

Cape2Rio 2023 - Report by Patrick70119

When I was 7 years old I was introduced to the beautiful sport of sailing and therefore being a South African sailor almost my entire life some races tend to stand out more than others, particularly races that involve South Africa.

The Cape2Rio is definitely one of these races as it is hosted by a South African yacht club and most of the competitors are generally South African as well!

When I saw that Sailonline was hosting the virtual race I was beyond excited and knew that I had to take part. There was, however, one obstacle that I had to face, and that was the fact that I would be on vacation in Canada for the entire race and not in South Africa. I definitely wasn't going to let that stop me though.

When the race first started from Cape Town, I found it particularly difficult with the time zone differences, instead of being 2 hours ahead of the UTC (Coordinated Universal Time) time zone I was now 5 hours behind it which meant that I battled a lot when it came to figuring out what time the WX updates would be, I did manage to overcome this pretty quickly, but it did seem to cost me some time and a few positions to the rest of the fleet.

The first couple of days seemed quite uneventful as the initial route out of Cape Town was quite straightforward. When it came to the 3rd day however, things started getting very interesting as the fleet started to spread out quite a bit, and this was when it was time to decide whether to go north or south as there was a significant split between the two sides of the race course.

After a lot of working out and trying to decide which way to go, I decided to take the northern route as the weather pressure and direction looked to be better than that of the southern route.

As time progressed and we made our way closer to Rio I was sitting in a top 10 position and knew that if I wanted to better my position I would have to do something different to the rest of the fleet, so I decided to start making my way further south of the rest of the fleet which would, in turn, give me a better angle towards the finish line when coming into Rio.

In the last 24 hours of the race, it was extremely close between the entire fleet and I was sitting in 3rd position which I knew was in my grasp, and my goal was to hold my position for the remainder of the race.

With some extremely close racing against **FreyjaUSA** to the finish in Rio, I managed to cross the finish line in 3rd position, taking the bronze.

I was extremely happy with my position and performance as due to the time difference I skipped every single 10:30 wx throughout the race and I was also doing a lot of sightseeing around Canada which meant that I had minimal time behind the laptop screen.

It is also an amazing feeling to have the honour of being on the podium in a race hosted by my country, which doesn't happen all the time.

I would like to say a massive thank you to all of my South African SOLers for the amazing conversations on our WhatsApp group throughout the race, to the Sailonline volunteers for all your amazing work, it truly is such an honour to work beside all of you and to the entire community of Sailonline, it definitely wouldn't be the same without all of you.

Sail safe and fair winds.

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