

## Corsica PYOC Sprint 2023

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When I first saw this race I put a note on my calendar, it was set exactly where I had 90% of my competitive sailing career.

Twenty years ago I was a tactician on a J24 and now I was getting the chance to virtually be at the helm of an AC72! Too tempting to miss, and we were going to get another bonus. Super accurate WRF weather gribbs, with razor-sharp fronts, were going to be very interesting to play with the tricky polar of the AC72.

The choice of the course was almost straightforward as the western route could be completed with only one gybe. So, I decided (probably the only one of the fleet) to start on the less favorable spot of the polar (95°TWA) for about 2 minutes prior to hopping on the 120° spot and getting a 10kts boost.

In ten minutes, we were past Capraia and, again, I was the first to ease a few degrees downwind as I wanted the East side of the fleet in preparation for the gybe. One long (short) starboard leg with the wind dropping steadily and a gybe in less than 6kts of breeze that was not punishing in terms of performance loss. Mirek was by my side but westward. I had positioned exactly where I wanted to be, gybed where I wanted to gybe, and headed toward the finish line with a “comfortable” lead.

The wx update changed basically nothing so I was able to maintain my 46 second lead, which is quite a solid distance at 25kts and after only 2.5 hours of race.

As I wrote, this is my playground, and it would have been very difficult to accept any other SOLer take this race.

ita10267 - April 2023