



THE EARLY YEARS

On May 7th 1909, the Admiralty placed a tender for its first aircraft signed HMA 1. This was to be a rigid Airship commonly known as the Mayfly. In 1911 the first four Royal Navy pilots completed flying training at Eastchurch on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent. On 13 April 1912 the Royal Flying Corps was formed by a Royal Warrant. Later in the same year, the Naval wing of the Royal Flying Corps was formed. This wing formed the Royal Naval Air Service on July 1st 1914.

On April 1st 1918, the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps were amalgamated to create the Royal Air Force.

SOPWITH PUP

Role

Fighter

Entered Service

1916

Weight

Empty: 388kg

Loaded: 556kg

Maximum Speed

106mph

Weapons

7.7mm Vickers Machine Gun



KEY EVENTS

1909 May:

Birth of Naval Aviation.

1911:

Lt C R Samson RN, Lt A N Longmore RN, Lt R Gregory RN and Lt E L Gerrard RMLI became the first four Royal Navy fixed wing pilots.

1912 May:

The first launch of an aircraft from a moving ship, *HMS Hibernia*.

1914 November:

Royal Naval Air Service attacked zeppelin sheds at Freidrichshaven in what was the first strategic air raid in history.

1914 December:

First night bombing raid led by Cdr Samson in Ostend.

1915 June:

First Victoria Cross awarded for the destruction of Airship LZ37 by F/S/Lt RAJ Warneford.

1915 August:

First enemy ship to be sunk by airborne torpedo at the Dardanelles.

1916 May:

First use of an aircraft in a sea battle at Jutland.

1917 August:

First deck landing carried out by Sqdn/Cdr Dunning on *HMS Furious*.



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