

IRL Tour Up North, Silverrudder 2022 and Tour Down Under 2022 three in one by bonknhoot

With my IRL yacht Damacle lifted out for the winter, I decided it was time for what may become my annual Tour Up North, a solo trip to visit my intra-day energy trading son and family in Jutland, the chalet in Wallis to assure its readiness for winter and on this occasion to be in attendance for its obligatory 20-year electrical circuitry health-check, and my marine inspector son and family in Zuid Holland and his adorable but rather inactive youngest brother also in Zuid Holland.

Leaving Susan behind with the dogs and the horses, suddenly therefore, I found myself with more time on my hands for Sailonline, and appropriately enough the first available race on the 'ever-evolving' calendar was the Silverrudder around Funen (or Fyn as the Danes write it, pronouncing it Fûn). Appropriately enough, because only days before I had driven across the selfsame island to Copenhagen (or København as the Danes write it, pronouncing it Kobemhauwn) and on to Malmo where André was competing in the Swedish Kitefoiling Nationals.

Kitefoiling Nationals sounds like a big deal, but kitefoiling is tricky and new and the fact that it has almost immediately been elevated to being an Olympic event has made it elitist from the get-go. Ten foilers turned up, of which three including André, who train together, from Denmark, and said threesome duly finished James 1 - Frederik 2 - André 3, or by age, James 54 - Frederik 29 - André 41, I believe.

Thus encouraged by my relatively young descendant's relative success, I set off from Svendborg the next day virtually, with every intention of finally winning this Classic of the Baltic that Sailonline are so privileged to be able to include in their calendar every year thanks to the past sterling work of SOLer Bimmer, RIP.

But it was not to be, since after a good start out through the gap between Thuro and Tasinge, out on open water, Pit8008 took the lead by sailing a better curve than bonk to the Storebælt Bridge, never to be bested thereafter. Happy enough, after a summer of Sailonline abs(tin)ence, to add another P2 to my previous 2 P2's when I raced this event, I neglected to be forewarned – Pit8008 is on fire.

Next up then, as I continued on my TUN, was the TDU (Tour Down Under). Last time I'd raced it in 2019 I'd won it, so, combined with the good showing in the Silverrudder, my hubrometer (measures degrees of hubrus) was high, and immediately went up another notch when out of the blocks only WRmirekd and bonkhoot bothered to take a short hitch south to get further inside the port tack lift to the turn south at Point Sir Isaac (N Sand Dunes).

At the turn, WRmirekd was ahead by less than a server hop. Mirek had tacked back onto the layline earlier; grr.. I remarked in Chat. But as the wind freed and died as we headed south, it was bonk's turn to be smart. A polar peculiarity to point my Tri 60 dead downwind for max VMG proffered itself, which I took for maybe 10 minutes, and so at the next turn at Point Whidbey (S Sand Dunes), it was bonk's turn to lead by a server hop. grr.. remarked Mirek in Chat.

I rarely route in QtVlm with 'Avoid coasts' checked on, preferring to use as few barriers as possible to keep the generated routing off the rocks. Unfortunately this time, this practice generated a routing from Point Whidbey to Wedge Island E straight through Perforated Island

(there should have been a hole in it really to let a boat through); this to hold better breeze further out to sea. Although I spotted it in time, my adjustment left most of that westing stand resulting in a very concave-y arc to the eastern tip of the island. Just looking at it afterwards it had to be too much extra distance sailed and slow – and it was, and Mirek went back into the lead, now by night on a minute.

A minute lost of course was also more than enough to put bonk under threat of the peloton (forgive, it is the Tour Down Under after all). Mirek pointed to Sax747 right behind him, and I to rafa slightly further inshore, but to our everlasting chagrin, not to Pit8008 who was also lurking, nor indeed to FreyjaUSA, who, in the end together turned out to be our greatest rivals for the podium.

Rounding Wedge Island for the run up to the mark at the top of Spencer Gulf, WRmirekd had a comfortable (if you can call it that) lead and perhaps (but I'm not sure) I had just managed to hold onto 2nd. It was going to be an interesting leg, and not only because we were all close in a bunch, but also and more so because of two further peculiarities of the Tri 60's polar.

Firstly, although at $TWS < 3kt$, TWA 180 is your fastest downwind angle, as TWS increases, boatspeed at TWA 180 increases only very little, so that from $TWS < 10kt$, gybing onto 180 before rounding up onto your optimum angle becomes advantageous. The resultant Performance Loss thus never needs to go much above 5% even if you're barreling along at 20kt, which in turn means you can gybe more often than you'd think to stay in a line of wind or on the inside of a bend. AGL will tell you when to switch to 'square' gybes, but how frequently you should remains a matter of judgment.

Secondly, just like at $TWS < 3kt$, optimum angle jumps from TWA 122 to TWA 180, so at $TWS > 16kt$, optimum angle jumps from TWA 142 to TWA 155 (in round numbers).

It was this second peculiarity, well-spotted by Qt as an opportunity to soak down a line of max TWS at 137.5E, that pulled bonknhoot ahead of WRmirekd again. But the fatefully overlooked Pit8008 spotted it too, and must have got some other gybes right as well, since he rounded first closely followed by bonk.

With a polar shaped more like a gambling die than a billiard ball at medium TWS, the Tri 60 thunders along upwind free-and-fast at deep angles, and thus performance loss minimalization again comes into play early doors. Trouble is to tack you first need to go head to wind to then complete the tack, which means that when you're DC-checking you need to look very carefully that you move off again 11 seconds after stopping for that brief TWA 0 moment of respite for the crew. I didn't and by the time I noticed I was in irons offshore Franklin Harbour (named after Lincolnshire-not-South-Australia Spilsby-born Sir John Franklin, governor of Van Diemen's Land and searcher for the North West Passage, I suppose), two minutes had gone up in smoke.

We already have the BBQ, a more frequent way of staying too long on TWA 0. Perhaps this more unusual one could be called DOB – Dummy Over Board.

I made up some ground on WRmirekd and FreyjaUSA as we scraped our keels over the rocks off Wedge Island, the Yorke Peninsula, and Troubridge Island, but Pit8008 was well away, and little changed up and down Adelaide's St Vincent Gulf, the home waters of the late-but great SOLer AGage, designer of this course, amongst many other things.

As we eased sheets after clearing Cape Gantheaume midway down the south coast of Kangaroo Island, it was back to neck 'n neck for P2. Being home alone, I had been going to bed

with laptop and multiple alarms (clock, phone, laptop) and so after a 1 hour catnap, I was back at the helm ready to override my safe DCs for another sharp rounding, now of Cape Du Couedic, the south west corner of Kangaroo. Shouldn't have done that – a BBQ was the result, worth another 2 minutes at the slow recovery rates associated with 20kt speeds through the water.

But when it's four in the morning in Europe, it's around midnight in the States and then the small hours of the morning follow there. With open water all the way to the last turn before the finish at Spilsby Island, our two American friends must have decided to get some shut-eye. Unfortunately for them, TWS for a while went above 16kt again and they missed the opportunity for max VMGs at deep TWAs.

It nearly cost Pit8008 the win, and gifted me P3. What a race!

bonknhoot / September 2022