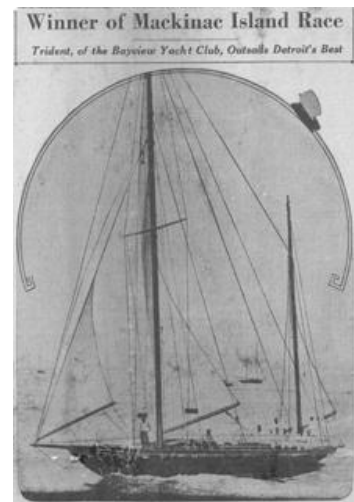


## The 1935 Port Huron to Mackinac Race Through the depression the race continued "On the way to the 85th sailing"

The race hit a high of 20 yachts by 1928 but in 1929 when the depression started to dig in the entry list dwindled down to 13. That same year the Bayview clubhouse burned down on Motorboat Lane putting further financial strain on the organization. By 1930 entries climbed a little with the entry of BYC Commodore Alger Sheldon's *Trident*, a new John Alden built yawl specifically to win the Mackinac Race. With her long overhangs and sprit she was ideal for Great Lakes sailing. And she showed it by taking the race overall two years in a row in mostly light air with a few squalls thrown in and later winning two more Mackinacs in her class.



In 1933 it was decided that spinnakers were banned for the sake of safety and most likely for just being too expensive in those poor economic times. In the early thirties although the gaff rigs were being replaced by marconi rigs, heavy cotton sails were still being used. By 1935 the economy improved and the desire to spice up the race resulted in a course change that would involve the rounding the Cove Island Light located off a small Canadian island. To quote Commodore Esmond Avery, "a 306 mile course...would discourage shore sailing, put a premium on navigation ability, and make a sportier race. The barking dog - apple tree method of navigation, employed now, will be at an end." The opponents to this course Perc Williamson and Race Chairman Trent McMath felt the opposite, "Such a course would present hazards possibly dangerous to men and ship, and would interrupt, if not erase, the tradition of past Mackinac races." While this would not be the last time this argument would surface the Commodore won his effort for the new course. However he appeased McMath by outlawing the use of high tech radio direction finders which cost hundreds of dollars and were beyond the pocketbooks of many boat owners.

This race was started with 16 yachts in a light southerly breeze. *Alsumar*, newly purchased by David Sloss and Herm Petzold steered a rhumb line course to the Cove Island Light and rounded Sunday afternoon with a ten mile lead. The next morning a dense fog and a calm besieged the fleet but *Alsumar* continued to move like a ghost in the straits. At 1400 hours on Tuesday with the rest of fleet becalmed *Alsumar* got the gun, winning class B and the fleet overall. The rest of the fleet drifted in for the next two days and this course was not sailed again until 1972.



Dave Sloss and Herm Petzold teamed to win overall in 1935 aboard ALSUMAR