

## Sailonline's Baltic Tall Ships Races 2021 - Leg 2 - Tallinn to Mariehamn

As I had built up a small but significant lead in the OC race to Alaska's Elfin Bay, I nearly decided not to start this quick (for a tall ship) race from Tallinn to Mariehamn. Obviously, I'm glad I didn't, but neither can I proffer my success in this one as an excuse for my loss of leadership in the OC race. I hedged my bets between a northerly and a southerly approach and lost out to both sides. There's still a day to go, but I'll be lucky to make the podium, with three Italians team-racing me.

But this race went better, and yes I sailed it more aggressively, free and fast all the way north across the Gulf of Finland to a tack point close under the skerries (Ed: small rocky uninhabited islets) at the entrance to Porkola Fjord. I always route with avoid coasts switched off and Qt had said tack and sail straight through the skerries. I decided to tack slightly earlier. rumskib was with me, which is always a good sign, but he had sacrificed a little too much height getting across, so settled in for the next long starboard tack into the Gulf of Bothnia slightly astern.

It was now an inside lift nearly almost all the way, so enjoying a better angle, than the bulk of the fleet who had tacked earlier to avail of more pressure. But 17kn or 18kn, where rumskib and also rafa and I were, is decent pressure even in a Clipper 240, so, unlike the previous TS race of the 7-race series (next race: Mariehamn to Szczecin, starting June 25, 14:00z), where the shorter route inside the lift lost out to those who stayed out in the breeze, this time this was not so, but only just, with Sax747, who with his Italian compatriots is proving to be my nemesis in the race to Elfin Bay, only 20-odd seconds adrift having tacked earlier.

Fun little race, and nice to win – P1's are proving hard to come by this year!

PS Did you know that the Clipper 240 is not a proper tall ship at all – she points far too well – and is more akin to a slow, more bashed-up sea cart?

