

## Ski News August 2016

The intermittent sunny warm days have marked summer this year and have been much appreciated out on the water – it's just a shame that the most frequent winds have been either from the north-west or south-east neither of which provide the best conditions for skiing. However there have been many of you using the estuary, enjoying the skiing and wakeboarding and introducing newcomers to the sport.

All those needing to update driving qualifications appear to have been successful in booking and completing courses. We hope that those new to the Camel Estuary will also become familiar with the general patterns of skiing unique to our situation. The basic circuits and anti-clockwise circuits are the guidelines but common sense has to take over in certain circumstances. Fallen skiers may drift with the tide or wind so that direction of take-off may have to be reversed to keep with the general direction of the circuit.

Whether to pick up a drop ski or not? The natural instinct is to pick up a drifting ski so it is not a hazard or to help return it to its owner. Usually the owner is aware of its basic position and will retrieve it as soon as the skier has finished. The rule we usually go with is – if there isn't another boat around, pick it up and return it to the crew room but if there are people skiing, leave it so endless time looking for it is avoided. Because of this, obviously the driver must always be on the lookout for any obstacles in the water ahead and ensure that the crew indicates it to the skier.

Remember also, when a skier has fallen or been dropped off, the ski line should be pulled in straight away, before returning to the skier (unless they are injured or in danger). Trailing lines cannot always be easily seen and can be hazardous to other boats.

This year the Fly Navy competitions were postponed from their original dates and both junior and adult competitions held on Bank Holiday Saturday instead. We had a record number of sixteen juniors competing for the Junior Shield. They were all keen to have a go and all ready for their turn when it came. They all did brilliantly and those few falling only did so as they were trying to either get round the buoy or back into the wash at a faster than (but still safe) usual speed! The time allowance for age really came into consideration this year with the reigning champion Piers Bowden (15) still skiing the fastest round but with newcomers Maddie Corben (11), Hugo Millington (13) and Max Corben (8) claiming the first three places! Live streaming was being put on Facebook thanks to Toby Mattos who was helping out on the rescue boat!

The Fly Navy Cup followed with the mix of familiar faces and two new teams taking on the challenge. TeePee Too was the eventual winner with Peter Bowden driving Piers Bowden on mono, Tabitha Bowden on tricks and Graeme Statton joining the family group on pairs.

Some of you may have taken part in the past? – yes it is still going (with a slight change brought in for safety reasons) so why not get a team together or come as an individual and join a team. The day was a great success helped by sunshine, a well-timed neap tide and helpful and friendly people. Thanks to all of you who came along.

Special thanks must go to Pam Mattos whose expert timing made sure the results were accurate and to Dave Webb and Piers Beach who helped with back up timing.

Finding the best day to hold the Fly Navy competitions is always difficult as we have to consider tides, tide times, sailing races, when key people are available etc. We have decided that the last two weeks of August will be the best time for 2017. Look out for the date/s when they have been finally decided and published. (The Junior and Senior events may have to be on separate days)

On a safety note for other water users, just a reminder not to go too close to kayakers or paddle boarders especially if they are children or beginners. It's easy to forget how big the boat washes are even at slow speeds when in close proximity.

Thank you to the Ward family who donated a pair of skis and wakeboard to the Club. The wakeboard was just in time to replace No. 14 whose bindings are now past repair and will be replaced for next year. The skis were passed on to a new Club member just starting out for a suitable donation to the Club.

Finally we would like to thank you all for complying with new driving requirements and renewed confidence that this has brought to skiing in the estuary. We can never be complacent though and all of us have to stay alert to any potential tricky situation that might arise. But this is definitely the way forward and we look forward to another successful year next year.

THE SKI COMMITTEE