

Vasco da Gama Ocean Race 2025

Report by Siaki

Fantastic race, with an incredibly thrilling final with a truly intense battle! Fortunately, with a small advantage built during the downwind leg, I managed to stay ahead, but it required great focus to avoid the slightest mistake. I made none and ultimately clinched the top step of the podium — my first victory, hard-earned, to be honest.

As for the race, I managed to plan it properly: "plan the sailing and sail the plan!"

With this boat, recovering through speed isn't possible, so I spent about half an hour pre-sailing to better understand the polars. It was crucial to focus on the angle and, consequently, the position.

After rounding Mark 1, it was about executing the plan, finding the angle, and sticking with the top sailors. Many corrections were needed to maintain a covering position, and this continued until the wind rotation about halfway through the downwind leg. During this phase, I forced myself to stay east of the fleet but not stray too far, as recovering would have been impossible.

The angle was the main theme, as mentioned, and as the miles went by, I felt I had built a small advantage, though I was never truly certain of what I was doing...

Finally, we reached the main tack before the final maneuvers. I mainly marked Kastor, who, like me, had stayed east, and during the tack, I aimed to come out in a covering position.

The approach to the coast was a crucial phase. Thanks to good positioning, I gained a bit more, but I also had significant doubts. Kastor opted to go up for speed, which likely cost him the podium (in my humble opinion). Vida and Freyja, by tacking early, were very high, and I underestimated the exceptional comeback they mounted in the final stages.

The last phase, with a series of tacks, was purely about covering for me. I didn't invent or attempt anything bold; I grabbed the bone with gritted teeth and tried to hold on until the end. I succeeded with a lead of just over 10 seconds, and judging by how close the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place finishers were, that's quite a lot.

What else to say? An exceptional result that finally came together, thanks also to the information and advice on race and route management that Team Italy, mainly through the Prof and Scara, has given me over time, which I managed to align perfectly today.

- Siaki