

Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

As you SOLers know we are again “buddying” with the Lake Ontario Offshore Racing in a SOL Lake Ontario Series of 2 races, the Susan Hood Trophy Race and the Lake Ontario 300. The Susan Hood is referred to as the “coolest race” on Lake Ontario given it is overnight on the still cold May waters of the lake. I know! I have capsized in those May waters in my dinghy racing days. You dinghy racers know! You stand in a cold shower to prepare yourself for the shock.

This year the LOOR Race Organisers changed the course so that it stayed in Canadian waters in order to eliminate any possible mid-lake US Border crossing issues in the current potentially uncertain environment at the Border. One extra mark was added to the essentially triangular course in order to maintain a course length of 71 nms. One added glitch was that the Race Committee could, at the warning signal, reverse the clock-wise Delta Course to a counter clock-wise Echo Course in order to provide the best wind conditions for the Race. As you SOLers know we sailed the Delta Course.

We again had great enthusiasm and participation on SOL with 83 boats from over 20 countries registered. 50 boats left the starting line again using the Polar of a Beneteau 36.7. The Directors of Lake Ontario Offshore Racing must continue to be pleased to be able to tell their Sponsors that their Race has such an international reputation.

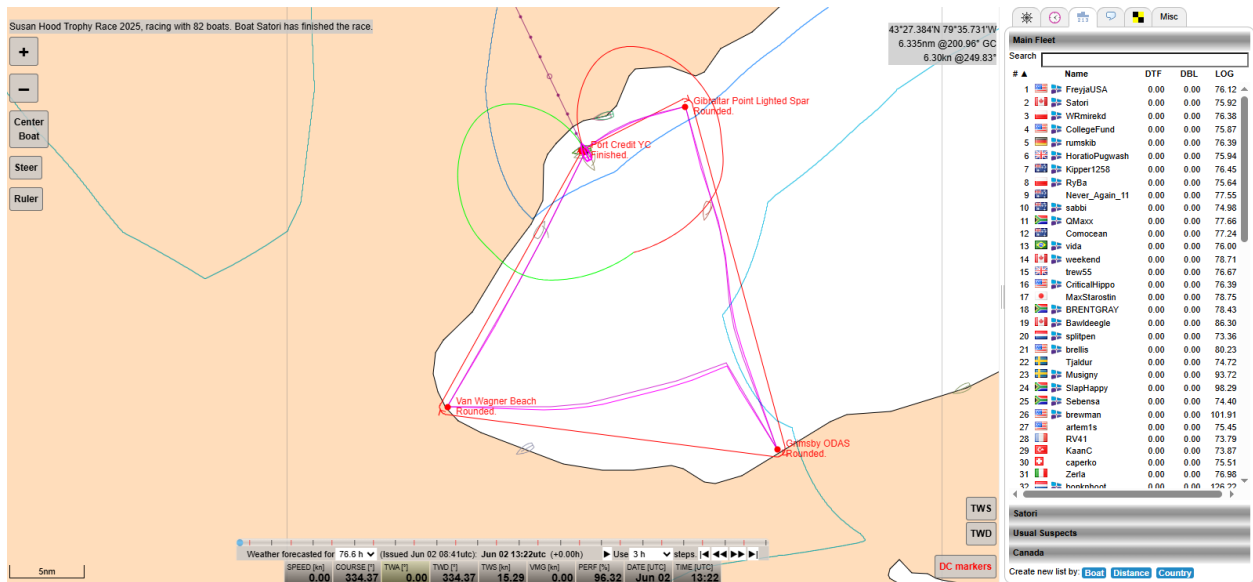
The on-the-water LOOR Race had 67 registered entries from 18 yacht clubs, including 7 sailing Beneteau 36.7's. **Tenacious** of the Etobicoke Yacht Club had the best time of the 36.7's and finished in 8h 35m 28s. This compares with our SOL winner, **FreyjaUSA**, who finished in 11h 23m 13s. Not nearly as close as in the past and I do not have an explanation for that.

Our SOL race was extremely close with the Top Ten boats finishing within 6 minutes and 18 seconds and included boats from the USA, Canada, Poland, Germany, England and Australia. **FreyjaUSA** beat **Satori** by just 1 second with **WRmirekd** 10 seconds behind **Satori**. Yes, as they say “Every second counts!” I was pleased with this Podium Finish given that I have been off the boat for over 5 months and it did take some pre-race planning to be potentially challenging. However, I should not have let **FreyjaUSA** stay ahead of **Satori** on the last leg to the STBD Finish at the Port Credit Yacht Club. I had been close to the helm for most of the race with only two one-hour naps. Wouldn't you know it! I fell asleep on the last leg and awoke to find **FreyjaUSA** ahead of **Satori**. What to do? **Satori's** course line was to the STBD Finish mark. I saw in extra zoom that I could get even closer to the STBD mark. That improved our boat speed slightly and enabled us to start to slowly overtake **FreyjaUSA**. I only needed a few more minutes to erase that one second lead but they were not there! However, there is no real basis for complaining when you are sharing the Podium with the likes of **FreyjaUSA**, No. 5 in the Rankings and **WRmirekd**, 1st in the Rankings, when **Satori** had slipped from 5th to 129th in the Rankings as a result of not being in the last 30 SOL races!! This finish will improve our Rankings!

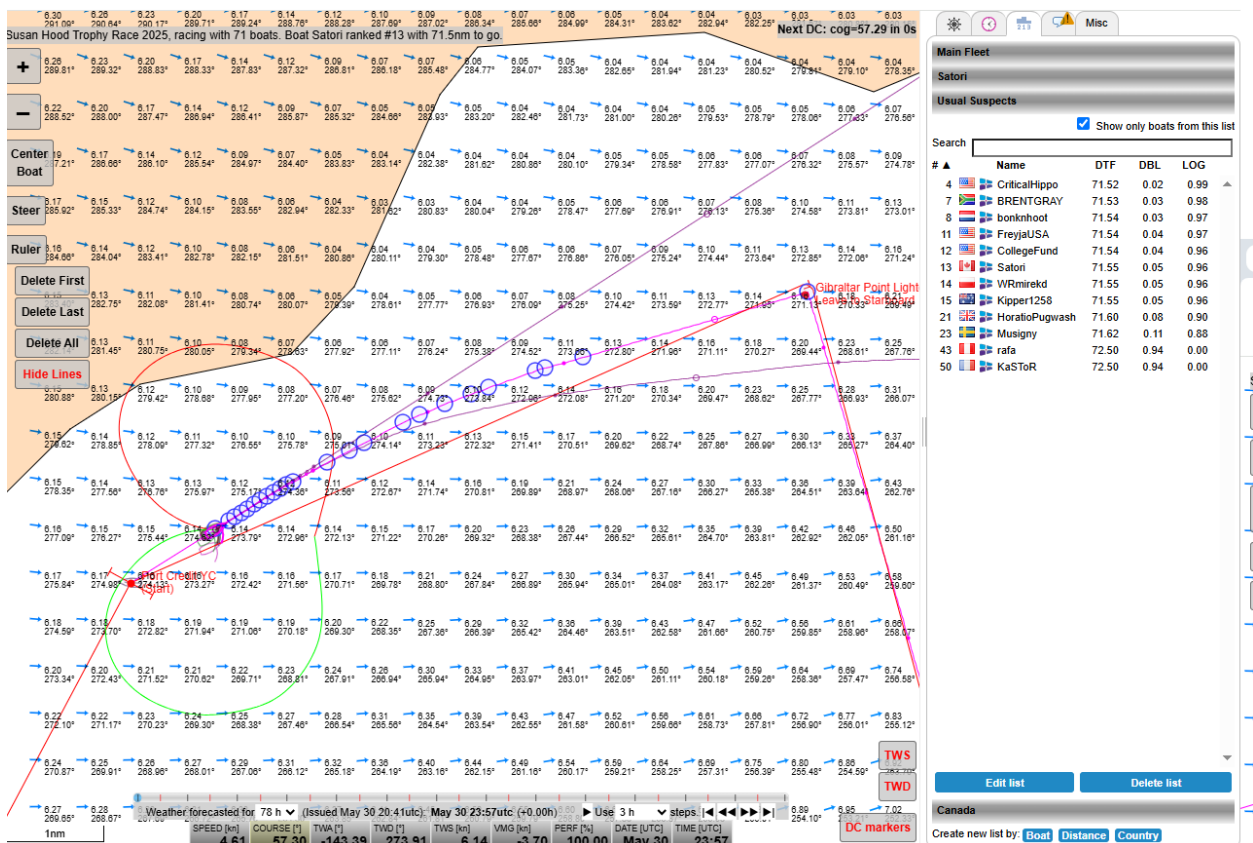
Should you be interested, a commentary on **Satori's** race follows. You may see your boat on the course! As usual I was using QTVlm and AGL but I am competitive enough to stay by the helm watching the competition and making adjustments. As I said, I only took the time for two one-hour naps and, of course, the unfortunate nod-off on the last leg. All-nighters are getting harder to do at 85 but I am still too competitive and foolish enough to give it a try!

Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

The following SOL screen print shows the courses of the winner **FreyjaUSA** and **Satori** as well as the Delta clock-wise course rhumbline. As you can see the courses are very similar. **Satori's** course is the slightly darker magenta course.

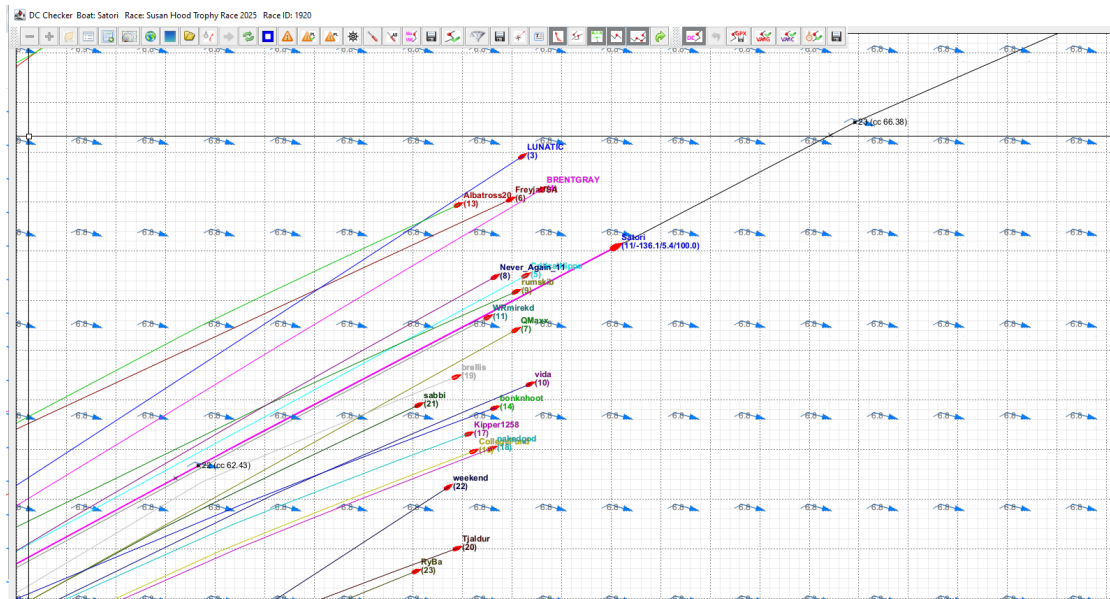


Here is **Satori's** course for the 1st Leg to Gibraltar Point. The blue circles are the delayed commands for course changes programmed into the autohelm. The butterfly is the Polar of the Beneteau 36.7. **Satori** is placed 13th because of her distance from the rhumbline based on Global Circle centred on the mark.

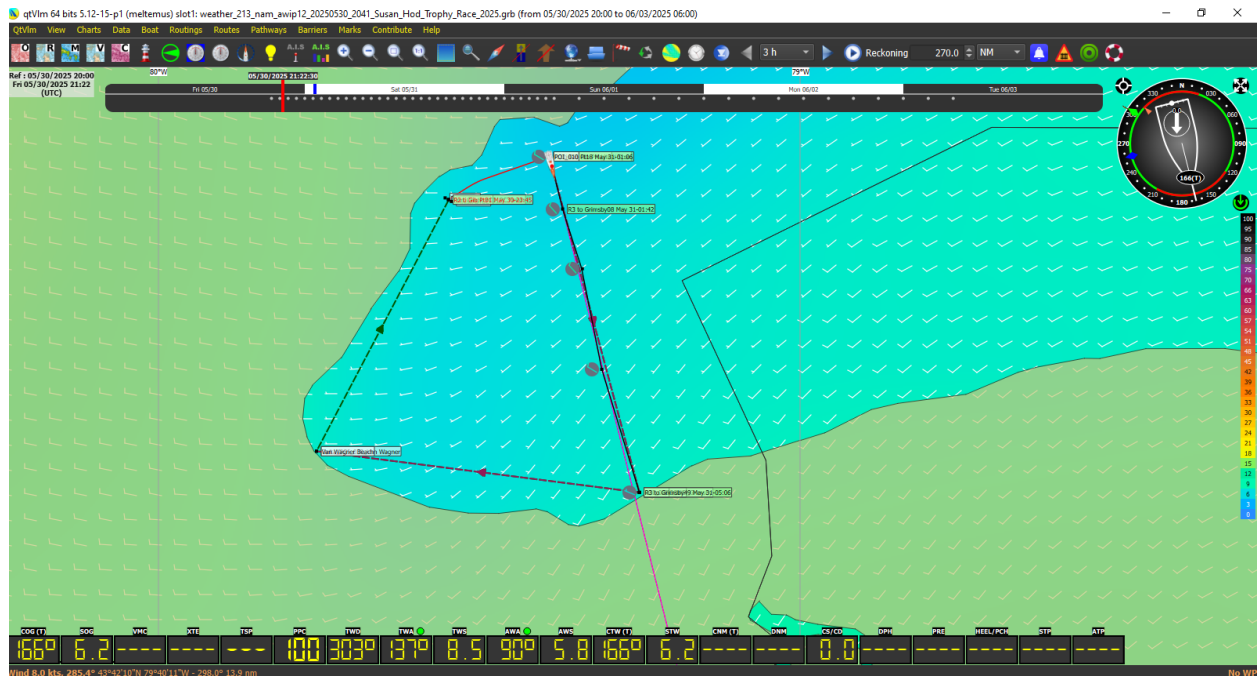


Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

38 minutes into the race here is a close-up of the spread of the fleet around **Satori's** course on the first Leg to Gibraltar Point. You can see that **FreyjaUSA** is just north of **Satori** and **WRmirekd** is on the same course line as **Satori** and just behind.

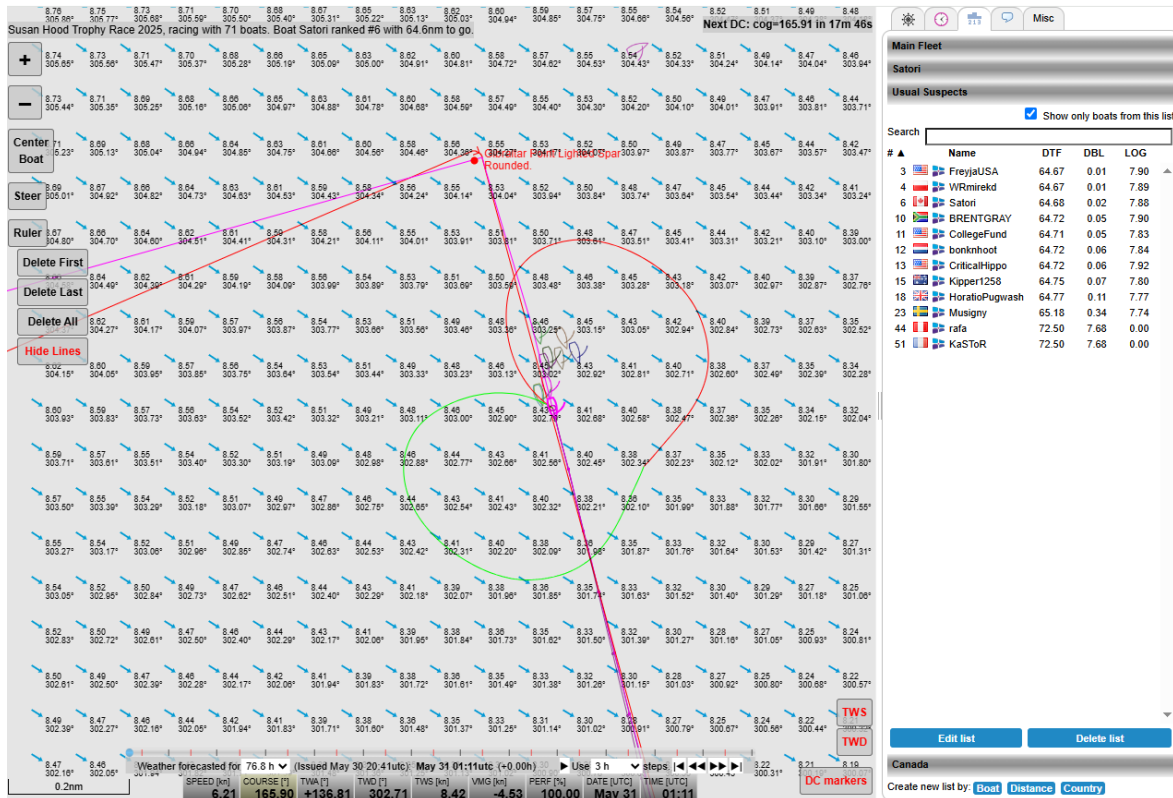


Here is the new Leg 2 routing for **Satori** to Grimsby after rounding Gibraltar Point. You can see how LOOR kept the race course to the west of the US Border line coming out of the Niagara River and going east down the middle of the Lake.

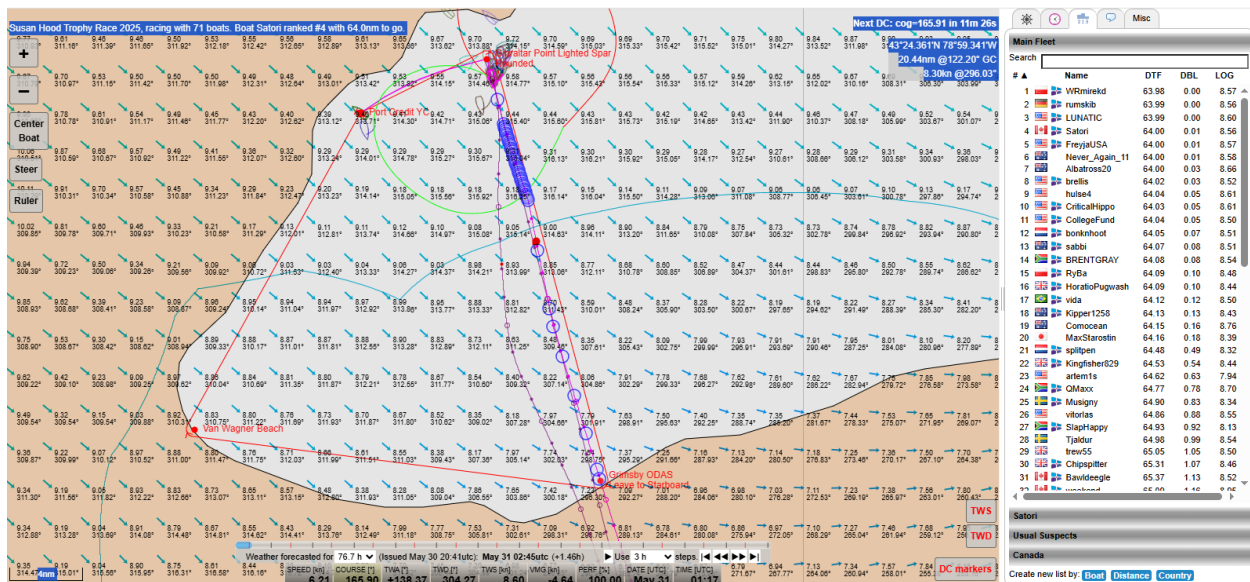


Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

Here are the high ranking “usual suspects” 84 minutes into the race on Leg 2 to Grimsby. Winds are steady but predicted to decrease a tenth of a knot. The next WX is before Grimsby. It is almost a rhumbline course. **Satori** is 0.02nms behind **FreyjaUSA** and **WRmirekd** who are neck and neck

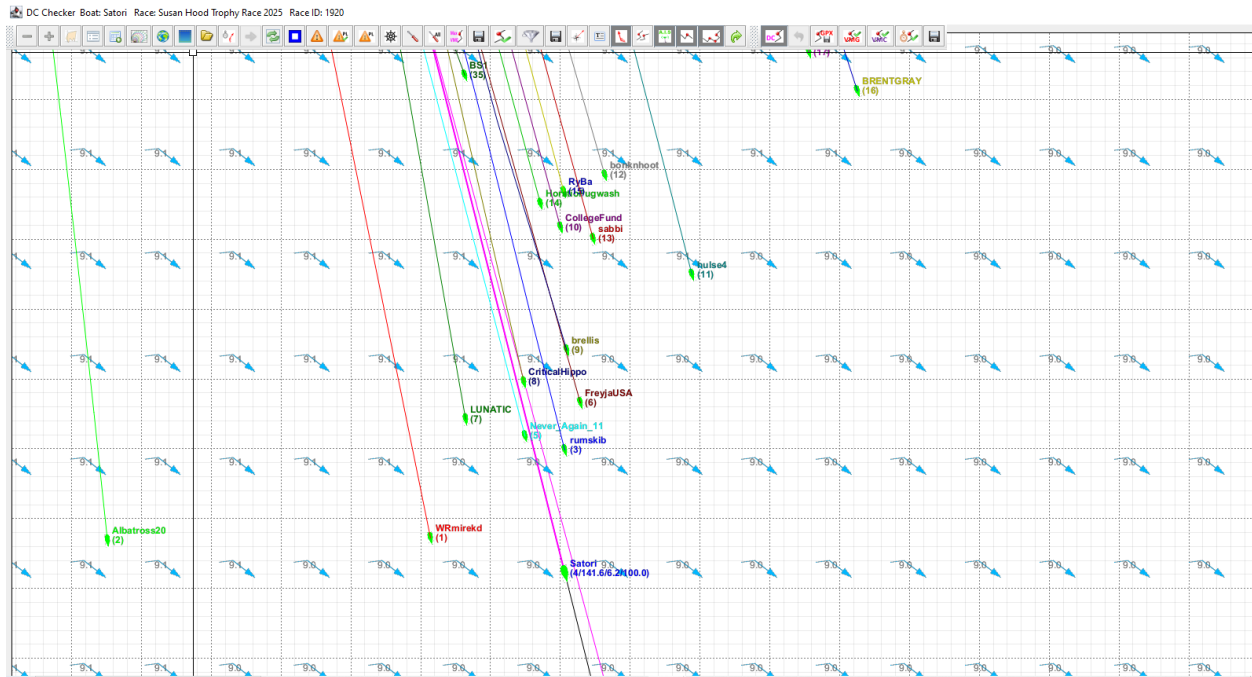


Here is the SOL screen 6 minutes later. The close string of Delayed Commands show that I am making minor course changes every minute that can make a big difference. The red dot is the next WX report at 02:45UTC and the winds shown are as predicted at that time with an expectation the WS will drop from 9:00 knots to 7.23 at Grimsby. The light grey line to the west is course Satori would sail if on TWA.

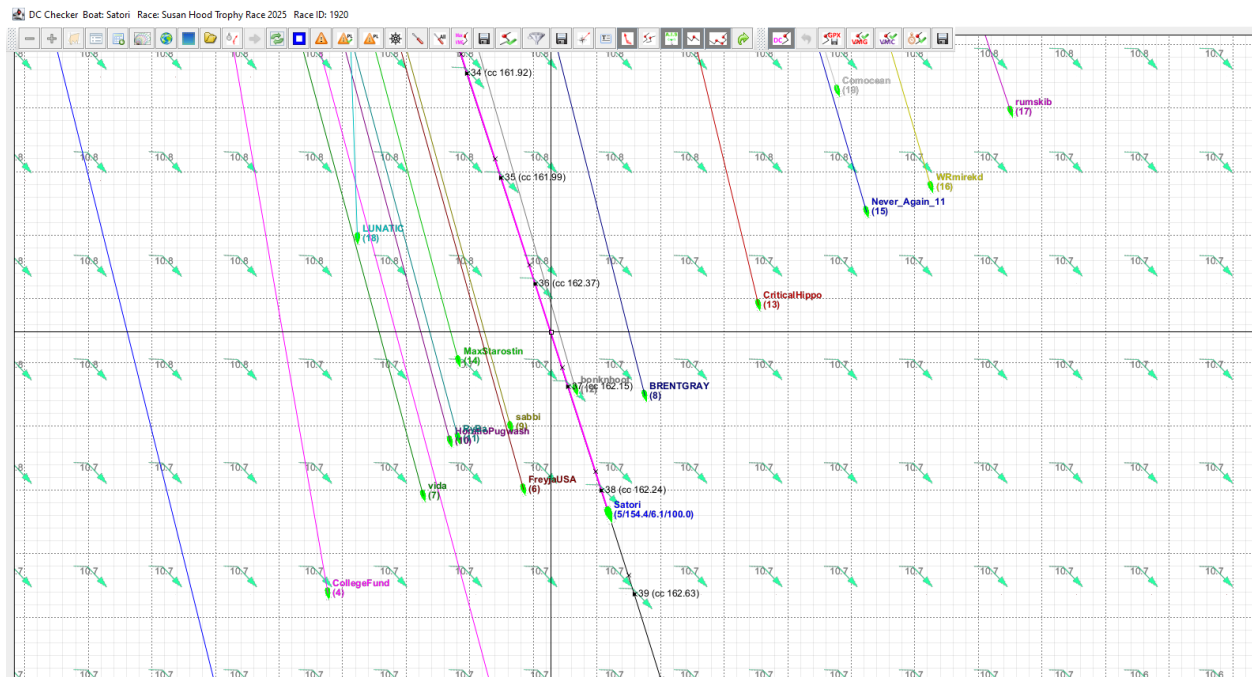


Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

Here is a close-up of the fleet in AGL. **WRmirekd** is placed 1st to the west in slightly higher winds and will get the advantage of the change in TWA wind angle shown in the previous screen. **rumskib**, **FreyjaUSA**, and **CriticalHippo** are to the east of **Satori** who is sailing 141.6° with a BS of 6.2knts.

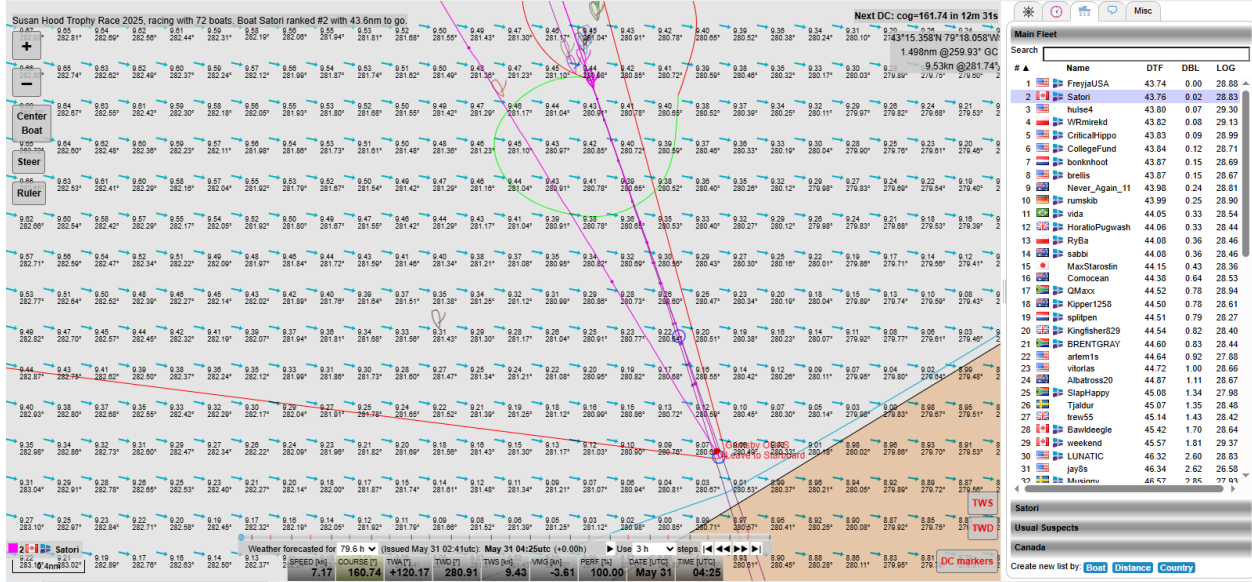


Further down the Leg **WRmirekd** and **rumskib** have moved east. I was certainly wondering what they knew that **FreyjaUSA** and **Satori** did not! Where they thinking of the tricky rounding angle at Grimsby?

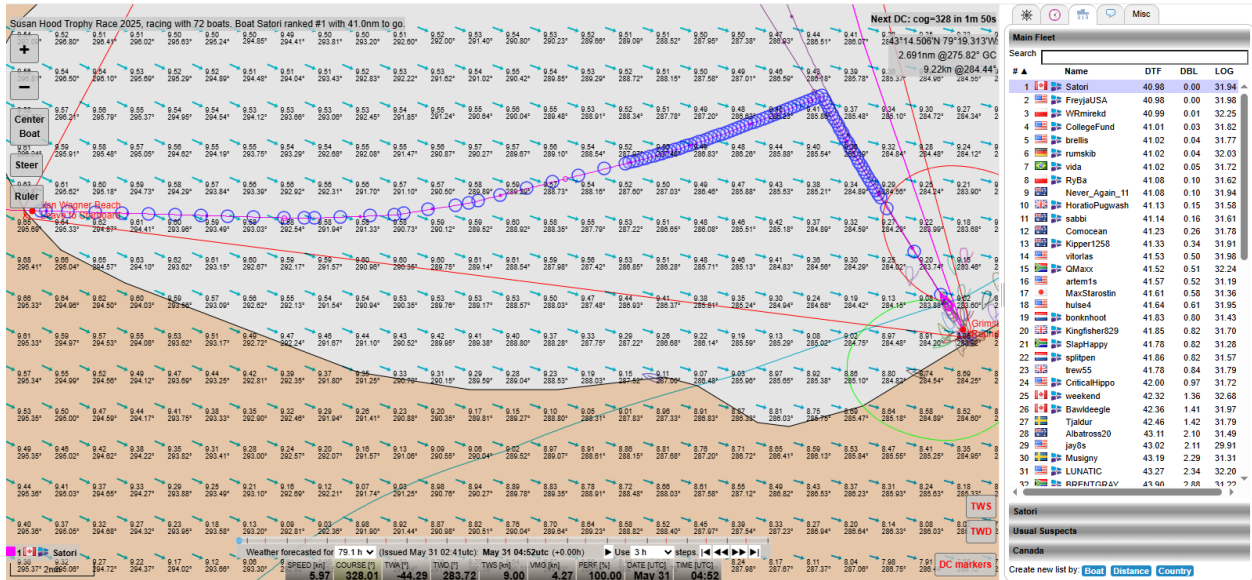


Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

The last WX resulted in higher WS. Approaching the Grimsby mark **Satori** is 2nd behind **FreyjaUSA** and has a very good TWA. The Grimsby rounding will be telling.

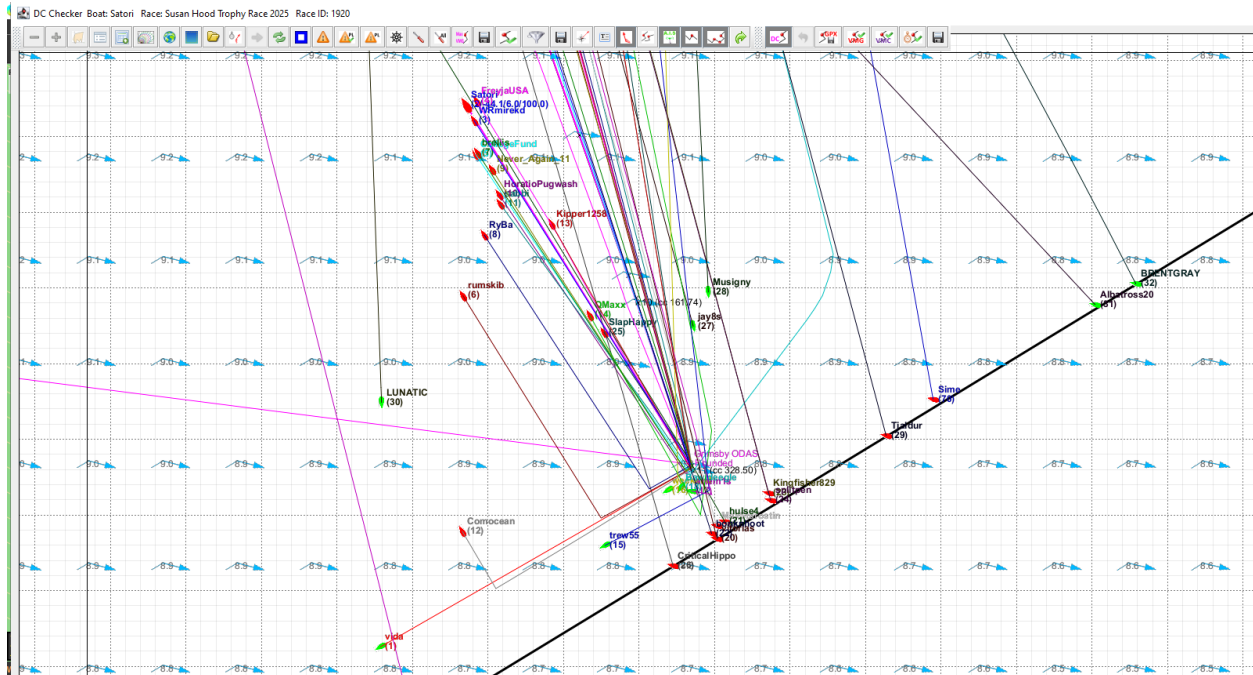


Here is Satori's Leg 3 course to Van Wagner Beach. You can see why I said the Grimsby rounding would be telling. Satori is in 1st place and going north-west to higher winds and better TWA to the Van Wagner Beach mark.

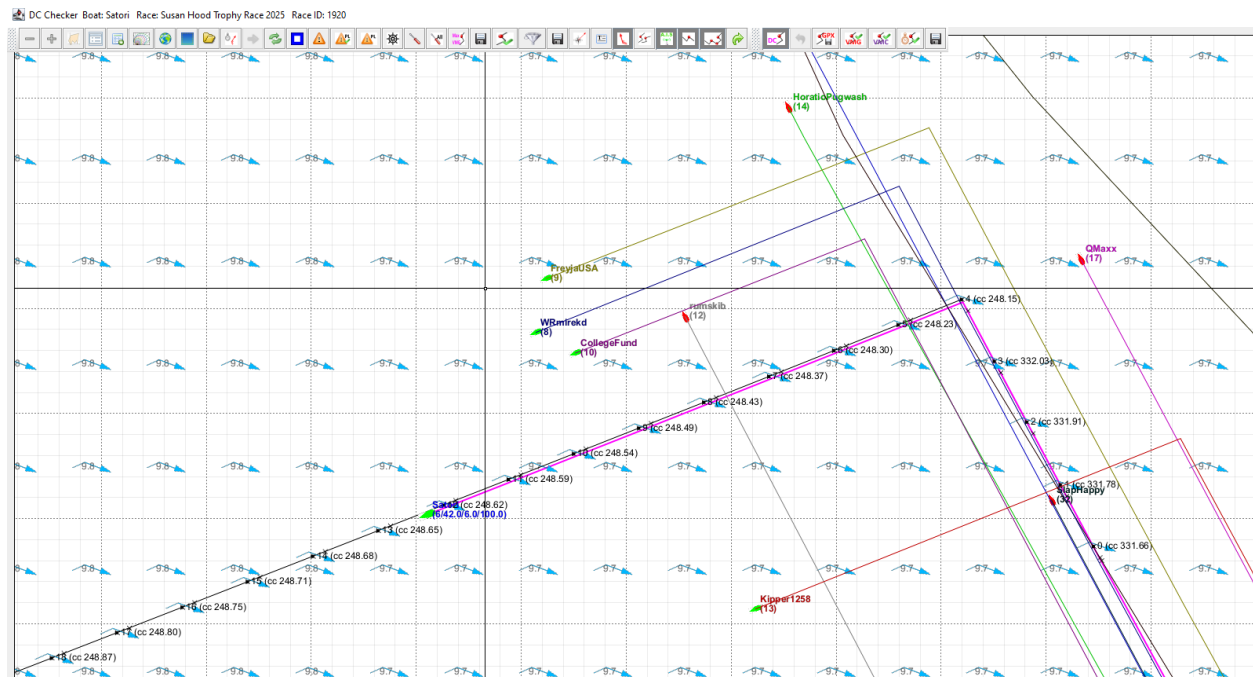


Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

Obviously I was not the only one to nod-off! I think I count 11 boats BBQing on the south shore. I will not embarrass them by naming any, especially the high ranking ones!

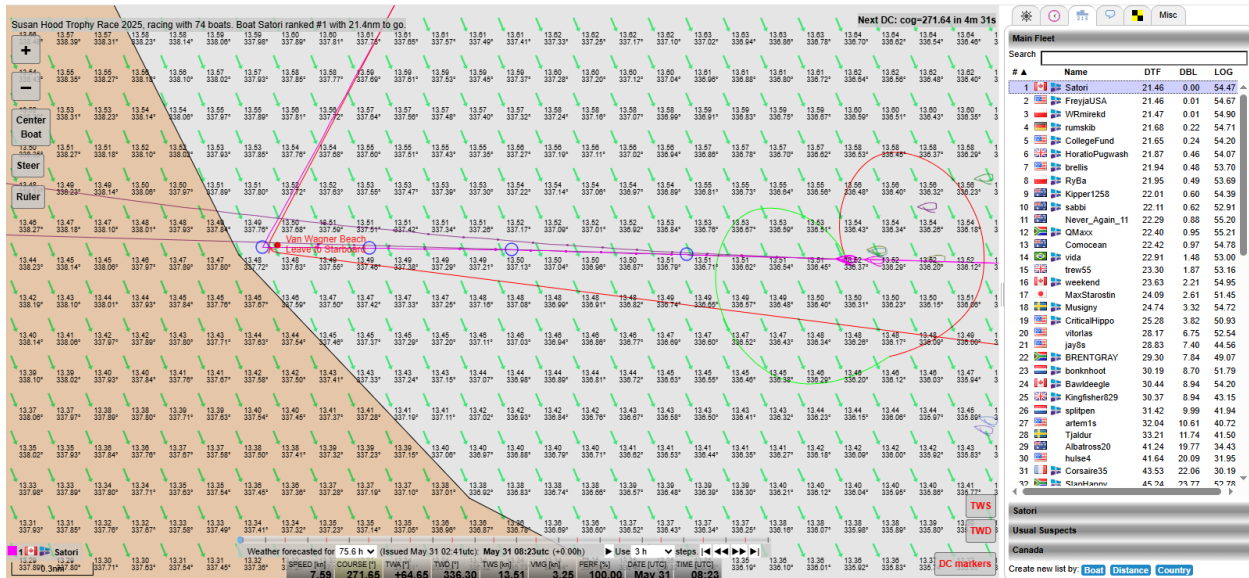


You can see in this AGL Leg 3 close-up after the Grimsby rounding the different decisions that were made by Skippers as to when to tack, how many tacks to put in and how far north to go, trading distance for slightly higher winds and maybe a better TWA approaching Van Wagner Beach mark.

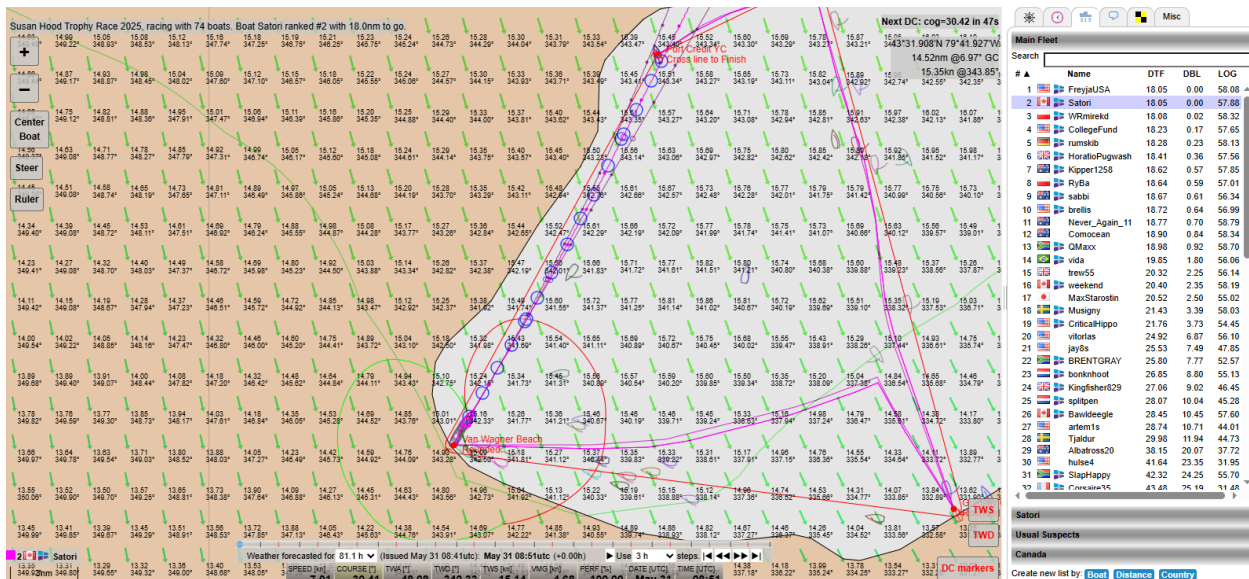


Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

Approaching the Van Wagner Beach mark **Satori** is in 1st place with **FreyjaUSA** and **WRmirekd** 0.01nms behind. The next closest boat is **rumskib** 0.22nms behind. So depending on the rounding we may have the SOL Podium finishers!

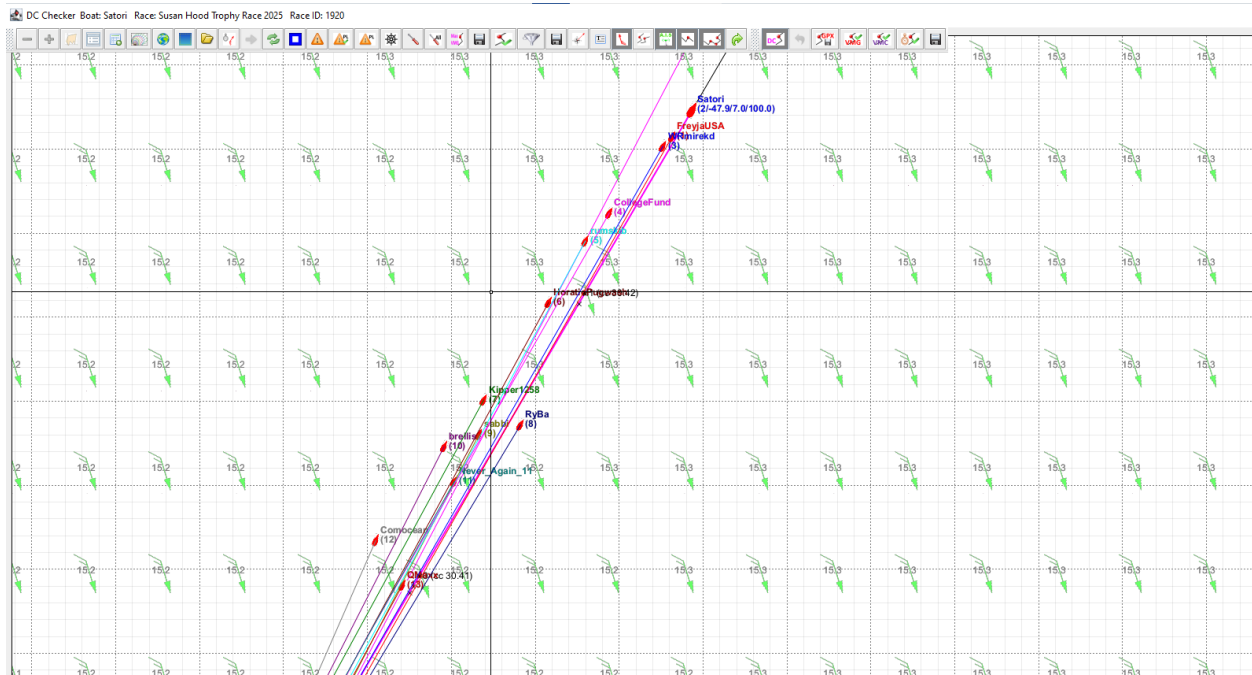


After rounding the Van Wagner Beach mark **FreyjaUSA** and **Satori** are virtually a beam with the server placing **Satori** 2nd. Both are sailing to the Port Credit Finish Line STBD Mark. **Satori** had better BS than **FreyjaUSA** by 0.040 knots and **WRmirekd** by 0.036 knots which put her in 1st place. Of course this is when I nodded off!

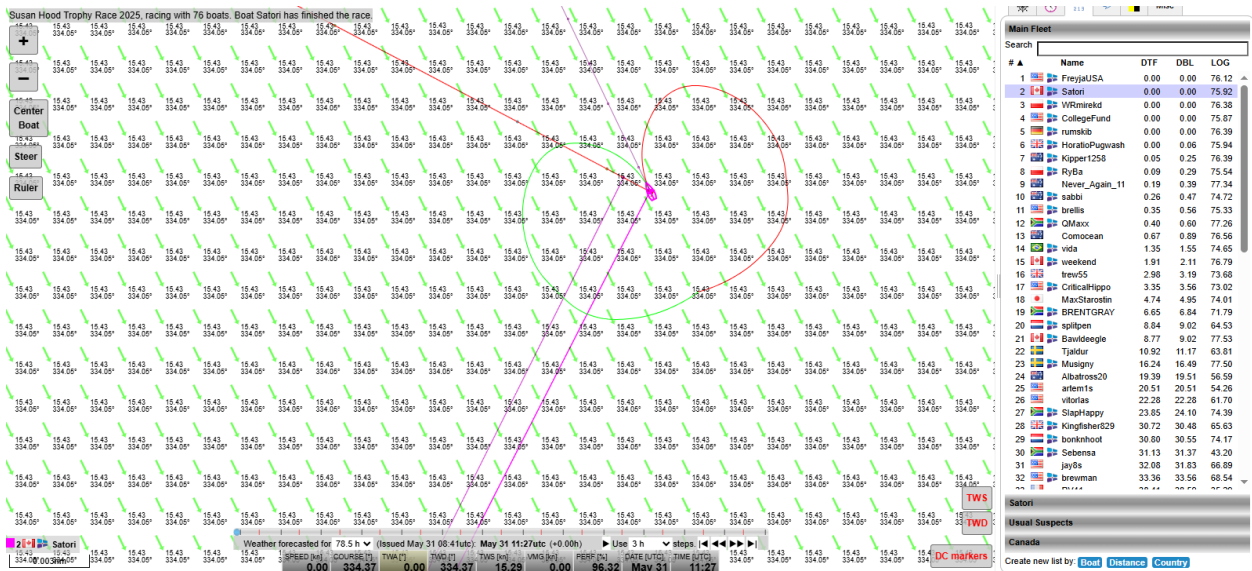


Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

Here is an AGL close-up of the Leaders after the rounding of the Van Wagner Beach mark.



Here is the finish of **FreyjaUSA** and **Satori** at the STBD end of the Finish Line in extra zoom. I altered **Satori's** course to be as close as we could get to the mark and that difference gave us a better TWA and a slightly higher BS than **FreyjaUSA** but not enough time to erase that one second lead.



As I said at the beginning it is an honour to share the Podium with high ranking **FreyjaUSA** and **WRmirekd**. Being ahead of **WRmirekd** is a rare accomplishment!

Thanks to all of you SOLers for racing and to our Committees of Volunteers for making our virtual sailing a reality.

Satori's Report on the Susan Hood Trophy Race 2025

I do hope to see you in the 2nd and final race of the Series, the challenging “chutes and ladders” Lake Ontario 300, which starts on Saturday, July 12th. It is an opportunity to improve your placement in the overall Series and it will be warmer!

*May the seas lie smooth before you.
May a gentle breeze forever fill your sails.
May sunshine warm your face,
And kindness warm your soul.*

John/Satori