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"Keeping Our Beaches Bare"

Airline Ad with Breasts Ruled Not Offensive

July 31, 2003 AFP & mdash

The body set up to monitor advertising in Britain on Wednesday said it had rejected complaints about billboards showing a woman's breasts and sporting the slogan "Discover Weapons of Mass Distraction" in order to advertise a cheap airline.

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) said it had received a total of 186 complaints from people who either found the ad degrading to women or considered that it trivialized the recent war in Iraq.

Take a peek at our top 10 list of "clothing optional" stretches of sand:

10. Little Beach, Hawaii
9. Red, White & Blue Beach, CA
8. Haulover Beach, Florida
7. Red Beach, Greece
6. Praia do Pinho, Brazil
5. Hedonism II, Jamaica

4. Sandy Hook Beach, New Jersey

3. Wreck Beach, British Columbia

2. Ocho Rios, Jamaica

1. Montalivet, France

ASA said it judged the ad, placed by the low-cost airline EasyJet and aimed at attracting passengers to hot-weather tourist destinations, to have been "light-hearted and humorous," and "unlikely to cause serious or widespread offense."

Although the comparison of a woman's breasts to the "weapons of mass destruction" which the United States and Britain failed to discover in Iraq was "distasteful," it did not demean the troops who served in the Iraq war, the authority found.

The airline itself dismissed accusations of sexism in its ad, saying that it had just been "topical, humorous and irreverent."

The ad, which appeared on both

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billboards and in newspapers, showed a woman's breasts in a bikini top, and also had the slogan: "Lowest fares to the sun." ☆