

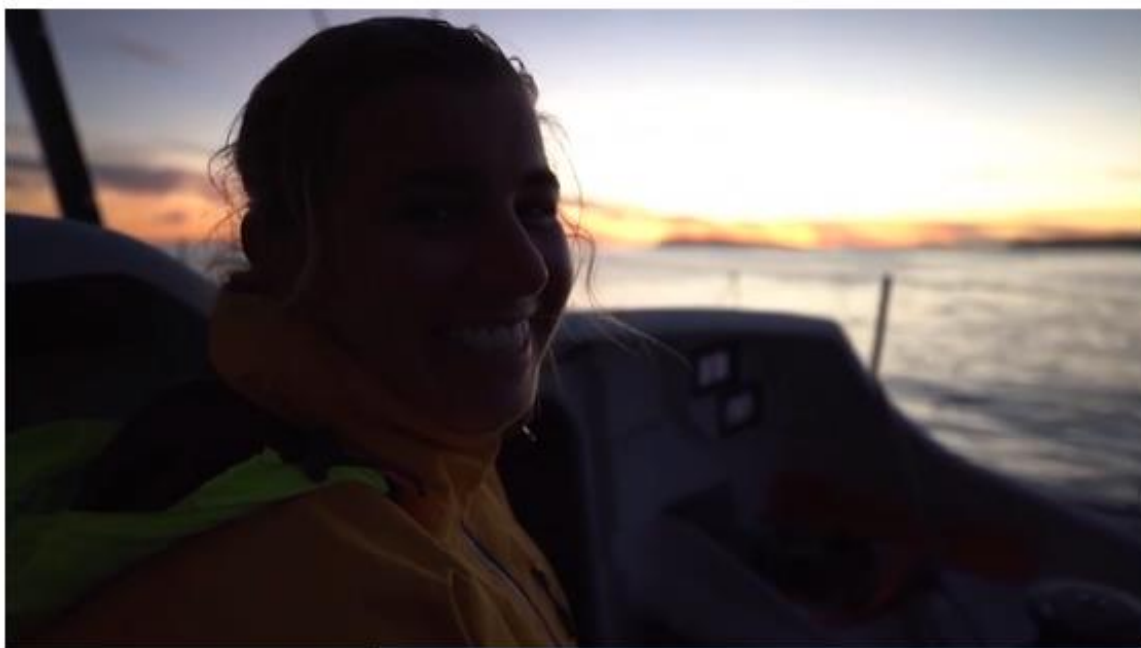


SPORT

# Volvo Ocean Race: Auckland leg set for thrilling finish

27 Feb, 2018 11:55am

3 minutes to read



Volvo Ocean Race: 'Turn the Tide on Plastic' rounds Cape Reinga. / Supplied by Volvo Ocean Race

NZ Herald



The leading Volvo Ocean Race boats are dueling for the leg win as they make their way down the east coast of the North Island - with Blair Tuke's MAPFRE in a dramatic late surge.

The New Zealander's team (and overall leader) had gained over 70 miles on the leader on Tuesday and sits in fourth overall - just over seven miles behind AkzoNobel as the fleet passed the Bay of Islands.

Teams are expected to reach Auckland between midnight and 2.30am on Wednesday.

1	Team AkzoNobel		RAC	143°	11.2	10.7	9.5	42°	-107°	
2	Team Sun Hung Kai / Scallywag	1.1	RAC	147°	11.1	10.8	9.0	44°	-107°	102.8
3	Turn The Tide on Plastic	4.4	RAC	140°	10.7	10.0	9.8	40°	-103°	106.1
4	MAPFRE	6.6	RAC	147°	13.9	13.4	12.5	48°	-106°	108.3
5	Dongfeng Race Team	7.0	RAC	143°	12.8	11.9	10.8	40°	-104°	108.7
6	Team Brunel	36.6	RAC	125°	13.3	13.2	11.5	39°	-98°	138.3
7	Westes 11th Hour Racing		DNS							



**Dongfeng Race Team** ✓  
@DongfengRacing



Has anyone got any fingernails left or have you bitten them all off already? 📈🏆. THIS IS SO CLOSE!!

7:41 AM - Feb 27, 2018



**Dee Caffari** ✓  
@decaffari



Red boats inbound at pace. You have got to be kidding me. 140miles behind and here they come. Never write off a red boat!

7:18 AM - Feb 27, 2018

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Earlier, Team AkzoNobel and Scallywag were bow-to-stern off the Karikari Peninsula, north of the Bay of Islands, around 150 nautical miles from the finish of the sixth leg in the City of Sails.

They were just eight nautical miles clear of Turn the Tide on Plastic.

There are two Kiwis onboard Team AkzoNobel and one on Turn the Tide on Plastic, but there's no New Zealand presence on Scallywag.

The leading three boats are scheduled to arrive in Auckland around midnight, with Dongfeng Race Team, overall leaders MAPFRE and Team Brunel expected to finish in the early hours of tomorrow morning.



America's Cup winner and MAPFRE crewmember Tuke told the *Mike Hosking Breakfast* show that they caught sight of the Three Kings Islands at daybreak and were not far away from mainland New Zealand.

"We should see mainland New Zealand in a couple of hours and be at North Cape within four hours. Pretty excited to be honest," the America's Cup and Olympic champion said this morning.

"This has been a leg I've been looking forward to the most, having the opportunity to sail to NZ. It's been a long time away. I haven't been on a plane since the start of the race and haven't been back in New Zealand since September and before that it was America's Cup. So not much time in NZ over the last year so very much looking forward to getting home and seeing friends and family. Pretty cool way to do it."

Despite being off the pace in the sixth leg, Tuke said it's been an enjoyable experience.

"It's been an amazing race so far lots of different experiences, learning lots. The boat I'm on, MAPFRE, we've been going pretty well. Had a couple of tough legs now. The one up to Hong Kong wasn't so great for us and we're not in a great position on the way back down here but overall we're still in the lead. So it's been a great race so far.

"Now to be sailing into NZ we've got a real right on our hands today with Dongfeng, who are currently half a mile in front of us, so it's going to be a long day sailing down the coast and into the night as we head into Auckland."