

## **RSWSC Fly Navy and Junior Shield background**

A gentleman by the name of Red Kelly realised that the waterski section of the Club was increasing in numbers to the extent that a competition should be organised for the skiers. Although he was a sailor himself, he generously presented a cup for the winner.

Red had been in the Fleet Air Arm and had flown many aircraft including Swordfirsh, Seafire, Spitfire and Hurricanes, so it seemed natural to call the event the Fly Navy Cup. The only problem for the ski section was to devise a competition befitting of the cup! A tidal estuary with multiple boats and winds sometimes creating rough conditions, does not lend itself to the traditional tournament waterskiing formats. The first year it was an endurance event – the winner was the skier who could go the furthest without falling! That was fine as a starting point, but the realisation that the only limiting factor in some cases was the size of the fuel tank in the boat, led to a rethink. The next year with standards improving, Dave Webb introduced a fancy dress element to the competition with 50% of the score being awarded for the costume. There is no longer a fancy dress element, but the format of the skiing portion remains largely the same today.

The team consists of one boat, one driver and three skiers each competing in a different discipline over a set course. The Junior Shield was introduced in 1988 and uses the same course as the senior event but only has one skier using the discipline of his or her own choosing. A time handicap system is used to level the playing field across the age groups. Plenty of Junior Shield entrants have graduated over the years to become seasoned Fly Navy participants as well.

**We are always keen to see new participants, either whole teams of just individuals who can join others to make up a team on the day – it is always good fun, both skiing and watching from the ski beach, so do come along.**

The prizegiving is in the Clubhouse after the event.