

# The SKCC Centurion

The official newsletter of the Straight key Century Club

VOLUME 02, ISSUE 087

AUGUST 2008

## SKCC Elmer Frequency

Attention all SKCC members. The SKCC projects team has declared that 7114 KHz is now the SKCC Elmer Frequency. We challenge our Elmers or any member that wants to help, to monitor that frequency whenever they can.

New CW operators need a safe haven where they can get on the air and not have to worry about making mistakes. Maybe for that first CW contact without the stress or fear of worrying about fouling up. The goal is to take away that fear, because WE DON'T CARE IF YOU MESS UP!

New: Novice Day - every Friday 0000z to 2400z is now Novice Day on 7114 KHz. No contest, just a day set aside for the beginners, the slower ops or anyone that wants to help. The goal is to congregate our beginners and they can help each other. Also to increase activity on 40 meters above 7100 KHz.

New: SKCC QRS Frequencies. A few weeks ago, we allocated that 2KHz up from each SKCC calling frequency was to be for high speed bug operators to congregate. We now declare that 2 KHz below each calling frequency will be QRS for our slower operators to congregate. Please note: The QRS frequencies are only suggested, the same as the bug frequencies are.

On behalf of the SKCC Project Team, Thank you! 73, Bill NT9K

*Editors Note: This is an excellent move by the SKCC Projects*

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*committee. As SKCC grows and attracts more first time straight key, and possibly new to CW, hams, it is important we recognize many of these members will likely need encouragement and practice. This gives them a place to practice, make mistakes, receive elmering and build confidence. Even though we encourage new to straight key and new to CW members to jump in the fray with us, most of us are not aware of the intimidation factor they face.*

## UK Straight Key Week 2008

Our friends, FISTS UK, are sponsoring a week-long straight key event. Participation might be of interest to SKCC members who enjoy contesting or would like to make some straight key DX contacts. Propagation at this point in the solar cycle is spotty at best, no pun intended, but some fortunate souls may be able to make a few contacts.

STRAIGHT KEY WEEK 2008	
DATE	0001 UTC on 7th September to 2359 on 13th September 08. UTC
FREQUENCY	All licensed amateur bands except the WARC bands.
SCORING	5 points FISTS club stations, 3 points for a FISTS affiliated Club Station, 2 points for a Fists Member, 1 point for a Non Member.
EXCHANGE	RST/NAME/QTH/FIST No or NM/DAY No. Sunday is Day 1 Monday is Day 2 and so on To Saturday as Day 7. All entrants must have used a straight Key for all their QSO's but the worked station does not have to use a straight key.
LOGS	To include DATE/CALL/NAME/QTH/QRG/RST/TIME/FIST No or NM/DAY No/POINTS. All entries to be received by the 22nd September 08.
GENERAL	PLEASE vacate or pass on the FIST calling frequency after 5 continuous QSO's or QSY off the calling frequency. PLEASE NOTE, These contests are meant to be fun and friendly as well as competitive. Any contact not showing the required return information will be excluded from the total scores.
SEND LOGS TO:	All entries can be received by post to; R.D.Walker, 125, Devereux Road, West Bromwich. B70 6RQ. or by EMAIL m0bpt@blueyonder.co.uk in Excel/csv/tabbed word format if possible please

For more information on this event visit [http://www.m0bpt.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/activity\\_calendar\\_2008.htm](http://www.m0bpt.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/activity_calendar_2008.htm) and scroll to the bottom of the page.

All 3 Fists UK Club calls are planned to be on air that week including Geo Longden's ( the founder of Fists ) old call which has been re-assigned to the Club as requested by his family.

## SKCC/FISTS Lookup

Many of our members are also members of other clubs, some of which also exchange membership numbers. FISTS is one such club. Getting both club membership numbers is easy if you know the operator is also a FISTS member. That is where Rob Thompson, G4LMW, comes in. Rob is a member of both SKCC and FISTS and has created a lookup utility to help

identify dual club members. The utility is very simple and supports query by callsign, FISTS number or SKCC number. Rob maintains the database so the results are accurate.

The lookup utility is an Active Server Page (ASP) which runs from Rob's web site. This means it is not available as a standalone utility and must be run from his web site, <http://www.g4lmw.co.uk/links.html>.

If you are an SKCC member with FISTS membership, give Rob's utility a try. If you do try Rob's lookup utility, please send us your feedback. We will share it with the club.

## New SKCC Elmer Manager

Since the pay is so low, but the job is so appreciated, it is my pleasure to announce the filling of the newly created position of Elmer Manager. Jeff K9JP has already started work to enhance our Elmer program.

Jeff will be contacting each of our SKCC Elmers asking if they still would like to be on the list and if so, to write a short paragraph describing the level of help they are able to give and what they are proficient in teaching. Whatever they feel would be helpful to a potential student.

With Jeff's help, the SKCC Elmer program can only get better. Thank you Jeff, for offering to take this on. For more information on the Elmer program, see: <http://www.skccgroup.com/elmers.htm>.

73, Bill NT9K

## Editor's Soapbox

Mark Saunders, KJ7BS SKCC 2240T

The WARC bands are a safe haven for operate during contests because these bands, 12 MHz, 18 MHz, and 30 MHz, are designed to be contest free. Over the last few months, I've heard SKCC sprint activity on 30 meters. Sprints are viewed as contests and therefore prohibited by agreement between IARU member nations, of which the United States is a member.

The SKS and WES rules state operations on 10, 15, 20, 40, 80, and 160 meters only. So lets please be careful during SKCC Sprints and other contest like events that we are not the group to cause an incident on the WARC bands.

While I am on the subject of operating procedures. Does QRL mean anything to anyone? It means; QRL? - Is the frequency in use?, QRL - The frequency is in use. I've heard several instances while putting together this issue of The SKCC Centurion where members start sending CQ SKCC without first sending QRL first. This is getting more common as time goes on.

Without sending QRL? how do you know if the frequency is in use an you just cannot hear the other station? Answer, you

don't. The bands are fickle these days and sometimes only one side of a QSO can be heard. Additionally, there are more and more members becoming active in QRP operations, which at times makes it difficult to hear both sides of the QSO.

What is the procedure for checking whether the frequency is busy? Send QRL? and LISTEN. If you hear nothing, send QRL? again and LISTEN. Hearing no responses, the frequency MAY be clear for you to use. Listening is the key. Sending QRL? seconds apart is not listening.

What responses can you get from sending QRL? You may hear nothing meaning the frequency MAY be clear. You may hear GA which means Go Ahead, usually this operator has been monitoring the frequency and knows it is clear. If You could hear C or Y indicating the frequency is in use. If you receive any response indicating the frequency is in use, DO NOT SEND ANYTING ELSE, simply wait or move on.

Some times a station sends C or Y and the station sending QRL? does not hear the response. In this case, if you hear it, it is acceptable for you to send C or Y, but that is all.

What do I do if someone starts a QSO on top of me? You have a few options, keep working because they obviously cannot hear you or don't care. Try to let them know you are in QSO and ask them to QSY. Finally, you may need to be the one to QSY, which I find to be the best solution.

## SKCC Contest Results

### SKS Sprint

**July 23, 2008**—Congratulations to Russ, K0LUW who placed first with Jack, K4CNW placing second and Frank, KB4T place third. Well done gentlemen. A special note for Gary, K9MMS operating the club call K9SKC, his score was fourth highest in points, but the club call is not eligible to place. Nice showing by 60 participants.

### WES Sprintathon

**July 13, 2008**—Congratulations to Tom, K4ZBG who placed first with Ron, K9DTH placing second and Gary, K9MMS placing third. Well done gentlemen. A special note for Russ, K0LUW operating the club call K9SKC, his score was fourth highest in points, but the club call is not eligible to place. Nice showing by 48 participants.

## New Members

4558, KC2IFT, Jeffrey, Island Park, NY  
 4559, KE5REJ, Ed, Cabot, AR  
 4560, ND4Z, Rick, Gilbert, SC  
 4561, KD0EGD, Rolf, Loveland, CO  
 4562, IZ1DFF, Marco, Genova, Italy  
 4563, AB2VE, John, South Plainfield, NJ  
 4564, KE4ESG, Tim, Ohatchee, AL

- 4565, WA2PJF, Vito, Bay Shore, NY  
 4566, KG6D, Kevin, Manteca, CA  
 4567, KC3QU, Hank, Lillian, AL  
 4568, VE9KM, Rob, Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada  
 4569, N4TRB, Brian, Lawrenceville, GA  
 4570, AF2Q, Bob, Lawrenceville, NJ  
 4571, G4MSN, Ray, Leeds, United Kingdom  
 4572, WA0AW, Andy, Sedalia, CO  
 4573, K7KTP, Dick, Portland, OR  
 4574, KH6OU, Jim, Jacksonville, FL  
 4575, N0JMS, Jonathan, Valdosta, GA  
 4576, K4SPS, Steve, Louisville, KY  
 4577, KE5TSL, Jed, Jamez Springs, NM  
 4578, WA8WFH, Johnny, Minneapolis, MN  
 4579, KA5EXI, Michael, Ohatchee, AL  
 4580, W0BCA, Rod, Brooklyn Park, MN  
 4581, W6ONV, Steve, Oakley, CA  
 4582, W1VR, Dave, Sanford, FL  
 4583, AF6KQ, Greg, Culver City, CA  
 4584, K1OIK, Burt, South Dennis, MA  
 4585, W3JY, Joe, Malvern, PA  
 4586, WB2DFC, Dave, Akron, OH  
 4587, VE5ZG, Malcolm, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada  
 4588, W4SVP, Steve, Buena, Vista, VA  
 4589, KB3RLI, Jonathan, Avondale, PA  
 4590, AE2L, Joshua, Rose Hill, NC  
 4591, K3VYL, Robert, Newark, DE  
 4592, VE3WH, Sam, Ingersoll, Ontario, Canada  
 4593, W0EA, Tom, Camanche, IA  
 4594, AB3HQ, Richard, Landisville, PA  
 4595, W4VAB, Hugh, Knoxville, TN  
 4596, 2E0DNL, Derek, Northampton, England, United Kingdom  
 4597, EA8ALP, Adelto, Llanos de Aridane, Canary Islands  
 4598, KC9ILJ, Bob, Oakland, IL  
 4599, SV1HEM, Giorgos, Athens, Greece  
 4600, W6OAV, Bill, Centennial, CO  
 4601, K4JTD, Sterling, Jacksonville, FL  
 4602, NI3F, Ken, Bethesda, MD  
 4603, KI4SII, Powell, Murray, KY  
 4604, K2IDK, Ed, Howell, NJ  
 4605, WR5J, Curt, Seattle, WA  
 4606, KL7AI, Mike, Anchorage, AK  
 4607, AB0TX, Mike, Halstead, KS  
 4608, MM0GSS, Gordon, Dunfermline, Scotland  
 4609, K3WD, Bill, Severna Park, MD  
 4610, OZ0JX, Soren, Norre Alslev, Denmark  
 4611, RV3GM, Oleg, Lipetsk, Russia  
 4612, W4IHI, Gary, Largo, FL  
 4613, KA1DBE, Jeff, Virginia Beach, VA  
 4614, N5KJ, Mark, Jasper, TX  
 4615, N7DLI, Mike, Coeur d'Alene, ID  
 4616, AC0BP, Ralph, Howard, CO  
 4617, KB0VCC, Dale, Conway, NH  
 4618, K5CFJ, Charles, Destrehan, LA  
 4619, W6TUK, Tuck, Foster City, CA  
 4620, KI7WO, Alan, Oak Grove, MO  
 4621, XE2HUM, Oscar, La Paz, Mexico  
 4622, N4QE, Sam, Mobile, AL  
 4623, WB0RMK, SMARTS Radio Club, Mound, MN  
 4624, WB5WZM, Roy, Pearland, TX  
 4625, K8KEG, David, Lancaster, OH  
 4626, VK6SIG, Nico, Fremantle, Australia  
 4627, WA7AZ, Matthew, Champaign, IL  
 4628, AA9GG, Paul, Lisle, IL  
 4629, K4MEN, John, Huntsville, AL  
 4630, AE5SP, Steve, Bauxite, AR  
 4631, KA4TWK, Bill, Winnsboro, SC  
 4632, IZ5IOX, Mike, Grosseto, Italy  
 4633, KA3IGW, Tim, Barnwell, SC  
 4634, N3FRT, Bob, Washington, DC  
 4635, W4BAJ, Alvin, N. Charleston, SC  
 4636, W4DDA, Doug, Huntsville, AL  
 4637, K8MEG, Rich, Grand, Blanc, MI  
 4638, N9FFG, Bill, Oostburg, WI  
 4639, DC7BTS, Saggi, Erwitte/NRW, Germany  
 4640, VE3KKO, Lewis, Cobden, Ont. Canada  
 4641, KI4KPD, Dennis, Louisville, KY  
 4642, IK7TVE, Pasquale, Molfetta, Italy  
 4643, ZL3NB, Bill, Christchurch, New Zealand  
 4644, KD7MSC, Sean, Milwaukie, OR  
 4645, W2IW, Michael, Raleigh, NC  
 4646, K2DGM, Paul, Green Brook, NJ  
 4647, W9HGO, Harry, Scott City, MO  
 4648, AD5FG, David, Canyon, TX  
 4649, KN6Y, Steve, Lake Balboa, CA  
 4650, G6PBS, Colin, Rochester, Kent, England  
 4651, KA3P, Robert, North Huntingdon, PA  
 4652, KB3BFQ, Eric, Pittsburgh, PA  
 4653, W2UX, Gary, Lexington, SC  
 4654, N4XE, Willie, Roanoke, VA  
 4655, N5SQL, Greg, Fredericksburg, TX  
 4656, KB3QJA, Mike, Chambersburg, PA  
 4657, W3BI, Rick, Allentown, PA  
 4658, W3DWD, Roger, Cochranville, PA  
 4659, KE5JRM, John, Stillwater, OK  
 4660, W3TDH, Tom, Takoma Park, MD  
 4661, WA7NWP, Bill, Redmond, WA

## SKCC Awards

### Centurion

- 226, KL8DX, 3800C, Phil, Denali Nat'l Park, AK, 4, July 2008  
 227, W4UCZ, 3609C, Mark, Atlanta, GA, 21, July 2008  
 228, KI6BHB, 4186C, David, Chino Hills, CA, 21, July 2008  
 229, K6JF, 4261C, Jim, Sunnyvale, CA, 21, July, 2008  
 230, HC2AD, 3671C, Allan, Guayaquil, Ecuador, 21, July 2008  
 231, K9DTH, 3698C, Ron, Godfrey, IL, 30, July 2008  
 232, KC9GMN, 2297C, Bob, Clinton, IL, 30, July 2008

### Tribune

- 116, K8KS, 4444C, Kaz, Ann Arbor, MI, 10, July 2008,  
 117, WD9DWE, 1564C, Dennis, Seymour, IN, 18, July 2008,

## Key Of The Month



Hi All AT SKCC,

One of my Vibroplex keys its a 1917 Original model with T damper. Some parts are not normal for the year, but are original Vibroplex parts. Name plate has 4 lines and THE VIBROPLEX MANUFACTURED BY HORACE G. MARTINNEW YORK .ES SERIAL NUMBER IS ON THE SIDE OF THE "T" DAMPER.#59960 Most of my keys are used daily on Ham bands.

*If you would like your key featured in Key of The Month, send your picture and a short description to [kj7bs@cox.net](mailto:kj7bs@cox.net).*

## Shack Of The Month



Here is a picture of my shack with lot of older gear. My newest is a TenTec Orion. I use all the telegraph keys shown on the operating table. I am ex-Navy operator from 1959~1961. After the Navy 22 years in the Merchant Marine as Radio Electronics Officer. You can see the ship's radio room clock.

*Email pictures of your shack with a description to [kj7bs@cox.net](mailto:kj7bs@cox.net).*

## QSL Of The Month



*Send images of your QSL card and see them posted for all members to see. Email images to [kj7bs@cox.net](mailto:kj7bs@cox.net)*

## Member Products

### Wooden Key Bases

George Osier, N2JNZ, makes beautiful key bases for your keys. I have made bases in Redheart, Chechen and Santo Mahogany in 5/8 and 1 inch thickness. I finish the bases in Minwax Wipe On Poly Gloss which gives a great shine but doesn't make the wood look like its covered in plastic." Samples of the bases are on the SKCC YAHOO group under "photos" and then to the N2JNZ Keys Folder. These are made from exotic woods and some are almost too pretty to drill holes into for mounting your key. Contact George [gosier@twcny.rr.com](mailto:gosier@twcny.rr.com) for a list of exotic woods currently available. Key base pricing is \$10 each plus \$5 USPS Priority Mail shipping.

Her are two samples of his work. On the left is Redheart and on the right is Chechen.



These key bases are 8 1/2 inches long, 5 1/2 inches wide and 1/2 inch thick. These will make any key look good and will be a nice addition to your shack.

### Gold SKCC Stickers

Mark Saunders, KJ7BS, is making Gold SKCC stickers available to all SKCC members. These stickers are 1 inch in diameter peel-and-stick gold foil stickers. The gold stickers

come 63 to a sheet on an 8 1/2 x 11 inch page. The sticker has the SKCC key logo centered on the sticker and member numbers can be printed below the logo, including Centurion and Tribune designators. Pricing for the Gold SKCC stickers is very reasonable \$0.60 per sheet of 63 plus shipping.



- 1 sheet (63) \$1.19
- 2 sheets (126) \$2.18
- 3 sheets (189) \$2.78)
- 4 sheets (252) \$3.38
- 5 sheets (315) \$4.15
- 6 sheets (378) \$4.75
- 7 sheets (441) \$5.35
- 8 sheets (504) \$6.12
- 9 sheets (567) \$6.72
- 10 sheets (630) \$7.32

(Prices include shipping)

Quantities over 10 sheets, please contact Mark for postage quote. Processing is 5-7 days excluding weekends. Orders and payments via PayPal to [kj7bs@cox.net](mailto:kj7bs@cox.net) ,USPS money order or check to:

Mark Saunders  
13226 N. 62nd Dr.  
Glendale, AZ 85304

Please include the above pricing when ordering,

## The SKCC Centurion

13226 N. 62nd Dr.  
Glendale, AZ 85304  
Phone: 623-606-1976  
[kj7bs@arrl.net](mailto:kj7bs@arrl.net)

**With SKCC every day is Straight Key Night!**

## Operating Frequencies

These are the suggested frequencies (+or - KHz) for SKCC members to congregate and look for other SKCC members. These are suggestions only, nobody owns any frequency. Be courteous and find a clear spot.

1.820 MHz	3.550 MHz	3.530 MHz
7.120 MHz	7.055 MHz	10.120 MHz
14.050 MHz	18.080 MHz	21.050 MHz
24.910 MHz	28.050 MHz	50.090 MHz
	144.070 MHz	

## Operating Events

**Monthly 24 Hour SKCC Operating Event:** The first day of each month from 0000Z to 2359Z is designated as a monthly SKCC operating event. For SKCC members and non-SKCC members to work each other for credit. Contact with 100 SKCC members will qualify that person for a certificate of accomplishment. Visit <http://www.skccgroup.com> for more info or contact [n6wk@n6wk.com](mailto:n6wk@n6wk.com).

**SKCC Sprint:** SKCC Sprints take place each month on the fourth Wednesday of the month from 0100z to 0300z. Rules for participation can be found at <http://www.skccgroup.com/sprint/sks/>.

**SKCC Weekend Sprintathon:** Every Second Sunday of each month beginning at 0000z UTC and ending 2359z UTC. This operating event is open to all licensed amateurs. Periodically themes will be announced for upcoming weekend sprints. See <http://www.skccgroup.com/sprint/wes/> for more information and rules.

## SKCC Member Resources

**SKCC website**—Everything you need to know about the Straight Key Century Club. Check back frequently as this site changes, <http://www.skccgroup.com>.

**SKCC Yahoo Groups Email List**—<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/skcc/>. A moderated email list for the exchange of ideas about SKCC.

**SKCC QSL Bureau**—Dan Rhodes, KA3CTQ manages this free service for SKCC members. Send and receive QSL cards for QSOs between SKCC members via this service. To re-

The Straight Key Century Club is the fastest growing CW club focusing on manual generation of Morse code. Founded in January 2006, SKCC has grown to over 3700 members in calendar 2007. Members enjoy a very active email list server, SKCC forums, monthly sprints, and a monthly 24 hour operating event. Information about the Straight Key Century Club can be found at <http://www.skccgroup.com>.



ceive your QSL cards, you need to have SASE (self addresses stamped envelopes) on file with the SKCC QSL Bureau. Dan also says non-members can send you QSL cards through the SKCC Bureau. For more information see <http://www.skccgroup.com/qs1.htm>.

**Award Tracker**—Don Kemp, NN8B (SKCC 0036) maintains an SKCC Award Tracker spreadsheet to assist members in keeping track of their current standings with SKCC awards. Don posts updates to this valuable tool in the files section of the SKCC Yahoo Groups <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/skcc/files/>.

**The SKCC Centurion**—The official newsletter of the Straight Key Century Club published monthly. The SKCC Centurion is posted on the SKCC site, in the files section of the SKCC Yahoo Groups site, and distributed via email to your email inbox. To join The SKCC Centurion email list, send an email to [The\\_SKCC\\_Centurion\\_subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:The_SKCC_Centurion_subscribe@yahoo.com) with Subscribe in the subject. (485 members subscribed to electronic delivery)

**Spotting Cluster**—Phil, AI4OF (SKCC # 600) has launched a spotting cluster and is making it available to SKCC members. Use this spotting cluster to announce your operations or to find other SKCC members to work. Point your Telnet client to [skcc.matrixlist.com:7300](telnet:skcc.matrixlist.com:7300). Login using your callsign.

**SKCC Sked Page**—Andy, K3UK (SKCC # 1325) maintains an interactive web page where SKCC members can arrange a meeting with other members to work towards SKCC awards or just to rag chew. Check it out at <http://www.obriensweb.com/skccsked/skccsked.php>.

**SKCC Elmers**—Jeff, K9JP (SKCC # 3008) manages the group of SKCC members serving as Elmers for the club. Anyone wishing assistance can visit the SKCC Elmers page for more information, <http://www.skccgroup.com/elmers.htm>.