

RACE REGULATIONS

Organisers

The organisers are voluntary individuals that make up the “Oban Sea Kayak Race”, and are referred to as the “organisers”, throughout this document and the website.

Sorry to burden you with the “legal /safety stuff” but please take the time to read through this section as it contains important information, failure to do so could prevent your day racing or paddling with the Oban Sea Kayak Race.

The Race

Sea kayaking by its very nature contains a risk element, all paddlers must be aware of the dangers facing paddlers whilst “at sea”. While no formal qualification is required it is strongly recommended that paddlers have or be at the standard of the British Canoe Union’s Sea Proficiency or Three Star level with experience of sea paddling. It is suggested that paddlers have had experience of several different coastal regions and to have competed at least one extended paddle, exceeding ten Nautical Miles.

Kerrera is almost five miles long and two miles wide at its widest part. It is a beautiful rural Scottish west coast island, steeped in history and contains much natural history. It provides shelter to the busy port of Oban. It has had its fair share of maritime disasters and many sections of coastline are inaccessible, some only accessible in calm conditions. The south and west coast of Kerrera is particularly vulnerable to a large open “fetch”, and sea conditions can quickly become challenging.

A wind against tide scenario, especially to the south of the island can be affected by tidal flows from the Sound of Kerrera, and Loch Feochan, the tide race between Kerrera and Bach Island and the north entrance to Oban Bay can be hazardous. The north entrance to Oban Bay is treated as a “constricted channel” for Maritime Regulations (i.e. sail and small paddle-craft **DO NOT HAVE** Priority). There are no proper roads on Kerrera, although a track does run from the ferry to the south and another to the west of the island.

Rules

The race start is timed to avoid the regular ferries to and from Oban.

NO Race Kayaks should impede the CalMac Ferries or be in the Ferry Terminal Area prior to 12.00hrs.

Entries

In order for a sea kayak to compete, a completed entry form must first be accepted by the organisers.

Entry Forms

Entry forms are available on-line and/or from the organisers, for non electronic post please provide a stamped, self addressed envelope.

Responsibility

The safety of kayaks, their entire management, including insurance, shall be the sole responsibility of the owner/skipper racing the kayak. Where a kayak has been borrowed'/rented/hired etc. it is the skippers responsibility that the kayak(s) meets the required standard and insurance requirements.

Scrutinising

- All kayaks and personal safety equipment will be scrutinised prior to the start of the race. If the kayak and/or safety equipment does not comply with the conditions, the entry may be rejected.
- Subsequent spot inspections may be carried out at anytime, failure to comply with the conditions will result in disqualification from the race.

Sea Kayaks

- Only "bona fide" sea kayaks will be accepted, they must be in a "sea-worthy" condition and fully serviceable.
- They **must** have at least one watertight bulkhead and water tight hatch.
- It is recommended that spare paddles are carried, and accessible whilst on the water.
- Method of navigation: It is essential that a suitable method of navigation is accessible on the water, which includes a compass. A Silva type compass, secured by a lanyard is acceptable.

The ideal chart for the area is Admiralty Chart number 2387, Firth of Lorn, Northern Part, 1:25,000. For sea kayak use the section containing Kerrera should be made water proof and of a size suitable for use on the deck of a sea kayak.

Some paddlers like to use Ordnance Survey maps, while these provide great land coverage they do not provide the required information of underwater obstructions or tidal information. The Explorer 395 map covers the area at 1:25,000 and the Landranger 49 covers the area at a scale of 1:50,000.

N.B. Any paddlers using OS maps must ensure that the relevant tidal information has been obtained prior to the start of the race.

Personal Equipment

- **All paddlers** must wear an approved buoyancy aid/life jacket containing suitable buoyancy and be of a suitable design to support the paddler.
N.B. Buoyancy aids do not necessarily keep an unconscious person face up in adverse weather conditions.
- **We recommend** that all paddlers carry suitable water proof clothing, which includes leggings, jacket and hat.
- **All paddlers** must carry spare dry warm clothing, including glove, warm hat and foot wear, in a waterproof container/bag etc.
- **All paddlers** must carry at least one exposure bag, or bivi-bag.
- **All paddlers** must carry emergency food and water.
- Torch with spare batteries.

Additional Safety Equipment

We recommend that all paddlers carry:

- Two hand held orange smoke flares
- or
- Two hand held pin point flares; (**flares can be purchased at The Oban Kayak School**)
- Orange exposure bag

We recommend that Paddlers carry a VHF Marine Radio, please ensure that these comply with relevant licences.

Mobile phones, whilst useful do not receive complete coverage on remote island locations and cannot be used for radio direction finding by the rescue services. Different service providers have various coverage levels in remote parts of Scotland. The organiser's personal view is that Vodafone may provide better signal requirements in this location.

A waterproof covering is highly recommended.

Insurance

We recommend all paddlers hold Third Party Indemnity Insurance as a minimum. Suitable coverage is supplied free with the British Canoe Union membership or with any of the affiliated country organisations (BCU, SCA, WCA & CANI).

Identification numbers

All kayaks entered into the Race must carry an identification number (Number provided on the race day). It is the responsibility of the paddler to ensure that the identification number is visible from the port side of the kayak.

Alternative course

An alternate course will be notified should adverse weather prevail.

Retirals

All retirals must be notified to the organisers ASAP, and must have received a response to be accepted.

**Please note that this is a safety requirement,
in order to prevent a large scale search and rescue event.**

Protests

Must be notified to the organisers ASAP and confirmed in writing to the organisers within two hours of the race end.

Abandoned race

There is no rescue cover provided, however several vessels will be on the water, and several craft will follow the kayaks during the race. Any such official craft will make the best safe attempt to notify paddlers of any abandoned race notification.

Communications

All official race craft will be contactable by VHF Marine Radio. The official race start/finish boat; is called "Seaforth", the race channel will be 72. "Seaforth" will also be contactable by mobile phone (07768 924 841, please bear in mind limited phone/radio access may be a problem in some locations).

Additional Information

For any further information or contact please contact the organisers through the website or; -

Gus Brydon 07747695016, Mark Carter 07768924841 or Email info@obanseakayakrace.org