

Race Report

Kamchatsky to Tromsoe

July 18th

Even the route conjures up images of Russian composers; a masterpiece by Rimsky-Korsakov perhaps!

This was however 4259Nm across Russia and Norway and no Flight of the Bumble Bee that was for sure.

The start saw some of the usual suspects jockeying for early places. CriticalHippo was off on one of his unusual angles; south south east while most headed east by north east trying to escape light winds but at least heading in the right direction 😊

The early leaders were Garagiste, QMaxx, HappyHour, wsguerin, Go4iT and myself. Apologies if I have forgotten some skippers as two new races are in progress and my memory fades! We swapped places heading up the Bering Sea, looking forward to sea ice once we cleared Cape Dezhnev. Mostly I set Wrangel Island as my target until well into the Arctic Sea.

CriticalHippo was joined by a few others lured by stronger winds but were about 30 miles behind as we left the Bering Sea.

Passing Wrangel Island was uneventful with QMaxx proving hard to catch. I saw wsguerin obviously ignoring QT as he weaved from high to low to get around but without much impact. Unfortunately, Garagiste had a BBQ just before the Cape and lost valuable time.

As we passed Wrangel Island the wheels fell of the server; the leaders plunged from 1-5 to 83rd onwards. Apparently, something to do with the international date line but it was quite disconcerting as it was hard to compare performances.

But on we pushed towards Sannikova Straight in a tight formation. As we cleared the straight after some days, CriticalHippo made another bold play, heading north while the leaders kept pushing on to Cape Chelyuskin. A day or so out from the Cape, Go4iT decided to abandon our chase and also pushed directly North.

His move was brilliant as it put him quite some distance ahead of CriticalHippo and his group at the top of the world. They all bounced along the race boundary making great progress on the leaders.

As we cleared Cape Chelyuskin, we were on the downhill run to Tromsoe; or so we thought. The “bouncers” suddenly showed as leading which was rather an unpleasant way to start the day for those of us smugly expecting to sail on to Novaya Zemlya and only focused on beating QMaxx or HappyHour.

No one expects the Spanish Inquisition (for Monty Python fans) but we weren't expecting Go4iT to roll us from the top of the world!

After passing Novaya Zemlya, wsguerin dropped his QT DC's and focused on pulling out some superb maneuvers which gave him a lead of several miles, I slipped into 2nd place and HappyHour a close 3rd. QMaxx had some days earlier missed a WX and paid a big penalty falling

out of contention for line honors. Go4iT challenged all the way to the end and deserved his 4th place, finishing less than 1 hour behind HappyHour.

A difficult and slow race with boats that are not too spritely but wsguerin outsailed us all and deserved his win – biggely 😊

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