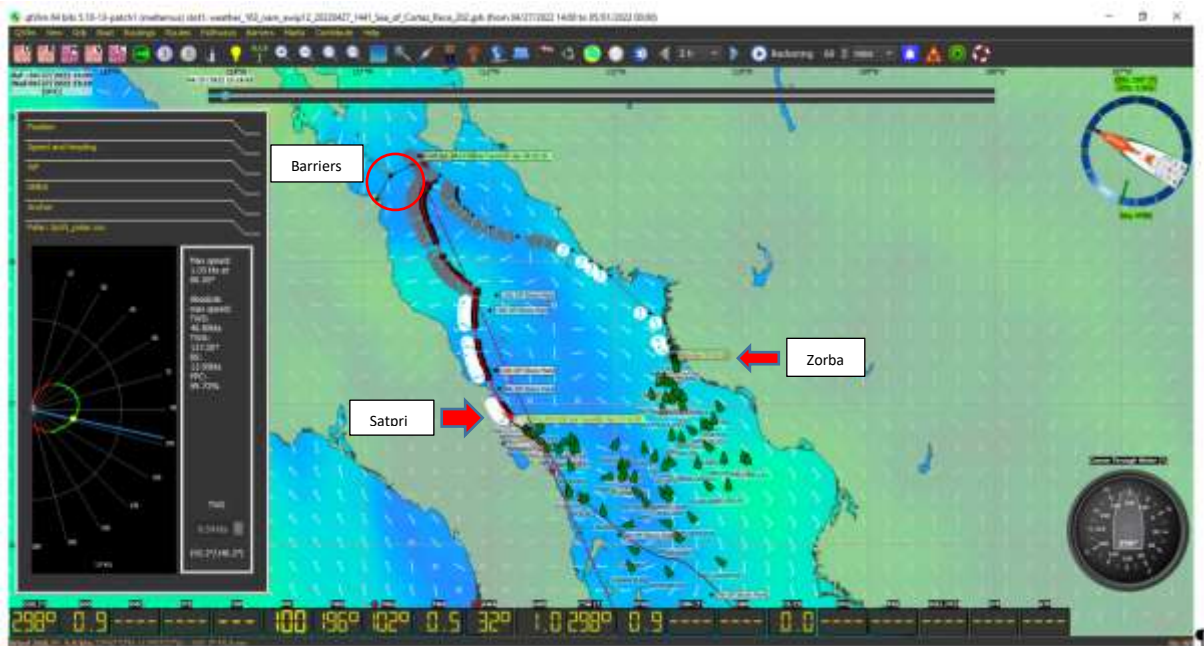
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The trick of using Barriers, if not known to you, would have made it worthwhile to read this Report!!

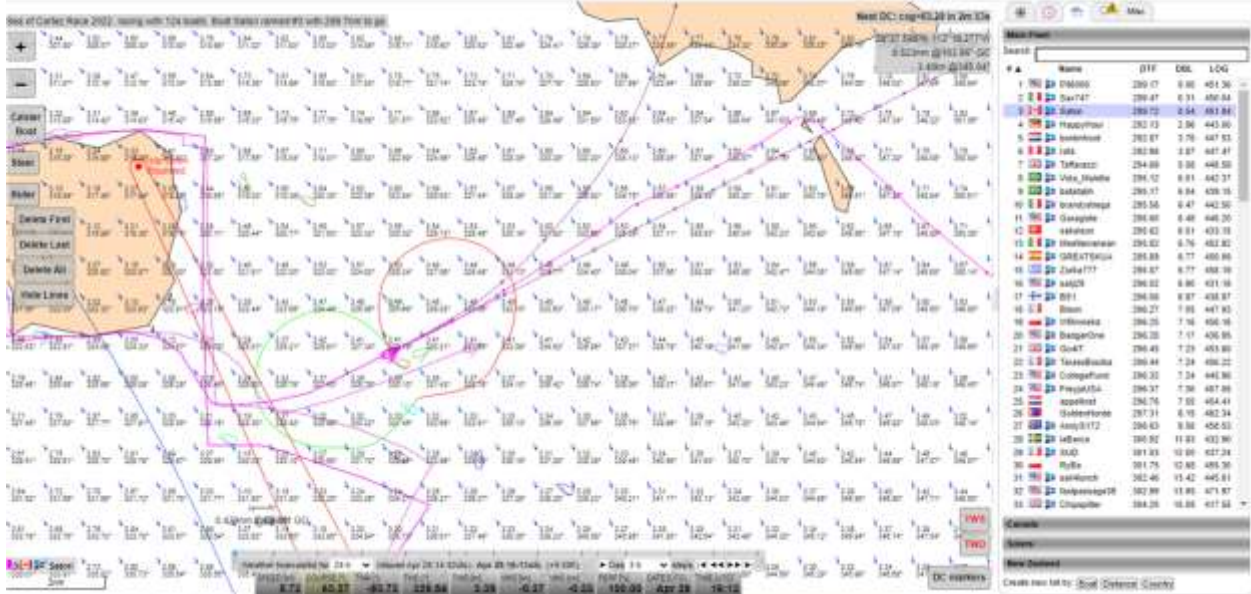
I missed 2 WX's in this race by an hour or so each time, a first for me. One I set the alarm to pm inside of am and the second I set it for the NOAA WX time to which I am conditioned!

This, as is my usual, is getting long so I will show how the fleet is spread out west to east and skip to rounding Isla Turon. The blue goo is going to get in the way. You can see the routes of both **Satori** and **Zorba**. The Server has **Satori** in 4th place and **Zorba** in 1st place, based on DTF, but I have him arriving at Isla Turon 1 hr 13 mins behind **Satori**. Note **Satori's** BS is 0.9 knts in TWS of 0.5 knts...ugh!!

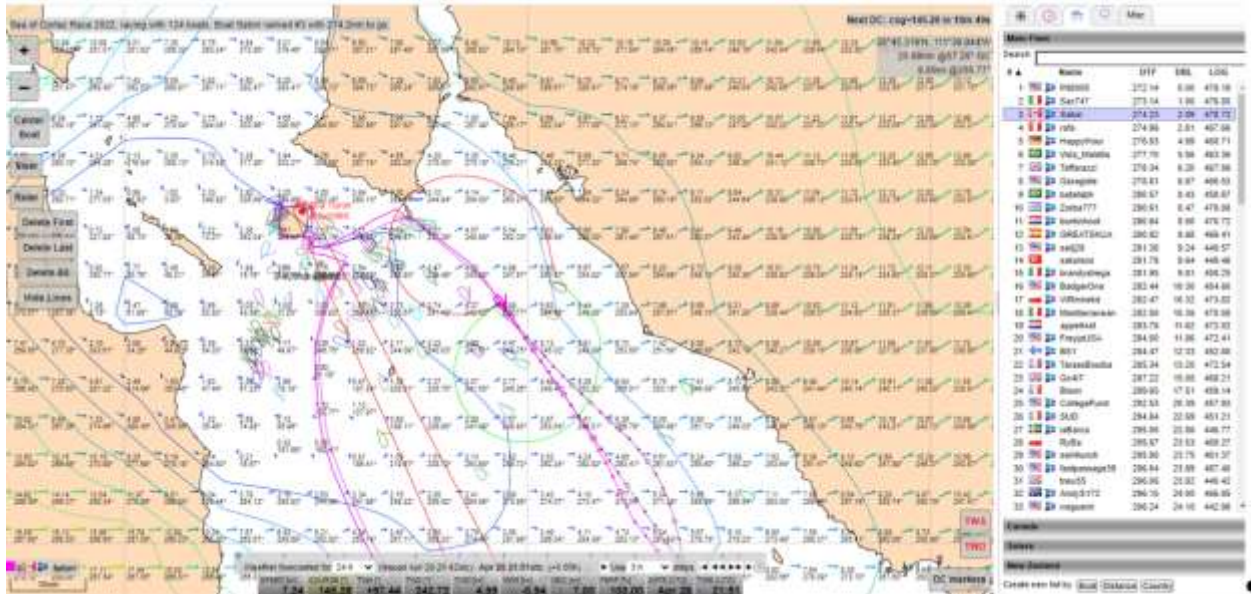


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Here is **Satori** in 3rd place with **Pit** and **Sax** heading rather dramatically ENE. You can see the hesitation in their rounding gybe each waiting to see what the other was going to do. **Satori** was staying to windward and thinking well we are in this together! **Zorba** in the Chat Room was saying what on earth are they doing? I said we saw another island to round while we are up here! At this point **rafa** was the lead boat in the west heading south from Isla Turon. I got some confidence back when I tested his ETA at the Finish to be 49 mins behind **Satori**. [**rafa** actually finished 1h 48m 8s behind **Satori** in 6th place.]

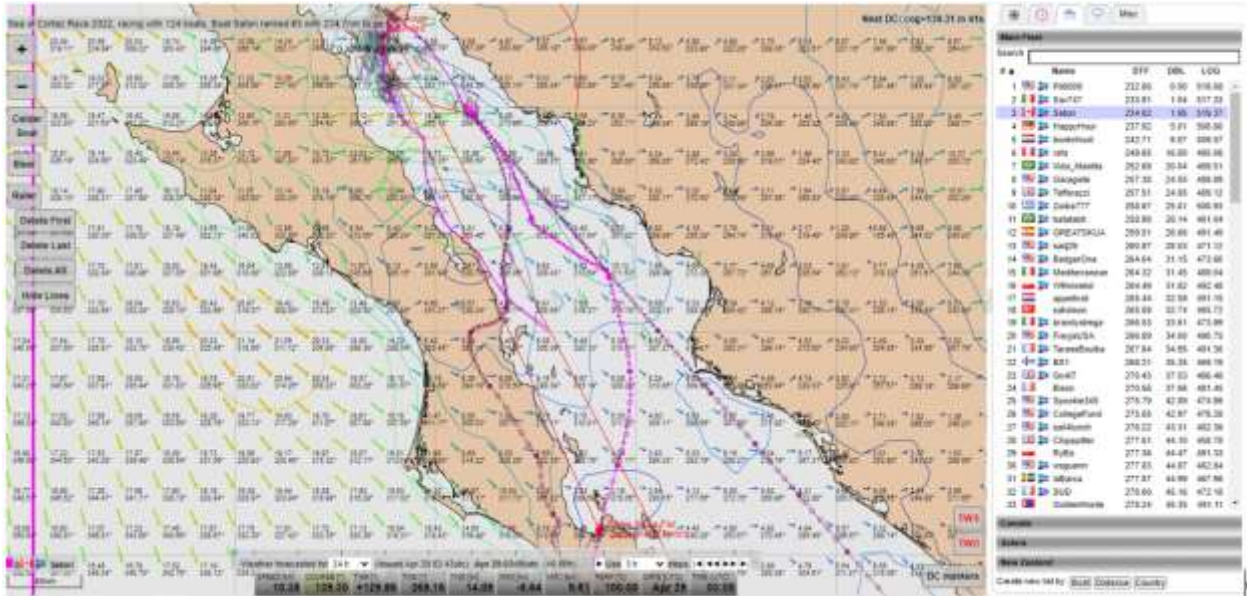


Here we are Apr 28th 21:51 UTC 478 nms into the race. **Pit** 1st 1 nm ahead of **Sax** in 2nd and 2 nm ahead of **Satori**. The way it basically stayed to the Finish. Only **HappyHour** 5th and **bonknhoot** 11th are behind us in the east. **rafa** is 4th and the lead boat in the west and I have him finishing 1h and 40 mins after **Satori**, only 8 mins different than the final result. How accurate is that 1d 12h before the finish!

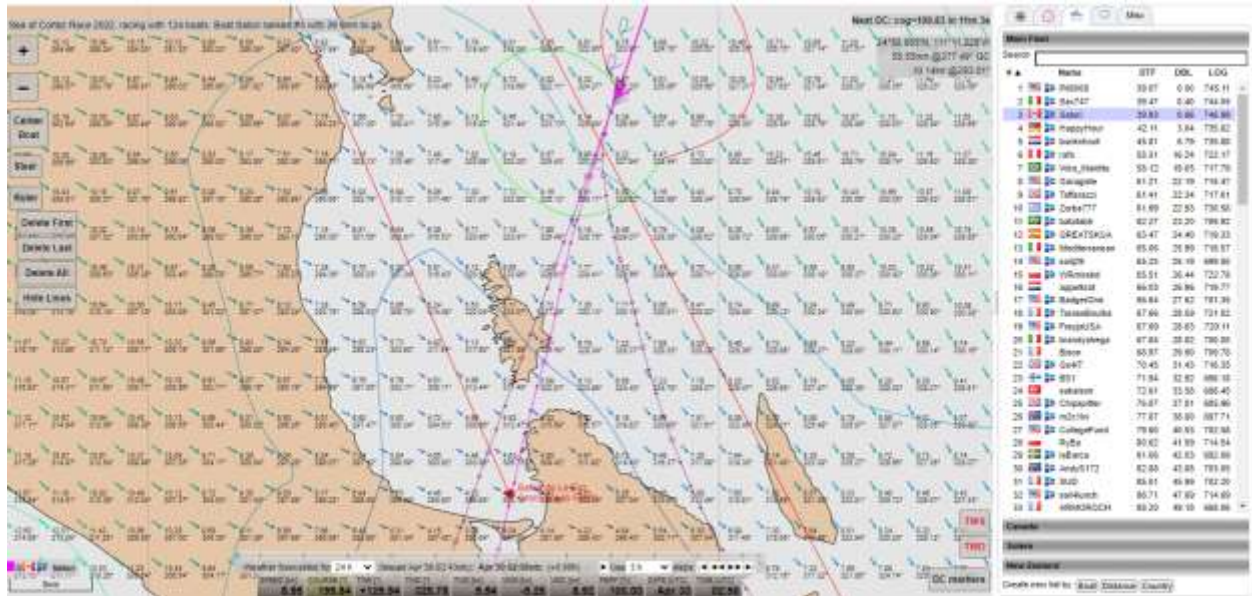


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Here we are Apr 28th 03:05 UTC with 2 days and 4 hrs and 234 nms to go and the first eleven boats finish in the order they are now in according to the Server, based on DTF. So there is not much more to say. You can see **Satori's** magenta route. **Pit, Sax** and **Satori** jostled a bit but there was no change that was not covered by the boat ahead.



You could always wickedly hope for a BBQ or a missed Finish Line but that is not to be with these excellent sailors that **Pit** and **Sax** are. An honour to be on the Podium with them.



A challenging race by **Zorba** well sailed by many when you see the closeness of the boats that were rivalling one another on the west side of the course once separated from the first five boats.

Thanks to you all for your companionship on the SOL race course,
John/Satori