

## Long Distance Pennant Race 1 2017-2018 Report

Last Saturday was the first race of the HYC long distance pennant series with the race from Port Huon to Cygnet and returning via Brooks Bay, a total distance of approximately 21 nautical miles. The fleet consisted of Mick Bartlett's Elliott 780 Another Girl Another Planet (AGAP), Jeff Sharps Jenneau 349 French Connection, Phil and Julie Mitchells Swanson 36 Kalista, Wil Meure's Marauder 27 Stardust Dancer, and Anthony and Janine Livingston's Compass 28 Harmony in their first ever race with Paul Shilcock on board to lend a hand.



The weather at the start was sunny with a 5 knot north westerly breeze that increased in strength as the boats made their way down the river which suited the lightweight downwind flyer AGAP who opened up a sizable lead from the remainder of the fleet by the time she reached One Tree Point. Jeff Sharp's crew was the first to hoist a spinnaker as they turned at One Tree Point and Mick Bartlett's crew followed suit, with AGAP staying close to the eastern shore of the river where they found a strong favourable breeze and at times reached speeds of up to 15 knots.

French Connection was achieving speeds of up to 10 knots using her large asymmetrical spinnaker but in doing this was forced to sail a less than ideal course further off the eastern shore line. Although not as quite as fast as AGAP and French Connection, Kalista with her mainsail and head sail goose winged along with Stardust Dancer who was flying her symmetrical spinnaker and Harmony were able to sail a more direct course down wind. As the fleet turned at Beaupre Point heading for Cygnet AGAP was well ahead and rounded the mark in Cygnet with a 7 minuter lead over French Connection after 70 minutes of sailing with the remainder of the fleet not too far behind.

Heading to the Cygnet mark the yachts encountered the Cygnet dinghy fleet of youngsters along with their support boats racing in the opposite direction which made for some interesting times but both fleets were able to pass each other cleanly in the challenging conditions. By the time the yachts were back in the main stretch of the river heading for Brooks Bay the breeze had increased to around 20 knots. Small waves with white caps meant the fleet would have a hard slog home.

AGAP was carrying too much sail for the conditions and the crew did a great job beating into the wind which was trying to blow them back down the river. French Connection was able to slowly claw back some of AGAP's lead, followed by Kalista the largest boat in the fleet, who was making easy work of the conditions followed by the smaller Stardust Dancer and Harmony.

Stardust Dancer unfortunately tore a head sail and had a wire strand on the forestay break and Wil chose to retire instead of risking further damage to his boat and started his motor to assist his sail back. Harmony also chose to retire from the race as it would have been a long hard slog back home but after the race Anthony, Janine and Paul were more than happy with how their boat had performed and are looking forward to competing in future races.



French Connection almost caught AGAP as the fleet sailed up the river but at One Tree Point where the river turned and the wind was more side on AGAP was able to accelerate away increasing her lead and crossed the finish line two

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minutes ahead of French Connection with Kalista finishing 42 minutes later. After the handicaps were applied French Connection was awarded first place followed by Kalista with AGAP finishing third.

This Thursday is the first race in the popular twilight series with the first boat starting at 6pm. A BBQ and prize presentation will be held at the clubhouse following the race and all members and friends are welcome to attend.