

JUNE 1979

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER NO 12

EDITORIAL

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Recently I have heard a lot about legal problems encountered when landing by sea kayak on the French coast. I have failed to obtain direct information from sea canoeists involved. The matter has arisen once again following groups landing near Wissant. My enquiries via Mons. Marchand (French Maritime Office, U.K.) resulted in the following:-

1. The French Authorities are not out to prevent sea canoeists from landing on their coast but are determined to ensure that all landings (by whatever craft) are conducted properly and safely, and this is the crux.
2. In future the French Maritime Office based in Cherbourg are to be informed of all intended landings on their coast. Address: Ms J L Marchand, French Maritime Office, 2 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5HE. Your letter will then be forwarded to Cherbourg. They require to know -
 - (a) Name of expedition leader and his/her qualifications in terms of sea-going experience.
 - (b) Numbers in the party.
 - (c) All safety measures taken.
 - (d) All safety equipment carried.
 - (e) Date and ETA French Coast.
 - (f) Any other relevant information.All being well, the expedition leader will then receive a letter of authority issued from Cherbourg which will entitle him and his group to land.
3. It was explained that due to small leisure craft getting into difficulties along the French coast the French authorities made a general order in November 1978 which insisted that all these craft obtain prior authority before landing. Several cases were quoted which included a party of sea canoeists where basic precautions had not been taken resulting in the French SAR team being called out.
4. I shall write to the French Maritime Authorities stressing the responsible and professional approach taken by devotees of sea canoeing here and appraise them of recent advanced sea expeditions and type of equipment used.

Personally I agree with the French arrangements and with the way in which they are being organised. It may well be that British Authorities will consider taking the same action. The number of 'idiots' rescued each year is mounting and the cost of an SAR operation can be enormous. I would appreciate your comments. Think about it.....the over-use and abuse of flares and radio equipment may well mean that they will be restricted: in which case, restricted to whom? Should we put the Advanced Sea Proficiency Award to great use ie use it as a qualification to lead expeditions to the French Coast or as a qualification to handle marine radio equipment? Unless we seriously consider the implications we may well find that the use of craft of less than a minimum size will be seriously restricted.

Talking of France - I enjoyed Alan Bydes' letter so much I have included it with this Newsletter. Also enclosed are -

Booklet on personal survival at sea.
Updated BCU hand out on sea canoeing.
Report from Tom Baptie on the 4th National Sea Kayak Meet.
Sean Dixon's report on the Jervis Bay Trip.
Alan Byde's leaflet on his cockpit liner.

COMING EVENTS

1. ASKC/BCU Sea Touring Committee Bristol Channel weekend, 21 - 22 July 1979.
Details enclosed.
2. October 12 - 14 - An inland canoeing course at Grafham Water, Cambridge, for improvers over the age of 17, directed by me. Details from the Warden, Grafham Water Residential Centre, West Perry, Huntingdon, Cambs.
3. The Third National Sea Canoeing Symposium, December 15/16 1979 at Cliff College, Calver, Sheffield. Sponsored by the Advanced Sea Kayak Club attendance is open to all for this residential weekend on a first come first served basis and will cost £16.50 per head all in. To me for further details.

4. FOR SALE

ASKC ties @ £2.00 each incl of P & P.

ASKC stickers @ 30p each incl of P & P.

ASKC letter headed paper, available shortly, price as yet unknown.

EXPEDITION REPORTS, NEWS, VIEWS AND OPINIONS - Please let me have yours.

J J Ramwell