

## Lake Superior Lights 2017

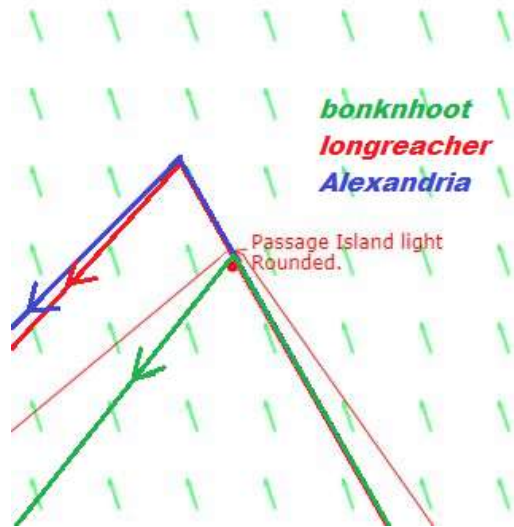
I have a love/hate relationship with this race. I love sailing on 'home turf', I love that the weather updates fall at more convenient times, and I love the idea of sailing in fresh water. On the flip side, I hate the 3AM roundings, and the mini archipelago just when you are at your wits end near the finish.

Lots of wind in Superior in this November, which always makes me think of the *Edmund Fitzgerald*, and the Gordon Lightfoot song that immortalized her.



*The legend lives on from the Chippewa on down  
Of the big lake they called 'gitche gumee'  
The lake, it is said, never gives up her dead  
When the skies of November turn gloomy*

But, SOLers have no reason to fear the big winds, and so, as we set off across the lake, we made good time out to the first mark, which amazingly, came during the day. As we made the turn south at Michipicoten island, I was in a tight group with **Alexandria and bonknhoot**. As the race



Bonknhoot schooling us on rounding technique.

went on, Alexandria slowly inched away from us, but bonk and I swapped second countless times, neither boat gaining more than a hundred feet on the other. I'd gain a slight advantage, only to have bonk steal it back with a flawless rounding. This back and forth carried on for two days, until just before the finish, when some loose sailing on my part gave the advantage clearly to the Irish boat. Following bonk would get me third, so I tried a run for the north end of the line, but a shift and some extra wind to the south sealed my fate.

Congrats to Alexandria and bonknhoot on a fun, close race. And thanks to the SOL team for putting it on the calendar. Having said that, I'm quite happy that it's just there once a year.

-longreacher  
September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017