

Report from Gryphon Solo: May 20, 2007

We are well into the C2B and so far, it has been kinda interesting!

Charleston and the tall ship fleet gave us a great send off from the inner harbor in a 10 knot northerly which made the first mile of the race down wind. With a conservative start and the reaching gennaker up (as there was no time to make sail changes at the first mark) we slowly picked our way through the fleet by sailing some pretty hot angles. In order to get out of Charleston harbor you have to make a couple of big turns and then run down the shipping channel for a few miles. So we rounded the first mark and came up onto a tight reach with the new weapon in the Gryphon Solo arsenal, a new Code Zero sail. By this time we were looking forward to the open water and some winds out of the North so we could reach off, but first we had to get by a bloody great big freighter coming down the channel and he forced us hard on the wind in the narrow channel!!

Unfortunately, by this time the northerly was shutting down and the Easterly wind was coming in- right on the kisser. We were expecting a Northerly breeze from the weather forecast that would allow us to negotiate the strong currents of the Gulf Stream, which sweeps up the U.S. Eastern seaboard close to the South Carolina shore. The easterly wind direction caused us to re-think our original rhumb line strategy and head off to the south and let Gryphon Solo beat feet to the south of the first feature and bury ourselves in the main northerly flow of the Stream to make northing as the wind clocks to the NW by Saturday. So there is a big ???? as to how this will play out so watch this space.

So as I write and the sun goes down Hank and Jeff are on deck pushing the red rocket east, the wind has backed to 045, at 9's + boat speed.

Cheers,
Hugh

Sunday May 20th