

## **Florida Water Ski Hall of Fame Inductee 2010**

**Jim Cleveland** learned to ski on the Ohio River at Portsmouth OH in 1961 and competed in his first tournament in 1965 on the Ohio River in West Virginia. This launched a competitive skiing career at the Regional and National level in Slalom and Tricks that lasted for over 25 years.

In 1973 Jim placed second in the Senior Men division of the Ski Racing National Championships held in Portsmouth. He was “drafted” into the competition and had to borrow a ski for his event, which had a binder setup that was different from what he needed and said it was a very painful experience, but exciting tournament.

In 1968, he and his wife Barbara moved to Hawthorne FL and became very involved in the skiing circuit. He began working on his Judges and Drivers ratings and became a Senior in both within a few years and has continued officiating at tournaments for many years.

He was one of the founding members of the Florida Water Ski Federation in 1976 and has been a strong advocate for the FWSF and skiers throughout Florida over the years. He served as the Executive Vice President of the Southern Region in 1973-74 and was a member of the Skiers Rating Committee for many years.

In 1979 Jim and Mike Harris purchased Victory Lakes in Jacksonville, and he has been the sponsor, tournament director and an official for over 100 tournaments in the past 30 years, including the first Hall of Fame tournament in 1987 and the Southern Regionals in 1988.

In 1979 he opened the Cleveland Ski School and taught many Champions of that era the intricacies of our sport. In 1980 he taught Gene Davis to Jump and was the last person to pull Leon Larson over the Jump.

He and his wife Barbara are now retired and spend much of the year traveling around the US and enjoying life.