

Christmas(W) to Christmas(E) Island 2024

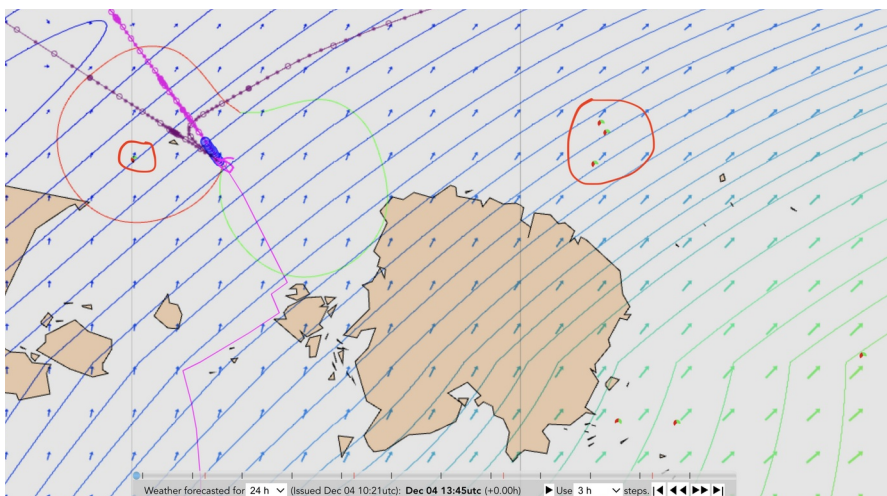
CriticalHippo

What a fun race! Four main groups of boats with tracks ranging as far north as Japan to south of New Zealand. This race was all about making a plan, sticking to it, and hoping for the best.

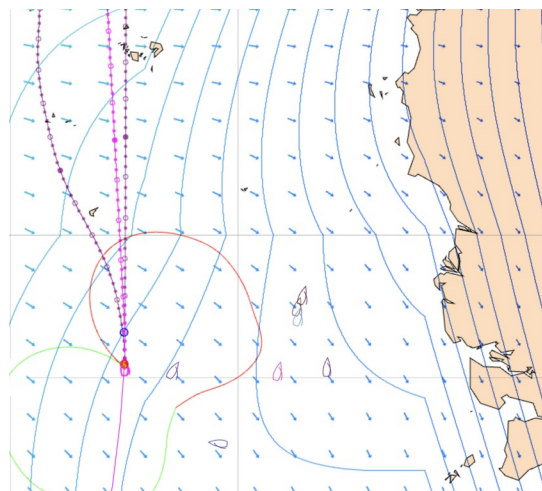
While studying routing prior to the race I liked 2 options: the far north route which I ended up sailing and a route that would go east after getting to the north side of Java. I like choosing routes that few others take, and I thought leaving Java to starboard would be an option few chose.

The race started at 4 AM local time, so I was starting on DC's based on the previous weather. After waking up a few hours into the race and updating my route I had a long day at work (perks of being a mail carrier in December) and when I got home I was almost head to wind and about an hour behind my fellow northerners. There were 8 of us – most notably ita10267, SCARABOCCHIO, RICOTINA, and FreyjaUSA – that headed north straightaway and a few others that followed later.

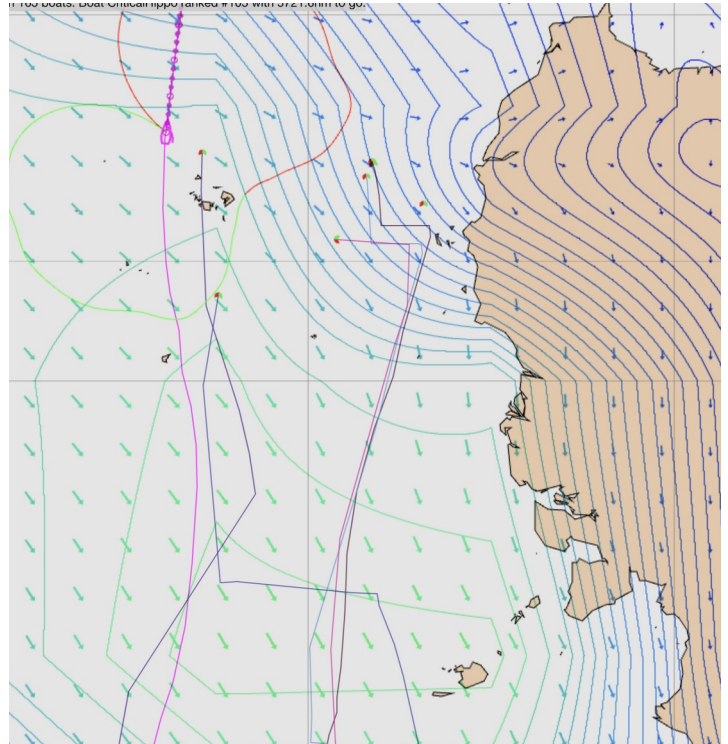
By the time I passed Java I was convinced of staying west of Borneo to take the far northern route. At this point Ita, Scara, and Freyja angled east while Rico and I, perhaps because we were a bit behind, headed due north to pass west of Belitung. In the image to the right Rico can be seen just west of me while the other three are over to the east.



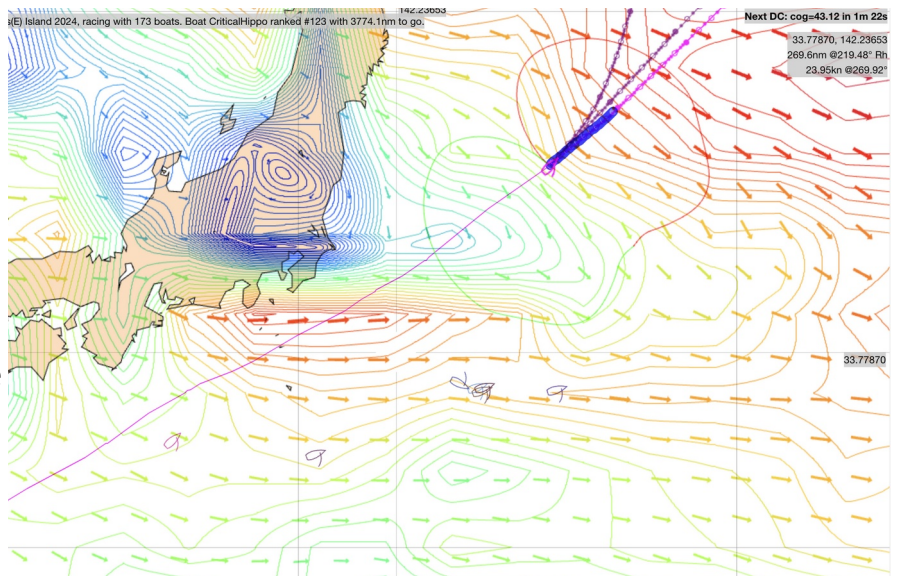
At this point Rico headed east to join the others hugging the coast of Borneo while I stayed the course due north.



But then a blue hole appeared in front of them! Rico angled back over towards me, now slightly behind, while the others were left floundering in light wind. They ended up having to come back west and lost about 8 hours in the process. Rico and I now had a commanding lead on the group.



We continued north by northeast towards Taiwan, and Rico made a move over towards Luzon while I went north of Taiwan. My choice was correct and by the time we were passing Japan I led Rico by several hours. At this point we were some 1300 nm behind the leader. I continued to head north while the others took a path due east. We rode several storm systems, sometimes doing close to 25 knots.



In this screenshot I'm nearing the north edge of my route, near 41 degrees north. The others are to the south with Rico in front.

