

Geneva-Rolle-Geneva, 9th June 2012: The race from the perspective of the Quant28

If another proof of the potential of the Q28 was necessary - Geneva-Rolle-Geneva last Saturday was the race to shut everybody's mouth doubting the DSS system in general and the Q28 in particular.

1 pm we started in Geneva. Nice weather, very weak conditions. For once we had a very good take off and we sailed away even from some of the tallest competitors. As long as the breeze is weak but touching the water (...and with the help of the new flying headsail we got from North) we can sail our 28' almost as quick, as the fastest and biggest monohulls and this means in Geneva 35 to 47 foot. Once it is time for the A1-kite from North most of our worries are gone anyway.

The race went on and there was no sign of the predicted wind – neither direction nor windspeed. In very good company we sailed up the lake for the next two hours or so – still on the french side.

I knew this would end up somewhere in the middle of the so called „petit lac“ (little lake) and other very prominent skippers like Jean Psarofaghis („SYZ“ Psaros 40) knew that also. Together with one of the new canters (Pasaros 33) he left our group with direction „Swiss coastline“. I had the reflex to do that also but the crew stopped me and i was not sure and ready (early stage of race) to make such a decision. Both boats that left us parked a few minutes later in the middle of the lake and we tried to get on on our side.

Around 20 minutes later the situation was changing slowly. The two boats that have left our group got closer to the Swiss side and into a gentle but steady breeze blowing 90degrees on to the shoreline. We on the other side stumbled from hole to hole. Never-racking – tacking, jibing, changing all sorts of sails for another hour.

Then the so called „Joran“ - predicted in the more positive forecasts - set in on the Swiss-Side of the lake. The bigger and faster Multis already sailed a good speed of far over 10kts on their way back to Geneva.

In the group of the wrong positioned part of the fleet, we maybe were one of the closest to the edge of the new breeze, coming closer slowly but steadily, to where we were placed by then. And finally we got in the new windzone, after having used the big sails up to the latest possible moment (thanks to the crew, who did a marvellous job). When we turned to the right to get to the first mark, we unfortunately found ourselves buried in the middle of the pack of much slower boats sailing towards Rolle also.

What came afterwards i never will forget, as it was the first time when the Quant28 encountered the really tall lakeracers from Lake of Geneva. Windspeed went up to a bit gusty 12 to maybe 15kts or even more in some patches around us (one D35 lost the rig).

The Quant28 started now to sail in one of here favourite modes. After the breeze really established over a big part of the lake, we started with our fast two sail reaching, directly to the mark in Rolle, always on the foil, speed varying a bit from 13 to 17kts and not one second below 9kts in holes.

First we quickly disappeared from the pack of the „normal“ boats, catching up to the much faster and bigger ones in front of us. Then we passed one the fully tricked up and new Psaros33 the latest canter on the lake – just some boatlengths on leeward side! Then we passed our archrival „MissTfy“ a modern Luthi38' in full carbon and so on - till the mark in Rolle. There rounding with a well sailed 18footer in front and the spectacular „PI“- Foiler behind us.

Other boats rounding at the same time: „Taillevent II“ a modern 47' in Americas Cupper Style the most beautiful Yacht on the lake also in full carbon, the newer „FullPelt38“ (a Jo Richards desing) a canter with trapezes and everything, who has an even taller rig by now – the „creme de la creme“ of Lake of Geneve and the tiny little Q28.

That was funny. The perfectly sailed Psaros40 of Jean Psarofaghis was gone already. He won the race in his class and was fastest Monohull. They deserved it.

After the mark we passed some of these bigger boats before the breeze was decreasing to maybe 8kts. Displacement sailing again and without kite (angle) – about three of the bigger boats came up and passed us again. Nothing much to do against. But ok. that's physics.

About two hours later we crossed the finishing line in Geneva 9 seconds after the tallest Libera i ever saw in my life (14.2m or 47') but around 2 minutes in front of „MissTfy“ the yacht that normally wins the class TCF1.

So it was a perfect race for us: line honours and fastest yacht in the class, and after corrected time we put over 18 minutes on „MissTfy“. Very satisfying indeed (after already 3 races & 3 wins on my home territory this season), when you think of all the speeches and discussions around DSS and the Q28 we had to face the last two years.

Now we look forward to the Bol d'Or and it seems that the weather will be nice and warm but weak conditions – it will be tough. But let's see...stay tuned

Michael Aeppli
www.quant-boats.com