



Advice To Coaches on: FIVE STAR TEST SEA KAYAK

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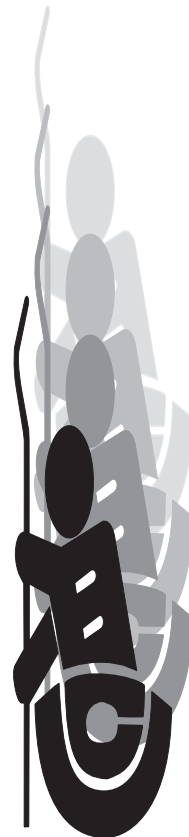
A resource for BCU Coaches....



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FIVE STAR TEST

SEA KAYAK



AIM

The purpose of this test is to ensure that the successful candidate has sufficient knowledge and skill to lead others of adequate ability on sea journeys, up to and including advanced level, with safety, in British conditions. When used with the relevant coaching award it shows that the candidate has sufficient expertise to coach and lead groups in more demanding situations.

This award is intended for paddlers who journey on the sea in areas where tidal races, headlands, open crossings, swell and challenging coastlines may be encountered. The award should be accessible to all those people who journey on the sea on a regular basis and should not be seen as the preserve of a few elite performers. It is envisaged that the average club member canoeing regularly, should be able to obtain this award within three years of starting to paddle regularly on the sea.

PRE-REQUISITES

Due to the nature of this test and its remit for leadership it is necessary that candidates should show three days logged experience of formal training in leadership, safety and rescue, prior to assessment. Such experience may be gained on advertised courses, or from endorsement by a level 5 coach

The candidate will have documented a minimum of six journeys on the open sea.

These will have involved a variety of different conditions including:

- A journey of a minimum distance of 20 nautical miles. (see journeying)

- An open crossing of at least 5 nautical miles.

- Navigation in poor visibility and darkness.

- Winds reaching at least force 4.

- Exposure to no landing zones.

- Tide races and overfalls.

- Camping from a kayak.

- Tidal streams of at least 3 knots.

- Paddling in swell and waves.

The candidate must already hold the BCU 4 Star test (or be recommended for exemption by a current level 5 Sea Coach).

The candidate must hold an appropriate, and current, first aid award (e.g.BCU Lifeguards Aquatic First Aid - 8 hour course). Any of the nationally recognised standard first aid certificates, or any H&SE approved, are acceptable provided they involve a minimum of 8 hours training and include CPR and EAV.

ASSESSOR

An A5 Sea Assessors as per student ratio supported by an A4 Sea assessor





SYLLABUS

Theory

Navigation; Weather; Equipment; Environment; History; First Aid

Practical

Show an efficient and effective forward paddling technique.

Demonstrate an ability to manoeuvre and control a kayak in a variety of different situations.

Launch and land in a variety of situations.

Perform a range of rescues.

Roll in rough water

Be conversant with different methods of towing.

Show the ability to navigate on the water.

Exercise group control and show concern for the general welfare of other group members.

Demonstrate the capability to handle a range of incidents.

Journeying

Have experience of a minimum of six journeys on the open sea. These will have involved a variety of different conditions.

Two of the journeys must have taken place in a different sea area.

At least one journey must have involved an overnight camp or bivvy.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Theory

As well as oral questions over the course of the assessment it is envisaged that there will be two written examinations. The first will take the form of a written paper which is sent out in advance and for which the candidate will be able to utilise all the resources which are at their disposal to answer the questions. The second will be a navigation exercise, which will usually be undertaken on the first evening of the assessment course. The candidate should have produced sufficient work for the assessors to make a judgement as to their competence within two hours.

Navigation

Plan a two day journey in an unfamiliar area which includes an open crossing.

Weather

Know where to obtain relevant shipping and weather forecasts. Understand the probable sequence of weather which occurs during the passage of a depression.

Have an understanding of the following:

The formation of fog, onshore and offshore winds, the effect of relief, line squalls.

The relationship between the pattern of isobars on a synoptic chart and the probable resultant wind speed and direction.

Be able to relate physical signs to the actual forecast.



Equipment

Show an understanding of the variety of equipment which is available including radio and navigation aids.

Environment

Candidates should be aware of the environmental factors that affect the sea. These will include the effect of wind, tidal movement, swell and physical factors. The candidate should also show a basic knowledge of the wildlife which is likely to be encountered on the sea and be aware of times and areas when special consideration should be given. The candidate should show a personal responsibility for the environment.

History

Show a knowledge of past and present developments in the sport of sea kayaking.

Coastguard

Have a knowledge of the role and responsibilities of the Coastguard Service.

PRACTICAL

The assessment course will normally be run over a weekend or similar time span. The first evening will be spent on the navigation exercise and course administration, followed by two days and a night undertaking a journey of the appropriate level. It is anticipated that an overnight bivvy or camp will be involved.

Forward Paddling

The candidate should be able to demonstrate efficient and effective forward paddling technique in different wind and sea conditions. This should include a following sea and a beam wind.

Manoeuvre and Control

The candidate should show manoeuvring skills in relation to static and moving objects and demonstrate good control in moving and broken water. Where a rudder or skeg is fitted the candidate should demonstrate reasonable control in the event of a failure.

Launching and Landing

The candidate should show the ability to launch and land themselves and the members of their group in a variety of conditions. This may involve beaches, rocky inlets, headlands and surf. They should also show the ability to land an injured paddler.

Rescues

The candidate should have a good repertoire of rescues and be able to adapt them to a range of conditions. It is expected that they should be able to rescue a loaded sea kayak without assistance apart from the casualty. In addition, the candidate should have a knowledge of a variety of self rescues and be able to demonstrate one. This part of the test should not take place in calm conditions but it is not necessary to perform it in a tide race.

Rolling

Perform a roll in rough water.



Towing

The candidate should have a towing system and be aware of the need for flexibility and be able to drop and pick up the tow with ease. They should demonstrate single and multiple tows.

Navigation

The candidate must demonstrate the ability to keep a compass course on open water and make good a course using transits. They should be able to fix their position using a combination of bearings and transits. The candidates should be able to navigate in poor visibility or the hours of darkness. They should be able to plan alternative routes whilst afloat which take into account wind and tidal conditions. They should also be able to identify features from the chart and recognise navigation marks.

Group Control

The candidate should exercise appropriate group control whilst on the water. They should also be concerned for the comfort and welfare of the party throughout the whole journey. The importance of effective group control cannot be over-emphasised.

Incidents

The candidate should carry and have easily accessible suitable means for summoning help in an emergency. They should have a first aid kit and be familiar with the use of its contents. A repair kit should also be carried. It should be possible to effect a repair on a kayak whilst afloat as well as being able to deal with more substantial problems to the equipment whilst ashore. The candidate should be equipped and prepared to deal with any incidents which could occur during the course of the journey.

Equipment

It is expected that by the time the candidate is ready for assessment they will be aware of what equipment is required for undertaking a multi-day journey. It is reasonable for people to make personal choices as regards equipment but they should be prepared to justify those decisions. It is not essential for candidates to present themselves for assessment in a specialised sea kayak, but due to the fact that they may have to paddle with people in those type of craft they should have some experience of paddling a variety of sea kayaks including singles and doubles.

