RACE REPORT BY WINSTON_4 STRUTTON TO CAPE HOPE PYOC SPRINT 2023 AND SPRQ3 – THIRD QUARTER SPRINT CHAMPIONSHIP 2023

Veteran SOLers have seen WINSTON_4 (aka WIN) sailing on all SOL waters for over a decade. They know that WIN has taken any possible available satisfaction throughout the years, winning Championships like Supersoler, Sprint (twice) SYC and Ocean. At a point, a few years ago, WIN decided that sleeping at night had become a more important priority, and announced retirement from agonistic SOL competition.

So: what happened ...or better ...what drove me to engage in the July 2023 Sprint race?

FUN ONLY FUN!!

No instruments !!when someone of my Italian SOL friends talks to me about QT , I really do not understand a wordWhen someone talks about some of the beautiful software tools that good community members have put at everybody's disposal ...well , I am not part of the conversation ...I just do not know what they are talking aboutTo this extent I abandoned the agonistic SOL arena , even cancelling from my PC the fantastic and almost unbeatable router that Admiral Andrea (aka ita10267) had made available to me during those years.

FUN ...because shortFUN because quickFUN because windyand because not interfering too much with sleep......

Problem isthat, although I made some fantastic mistakes, like navigating for a longtime in VMC rather than VMG, I ended up 8th.... that I consider an excellent result if the only tool is the hand on the till and the mental fishing from the vast IRL experience that I have not forgotten about.

Result: 6th !!!!incredible.....

The problem (rather curious situation) at this point was.....that, with only FreyjaUSA in front, who had a couple of good results, better than mine, WIN was on second step of provisional ranking of the quarterly championship JUST because consistent resultsSO....... CANNOT AVOID TO RUN THE THIRD AND LAST ONE!!!!!!and this was not for FUN ...it was for honoring my boat and the opponents, plus my good self...... (my three honors that always meant sportsmanship to me IRL: your own nameyour opponents and your boat)

Made a list of "usual suspects" to watch (as my friend Simo (smo) used to say when speaking about WIN) ...This time the usual suspects were Freyja and those who have the strange habit to win all available SOL races......and decided what the goal was: "do well enough in order to protect a podium position at the end of the quarterly championship if at all possible"so ...concentration and KABOOOOOM !!!!!

10 seconds later....... I have immediately seen what I could not believe: Freyja had chosen a direction after start that was wrong to say the leastnot because I say so ...but because all the other sharks were going alongside WIN to seek the tiny channel between the two islands after the start.

At this early stage I did not have a clue about how much the error could cost and jeopardize the championship for Freyja, but as soon as I had a moment, I went to the rankings to assess the possible scenarios and found that they were:

WIN finishes ahead of Freyja by less than 9 spots = Freyja takes the championship

WIN finishes ahead of Freyja by 9 spots = Frejya takes the championship at tie break because best score

WIN finishes ahead of Freyja by 10 or more spots = WIN takes the championships and possibly faints in front of the puter thereafter in the middle of the night !! ;)))))))))))))))

This was also a HIGHLY technical race, with double VMC legs one behind the other because strong shifts in light winds round polarSO.... simply NEED to be perfect at the till (and blind as a bat as to instruments !!!!!!)

It was soon clear that the error would have affected Frejya quite significantly, although the SOLer is an excellent one and could come back and close the gap quite easily before the finish

WIN was fighting in the front pack, still making some minor mistakes specially during the final run, and Freyja was JUST 10 spots behind (just...enough !!!)when I checked this for the 1000th time the race was almost over , and I started to BELIEVE to the fairy taleto the extent that I spoke at this time (04 am local) to the one who was my company during the entire race ...WINSTON_5 ...laying relaxed in his fully black fur and yellow eyes , watching me all the time(2 years old and 8 kilos of fully black cat)and I told him : " my friend ...you , me and your earlier bro are going to do an unbelievable miracle tonight!He did not get excited maybe he knew something I did not know

PRECISELY a minute after WIN arrival (6th), when Frejya was definitely 16than old friend of mine, rafa, with whom there is a looooong and never-ending story of respect and friendship between the two boats and skippersjust missed the finish line in his 7th position and gave Frejya a magnificent gift of a quarterly championship at tie break

Talking now to YOURafaold friendno one else would have been allowed anything like that with only a smile on my side as resultI still have huge respect for you and consider you as one of my most important friends at SOL No worries ...you only owe me a Dinner !!!!!

Besides, as I wrote in chat, Freyja fully deserved victory because his overall performance during the three events. Sport is often matter of luck and bad luck and sailing more then other sports is solid confirmation of thatwhen justice wins over luck ...the true sportsman is happyand I am

I Shut the puter at 04.30 am ...and went with WINSTON_5 towards the night quarters noticed that he wanted to say something soI closed up my eyes on his yellow ones and he said

And FOR YOUR EYES ONLY (NO permission to post in social media)

WINSTON_5 salutes you all from his majestic approach to true life.......



Ciao ALLhope you enjoyed

Piero (aka WIN)