



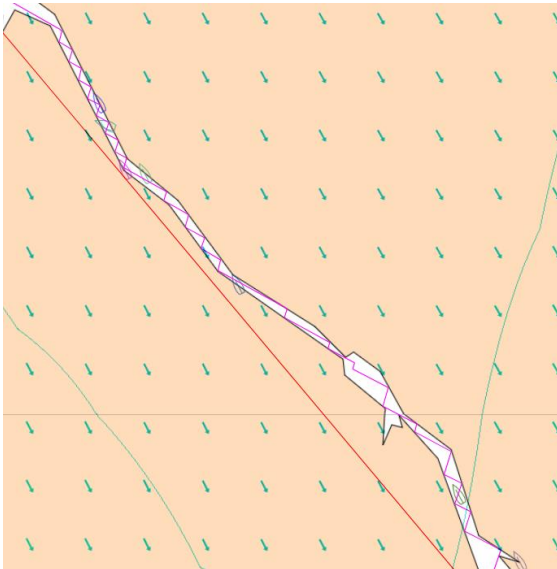
For the first race of the year, I decide to go for it without having studied the course too much.

I suspect it will be technical, as the minimum width of the channel is 150 m, but I have no idea how long the course will take, as the router is of no help on this race with a succession of narrow passages.

I was lucky enough to get off to a flying start, and my boat was immediately at the front of the pack. However, others had clearly prepared better for the race and caught up with me by choosing better tacking lines before reaching the first locks.

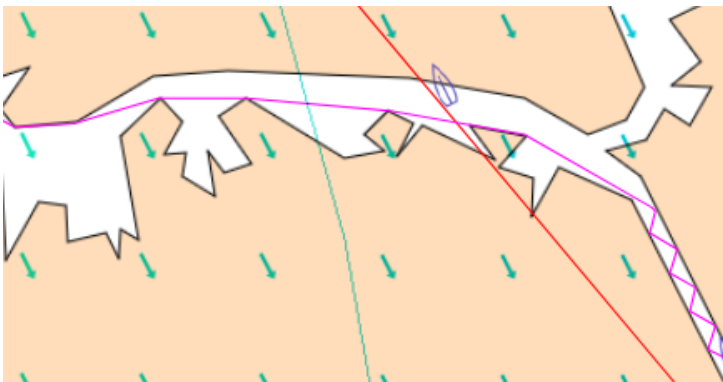
This is followed by a first series of locks with a series of tacks to be made, as long as possible, but ensuring an optimal exit from each difficulty in order to tackle the next one in the best possible way.

In this game, I seemed to come out on top, about ten seconds ahead of a trio of Americans: Garagiste, CollegeFund and Brellis. Accompanying them were Sadlersailing, Mirek and my compatriot Panpyc.



Finally, at the end of the tunnel, there is a more relaxing section, reaching but skimming the peaks.

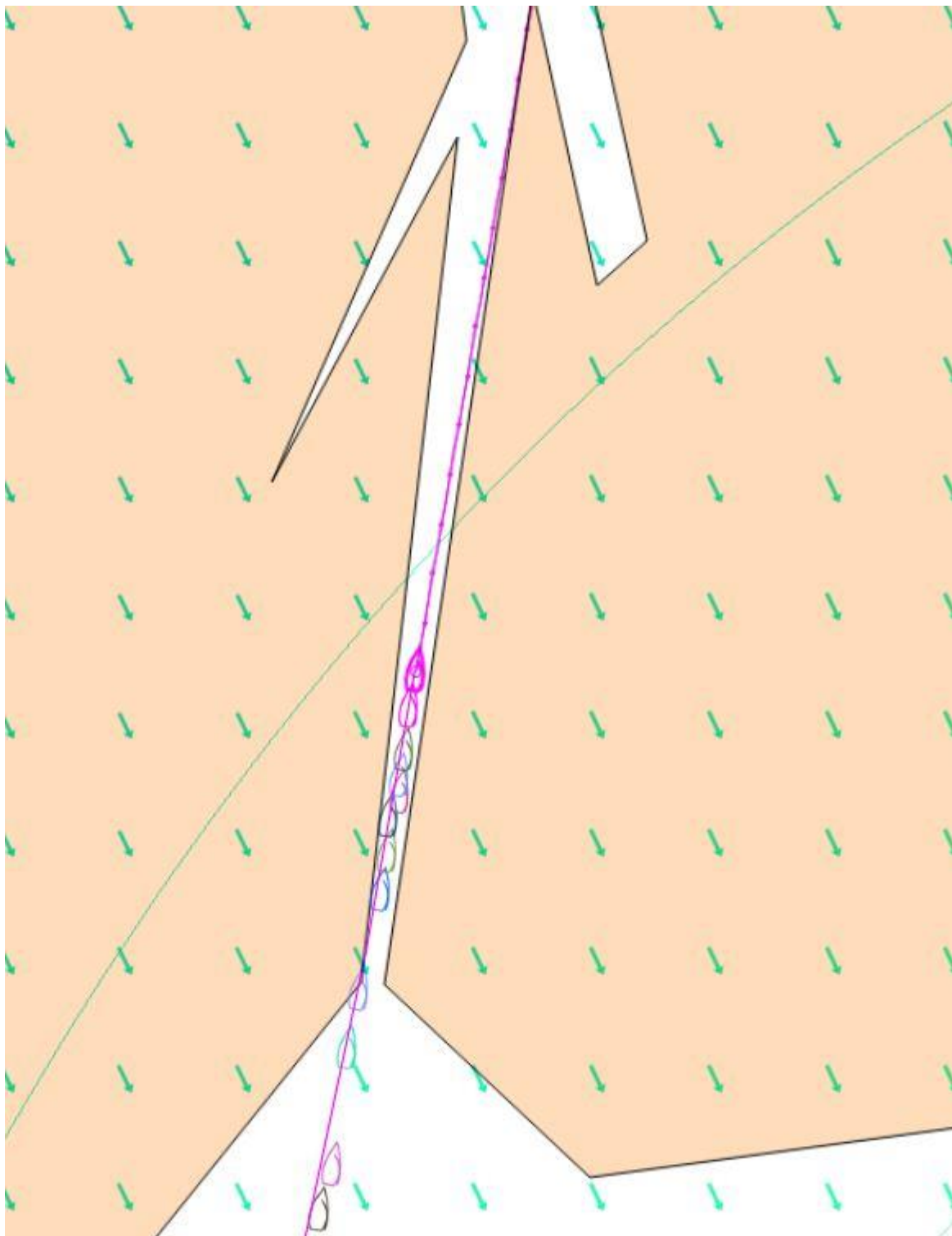
I take the minimum margin, pushed by the pack chasing me.



Finally, here is Gatún Lake. It will allow me to take a short break to eat my lunch.

I decide to stay as far south as possible to benefit from stronger winds.

Above all, I aim to enter the Gatún lock as far west as possible. With a bit of luck, this will allow me to pass through without manoeuvring, just below the BVMG.



Behind me, it's a bit of a scramble... It's not a lock but a funnel!

On the way out, crossing Limon Bay is easy, there aren't many options and all I have to do is head for the line in two BVMG tacks.

I am very happy to win this first race of the year.

Thank you to the small group of fierce pursuers who pushed me hard and made this race interesting. This is my first canal race, as I was unable to participate in the last Suez Canal race, and it has been very informative.

KaSToR – 1st January 2026