

The Old Goat

Over the past several weeks, traditional sports activities have dominated the media outlets: the Olympic Games have come and gone; the Cincinnati Reds remain in 1<sup>st</sup> place; the Detroit Tigers are trailing the Chicago White Sox; and the Green Bay Packers appear ready to make another run to the Super Bowl.

A lesser-known event but one equally significant in Lake Michigan history is the Chicago to Mackinac sail boat race. This event has run for 104 consecutive years and is the longest freshwater race in the world; approximately 290 nautical miles or 333 land-based mile equivalents. It also has a rich history of participants: Steve Fossett, Richard Branson, and several extended-family members of Disney fame. In all, an individual, group, or team competes for the singular and fleeting opportunity of being acknowledged by their peers as the best.



21<sup>st</sup> century technology has made winners out of ‘average Joe’s’ in recent times at the Chicago to Mackinac race. Gone are the days of navigating by the stars, sensing a fast approaching weather front, and hand-operated bilge pumps. Welcome GPS, Doppler Radar, and tri-hulls having single piece construction and phenomenal drag coefficients.

In 1959, The Island Goats Sailing Society was formed made up of sailors who have completed 25 of the annual Chicago to Mackinac races. Their legacy has been built with classical seamanship, little fanfare, and even less technology.

The next time you cross paths with the ‘island goat’ of your sale team be sure to acknowledge the contributions from a different time that allows guys like us to win in a highly competitive market.

The ‘island goat’ says: “do not go where the path may lead but leave a trail so that others may follow.”

The same is true in business and more specifically sales.