

Football is a simple game, and a simple man like Jimmy Greaves, Tottenham Hotspurs' greatest centre forward until the arrival of the more complex Hurry Kane, captured it simplicity for posterity most simply in that memorable aphorism: "Football is a Game of Two Halves", and so was this year's Sillonline race from Melbourne to Kong Hong (or Kingdom Hong, as captured by the IYRU international sail letters 'KH' in years gone by).

Two halves, distinctly separate in nature, except that both halves took forever – up and up and upwind for more than a week well out to sea along the Australian coast to a turn east at the Solomon Islands, and a never ending reach though patchy moderate winds for more than another week to the finish.

Upwind the leaders stayed close together, but, if my memory serves me well, I think at the Solomons, bonknhoot had gained the slenderest of leads on SCARABOCCHIO and Mullionman, which proved to be an entirely trivial achievement as what next followed was epically disastrous. Of course, like any good sailor, I can offer you a litany of excuses, but the simple fact of the matter is sailed bonk mostly there where there was subtly less wind, so upwind of the SCARA and the Mull hunting for patches of puff closer in to the Indonesian archipelago, but downwind of Rico and his friends sailing the longer distance but in steadier stronger trade winds further north of the rhumb line. And I kept it up, day in, day out.

Afterwards, I wistfully wondered what if the race hadn't simply been a "Football Game of Two Halves". What if it had been a cerebrally more challenging multiverse of many games of many different halves, which as Stephen Hawking quipped: "would cause real problems if you forgot where you parked your car". I surely would have done better, as surely none of those other 'verses' across and through such diverse waters as the Great Australian Bight, the Torres Straits, the South China Sea, the Java, Banda, Sulu and Celebes Seas, would have got my competitors quicker to KH.

Oh well!

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