



Volume 16 Issue 3

The official newsletter of the Straight Key Century Club
"The Rag Chew"
Editor: K8AQM/VE9AQM

September, 2023

CSKM VC3K Canadian Straight Key Month

The Straight Key Century Club's yearly on-air event promotes the club's many Canadian members. This year VC3K is the special call sign that has been granted in Canada for this event, which we refer to as the "Canadian Straight Key Month."



VC3K runs from Sept. 1st. through the 30th. It's a perfect time to introduce or reacquaint hams to the fun of hand-keyed Morse code sent with straight keys, bugs, and side-swipers. Members and non-members alike are welcome to hunt the Canadian-based VC3K stations. Non-members are encouraged but not required to use straight keys for their VC3K contacts. This year we hope to field VC3K operators in all Canadian provinces and territories. You can track your progress working the event stations by referring to the Stats section on the VC3K



Straight Key Month page at the SKCC web site (www.skccgroup.com). Check for regular updates in your standings for Number of Areas, Bands and VC3K operators to document your success.

Earn a QSL card by making at least one contact with any VC3K event station. Work all provinces for a basic sweep; add territories for extra points; check the Op Schedule and Operator Map links to find where and when the VC3K stations are operating.

For SKCC members VC3K is a great opportunity to make lots of progress toward various club awards. Contacts with VC3K stations are valid for SKCC awards purposes. Also, by signing up as a VC3K Operator you can readily log dozens or hundreds of award-eligible QSOs with other SKCC members.

Would you like to sign on as one of our VC3K Operators? You can try it for just an hour or two. Or reserve a series of time slots throughout the month. Code speed and station sophistication are not important. The on-air exchanges tend to be fairly relaxed. Please contact the Province Coordinator in your area for more info. He or she will be eager to sign you up. Our VC3K Operators are key to a successful event!

73,

The Canadian Straight Key Month Committee



Canadian Maple Awards and VY9

Are you aware SKCC has an award at several levels for working the Canadian Provinces? On the web page left side under awards you'll find the information for the awards. The Canadian Straight Key Month is the perfect time to chase and qualify for these various award levels. Many of us have worked quite a few of the Provinces but it's been difficult to find some of the rare ones with SKCC members. VO1, VO2, VY2, VE8, VY1, VY0 and a very rare one, VY9 are all hard to come by.

Last year a group of SKCCers operated from VY2 and netted over 1500 QSOs on 160-10m. This same group of operators will be VC3K/VY9 this year from September 7-11 including the September WES. VY9 is not a Province, it is a "territory" but counts according to the Canadian Maple Awards as a Province. There are only four VY9s across Canadian; we will be a "field unit" of VY9DFL, the "David Florida Laboratory, Canadian Space Agency" which is similar to our NASA and located near Ottawa, Canada. We'll have three stations on the air (VC3K/VY9) and all running ~500 watts 160-10m. Watch the sked page for frequencies. Work us early and often!



VE0 - Stations at sea	VE8 - Northwest Territories
VA1/VE1 - Nova Scotia	VE9 - New Brunswick
VA2/VE2 - Quebec	VO1 - Newfoundland
VA3/VE3 - Ontario	VO2 - Labrador
VA4/VE4 - Manitoba	VY0 - Nunavut
VA5/VE5 - Saskatchewan	VY1 - Yukon
VA6/VE6 - Alberta	VY2 - Prince Edward Is.
VA7/VE7 - British Columbia	VY9 - Government of Canada

Award Levels

Yellow Maple Award:

Work any 10 provinces or territories once on any mix of bands to qualify for this award.

(10 contacts)

Orange Maple Award:

Work any 10 provinces or territories on a single band only to qualify for this award.

(10 contacts) Award for each band.

Red Maple Award:

Work any 10 provinces or territories on each of all nine bands to qualify for this award.

(90 contacts)

Gold Maple Award:

Work any 10 provinces or territories on each of all nine bands QRP (5 watts or less at qualifying station end) to qualify for this award.

(90 contacts)

Here is a chance to add a very rare and elusive "province" (and prefix) to your totals for SKCC Maple leaf awards as well as a very "spiffy" QSL card "IF" you are good in the SKCC QSL Bureau (the only way to get a VC3K/VY9 QSL) so check the bureau on the web page and make sure you are "good in the bureau."

73, VC3K/VY9 Team

Bug Cleaning

Editor....The following was written regarding McElroy bugs but is a good process for all bugs:

The McElroy bugs are beautiful when well cleaned. You must disassembly them, put in a vinegar bath for 12-18 hours (all mechanical parts). Brush them with Scotchbrite pad and wash in water. Dry them. The base must be washed with mild soap solution and after, washed in water. All parts so has returned NEW. Assembly them and use the bugs. It is a pity to have them in a armchair. They are great racers, cw machines better than Vibroplex, they must work otherwise the didn't have any value.

73, Luca IK4EWX

Slow Speed Saunter June 1, 2023

Slow Speed Saunter



Didn't do many this time around... too many irons in the fire (again). Thanks for the contacts. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Busy day but squeaked in a few nice QSOs. 73, Ted K8AQM

Slow Speed Saunter Results

Results for Slow Speed Saunter: 1 Jun2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
AB4QL	Barry	24997T	AL	3
WB6IZG	Bruce	17714S	CA	4
W9GOO	John	21474S	IN	2
K8AQM	Ted	1629S	MI	3
K2CWM	Curt	3018S	NJ	9
NC2M	George	26325T	NY	3
KA8HFN	Larry	2046S	OH	1
W7VC	Jordan	24194T	OR	3
WP4SSL	Karlo	27446	PR	5
KA5TJS	Allen	5172S	TX	3
KK0I	Jack	2370S	WI	2

Participants and QSOs by SPC

AL: 1 / 3	CA: 1 / 4	IN: 1 / 2	MI: 1 / 3	NJ: 1 / 9
NY: 1 / 3	OH: 1 / 1	OR: 1 / 3	PR: 1 / 5	TX: 1 / 3
WI: 1 / 2				



Minimal time available, but managed to get a couple for the monthly count. See you all next month. 73, Jack KK0I

CQS! CQS! CQS! CQS!



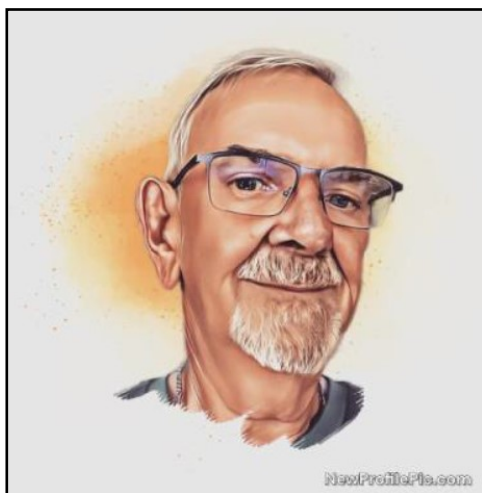
W4RQ...SK

There are many fine hams in SKCC and in May we lost one of the best of the best, Rich W4RQ.

Rich was not only a fine operator who was always involved in SKCC events. Rich gave unselfishly of his time to administer both the Slow Speed Saunter and the monthly SKS events. Rich was the lead coordinator for the fine SKCC booth at "Hamcation" in Orlando, FL.

Rich will be sorely missed on the bands and with his leadership in SKCC activities.

Rest in peace OM.



SKSE June 1, 2023



Straight Key Sprint Europe Results

Results for SKSE: 01-Jun-2023

Overall | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | SWL | By SPC | Soapbox

Overall results

Rank	Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
1	EAT7GU	Manuel	159T	ESP	10	9	1/4/1	150
2	ON7DQ	Luc	14984T	BEL	11	7	1/5/0	142
3	EA6/GM3ZDH	Bob	6027T	BLI	10	8	1/4/1	140
4	AD2BO	RUSS	27372	NY	8	7	2/5/0	136
5	YU7AE	Kare	5790T	SER	9	5	1/5/1	115
6	G4IVV	Jon	26874T	ENG	6	6	1/4/0	91
7	ON5UK	Luk	13764S	BEL	7	5	0/4/1	80
8	F8DTU	Frank	8662C	FRA	5	4	1/3/0	65
9	EA3O	SANTI	11799	ESP	5	5	0/3/1	60
10	G3ZRJ	TONY	3492T	ENG	5	4	1/2/0	55
11	SA5ACN	Joakim	7592	SWE	3	2	0/2/0	26
12	K0KEX	Rick	5220S	MO	2	2	1/0/0	19



Another great time from CW! 73, Frank F8DTU



Using FT-817nd 5W and LDG Z-817H atu with ZS6BKW doublet, K-64 GDR key, from my workplace at hill (JN95ud). Bad propagations and QRN on low bands, 73 and cul in WES. Kare YU7AE



W1DV New SSS Manager



Please welcome Dave W1DV as the new Slow Speed Saunter manager. Dave is also a member of the board for SKCC and manager of the SKCC Elmer program.

Dave is very active in all SKCC events and has a great signal and "ears" from his NC QTH.

Dave is a retired Navy veteran and an ordained pastor/ministry who has traveled the world. He is also trained in oboe and double reed instruments at Juilliard School of Music (NYC) and East-

man School of Music (Rochester, NY). He is a handbell director, tenor soloist, and has conducted international voice choirs in southeast Asia.

He says, "I 'pretend' I am an accomplished fisherman but don't fool very many folks with that claim. And for the most part the fish are safe when I venture out"

Dave looks forward to continue the "SSS" and hopes to grow it even larger. Join Dave in the SSS and enjoy the slower pace of CW helping others improve their CW skills.

Forgive Me, For I Have Strayed...

K8AQM 1629s

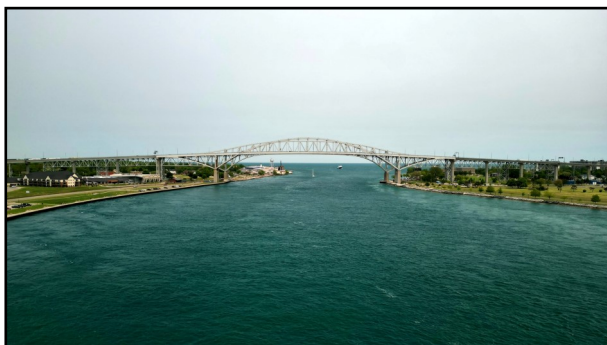
I am a CW man, I have enjoyed it as my preferred mode since being a Novice back in 1961. Yes, I have made many AM/SSB QSOs through the years in contests and many special events. They say with age comes wisdom...maybe to some but maybe not to all.

Until last June I hadn't made a phone contact for more than 10 years...but... My home town has a "museum ship," the lightship "Huron" and my local club decided to activate the ship during Museum Ship Weekend. A fellow SKCCer was in-charge and since I recently moved back home, he asked me to give a hand. He knew I had been very active in Museum Ships and activated many ships around the Great Lakes. What could I do...of course I'd help out a fellow SKCCer and good friend! **I strayed!** If you were in that Museum Ship Event and worked the light ship "Huron" on 40m SSB then you helped me stray from the true path...CW!

I must admit it was an enjoyable time and perhaps I may stray again next year if needed so please...**Forgive Me!**



Drone photos by K8JAD...three ops of the Museum Ships event. No chance to get seasick!

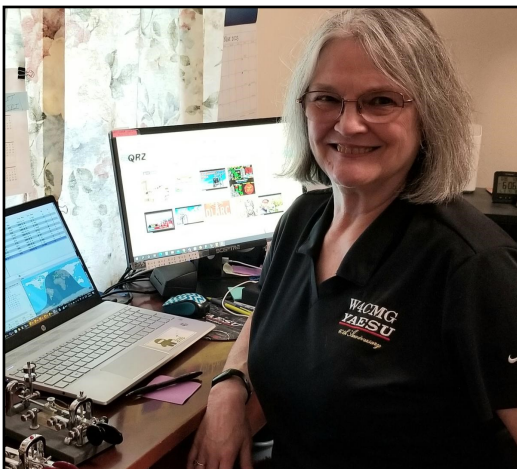


On the St. Clair River at the mouth of Lake Huron. Area is known as the Blue Water District. USA on the left and Canada on the right.



Entrance to the museum ship "Huron." We operated on the bow under the awning.

New SKS Manager, W4CMG #20093s



W4CMG Cathy, is our new SKS manager. Cathy is very active in SKS events from her TN QTH. Cathy is beyond the half way point for the Marathon Award and recently finished with her TKA Award. Cathy has all the WAS Awards, Rag Chew awards is an active K3Y/4 operator and ...she also uses the SKCC QSL Bureau!

Additionally Cathy is very active in teaching with the LICW group and can be found in many of the Zoom Classes as both an instructor and a participant.

Please welcome Cathy to SKCC management and please work her for a Marathon QSO!

Pocket Size Picnic Table POTA Antenna

By Steve NQ8T

I wanted a durable, robust, pocket sized QRP antenna with a picnic table friendly foot print. It seemed everything that I was interested in was back ordered 'till Fall.

I cruised the big box stores for ideas and dug through my junk box for stuff. I scrounged up a partial roll of 22ga magnet wire, a PL259 to 3/8-24 adapter, a piece of PEX tubing that I picked up on the road, ordered a 60" collapsible SS whip and started from there.

I used 3/8-24 bolts through 3/4" CU sweat solder caps drilled to 3/8" dia. for the coil ends and connected the coils together with 1" long 3/8-24 rod coupling nuts.

With the help of my RigExpert and with the 60" whip extended to 46.5", I finally got both a 20m & 40m coil that were <2:1 across most of the intended CW bands. Changing the extended length of the whip +/- an inch or so does wonders at the ends of the bands. Adj. the length of the whip and my KX2 will tune 30m, 17m & 15m.

I used one 16.5' radial laid on the ground. The antenna seems happiest when on a small very short home brew tripod or a spike in the ground.



New/Old Knob on New Key

That "bay" place was offering a pretty good looking Chinese-made key for a very reasonable price...I took a chance. In less than two weeks the key arrived from China extremely well packed: in a box and a wooden box inside a bag!



The key is finely finished chrome, very heavy and has a smooth action. I am not a big fan of the round sending knob which is a very pretty exotic wood (maybe bamboo stained maroon?). I decided to replace the knob with a knob from my Junker supplies...easy. I like the feel much better and added a navy-knob skirt. This key is both

a real deal and THE real deal...not junk!

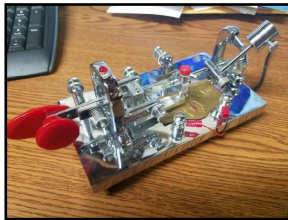
73, Ted K8AQM



WES June, 2023



WOW, what a great weekend. Of my 39 contacts 35 were with OT's. Was glad to see so many still pounding brass after all those years. If you heard me on Sat. it was my 1939 McElroy straight key and Sun. on my 1939 McElroy bug. All contacts sent to you with the help of "MR. Cushcraft A3S" or my Carolina Windom. I hope all of you enjoyed this weekend as much as I did. Thanks SKCC team. Hope to see you all next month. 73, Frank AA2XB



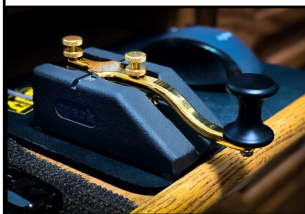
So much for the Summer bands for me. Wasn't getting heard and heard extremely few. Can we do Summer bands again when it's Summer? Lol At 49 years, I'm a youngster, golly. Proud to be included among some of the best operators of the 50's and 60's when CW ruled....And CW is certainly back!!!! Have a great month everybody. 73, Bud AA8CL



I managed to jump in for a while it was fun. This was my first chance to use the new Begali Sculpture Swing in a sprint. I really like the key. Have fun guys! 72, Barry AB4QL



Conditions on Saturday during the day were pretty bad, only 48 QSOs by 7:30PM local time. Then 40M started to heat up and spent most of time there until 1:30AM local time, 132 QSOs at that point. Sunday was typically slow as usual, better conditions in the evening like Saturday. Lots of old timers out there, that's for sure. Makes me wonder if ham radio is a dying hobby. Definitely need to get some young blood into the hobby. Photo shows one of my cats. 73, Bob AC1GF



Stopped in real quick between thunderstorms for a few FB QSO's. Thanks all, always fun to be had in the WES. 73 de Mike - AD0WB.



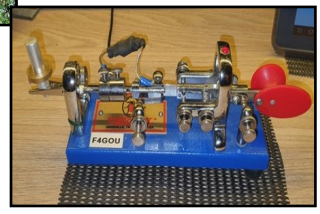
Thanks to everyone! Haven't been able to send CW in almost 4 month's so it was great being able to join in this month! Not that many contact's but all the Old Timer's saved my respect, THANK YOU!!! Look forward to next month when I should be stronger. 73 my friend's ..Kevin, AF5SW SKCC #20090S



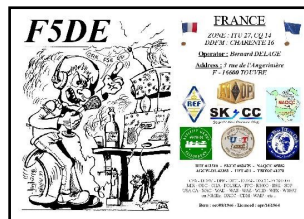
Played with my new (to me) Ten-Tec Omni VII. I moved up out of QRP this month. Got 4 QSOs on 15m using an end-fed wire. Remainder of QSOs on 20m and 40m. 73, Steve AI9IN



Thanks for the contacts. I worked a lot of old friends and a lot of new call signs. One tiny bit of advice to the newbies, please don't zero-beat me. The callers who are, say, +/- 10 to 50 Hz off my freq are the only ones I can read in the pileup so, they get answered. 73, Jim AD0AB



A few qso on 15m and 20m despite a big qrm covering 14,050 to 14,140 every afternoon. Thank you to those who answered my calls. My condx TS2000, pwr 70W, ant ZS6BKW. 73, Tom F4GOU



Two contests this week-end : the WES and a french 6 m contest, not many contacts but a pleasure to be driving the key as always ! YU7AE Kare was contacted on three bands. The most difficult contacts was done with F/PG4I/P but we did it, thank you for your patience Jo ! My license is dated 1964-April-14 so O.T. for 59 years now, without any break and mainly operating on CW. My equipment : TS-590SG, Hy-Gain DX88 GP antenna, Lionel J36 bug key for this edition. 73 to every one and see you soon down the log ! Bernard F5DE



My first WES from abroad, on holiday in Brittany. Brought along a QCX with amp (25W) and a vertical, 20m only. Managed to work 4 US stations: K3WW, KF6C, KB3NSK and N3MVX. Weak signals but strong EU stations. The next WES I will be in Germany ;-) 73, Jo F/PG4I/P

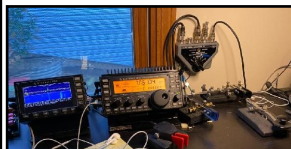
WES June, 2023 II



Very good WES Old Timer, Saturday was excellent and Sunday was disturbed in France by numerous thunderstorms and an infernal noise on the high frequencies. Very good score in 15m on Saturday. Impressive number of Old Timer, maybe 95%. Thank you all for these good QSOs and see you soon. Bob OT 47 and age: 78, F6EJN



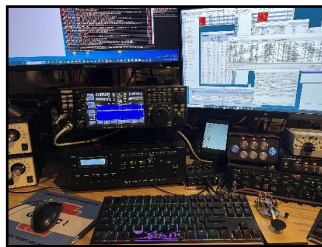
Got on to hand out my 64 years on the air and couldn't stop. 160 QSOs on 15/10 none on 6. 287 Old Timers averaging 51 years for 15,463 the most bonus points I can remember getting. Thanks to all that called in. 73, Chas K3WW



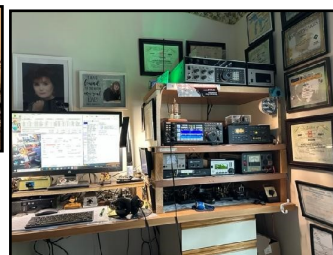
The bands were good Saturday, less so on Sunday. Boy, there sure are a lot of old men out there, hi hi. KX3 @ 5 Watts to a 132' doublet up 35;;, or IC-7300 @ 5W to a 6BTV using SS and SK. 73, Steve K9NUD



A few hours of traffic between professional activities and ...storms!! A good moment. 73, Frank F8DTU



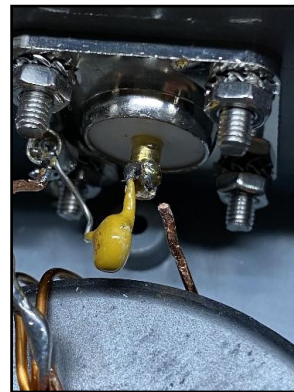
Had a church picnic Saturday and another picnic Sunday which crunched on my radio time, but still made a few contacts, and even managed to snag a new FISTS number in the fray (hi hi). Used my 1943 Lionel J38 str key that was gifted to me after 31 years of NJ Army MARS membership. Kenwood TS-590SG & vertical antenna. Pwr 50 to 75 watts. Thanks all for the contacts....73, Curt K2CWM/50



Bands seemed very poor for me but others seemed to have very good ears as they heard my 100 watts and EFHW at 15 feet! Great event and great fun! 73, Ted K8AQM



Only had a short time on key but it was good fun on 15m. Most pleased to work F6EJN Bob, 4X1WQ Avi, HB9GWK Robi, K3WW Chas, TA2DA Sabri, EA7Q Leo. All on 15m using a Kenwood TS440S at 100 watts to a home brew telescopic 7m fishing pole ground mounted vertical, key = Marconi AS No300A beautiful rare pump key circa 1920s. 73 John G0RDO SKCC 2133s (years a Ham 33).

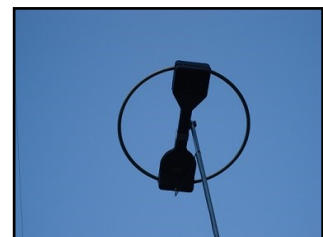


Uhhh ... is there something lacking in my soldering skills? Minor interruption during WES for repairs. Guess these are not meant to be dropped on concrete ... oh well but got back in the game and had a great WES ... Made T x 7 finally! Thanks to fellow SKCC's. 73, Jim K3Y-MI



A very enjoyable WES, a bit humbling to work others with similar history in amateur radio. As the calls/years were logged I had flash backs of the mid-fifties. My station was a mix Hallicrafters, Heath Kit, and Military surplus. The key of choice was a J-38, they were \$1.00 at the local radio store. The Vibroplex keys were part of the Old Timers station Hi Hi. The pix is a station I have put together to share with visitors My IC 7300 along with a "59" Blue Racer & the Llaves SKCC St Key were in use for the OT WES. My hope, the young op's reading this will search the history over the years to have a full appreciation of the hobby. My interest in CW was renewed in 2009 when I joined the SKCC. The summer bands, 10 & 15 were good in No West Mo. I reserved 6M for the VHF contest, I missed a couple of SKCC'ers. Thank you all. 73 Rick

The link covers the Military gear that many used in those days <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AN/ARC-5>



Not very active in ham radio lately but did participate in this wes and gave out my /62 to a few. Made qsos in the 5 bands 80m-10m. My summer band antenna was my Mag loop. 73, Randy K8ZAA

WES June, 2023 III



Having just returned this past Wednesday from a 2-week family visit in the Miami area, I had a lot of catching up to do and doubted that I would get any time for this contest- One of my favorite themes. Among the tasks that had to be completed as soon as I had time, was essential tower guying adjustments for my and my buddy's AB-571's. Due to other personal pressing matters it did not get on the schedule until Saturday. Another personal matter had to be completed Saturday AM and we completed guy adjustments in time for a late pizza dinner at my QTH at 830. Having completed the most pressing tasks, I looked at my XYL and I said I'm going down to the shack and spend some time on the contest. Well missing the first 13.5 hours of the contest put me in a hole scoring wise, but I still wanted to exercise the new 10/15-meter antenna during the height of Sporadic E season. See PIX attached of antenna on 50 ft AB-577. After a good showing on Saturday evening, I decided to spend Sunday on the contest. My statistics for this contest: 15.5 hours on + 20.5 hours off. = 43% of the 36 hours. 115 of the 247 QSO's (46.5%) were on 10/15 meters: 12 on 10 (including LW3EX) and 103 on 15. Great runs on 15 meters and lots of patience for stateside 10-meter Es QSO's due to deep QSB. Surprise 15-meter conditions Sunday morning to Take JR2IUB- tough copying due to multipath echos. Sunday 15 meter and 20-meter conditions to Europe were poor-fair at times. Did snag TA2DA on 15. Bottom line- The new antenna performed great for me under sometimes marginal conditions. Thank goodness for the audio peak filter on the FTDX10- essential these days with all of the QRP entrants on the WES. I and glad I was able to amass a great score even with starting late. Thank you for all of QSO's - it was great fun discovering that so many of the participants were from the time that I began in hamming in 1959. Overall, as Chas K3WW pointed out, the average number of years hamming, for the stations he worked, was 56 years. We do have a seasoned and veteran constituency to say the least. I think it is imperative that the new members get on the air or just listen during a WES, to experience and learn from the superb operating practices exhibited by our veteran group of operators. 73 to all Phil K3EW



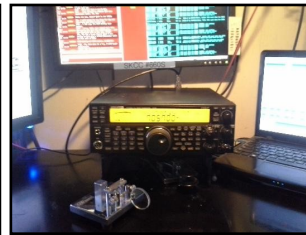
Ninety six QSO's is a high water mark for me. This WES gave me a chance to re-familiarize myself with my "Field Radio" IC 706 MKII G. I needed this to get ready for Field Day. Good activity on 15 and 20 meters. Only one QSO on 10 meters and that was Max, KH6ZM. I was hoping for some six meter activity but there was none at this QTH. Lots of fun and thanks to all who participated. 73, Jerry K9PMV



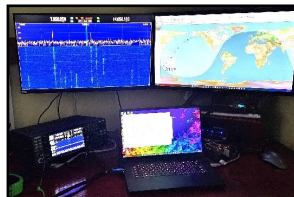
That was fun! There is a lot of experience in SKCC!! You don't think about it till you see the accumulative years added up....wow. I spent most of my time on 15 meters. I couldn't help jumping over to 17m for Non-WES contacts. That band was crazy open!! Thanks for all the fun and see ya next month. 73, Randy KB4QQJ



Operated from a local park this WES. Bands not strong but workable. Many thanks for the QSOs and especially to the OTs for their participation. 73! - Terry KG5OWB



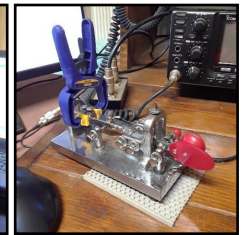
Thanks to all who participated. Bands were not very good here, but made a few contacts. Hopefully, I was able to help some with their goals. 73 & God bless. Ric KA3LOC



Got a late start, 5 pm Saturday, attending 10-year-old granddaughters black belt ceremony. Activity on bands seemed low. Summer bands were not so good, only 1 10M QSO and none on 6M. Good fun especially to-



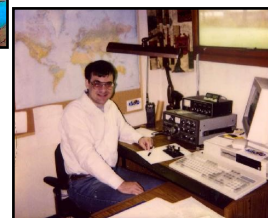
...a fun event with a LOT of OTs out there. Managed to catch 14 QSOs on 15m, but no luck on the two other upper bands. Oh well...Event short-lived for me...off to the pro shop for the closing shift today. Was a ton of fun pounding brass with the OTs. Looking forward to another. 73, jack KK0I dit...dit



Wow, that was fun. On Sat and Sun morning and then about an hour Sunday afternoon. Got 17 on 15 meters and 6 on 10 meters. Bounced between the Vibroplex Original, W1SFR TBSP and the Viz Camel Back SK. Used the IC 7610 @ 75 watts and a doublet antenna. Thanks to all the OT for great bonus! I got to hand out my /50. Look for you next month guys! 73, Allen KA5TJS



Used the Icom 761 again. A great old CW rig. 73, Randal KG51-EE

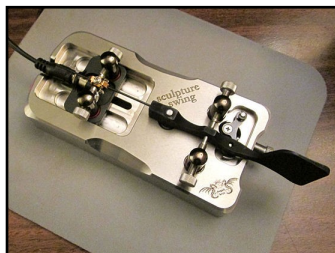


Proud to be SKCC with a great deal of seniority and experience. My picture was me in my radio shack circa July 1995. Equipment: Kenwood TS-520 Key Nye -Viking Speed-X MFJ-949E Antenna Tuner Cushcraft R7 Vertical Compuadd i286 @ 20 Mhz 50 Mb diskdrive 1 Mb RAM MS-DOS 5.0. 73, Jim KG0RD

WES June, 2023 IV



I'm only active on 10m QRP, all QSOs were with OT (Avg. 59 Yrs) Congrats UR FB ears, HI!
28MHz 4ele Yagi – 3/5W – Homemade DSK + German 2WK era SK I had a great Radio time TU SKCC Team for the FUN. BCNU 73, Walt LW3EX - ..- ZUT



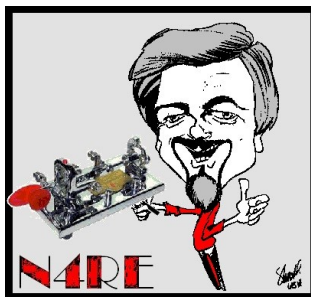
Caught some ES on 6m and work W3NP ! wow ! My first 6 meter QSO's in ages. I enjoyed giving out my 68 year bonus. A FB theme. 73 de AL, N4ow 11375s



Had a wonderful time operating 19 hours out of the 36 hours (52%). Money band was 40M (49%) with 15M second (33%). 143 contacts (79%) were OTs ranging as high as 103 yrs (TU W9TE). Spent about 70% of the time calling CQ with S&P based upon sked notice. Looking forward to next months WES as I'm getting better at using the computer keyboard one handed. Helps sending left handed using the W1SFR Fat Boy and keyboarding right handed using the hunt & seek method. Now to be able to not have to write down most calls. 73, Vern NJ8L



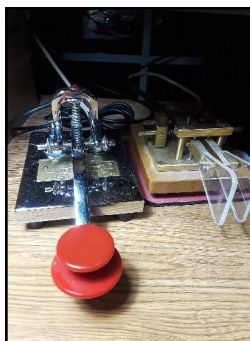
Conditions not good on Saturday here but some better on Sunday ... used all of my keys and bugs and had a great time !! ... worked Drew AF2Z and Randy KB4QQJ for old buds the Lightning Bug is just too fast for WES good luck with my 100th Original and 1946 Blue Racer ... used my CCZ 711 straight key and Nano Key too many thanks to all the "OT's" !!!!!
73, George N2JNZ



I just stayed on 15 to get the Summer points and there were lots of great signals. TKS QSOs, Rick - N4RE - SKCC 942s -



Had a blast when I was able to sit in front of the radio. Thanks for hearing my QRP station. I'm honored to be a part of this fine club. Until next time, vy 73, Will, NQ2W



This was a fun WES, and then it tested our math skills! Bands were terrible here in DE, or maybe my antennas just refused to work! Thanks all who gave me Q's, 73 all, CU next month, 73, Jerry N3KRX



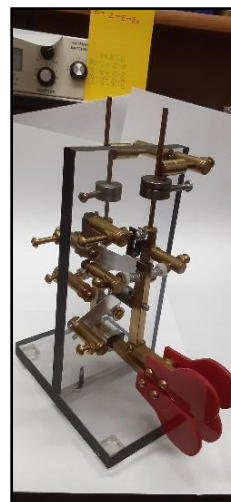
The Bands were in Good Shape. I had 38 Summer Band contacts. Pointing my Antenna at Europe, I was getting better RBN spots than pointing towards CA. My goal was to make 100 contacts...Made it! I even had Mats, SM5CAK call me on 21.051 MHz. Our last two contacts were 1974 (20m) & 1992 (10m). Not wanting to make a mistake with pencil & paper, I used MS Excel to add up OT Bonus points :-). 73 and Thanks all, Rick N8XI



TNX! all for another nice evening on the air. 40m came on strong here late Sunday eve. Pretty obvious that I should have started this hobby much earlier in life!! 73 Steve NQ8T



73, Danny N0OLD

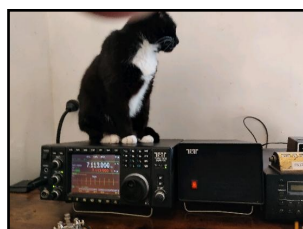


K2, 5wts, g5rv at 35ft.. used stkey and a bug.. tnx to skcc club mbrs... i see only 90 new mbrs since last wes.. since 10_5_13 i have been on skcc making LEGAL QRM.. haha.. so, 7three, and if a 2 way qrp qso, i give a "7two".... so, c u in July to make more LEGAL QRM, ha.. i do it daily... the pix is one of my hb keys, i now have 88 keys.. that pix is a DUBBUG, one of my own designs..it's fast and slow.. so cu in July. Takecare DAVE LARSEN
N9ZXLQRP@GMAIL.COM

WES June, 2023 V



This month's theme was a good indicator of the years of experience out there. I Had a good time. 73, Mark NU8Z



Excellent weekend despite just one wire antenna (80 meter dipole) and no amplifier. My score doesn't give our traditional big guns (K3WW, W5ZR, K3EW etc) much competition with this minor league station but it was a good effort for my standards! We are an "old dinosaur" group, aren't we? And proud of it! Was pretty much a one day event for me; tied up with ministry duties Sunday but put in a solid QRV Saturday. See you all next month 73, Dave W1DV// ZUT



Of those I worked only Bert W5ZR beat my 68 years. Had great fun handing out 5095 points. Some excitement working VK2DVA and KH6ZM QRP. Most QSOs on 15M and 20M. Amazing what 5W and a wire can do. Thanks to all that pulled my QRP sig out of the noise. 85 years old and still having fun. 72, Andy W4NLT



A really fun WES during which I found out my OT number of 41 years is not all that high! I worked more than one OT who had been a ham 70 years or more - wow! Worked all of my Qs on 15M and 10M with the exception of 2 on 40M so got a lot of "summer bands" bonus. The propagation was weird with very fast and deep QSB but still great to have the upper bands open. Used my Elecraft K4 at 100 watts into a home brew Carolina Windom at 25' and my KN4YB bug. Thanks all for the fun! 73, Bill NZOT



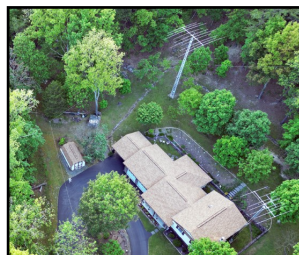
First time using new QRP rig. Lots of learning to do but I think I'm going to like the new rig. 73, Bill W3SI



Random pic... 73, Pat W5WTH



Condx were fine today and it was a pleasure to meet old and new SKCC members again. Congrats to Helmut OE1TKW for his 50 years of being licensed! He also delivered me the fastest QSO of this weekend, we both on bugs. 73, Andi OE3IAK



OT/64 - first licensed as a novice in 1959. I was hoping for more 10 and 6 meter activity. I did manage 1 QSO on 10 and 1 on 6 (with N4OW), 21 contacts on 15 and the remaining 10 split between 20 and 40. All search and pounce. The drone photo shows my 3 ele 6m yagi at 47' mounted above the the 12/10 meter duo-bander (4 ele on 10). The larger yagi sports 4 elements on 15. Elecraft K4D/KPA-1500 rig with the Begali Intrepid bug for a key. 73 Dave W3NP de West Virginia

Well, 'twas another WES where I only had a limited amount of time on the air (thunderstorms really hurt). But it was a BLAST. I was disappointed 10 and 15 weren't as hot as I hoped, but that's just the way she goes. 73, Rod W4NNF



Thank you all for the points. Good condx on 40 mts. Using an FD4 Windom antenna. 73, Joop PA3JD



There will be some big scores from this one! Not mine, we had "grandson duty" this weekend, and my WES time was less than normal. Conditions were pretty good here, but the Es stuff didn't quite connect to northern New England on 6 and 10 meters, so most of the "summer bands" operation was on 15 meters. The activity level seemed to be pretty good. It was a pleasure to work the other OTs, many of whom had a good start on my 61 years. Nice weekend. Thanks to all. Note the little message strip above the rig, to keep my brain from wandering...73, John W1TAG



WES June, 2023 VI



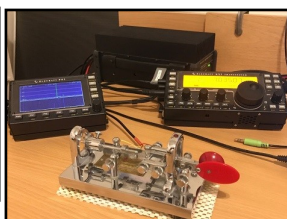
I had all of ten minutes to operate this WES! Family obligations took precedence. Will be spending quite a bit of time this summer operating from my camper in DE rather than from home QTH in MD; there to help my daughter who is recovering from major surgery. Thanks to John WITAG for my single QSO, and that on 15. 73, Steve W6WU



Great to hear so many signals especially on 10 and 15 meters. First event to operate in a while so was fun to contact all the old timers again. Thanks to all the great CW operators and the SKCC organization. Pic is of myself and twin brother Johnny testing out the Heathkit AR3 we assembled in 1960. 73, Ger-



Unexpected company led to very limited time of about 3 hours radio time. At least the bands seemed to cooperate out here, and I ran with the HB Sideswiper again. Thank you all for the contacts. 73, Mark WO7T



Elecraft KX3 @5 wts to a fan dipole (DX-CC) hanging on my backyard fence (5 ft AGL). Hopped on for about 40 minutes at the end of the event. Thanks to all of the stations that dug my signal out - it was much appreciated)! 73 de Andy, WA5RML [PS. Picture is an old one...but only difference is that I actually used a Vibroplex Blue Racer 2000 bug instead of the one in the picture.] 73, Andy WA5RML



I sure enjoy these events. I wish I could devote more time to them. This time I used the Collins Gold Dust Twins (75A-4 + KWS-1). They worked great. Keys used were the Begali Sculpture Swing SS Key and Begali Intrepid Bug. Thanks again everyone for an enjoyable event. 73, Mike WB0SND



Nice propagations on 15m, nice to work few new members for my TX7 and S.....Using TS950sd 100w 2el. Steppir at 10m and Vibroplex Presentations bug. 73 de YU7AE Kare

Canadian SKCC Members!



Looking for lots of fun and QSOs this September? Come join in the Canadian Straight Key Month event. Be the sought after station on the bands. Help promote the search for all Canadian Provinces while building your own log for SKCC Awards. Go to the club web page and under "Activities" go to "VC3K Operating Event" and see how easy it is to be a VC3K station. Contact your area coordinator and request an operating time. It's just like K3Y only Canadian!



EditorIn case you missed it, here is a conversation from Daniel AJ6WI and Colin K6JTH that recently appeared on our reflector and is worth repeating for those who have a bug.

Adjusting A Vibroplex Bug

By Daniel AJ6WI

I purchased an old Vibroplex Classic bug on eBay a while back. Cleaned it up and started getting acquainted with it. I really like the concept of semi-auto and it's fascinating so far. I generally use a Morserino-32 to practice with Straight Key, Iambic and Bug. The Morserino generally sounds fine and decodes my characters fine. But when I put my bug on a rig (in my case QCX or Yaesu FT-891) the "dits" sound scratchy on the bug. "Dahs" are okay and I can send code on one side (just using the dah lever) that comes out clean and is decoded with the QCX fine. But when I introduce the "dits" it thinks I'm sending "B" when I intend and hear "N" - as an example - almost like it's hearing extra "dits" that I don't hear.

I've seen some things about "de-bouncing" a bug and I've tried adding a capacitor between the two leads on the bug. It does seem to calm down the QCX decode, but then the Morserino-32 doesn't decode correctly. I've also seen that a properly adjusted bug won't need to be "de-bounced". I'd like to use this on the air, but I don't like the scratchiness of the "dits". It's not overly pronounced, but it just bothers me a bit - sounds dirty somehow. I've cleaned all of the contacts and the connectors underneath and have the same results.

What am I missing or is this to be expected?

Thanks in advance!

Daniel (AJ6WI)

RE: Vibroplex Bug Adjustment

By Colin K6JTH

I am not a bug expert but I love mine. I'll go through the list for someone who had never seen one. The first thing would be to clean the contacts. If they are really bad you can use an acid like vinegar. Then you need to make sure the contacts are hitting square. If there is an angle in the contacts it will not connect as cleanly. As you adjust the bug the contacts may need to be realigned. I set the right screw first to get the damper in the right spot. Then I adjust the dit gap. Adjust the weight for the correct speed and run the dits. If you are running 20 WPM or faster you should get a string of clean dots that lasts for more than 10. Running slower you will be good at 8. If you are only getting 5 you need to keep adjusting. Then I adjust the dah. It takes me a few tries to get everything feeling right.

If you have an oscilloscope it helps to see what is happening. But your ear should be enough.

Make sure to read this:

http://www.vibroplex.com/techdocs/champion_adjustments.pdf

For me a capacitor is a last resort and only to polish a good signal.

--

Colin - K6JTH - SKCC# 26192

<http://www.tangokeys.com>



**SEMI-AUTOMATIC KEY AD-
JUSTMENT**
by
BRIAN MURPHY, VE2AGO
originally published in *QST* MAGA-
ZINE



Although the use of electronic keyers is increasing, many C.W. operators would prefer to keep their "bugs", especially if they could make them perform as well as, or better than, keyers. The performance one gets with a bug depends greatly on the adjustment, and no amount of skill can make up for a poorly adjusted bug. It has been my experience that there is a tremendous lack of understanding among amateurs over the maze of adjustments found on most bugs. There is also the belief that the adjustments are solely for one's individuality, and we therefore hear a lot of signals with choppy dots, poor ratio of dot length to dash length, and poorly timed spacing between dot groups and dashes (e.g. "•• — — —" for the number 'two').

The following will describe some techniques to use in adjusting your own bug, together with some hints on good character formation and better, error free sending.

GENERAL

Although different manufacturers have a few more or a few less adjustments on their bugs, most have the ones shown in the diagram in **Fig. 1**, together with various types of spring tension controls. Admittedly, some of these adjustments have to be made by trial and error according to instinctive feel, but we will outline the general objectives:

- 1.) To make dots of correct length with correct ratio of dot to space length.
- 2.) To prevent high frequency vibrations of the moving dot contact **F** with resultant scratchy dots.
- 3.) To prevent any other undue motion (unwanted bouncing) of the dot contact (**F**).
- 4.) To keep the time between dot groups and dashes down to its proper level (the length of one dot).
- 5.) Proper mating of contacts.

PROCEDURE

The first adjustments to play with are **C**, **D**, and **G** on the diagram. The damper arm, **G**, may be non-adjustable on some Vibroplex® bugs, in which case **D** should be adjusted as follows: clear **D**, **C**, and **E** away so that the arm comes completely to rest against the damper arm **G**. Then advance **D** so that it slightly pushes away the lever, but not enough to clear the arm away from the damper arm. The result is correct if, when the arm springs to rest against the damper arm **G** and **D**, there is absolutely no visible bounce. This is to ensure that when another group of dots is started, the arm is not still vibrating. If **G** is also adjustable, there is just this much more latitude in making the alignment.

With **E** still clear, adjust **C** for optimum distance between **D** and **C**. This is probably the most difficult adjustment to make because some experimenting is required. When the paddle is pushed for dots, the lever butts up against **C**, which sets up the oscillations of the arm. Moving the lever from **D** to **C** takes time, so that transforming from dashes to dots is faster, and therefore smoother, if the distance is kept small; but then, unfortunately, the arm does not gain enough momentum to make long slow dots. This is where many hams fail to make the best compromise, and end up with very poor dots at speeds below 25 w.p.m.

Since there is seldom any problem getting fast dots on a bug, it is best to start with the **D** to **C** distance quite large. This will feel awkward, but try it with the weigh set for the slowest possible speed after setting up the dot contacts. The moveable contact **F** on the arm should mate evenly with its counterpart **E**. After checking this, adjust so that **E** and **F** just barely short together after making a string of dots. Lock **E**, and now connect an ohm-meter across the bug terminals. While making a string of dots, the average deflection of the meter should be mid-scale = 10% for both slow and fast speed settings. The reading should be taken for the first five or ten dots only, because after that it will start to change, depending on the **E** setting. It is typical to have too low a reading and, hence, have choppy dots. Too high a reading will probably result in mushy dots. Of course, adjust the screw **E** closer or farther as required. In case your meter has a poor transient response, a good ear is the final check for this test.

Now if the arm oscillations die out too quickly with slow dots, **C** has to be adjusted to increase the **D** to **C** distance and, hence, the lever momentum. This is also true if the dots cannot be made slow enough, say 20-25, words per minute.

If **C** is changed, **E** must be re-set before further testing; and so these compromise the bulk of the adjustments which affect your fist. If **D** to **C** is too large, one will find it too difficult to switch from dots to dashes smoothly and vice-versa.

At this point another problem occurs with many bugs: contact **D** is usually mounted on a hairpin spring which sometimes has a high-frequency vibration visible after some dots are made when the arm comes to rest. This vibration will make the next dot scratchy, a good cure for this problem is to cut out a small cubicle of fine grain, soft, synthetic sponge and fit it snugly - but not too tightly - inside the hairpin behind the contact, so that the vibrations are damped out. Use a small dab of glue on the back side to hold it in place.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC KEY AD- JUSTMENT page 2

The dash contact spacing **B** can be set to personal preference. Too wide a spacing and too much spring tension will result in jerky dashes, while small spacing and low tension may cause an occasional joining of what was intended to be two dashes. Contacts should mate perfectly for maximum life and may be cleaned with good silver polish; or they may be lightly scuffed with the very slightly abrasive material used to clean relay contacts, if they have become pitted. **DO NOT** use emery paper or sandpaper, as these leave an unwanted residue on the surfaces and can also excessively wear down the surface.

OPERATING

When using a bug, it is essential that it be firmly mounted, even if it is heavy and has rubber feet. It is sometimes inconvenient to attach it directly to the table top. If the table top is smooth, suction cups with protruding studs are available at hardware stores that can be stuck on the table around the sides of the bug, so that the studs keep the bug from sliding sideways.

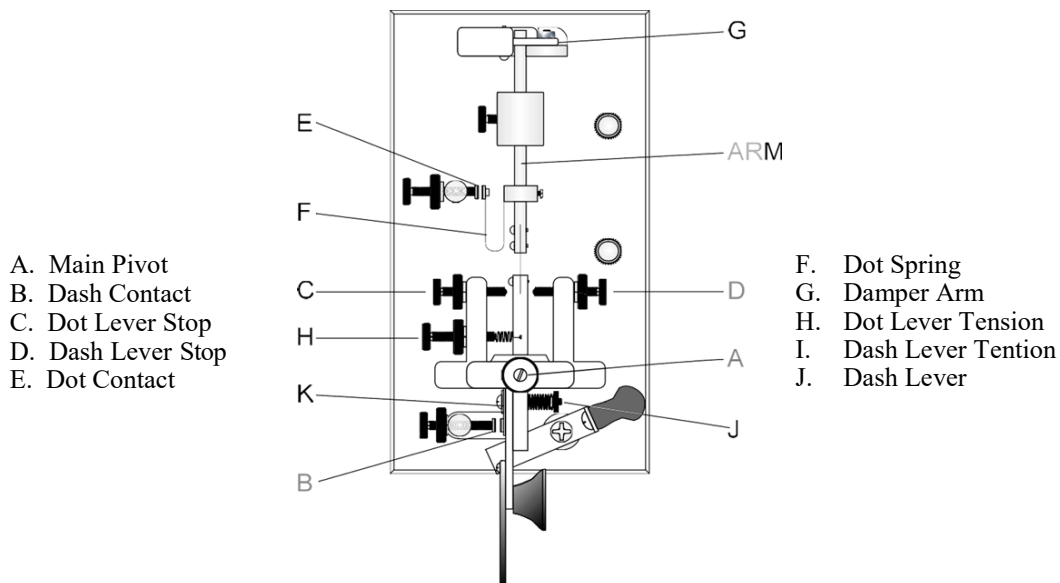
The following will describe some ideas on how to send, at the risk of fiery disagreement from A1 operators across the land.

Most surely, this is not the only way; but the basic ideas might lead one to recognize a weakness in his own method.

The hand should rest on the table, with the paddle located between the print of the thumb and the side of the index finger. Using the tip or the print of the index finger is all right provided the wrist action, not finger action, is maintained on dashes. Dashes should be made by rocking the wrist with the fore-arm resting on the table. No part of the hand, wrist or arm should feel constricted. When a row of dashes is made, the side of the index finger should remain in contact with the paddle, while the wrist is rocked back and forth, with no slipping on the table. This helps the continuity of the row, rather than hold the remaining fingers outstretched in midair, curl them under so that they may rest on the table. Most of this comes naturally; but it is mentioned to prevent beginners from starting off completely wrong.

There is a great tendency to set the dot speed too fast. Concentrate on sending good code at the slowest dot setting possible which should be a least down to 20-25 w.p.m.. A technique which produces amazing results is to send as slow as absolutely possible for one QSO, then, as fast as you are able for the next QSO. The effect of sending slow engrains good ration, spacing and general good form, while sending fast gives practice in timing and muscle control. I would strongly discourage leaving the speed control always set to the favorite spot, because this seems to lead to the freezing of bad habits, and definitely results in poor ratio when trying to vary the speed by varying the dashes only. On a bug, or keyer, variation of speed is the key to learning control.

For good practice, open up the telephone book as some page other than Smith, and send the names, addresses and phone numbers at slow, fast, slow, fast, ... speeds. Ten sets at 15 w.p.m. and 30 w.p.m. without one error is excellent. Those numbers are terrific practice for dashes!



SKSA June 9, 2023



Results for SKSA: 09-Jun-2023

Overall | QRPp | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | Multi-Op | By SPC

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC#	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/TIC	Score
JF1UOX	MISA	26413	JPN	23	9	4/3/0	297
JA0FVU	Taka	13456	JPN	30	4	2/4/0	190
JA1IAZ	NORI	25300T	JPN	25	4	1/3/0	145
JF1JDG	HIRO	26409	JPN	25	4	1/3/0	145
JO1ZZZ/1	A1CLUB	16199	JPN	18	3	1/2/0	89
JF2FIU	Mark	NONE	JPN	24	2	1/2/0	83
JK1BVN	KAT	26584	JPN	19	2	1/2/0	73
JF1NHD	Ino	NONE	JPN	16	2	0/1/1	47
JR2IUB	Take	11167S	JPN	12	2	0/2/0	44
JF1EPL	YOSHI	26458	JPN	14	2	0/1/1	43
JJ4JGD	TAKA	5393	JPN	10	1	1/1/0	35
JA0IND/1	Jin	8240	JPN	12	1	0/2/0	32
JS2BGJ	MATT	27288	JPN	11	2	0/1/0	32
JG1BGT	UJIE	26599	JPN	9	1	0/2/0	29
JJ1FXF	HIRO	22608T	JPN	16	1	0/1/0	26
JK1AKA	Kei	25478	JPN	9	1	0/1/0	19
JJ0SFV	Aki	26384	JPN	5	1	0/1/0	15
VR2CO	Solo	13192	HKG	8	0	0/1/0	10
BI8CZM	Cheng	23269	CHN	5	2	0/0/0	10
JA9MAT	HIDE	12796	JPN	4	1	0/0/0	4
JG2JKR	Roy	10424	JPN	3	1	0/0/0	3
JR6CSY	TAKA	26476	JPN	1	1	0/0/0	1



Today's bug, early version of BK-100. This is a gift to me from SKCC member in WA. He calls me a "Bug Man". It has become much easier to use with some adjustment and improvement. 73, Nori JA1IAZ



Thank you all stations! I'll work hard to achieve Centurion! HPE CU AGN. 73, Matt JS2BGJ



GHD GT599SG. TS990S 200W. WHIP ANT. 73, Aki



Hello everyone. TNX for the QSO. I was using homebrew straight key. I processed stainless steel scraps. I hope to work you again soon. 73, Take JR2IUB



73, HIDE JA9MAT



SKCC YL Senators

Editor... While at Dayton this year Ed WA9BBN and I were talking about YL Senators (Ed's wife Rose KA9GKE is one of our Senators, first one in Indiana). Ed later did some research and this is the result he found (in no particular order).

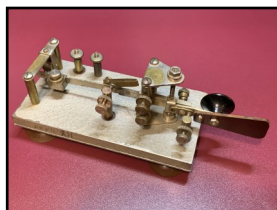
As far as I can tell, there are 7 YL Senators in the SKCC world...73, Ed

W4CMG	Cathy	20093s
AG6V	Donna	6933s
WB9TFF	Donna	7057s
W4KRN	Karen	4495s
KF4MXF	Linda	12812s
KA9GKE	Rose	17764s
KC5SAM	Sam	21170s



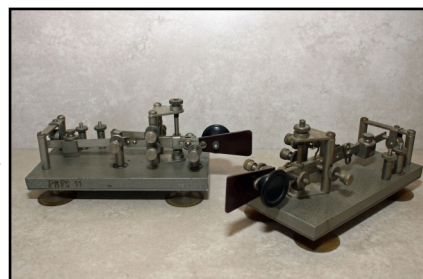
An Interesting German Made Key

Everyone knows about the famous German Junker (pronounced “yoonker”)Key. Some consider it one of the top 10 keys ever made. Rarely known is that Junker also made a bug! Here is info from Kees van de Spek:



Junker semi automatic key (bug)

These are two of my Junker semi-automatic 'bugs'. They are in fact a clone of the Vibroplex number 6 Lightning / J-36 key for which no patents existed. There are nevertheless differences with the Lightning bug, including the high binding posts and the steel base which has routed grooves for the wiring and a screwed-on aluminium covering plate which also holds the rubber suction feet. The circuit-breaker that is a feature of the Vibroplex



Lightning and J-36 bugs is absent on the Junker version. They come in slightly varying shades of silver hammertone. Their production history remains obscure: flooding of the River Rhine in 1993 destroyed most of the Junker company records at Bad Honnef. The closest documented dates that will be accurate would place their manufacture between March 1962 and 1974. When visiting the Junker factory during November 2000, Martin DK4XL was shown surviving first technical design drawings dated March 1962. Production may have ceased during the early 1970s, although by 1974 at least one distributor (the Hannes Bauer Company) was still offering them for sale. Today, two versions may be recognised: the so-called 'civilian' version (not numbered, and likely used at ship-to-shore coastal radio stations) and those produced in limited quantities for the Polizei Haupt Funk Stelle (PHFS, Police Radio Head Quarters) of the Federal German Border Police (the Bundesgrenzschutz). There are only very minor differences between the two issues. While both versions are now rare, this is especially so for the police version. They can be recognised by the engraved letters PHFS followed by a serial number. Some 40 PHFS bugs were scrapped by the Bundesgrenzschutz during the late 1990s but a number of these were salvaged.

Oceania QRS Saunter June 17, 2023



VK2GAZ 14.044 S 559 R 579 AUS GARRY 5460C
 VK2DVA 14.053 S 599 R 599 AUS COLIN 23507T
 VK8MC 21.150 S 559 R 559 AUS PHIL 22693
 Xiegu 108g 20W into 80m 1/2 wave end fed ant
 Getting better at CW tnx es 73, de Peter VK7KPC

Oceania QRS Saunter Results

Results for Oceania QRS Saunter: 17 Jun 2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

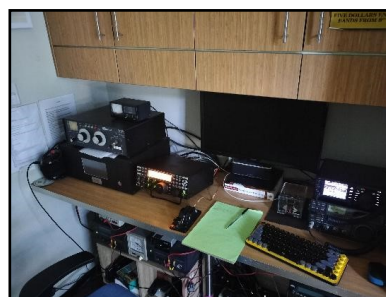
Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
VK2GAZ	Garry	5460C	AUS	8
VK4DRK	Derek	26381	AUS	2
VK4EV	Ron	10775	AUS	1
VK4JAZ	Grant	4502	AUS	0
VK7KPC	Peter Dodd	26832	AUS	3
VK8MC	Phil	22693	AUS	6
JJ1FXF	HIRO	22608T	JPN	5
ZL1ARW	Jim J T	16633	NZL	2

Participants and QSOs by SPC

AUS: 6 / 20	JPN: 1 / 5	NZL: 1 / 2
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Of the 8 contacts for this month 6 were SKCC members and 5 were new contacts for me. Ian VK4IAN #18148 was my surprise contact on Sunday morning at 22:24 thank you Ian. I hope all who joined in had a great time. 73, Gary VK2GAZ



OQS is helping me with my copying and sending skills. Thanks to all my contacts. Not able to make the distance to IU1HCC which would have been a thrill. 73 de Phil VK8MC



KP4ED Nr. 6589s

It is with great sorrow we announce the passing of one of our KP4 members, Luis KP4ED. For many years Luis was a constant KP4 in our logs until his severe stroke in 1997 and limited his ability to enjoy his beloved CW. He did continue with digital modes of CW. Luis was a ham for 64 years and was first licensed at the age of 17. RIP OM, you will be greatly missed.

Confessions of a Casual Contester

Vol. 3 Issue 9
from the shack of David VE4DL

I am not now, nor ever have been, a Contester. I don't see myself becoming a Contester either, if one defines the term to include round-the-clock operations, intravenous fluids and diapers, and frequent relays of cold, one-hand meals. Not my thing, at all. BUT.....

May has been a slow month for me, doing some casual DX on the remote, staring at the yagi on my patio and waiting to hear from the bucket-truck guy. In the meantime I've been slowly rearranging the shack. I added an MFJ-1263 mic/radio switch to the setup. I can now switch between boom-mic/spkr and headset at the touch of a button, instead of unscrewing/re-screwing the connectors. Very convenient.

The box was a used one from KWARC swapshop, and it was missing some of the jumpers (it had enough to do the job, but not all the original number.) I contacted MFJ customer service to ask if I could buy a bag of jumpers, and lo and behold, a bag of jumpers appears a week later, free and gratis. This is great customer service in my humble opinion. Especially as it was sent FedEx international. They could have mailed it in a standard envelope easily.

I also swapped out the Kenwood SP-930 speaker for a Heathkit SB-600 unit. The original was a bit hit and miss, even after re-capping it. Modern cheepshit components are not a good match for the originals. I'm also a believer in bigger speakers are better speakers (within limits, I wouldn't hook up my brother's Voice of the Theatre units to a ham radio.)

I moved the rotator controller up from beside the radio to the shelf above (also the home of the mic switch, speaker and monitor.) I rewired and simplified the key and paddles, shortened the cable run for the WinKeyer and shortened some of the ground straps to the bus-bar. I changed the position of the keyboard shelf to be a more comfortable distance to the monitor. The computer is still the ancient rescue unit I've had all along.

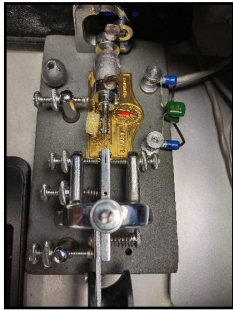
One project hanging fire is adapting my MC-60 mic to the Heil boom. The Kenwood mic is 8-pin, not XLR so I can't adapt the cable I have. I'll save it for future XLR mics I might acquire, or even for the Goldline mic I currently have. I have not found any pre-made, 2m straight, 8pin mic cables. They all seem to be coiled. My usual "mic" cable around the shack is not adequate, but my local supply doesn't stock the heavier stuff Heil uses. Any suggestions would be welcome....

CQ WPX CW is this weekend. If the remote radio at the Club is available, I'll be on from time to time. It's a busy weekend at home, and I'm on course all next week – that needs preparation, too. I'll do what I can in the in-between spaces.

ARRL Field Day and RAC Canada Day contests are up next, praying to have my own shack operational by then.

But it isn't contesting. Nope. Not at all. Well, maybe.... yes it is!

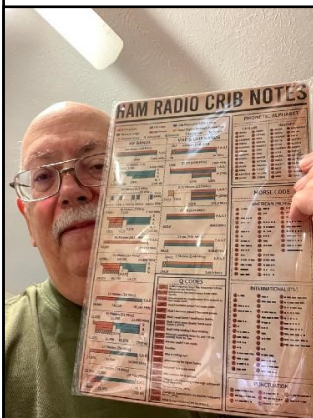
SKS June 28, 2023



Thanks for the fun QSOs, folks. Glad you could copy my 'fishing sinker' bug. 73, Bob AF5Z



Very tough night here for SKS. Started on 20M which was sparse and then 40M which wasn't much better what stations I worked were mostly S9 or more and I usually got a 599 but I ended up with about half the number of Qs I normally see during SKS. Tried 4 different antennas too! Rig was a K4 at 100 watts and the bug my KN4YB left handed bug which I use with my right hand. Yeah, I know, I'm weird. Thanks to all I worked! 73, Bill NZ0T



Ran my best rig at this time, my TS-590SG at 75w to my 30+ year old Butternut HF6V vertical (elevated). This antenna is completely resonant on the low CW/DATA ends of the bands it's designed for (took some time and effort to achieve that hi hi) and the only time I use either the internal or MFJ-939 tuners is if I venture onto a frequency that's not very friendly to my antenna lol. Used my currently fav key, a 1943 Lionel J38 straight key. Regretfully I had to finish up a little early this evening. A note of congrats and all the best to Cathy W4CMG as our new SKS Manager. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Horrible QSB here is AZ again but managed to squeeze out 7 all new numbers (toward my Tx7)...that makes it successful. 73, Gary KI7PBR

Tinkering and late dinner dinner permit much operating time but I was fortunate to make 2 new contacts and another 2 steps on the journey to Senator. Thank you Steve and Glenn for FB WSOs and new numbers. 73, Dave W4QDV



Small effort...40m on-ly...Multi tasked... watching "Jack Reacher" and making QSOs! 73, Ted K8AQM



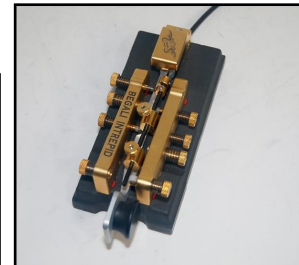
I was QLF tonight ...TNX! to all, especially Ted K8AQM, for your patience! Nice to see that 40m got pretty crowded! C U in July! 72, Steve NQ8T



Looks like this was my fourth SKS attempt, but first time working both hours of the sprint. The big news is I've hit 201 QSOs for my S-Quest! TU QSO, everyone! And a special thanks to Peter N7IY, who gave me, two years ago, the K4KIO Hex Beam that made this all possible. It is finally on the roof! 73, Jordan W7VC



Only operated 1 hour mostly on 20 meters. 73 & STAY TUNED! Daryl K9QEW



13 contacts on 20 and 1 on 40. Only had a little bit of time spread out through the event but it was fun. All S&P. Rig: K4D/KPA-1500 and the key was the Intrepid Bug. Antenna 3 ele yagi at 50'. 73, Dave W3NP de West Virginia



Got a few on 20M then shifted to 40M which was busy and noisy here. Worked a lot of IN and IL. Several PR were active too. Thanks for hearing my 5W.72 Andy W4NLT

Small Magnetic Loops

Made from LMR-400 Coax Cable

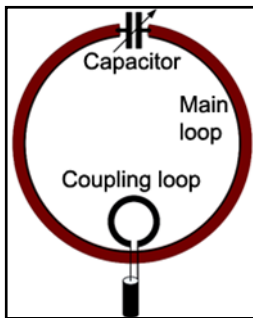
[Larry Nelson - K5IJB](#)

A small magnetic loop antenna is an easy and cheap antenna to build. It can be used indoors or outdoors with near equal results.

Stateside and DX contacts have been made with an indoor small magnetic loop running 3-50 watts using CW, PSK, JT65, and FT8 modes on 10-40 meters. Using wide-spaced variable tuning capacitors allow for higher power with no arcing.

The two small magnetic loops described in this article are for (1) **fixed operation** using a 9-foot circumference loop with a fixed stand, and (2) **portable operation** using an 8-foot circumference loop with a break-down stand.

Background



The basic configuration of an inductive-fed small magnetic loop consists of the main loop, coupling loop, and a capacitor - fixed or variable. This antenna requires no grounding or counterpoise since it is a resonant circuit. Performance is not limited by low height.

Main loop: The main loop can be configured as an octagon, circle, or square. Circle configuration is the most efficient, but all three configurations will work.

Diameter of the loop conductor is generally 3/8 inches or greater. RG-8 (model LMR-400) coaxial cable was chosen over copper tubing since it is easy to work with. LMR-400 requires no tools for bending into a circle, has a solid center conductor for strength, and the two-layer outer conductors (braid plus foil shield) insure less loss due to continual conductivity.

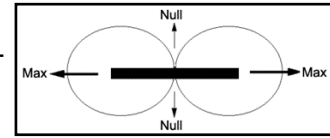
The center conductor is generally not used, but G8ODE illustrates that the center conductor can be shorted to the coax shield in his [QRP loop tuner](#).

Capacitor: The fixed or variable capacitor tunes the loop antenna for lowest SWR. The capacitor is located at either the top or bottom of the main loop, but always opposite the coupling loop. An antenna tuner may also be used for obtaining lowest SWR.

Coupling loop: A coupling loop is used for feeding the magnetic loop inductively. N4SPP suggests [five configurations](#) for constructing the Faraday coupling loop. Configuration #4 below was chosen due to simplicity and ease of construction. The coax is not split at any point as illustrated in the other configurations. RG-8X coax is used for the coupling loop.

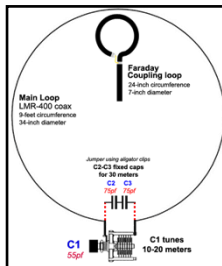


Radiation pattern: Maximum radiation of a loop is off the vertical ends with a figure-8 pattern similar to a dipole antenna. Theoretically, a loop can be rotated using the null side to reduce QRM. In practice, contacts have been made off the ends and null side without a need to rotate the loop.



Fixed Operation

10-12-15-17-20-30-40 meters



9-foot circumference

Tuning: Tuning is simple, but touchy due to hand and body capacitance from being too close to the loop and variable capacitor. Try to tune at arms length.

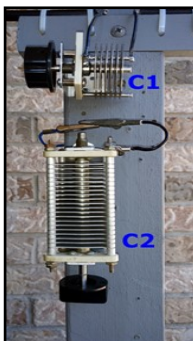
- **Course tuning** - adjust the variable capacitor initially for loudest background noise when changing bands
- **Fine tuning** - adjust the variable capacitor for lowest SWR reading
- **Antenna tuner** can be used for obtaining a better match, especially on 10 and 12 meters



Coupling loop with attached ferrite beads used to suppress common mode currents.

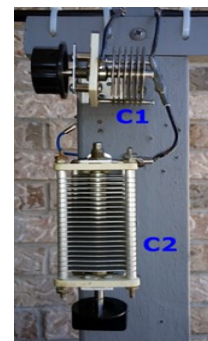
55pF variable capacitor located at bottom of loop. Plastic handle on knob added to avoid hand capacitance. Capacitor tunes loop for 10-20 meters with antenna tuner needed for lower SWR on 10-12 meters. Holes show past experiments with capacitor configurations.

Alternate capacitor configuration for 30-40 meters



C1 Only- tunes 10, 12, 15, 17 & 20m
C2 bypassed Using alligator clips

C1 + C2 in parallel tunes 30-40m
C1=3-35 pf
C2=17-252pf



Portable Operation



10-12-15-17-20 meters, 8 foot circumference, 30 inch diameter and LMR-400 coax 25pF variable capacitor located at bottom of loop. Plastic handle on knob added to avoid hand capacitance. Capacitor tunes 15-12-10 plus tuner on 10 meters for better match.



Summary

Both small magnetic loop antennas were interesting to build and use. Five magnetic loops have been built, but the two described in this article have been the most successful. The magnetic loop is placed at least 5 feet away from the operating position with the null side facing the operator.

Many stateside and DX contacts have been made on 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, and 10 meters using CW, JT65, FT8, and PSK31 modes. Propagation has not yet been favorable on 12 meters from my QTH.

Power used for both loops ranged from 3 to 60 watts during general QSOs. Full CW key down was tested using 100 watts for 5 seconds. No arcing resulted due to wide spacing of each variable capacitor.

Additional Reading

AA5TB	Small Transmitting Loop Antennas
K1FM	Mini Magnetic Loop
N4SPP	Magnetic Loop Antenna for 80-20 Meters
K5IJB	5-Band Small Magnetic Loop
K5IJB	Small Magnetic Loops
WA8LMF	Home-Made Magnetic Loop Antenna for 30 meters
W9SCH	The Rockloop
PH1AHD	Magnetic Loop antennas
PA0WIT	Foldable Mag Loop 40m-17m
Royal Signals	QRP Loop Tuner 80-20m - G8ODE
	Portable Mag Loop for 40-10 - G8ODE
	Simple RG213 Mag Loop (30m-15m) - G8ODE
	40m High Power Mag Loop Tuner - G8ODE
	40-17m Small HF Mag loop antenna tuner - G3WME

Slow Speed Saunter July 1, 2023

Slow Speed Saunter



CQS! CQS! CQS! CQS!



Slow Speed Saunter Results

Results for Slow Speed Saunter: 1 Jul 2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

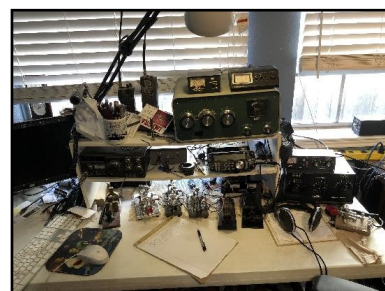
Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
KF5RUO	Mike	27625	AR	3
WB6IZG	Bruce	17714S	CA	7
W9GOO	John	21474S	IN	6
W1Z1Y	Ron	9621T	MA	2
K8AQM	Ted	1629S	MI	12
AC1GF	Bob	19399S	NH	2
K2CWM	Curt	3018S	NJ	3
N1XJM	James Savickas	14835	NY	1
NC2M	George	26325T	NY	6
W3HMS	John Jaminet	20679	PA	5
MM0GGG	Dave	25700	SCO	0
KY4O	Bill Spencer	7091S	TN	2
W4CMG	Cathy	20093S	TN	2
AF5Z	Bob	27159T	TX	13
KA5TJS	Allen	5172S	TX	6
WB5JWI	Les	5013	TX	1
KD9GDY	Jim	18156S	WI	1



Not feeling well today so only managed 3 QSOs, 2 of which were QRP x 2. Used my Kenwood TS-590SG, vertical ant and old Lionel J-38. The picture taken with my old Sony Mavica camera, one of the original digital cameras. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Gave my new antenna a workout. Flagpole vertical Dipole...HOA stealth antenna, covers 160-6m. I had some very enjoyable QSOs at various speeds. Great fun! 73, Ted K8AQM



Storms and really bad bands limited me to only 1 QSO on the first. I was able to work a few more after 0000Z on the 2nd. 73, Les WB5JWI

Sweet Looking New Bug...and Modified



Here is a new bug produced in Japan for the Japanese magazine "CQ Ham Radio" and made by GHD. It's a limited edition and sells for \$550.00. Since all my bugs have the paddle and

knob I switched (\$9 for nice red ones) the paddles for a paddle and knob setup. It feels great and responds as well as my McElroy bugs and Vibroplex bugs.

73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM



Editor...The following is a discussion that took place on the reflector and is worthwhile info for those who want to "polish brass." I also condensed the article from the web site Dimitris mentioned.

Polishing Brass

Re: How to clean brass

From: [Dimitris TL SV8ANW](#)

Date: Fri, 09 Jun 2023 02:46:48 EDT

Hello Mike,

Please read here <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/how-to-clean-brass> about cleaning the brass best 73

Jim/SV8ANW

19770 SKCC

Re: How to clean brass

From: [D.J.J. Ring, Jr.](#)

Date: Fri, 09 Jun 2023 07:20:10 EDT

An excellent article Jim, I also highly recommend this product. I used it on my Hamco paddle - I bought the Scotia finish of that ancient paddle that was eventually purchased by Vibroplex and sold as their Brass Racer, I made my key a mirror sheen brass and the tarnish kept away for about 10 years. It's dull now but it's been 40 years.

Highly recommended. <https://amzn.to/3NkYEil>

Flitz polish from Germany, 1 oz bottle lasted me for 40 years, I use this and a paste of Bartender's Friend for nasty brass hardware to clean it up until it's "nice" then this to make it golden brass shiny.

73

DR

N1EA

How do you clean badly tarnished brass?

Before you roll up your sleeves to clean brass, consider this: Sometimes the beauty of an antique brass object is its tarnish, in which case Sorenson recommends leaving it alone.

"Oftentimes it's best to forgo the polishing process altogether," he says, noting that polishing antiques could significantly reduce their value. "Too often I see what would be [a wonderfully patinated item](#) significantly degraded by a bad decision to restore it to a like-new state."

If you do want to banish the tarnish on brass, first determine whether it's lacquered brass or not. The most obvious test is to check for existing tarnish. "The point of lacquer is to prevent tarnishing," Hartman says. "But if there's a thin, shiny coating that is coming off in places, then the piece has been lacquered and the only real option is to take it to a metal refinisher."

Next, check if the object is brass or brass-plated. The way to know whether something is fully brass is simple: See if a magnet sticks to it. If not, it's brass. If it does stick, it's only brass-plated—and if the object is just brass-plated, all you need to clean it is warm water and soap. Polishing isn't necessary on objects that are only brass-plated, and, in fact, it could scratch the plating off. That's why it's important to identify plating before you embark on a brass cleaning project.

For badly tarnished brass, you might want to invest in an [ultrasonic cleaner machine](#). When you add a solution of citric acid and lemon oil, stubborn tarnish comes right off. Mixing 1 cup of [citric acid](#) with 3/4 tablespoon of [lemon oil](#) (mix using a food processor and place in a jar, this will last you for a while). Then place about 12 cups of water into your ultrasonic machine, and add about 2 tsp. of the mix, with a few drops of dish soap. Run the machine for about 30 minutes. Once you dry the brass items on a towel, you can rub a thin layer on [car wax](#) to create a protective coating to keep it from tarnishing again. This works best on non-food items like door knockers. You can also use it on outdoor elements like lighting fixtures.

For functional elements, such as locks, hinges, hardware, or light fixtures, Sorenson suggests seeking the help of a professional. “Wiring, mechanical complexity, and lubricating requirements generally turn these types of projects into more than [simple DIY chores](#),” he says.

What is the fastest way to clean brass?

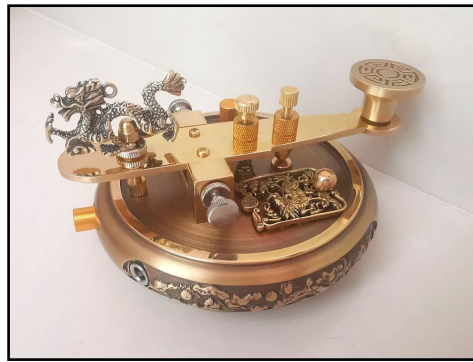
“The best way to clean a brass faucet is with a clean [microfiber cloth](#) and water,” says Abbas Imtiaz Poonawala, director of operations for [Isenberg Faucets](#) in Dallas. “This is natural and works wonderfully. For hard water scaling use a simple solution of vinegar and water.” For other pieces, always wash the brass before polishing. All you need to start is a mild dish soap, like [Dawn Platinum Powerwash Free & Clear](#), and a warm water rinse. Use a soft, damp cloth to wipe away the soapy water and all the debris, dust, and dirt.

If your brass isn’t too grimy, this might be all you need for a refresh. For a more neglected piece, store-bought brass cleaners will get your brass polished in a jiffy. Grab a soft cleaning cloth—Sorenson prefers a knit-cotton material, like an old undershirt—and buff away. To remove discoloration, use a cleaning product specifically designed for brass, like [Wright’s Brass Polish](#).

Our experts recommend some great store-bought cleaners to bring your brass back to its original luster in a jiffy. [Brasso](#) is great for to bring back shine to door knobs and locks. [Bar Keepers Friend](#) tackles both rust and tarnish on brass pieces. [Twinkle Brass & Copper Cleaning Kit](#) actually has an anti-tarnish ingredient that extends the treatment, making it ideal for outdoor pieces. [Blue Magic](#) is great for getting rid of tarnish and oxidation and works well on brass jewelry, the rim of a watch face, or a [vintage tea set](#).

Though Hartman rubs in polish with very fine steel wool, she warns that you should never use anything thicker than [grade 00 steel wool](#) to avoid scratching the surface

Zodiac Keys



Produced in China, these keys are made for the “year of the dragon.” Wonder if they have one for each year...I could have one with a “Rat” on it for my birth year!

Editor...The following is part of a great article on ferrites from the web page: "QRM Guru" It has been edited a bit (originals 22 pages!) but the main facts and summary are presented here.

The Truth About Ferrites

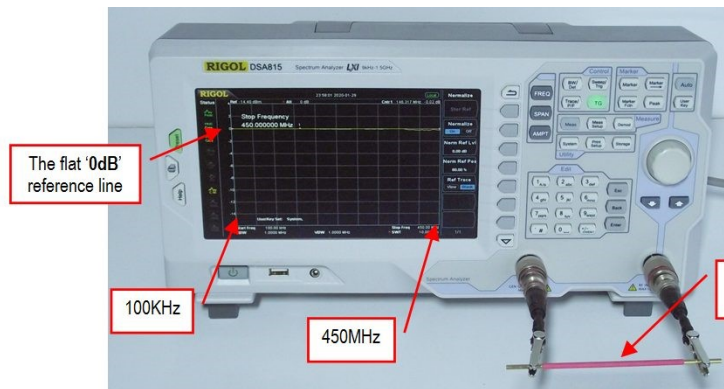
Articles on the correct placement of ferrite noise suppressors are common, but little has been written about the different options and where to buy them. Ferrite size, shape and cost varies significantly. The information provided can be minimal or non-existent.

Often we don't really know what we're getting and how effective they will work for us when they finally arrive. From this perspective, buying and using ferrite filters seems to have more in common with black magic than the application of radio science.

- How do I know if the ferrites I purchased are good, bad or totally ineffective?
- Do I get what I pay for? Are expensive ferrites much better than cheap ones?
- How can I tell if one ferrite is enough? Are 2 or 3 together really worthwhile?
- What are the advantages of clamps over beads and rings?
- Are big and heavy ferrites better than lightweight and small ones?

How far up the radio spectrum are these things going to work for me?

Ferrites are a type of ceramic made from iron and other oxides and come moulded into different shapes. The material combination is called a 'mix'. The characteristics of these mixes determine where and how they should be used. When a wire passes through or near ferrite materials, it effectively adds resistance to that wire at radio frequencies, but this resistance effect varies with the frequency applied to the wire. Every ferrite has its own characteristic impedance curve allowing it to absorb unwanted RF currents before reaching your receiver or appliance. Unfortunately, you can't tell what that working curve is going to be just by looking at it.

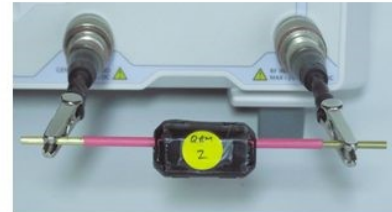
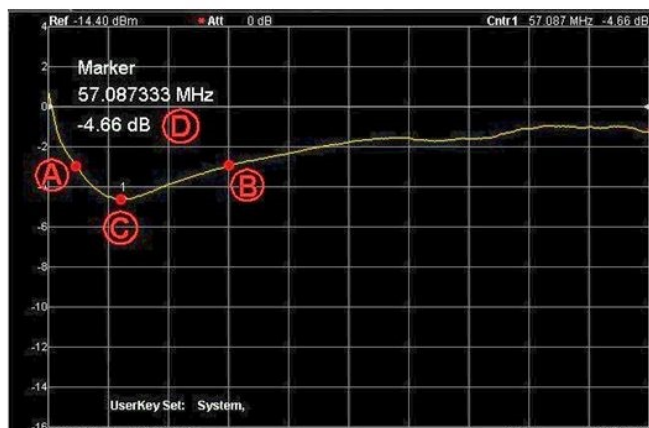


Testing methodology is important. We used a spectrum analyser with a tracking generator. The spectrum analyser shows gain or loss of radio frequencies between any two points on the radio spectrum. Our unit has capability to scan the radio spectrum from 10KHz to 1.5 GHz, but in this trial, we profiled these ferrite devices between 100KHz and 450MHz.

The tracking generator creates a small signal that regularly sweeps between two frequencies we are monitoring at a very controlled level. We are then able to couple from the tracking generator to the spectrum analyser via a small brass rod, which will become our test wire. First we 'normalise' to compensate for any stray capacitance and inductance around our test area. A flat yellow line represents zero dB. This line becomes our reference point before filtering is added. When any unknown ferrite is added to the test conductor, we measure a clear plot showing the unique characteristics of that item. With this arrangement we examined a graphic plot of each sample, then recorded five unique values which identify its effectiveness. We looked at :

- (A) The **lowest** frequency where the item drops below the -3dB (half-signal) point.
- (B) The **highest** frequency where the curve crosses the -3dB point
- (C) The frequency (MHz) where the greatest attenuation takes place

- (D) The maximum degree of **attenuation** (peak -dB) that takes place.
- (E) The **weight** of each ferrite item. (in grams)



The unique signature of each ferrite is plotted from 0.1 to 450 MHz

Branding vs Price

The first significant observation is that they all worked. Regardless of the source, none of the samples tested were fake or defective. They were all capable of suppressing radio frequencies to a greater or lesser degree. This is reassuring, as you can never prove authenticity just by looking at a ferrite.

From these samples, we can surmise that regardless of their source, all of these clamp-on ferrites will provide at least some degree of effectiveness in the shack.

Ferrite Mixture Type

The next observation (with the exception of the Altronics Iron Core ring) is that all of these materials are composed from a similar mix of ferrite material. The absorption curves were all a reasonable match to **Mix 43**. This indicates that their application is appropriate for HF and low VHF frequencies. (The Altronics ring L4534A was purchased with the rest of the ferrites, but it does not qualify as a ferrite device. It is a powdered iron object with different characteristics. We left it in the test for contrast and will provide separate comment on these devices.)

Size vs weight correlation of ferrite clamps

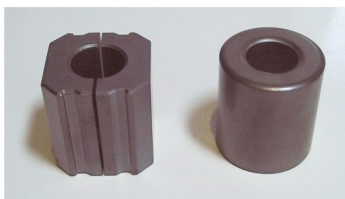
Clamp-on ferrite devices come in a variety of different physical sizes and shapes. It is reasonable to think that bigger ferrites work better than smaller ones, but is this actually the case? We sorted our samples by weight and plotted this chart to see how closely the degree of absorption of RF energy followed the physical weight of each sample.



There is a correlation between ferrite effectiveness and wall thickness. This equates to a higher density of ferrite material around the single conductor, giving superior performance. This effect is not as bad as it first seems, so don't necessarily shop only for thick-walled clamps. Examine some of the following sections in this article which explore the most effective ways to use ferrite clamps.

The final comment on the size of clamps was the observation that the very small clamp-on ferrites don't have sufficient mass for good performance. The smallest of the eBay clamps (**E5**) didn't even reach -3dB. Unless a friend gives you a lot of them for nothing, there is a lot to be said for aiming straight for medium and large clamps, or the results could be disappointing.

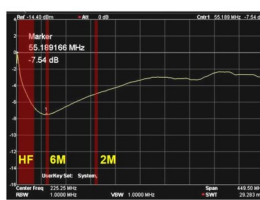
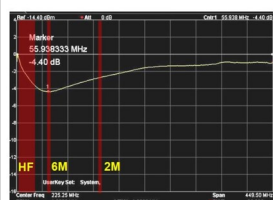
Are solid ferrite rings better than split rings?



Split and solid cores have similar performance This turned out to be an easy question to answer. Two rings of similar weight, hole-size and ferrite mix were compared. One was solid and the other was split.

The results were almost identical when tested. This tells us that shopping for solid cores have no real advantage over split cores. However, the split ferrites can be applied to cables without having to remove connector plugs and this makes them a more practical purchase.

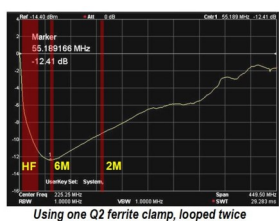
An important question to answer is “*what is the optimum configuration for the application of ferrite clamps*“. It’s easy to imagine that two clamps are better than one, but how much better?



Unsurprisingly, doubling up on the clamps gives an additional 3dB of RF absorption. At **55 MHz** the peak absorption jumped from **-4.40 dB** to **-7.54 dB**. This tells us that if one clamp on its own does not quite do the job, then add another for improved performance. Be aware that to achieve a further 3dB, you must double again from two to four units.

Next, we explore the effectiveness of looping a wire through a clamp more than once. This can only work where there is sufficient slack in the cable, and where the hole in the core is large enough to accept additional turns.

Here is what happens:



This is a very interesting result showing that the single extra turn through the core increases absorption from -4.4dB to a huge -12.41 dB. This 8 dB increase makes a single clamp provide the same effectiveness of around six such clamps on the same wire.

Why adding turns makes ferrites much more effective

This effect is not really a mystery when we break down what’s happening. When we add ferrite to a wire, we are effectively adding series resistance to that wire, but this resistance effect varies with frequency. At steady DC, the ferrites have no effect, but as an AC signal is applied a resistance is developed within the wire surrounded by the ferrite material. The higher the frequency, the greater the increased resistance. This resistance is also affected by the type of ferrite material, its volume, and its distance from the wire concerned.

When we increase the windings through a core, we begin to invoke conventional transformer theory as well. As happens in power transformer calculations, **the impedance ratio is always the square of the turns ratio**. So increasing turns through the core by **x2** lifts its impedance (and attenuation effect) by **x4**. A x4 increase equates to a **6dB** increase. In our example above we had a larger **8dB** change. This was because on the first turn, where the wire just passed through a clamp, it was not in contact with the ends of the clamp. Hence the *first* complete loop through the core provides more benefit than just one turn.

IF: **URNS RATIO = 1 : 2**
THEN: **IMPEDANCE RATIO = 1 : 4**

Earlier we observed that **thin wall** clamps had poorer performance than **thick wall** clamps. However, if the reduced wall thickness then allows multiple turns through the clamp, it will more than make up for the initial poor response afforded by a single wire

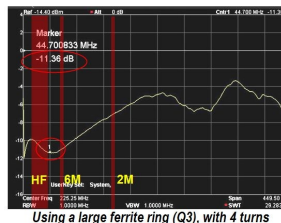
passage.

The big takeaway from this observation is to insert the maximum possible turns through any ferrite clamp. This is always going to be cheaper and more compact than adding extra clamps to the same wire. If more suppression is needed, perform both actions.

Ferrite clamps vs ferrite rings

Initial test results of ferrite rings showed poor performance compared to clamps when a single wire was passed through a ring. This does not mean that ferrite rings are a poor choice.

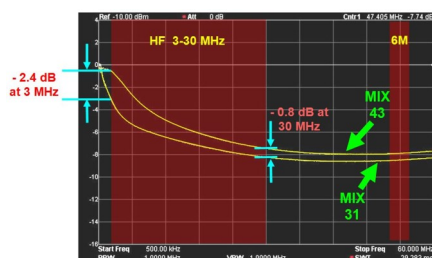
Ferrite rings are a convenient way for a large cable to achieve multiple turns and high exposure to the ferrite material.



How important is it to get the right Mix?

As previously described, ferrite products are created with different mixture profiles. These different mixes absorb RF energy in different parts of the spectrum. Thus far we have examined a range of common ferrite clamps and rings which profile as 'Mix 43', which is a common, general purpose filter. However some operators are keen to obtain maximum effect on lower HF bands and in this area Mix 31 is reputed to be better. This mix is generally harder to get and more expensive, so it would be nice to know if it is worth the effort.

In this final experiment we purchased some genuine Fair Rite samples graded as Mix 31. This was a very close physical match in size, shape and weight to the Jaycar LF1290 with its Mix 43 profile. A good physical match was important for realistic comparisons at HF frequencies.



The results confirm that the Mix 31 ferrites can absorb RF at lower frequencies than the more readily available Mix 43 composition. With the single passage of a conductor at 3MHz there was a measurable absorption difference of 2.4 dB. These two curves quickly begin to converge with a rise in frequency. At 30 MHz the difference was a scant 0.8 dB. By 150 MHz the two lines follow a near-identical path.

On the 80 metre HF band, the Fair Rite ferrite with its lower mix value delivers superior results, but the conventional Jaycar sample is not far behind. As seen with our previous measurements, absorption effects will compound where multiple turns of conductors are applied.

In practice, a single passage of cable through either type of clamp would barely create any discernible difference in Common Mode noise. Multiple turns are needed. The success of any good filtering exercise will therefore be governed by the number of turns that may be applied to a clamp, individually or as part of a chain of ferrite devices.

Summary

Ferrites have an important role to play in suppressing RF noise. These experiments and tests have illustrated the underlying science behind the practical application of ferrites in your desire to eliminate QRM. Some of the mystery surrounding ferrites have also be addressed. Much has been written on this topic and many detailed documents are available for those who wish to dig a little deeper. For most operators, this article will provide sufficient information to get started.

All ferrite devices exhibit a curve and a frequency where they are at their most effective. Just because the peak frequency is not where you wish to operate, doesn't mean that the device won't be fit-for-purpose in other parts of the spectrum. It's all about having sufficient filtering to do the job at hand without blowing the budget.

Thanks Ian VK3BUF for a practical insight into this complex topic. And thanks also to Leigh VK5KLT for conducting a peer review.

Want to see some case studies covering the use of ferrites? Click on the links below

Ian VK3BUF: [*"The Effectiveness of Ferrites"*](#)

Josh KI6NAZ: [*"For most of us, RFI is around us all the time"*](#).

Peter VK3YE: [*"The best thing you can do for your ham station"*](#)

Related Articles

[Mitigating Amateur Radio Interference to VDSL2](#)

[The saga of the network switch and 20m QRM](#)

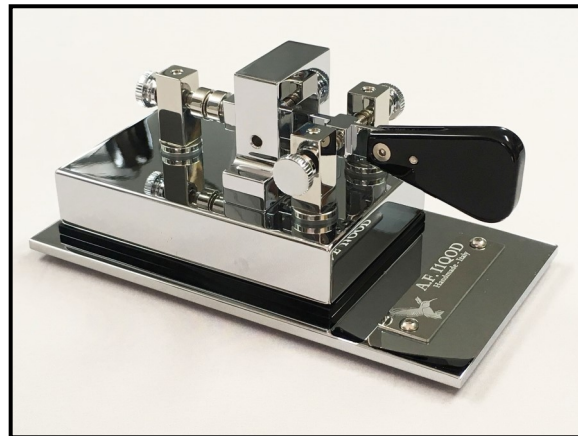
[Caution when working with mains power](#)

[Noise Celler Kit – from VK5TM](#)

[Plasma TV RFI – symptoms & possible cures](#)

Stylish Cootie

Alberto Frattini, I1QOD makes beautiful keys. Here is his "Maniflex" sideswiper.. If you ordered now (price unknown) you might have it by Christmas 2024. Beautiful, expensive and in high demand! He also has a "magnetic" sideswiper.



Magnetic Chrome Sideswiper

July 6, 2023 SKSE



Unfortunately my computer had suddenly some problems during the event and it was difficult for me to give infos on the SKCC sked page. Sorry not to have contacted our American friends for this edition. Never mind, that was a pleasure to be here as usual. 73 to everybody and see you in the next WES ! De Bernard F5DE



Thanks for nice QSO, good propagations across Eu, no DX stn in log, thanks ON7DQ and SM7BUA for 3 bands QSOs and F5JBR, F5DE, I4IKW and HB9IRF for 2 band QSOs, using TS950sd 100w into 2 el.Steppir at 10m agl and trapp Inv.V, key was Vibroplex Presentation bug. 73 and cul in WES...Kare YU7AE

Straight Key Sprint Europe Results

Results for SKSE: 06-Jul-2023

Overall | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | SWL | By SPC | Soapbox

Overall results

Rank	Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
1	SM7BUA	Mats	122T	SWE	18	8	4/9/2	304
2	F5JBR	ANDRE	2574T	FRA	18	10	3/5/2	285
3	YU7AE	Kare	5790T	SER	24	8	2/5/2	282
4	F5DE	Bernard	6247S	FRA	20	8	2/7/2	270
5	IZ0FBJ	Alex	24472C	ITA	17	9	2/7/1	258
6	I4IKW	Mark	24889	ITA	18	8	2/6/1	239
7	ON7DQ	Luc	14984T	BEL	17	8	2/5/3	231
8	G4IVV	Jon	26874T	ENG	16	8	2/4/3	213
9	PG4I	Jo	11019S	NED	12	8	1/5/3	176
10	G3ZRJ	TONY	3492 T	ENG	8	7	2/4/1	131
11	F8DTU	Frank	8662C	FRA	7	6	2/3/1	107
12	PA3JD	Joop	10955T	NED	6	5	1/2/2	75
13	HB9IRF	Gerald	12483	SUI	6	4	1/3/1	74
14	WA3AAN	Grant	22144	PA	5	4	2/0/1	55
15	HB9CPS	Geo	20350	SUI	4	3	0/0/1	17



Very heavy QRN tonight. Thanks for QSOs. 73, Tony G3ZRJ



Conditions not good enough to work across to the states this evening, but had a nice time mostly on 40m. Was nice to meet a few new call signs. I decided to use a WW2 'Bathtub' key that I found this afternoon in my garage and had spent a little while cleaning up prior to the SKSE - it worked well! 73, Jon G4IVV

Report and Evaluation of a Greyline 20ft Vertical Dipole



I have moved into an HOA complex and needed an antenna that would suit my needs for working SKCC stations. Of course no towers nor “unsightly antennas” (whatever that means; antennas are a thing of beauty!) What to do? I put up a “stealthy” EFHF for 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10m. At 15 ft and running through trees and shrubs I wanted something better (always better). Flag poles were allowed but no more than 20ft. After searching the internet for products I found the perfect solution (I thought) with Greyline Antennas ... and here is where the fun began. I don’t know why but for some reason it took me over a year to get an antenna from them and then I had to have someone else order it for me! For over a year I emailed, tried their online chat and phone all with no response what-so-ever regarding my order. Finally getting a friend to order one for me and paying him back, I got one! The MFJ remote antenna tuner arrived two weeks later but at least it came. To say Greyline’s customer service is “poor” is a gross over statement! To me it’s virtually non existent!

On to the installation! Laying it all out I saw how it was to be put together and together it went...except the top section which would not fit together because the top section ID was too small to fit over the sleeve OD of the lower section! \$150 and a local machine shop later the two sections were machined and fit (with thinner walls of course).



The cement base was poured. A week later with the help of a couple sons the antenna was assembled and raised. It looked great! No complaints from the HOA folks.

So now for the tuner and burying the coax. I should have used LMR 400 but used RG8-x for now.

Of course there “had” to be a better look to the installation for the wife so..... a trip to the local greenhouse and big box store for some “bricks” and now the installation looks pretty....but does it work?



Getting all the cabling buried and connected in the shack I fired up the K4D to see how the system worked. I was most interested in 80, 40 and 20 meters for SKCC events. The following are my results as read from the swr screen of the K4D and a 1.8-60



MHz Vectronics SWR bridge 1.8-50 MHz.

K4 SWR meter External Vectronics SWR meter

1.813.....1.5:1	1:1.2
3.555.....1.8:1	1:1
7.055..... 2.5:1	1.8:1
10.120..1.5:1	1:1
14.055..1.5:1*	1:1
18.080..2:1	1.5:1
21.055..1.8:1	1.5:1
24.900..2:1	2:1
28.055..2:1	1.5:1
50.100.. 2.5:1	1.5:1**

*WITH THE TUNER "OFF" THE 20M SWR IS 1:1 perfect...weird!

**Meter may not be accurate on 50 MHZ

So why the difference in the rig meter and the external meter; I don't know. There is an amplifier and antenna switch between the rig and the Vectronics SWR bridge. I do know that the power cuts back on the rig when the SWR is over 2:1.

I must admit I was very pleased with everything except 40m and 6m. My EFHW does a pretty good job on 40 and I really don't do much with 6m.

I have used the antenna on the higher bands and have been pleased with what I can work. The antenna is quieter than my EFHW. I haven't tried it on 160 nor 80m except locally and at least I was heard within the state.

The vertical dipole has a lower angle of radiation than even a true vertical so I suspect that feature and the fact it's three feet from our lake gives me a fine 20m signal to Europe.

The winter months here in Michigan should be a good test of the antenna both with propagation and its durability.

Final analysis at this point: **Greyline's customer service stinks!** If the right parts are sent then the product appears to work as stated. I ordered some extra parts over a month ago and am still waiting for a choke and some extra feedline spacers...don't need them now but I'd like them anyway.



Early morning view of the flag and looking to the northeast across the lake to Europe.

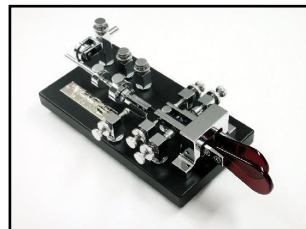
WES July, 2023



Busy weekend and got home 11:00 PM Sat. (Eastern) Hooked up my 160 meter dipole to try 1.813 and logged on to sked page. Before I had a chance to call I got a PM from Stan, ZL2BLQ in New Zealand and we had a qso on 15 meters. Then I got a PM from Vern, NJ8I who told me that VK2DVA from Australia was on 15 meters so I had a qso with Colin. Not bad for a dipole and 100 watts. This was the only hour I was able to participate in the Wes this weekend but this made my day. Hope to spend more WES time next month. 73 all, Frank AA2XB



Thanks to everyone involved with WES! I look forward to this every month. Best 73 to all, Kevin AF5SW SKCC #20090S



Had a very good time with this WES. Was on 20 & 40 mtrs most of the time. But some 15 mtrs as well. Unfortunately, the QRN from local storms really cut down a bit on operating time & made copy of some weaker stations quite rough. Thanks to all of the stations who worked me! 73, Steve K2FW



Very poor band conditions during the day. Best runs were from 5PM-8PM local time, 40M Saturday, and 20M Sunday. Made 66 QSOs last 3hrs of contest. Very little DX, mostly short skip. Made most of my QSOs on 20M. I couldn't believe I missed



Three watts, a doublet at 35 feet, and a Cootie. I'm working toward TKA and QRP awards. Thanks for hearing me! 73, Gary



Not the best conditions for 900 mW. Didn't hear a lot of the old regulars this time. 40 was the place to be for me. Here is the Mayflower II from here in Plymouth. 72 / 73, Gary K1YAN



As always, thanks for a great WES. I hope to see everyone next time. 73, Jim AD0AB



Only active from 12 a.m. to 5 p.m. UT on Sunday. Lots of noise and weak signals. Fatigue after surgery and placement of Stents (3) in a coronary artery on Wednesday evening. Thank you for these QSOs. 73, Bob



Was away most of Sunday and when I returned home the T-Boomers followed me home, so Sunday was a wash for me. Ran 50 watts from my TS-590SG into a vertical, using my 1943 Lionel J38 straight key. Sorry I couldn't spend more time but it was fun. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Busy weekend away from WES. When I was available, not many stations heard. Strange conditions for me. 73, Bud AA8CL



Noisy bands here on the vertical antenna plus only a short time on the key (a folding Arm military key). Kenwood TS440s, 100 watts and a vertical antenna. 73, John G0RDO



Thank you to the 13 Colony op's, A busy weekend limited my Op-Time ...Special Thanks to WB9HFK 83T and AB8FU 62T. 73, Rick K0KEX

WES July, 2023 II



I missed a good deal between a day trip to Pgh and storms on Sunday. Got to see Telegraph Way though. 73, Bill K3QP



Seemed like band conditions were poor the first day and improved the second day. Enjoyed the sprint. 73 & STAY TUNED Daryl K9QEW



Had a lot of fun on Sunday! Only had a few hours to play. Spent Saturday in the IARU Contest. 73, Tom KC3SVR



I thought this was just a great event, dovetailing nicely with the other 13 Colonies event (last week). It was very nice to connect with so many great ops during this WES (both in the "13 Colonies," in the nation and across the ocean. One small bummer...a simple "QRL" would've been a nice courtesy yesterday. But no matter - he had a great event! Already looking forward to next month! As for a photo, I wasn't sure what would be appropriate. So, after giving the matter some thought, I dressed in patriotic attire - a fitting tribute to the 13 Colonies from the comfort of the K4KYN ham shack. Enjoy!



Sure glad to see the bands improve on Sunday. Saturday was a 20m only band for me. Forty was stone silent. I managed to play longer than normal so had a lot more fun. Favorite contact this time was Lidiette, KQ3Q. Her first SKCC Contact!! Maybe her first on air CW contact? Ran the KX3 and K3/10 to a doublet and LNR Quad at 33 feet. Used the full house of keys. Bug, sideswiper and straight key. Happy 4th!! 73, Randy KB4QQJ



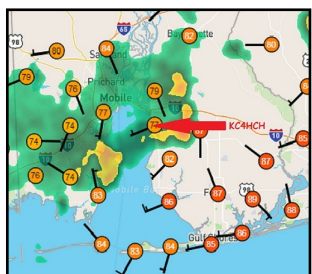
Homebrew station: <https://www.zianet.com/k5am/> 73, Mark K5AM



Thanks to all who participated in make these weekend sprints so much fun. Everyone have a good month and look forward to working you in the Brag program. God bless you and your families. 73, Ric KA3LOC



I got in late but happy I got 8 colonies. Haven't been in 3 months with other things going on. 73, Rich KB1FGC



73, Roger KC4HCH



Only short time but fun as usual. Sunrise over the lake. 73, Ted K8AQM



Had a lot of fun. I had a some time this month to make a few contacts and 40m and 20m was fair. 73, Bruce KA3YGL



This was a fun WES looking for QSO & Colonies. Did not get Ny and RI. Bands here not the best! Thanks for all Qs. 73, Craig KA9ERV

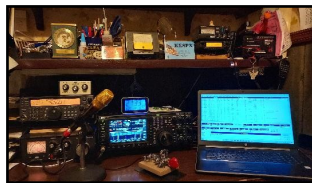
WES July, 2023 III



Always fun to do a little bit of Straight Key. Thanks everyone who participated. 73, Warren KC9IL



Good fun working WES this month. Unfortunately, I didn't get serious enough about working all of the colonies until a little too late in the game - but managed to work 11/13 of the original colonies + 18 others states. 73, Terry KD8RGJ



I really enjoyed this month's WES. A little crowded with the IARU contest happening at the same time but it was still great fun. 73, Ron KE8PX



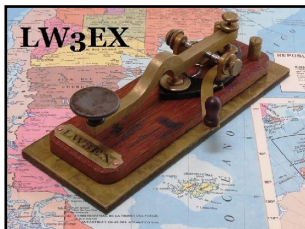
Unexpectedly had to operate QRP from the RV. Did not have the "radio charge lead" and one of the two batteries I had was close to flat, not good a go bag packing! First time operation with this set up made it interesting, and only had x hours operating time. IC705 5 watts, Screw-driver Antenna, Palm Radio Portable Key. First time using this key for a while, miss the Intrepid, sorry for the lousy keying and weak signal. Thanks for the few QSOs. 73, Brian KF6C



The old Icom-761 has become my go-to rig for the WES along with the trusty J-38. She still works like a charm. 73, Randal KG5I-EE



My right arm is working again (!) and I can use a bug to prevent further wrist injuries. I made contacts with N0IP, WB6IZG and W1PR. 73, Dean KG7WGX

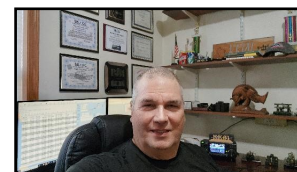


Prop AWOL... Thank You very much Dennis, W8BFX for "The QSO", FB ears! 28MHz 4ele Yagi - 5W - Homemade SK Looking forward to the next... BCNU 73, Walt KW3EX - ... ZUT

Good to be able to get on the radio off and on this weekend. Here in Tx for me the bands were very up and down, more down. Also had alot of line noise due to rain and some storms that pushed thru the area. Still had fun making as many QSO'S as I did. Did not even come close to 13 colonies and heard very few of them from the N.E due to the crazy band condx. Look forward to next month as well. 73, Doug KG5YTS from The Lone Star State.



QSO count: Saturday = 1 (K2FW), Sunday = 59. QSOs were mainly on 15 M, some on 20, 40 was useless out here. Pictured is my one and only all band antenna, 33 feet over 16.5 feet of wire. Tunes with tuner on all bands except 160. Top is at 26 feet. QRO is a must with this simple sky wire most of the time. Looking forward to next month's Homebrew Key WES (a special key is already built and guaranteed to be different than most anything seen before), Here's hoping for good band conditions, 73 all Chuck N0CW



Another work weekend for me, so made the best of what time I had along with the band conditions. Thanks to all the "colonists" out there passing along the bonus points. Catch you all next one...73, jack KK0I



Had a wonderful operating experience. Goal was 100 WES contacts and made it with 3 minutes to spare. Looking forward to the RandomGram later this month. 73, Vern NJ8L

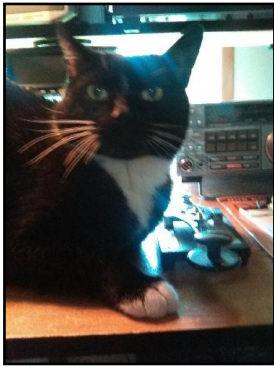


Very fun event and working with a new station, FTdx1200 into a flat top wire running 60 watts. Stainless paddles wired as a cootie mounted on an old bug metal base. Propagation wasn't that bad but several T-storms in the area. Mainly stayed on 40 to hand out the bonus points on the east coast. See you next month, 73, Dean N2TNN



First ever WES! Here's a picture of my key...73, Chris N8PEM

WES July, 2023 IV



Band condx questionable, with a number of thunderstorms both days. Great theme and it fell right in with the special event that had just closed. The first time I became the object of a pile up with a number of stations calling at the near the same level, and with QRN! Great fun nevertheless. Both myself and the cat had a good time! 73, Jerry N3KRX



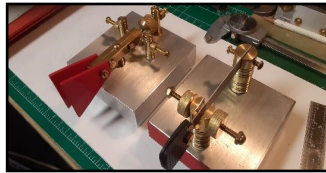
Bad condx Saturday but good on Sunday. Missed RI, NH, UK and FR but still a lot of fun. Living on a lake means I don't spend as much time on WES during the summer as I do in winter HI HI. Used my K4 at 100 watts with a KN4YB bug. Antennas were an 80M doublet at 30', 80M OCF at 25', 43' vertical and a full wave 160M horizontal loop. I REALLY need to get my 5 band quad working again! 73, Bill N2OT



Saturday I had 42 QSO's but my granddaughter kept me away until 17Z Sunday which resulted in 18 13C QSO's. But with the help of the Sked Page I was able to complete a 13 Colony SWEEP including the UK & France. Hints from others like from Ron, AC2C about Jim (RI), W1WIU lurking around 40M...Thanks for all the the WES contacts. 73, Rick N8XI



We were traveling this week end so time was limited. 40m was great, even tried 80 & 160 but no success. TNX! to ALL! for an enjoyable evening! 72 steve NQ8T

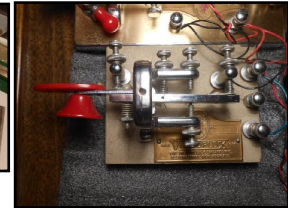


Argo 6 and 418 amp, 80wts. G5rv at 20ft, ma5b at 35ft.. 56 qosos.. spc24.. only this last month new 64 skcc mbrs.. so, all takecare and tnx to the SKCC working mbrs.. so, c u all next month to make more QRM it is LEGAL.. i still have only 88 keys.. they all make QRM, ha.. this WES i ran 80 wts, but usually run qrp 5wts.. so c u all.. take care..73, Dave N9ZXL

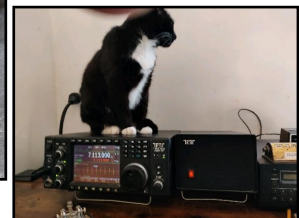


I missed WES for the last three months so I am happy to be back. Difficult conditions on 40m and 20m at my place; 15m was good, but not many players. Yet, it was fun and that is what matters. Thank you all and 73, Robert VE2KZW

Had been planning to spend a lot of time with the WES this month, but family activities popped up at the last minute. Having a cottage on a lake in Maine will do that to you! Anyway, had a nice time with the time available, despite the IARU contest. No sweep this year. Missed RI as usual, and prop to EU was lousy when those stations were available here. Looking at the August calendar, we will have our two grandsons here that week, so may not get much time then, either. But thanks to all that participated this time -- seemed to be good activity after the competing contest stuff ended. 73, John W1TAG



Funny bands at times, 10 never opened, and 15 was open but not to where I needed it. Made solid contacts with friends, old and new. Picture is the '60 Vi-brokeyer that I used - the green wire shorts the dot and dash contacts. Looking forward to seeing everyone on the air over the summer. 73, George NC2M



I was fighting a little jet lag (I recently returned from two weeks in Uganda). But it was a good weekend. As usual, ministry demands pretty much filled up my Sunday - but I put in a long day QRV Saturday - despite WRTC, IARU contests and poor conditions, had a good run. Not bad for my antenna farm which consists of one dipole (for 80 meters). That's it. 40 and 20 were the only bands worked. Great time despite less than ideal condx; see all next month. 73, Dave W1DV

WES July, 2023 V



Frustrating WES. The sun-spot bands 15 meters and 10 meters were totally dead here in SW Ohio. 20 meters was not very good either. 40 meters was OK both days. Looking forward to the August WES. 73, Drexel W4DHT



Had fun firing up a new QRP radio for a bit. Thanks for the contacts! 73 de Josh, W9HT



My first WES with an "S", and with the Hex Beam finally on the roof! All but one QSOs were on 15m-- had to catch a DC on 20m :-)--and all but one on 15m were from calling CQ. 15m was nice and quiet, and open to the Colonies almost the whole day on Sunday. Had some very good runs. Was on for about 4 hours in 3 shifts, so 9 QSOs per hour, which is comparable to my average on "speedy" contests. Very pleased with the results. Thank you again to everyone who had helped me on my path to "S", and see you all again soon! 73, Jordan W7VC



Wonderful time as usual. Saturday was difficult with IARU going on. My 75A4 handled it pretty well. I used the Gold Dust Twins (Collins 75A-4 and KWS-1) along with my Begali Sculpture Swing Cootie and Intrepid Bug. I switched back and forth. I always enjoy these. I wish I could dedicate more time to them. 73, Mike WB0SND



Random pic...73, Pat W5WTH

FD With W0GQ

I spent time at the W0GQ Field Day site that was a joint effort of the Collins Radio Club and the Cedar Valley Amateur Radio Club in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. They had CW, phone, and 6 meter FT8 positions as well as a JOTA position. The photo is of me at the broadcast monitor position. There was also an antique radio display and a Saturday morning "Junk in the Trunk" swap meet. Start of operations were delayed a couple hours by nearby lightning. All the antennas and tents survived several periods of rain and gusty winds during the weekend. There was plenty of time to remanence about previous radio operations and hundreds of QSOs were completed.

Dave Graham
WA0YDO
SKCC Nr 24667T

I forgot to give photo credit to Bob Lee, W0GXA, of the Eastern Iowa DX Association. I believe Bob is also a SKCC member, or has been in the dusty past. He likes to make fun of people that admit to owning microphones.

Ed...W0GXA is SKCC 8737



SKSA July 14, 2023



Results for SKSA: 14-Jul-2023

Overall | QRPp | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | Multi-Op | By SPC

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC#	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
JA1IAZ	NORI	25300T	JPN	30	2	1/1/1	90
JA0FVU	Taka	13456	JPN	21	3	0/2/1	88
JF1UOX	MISA	26413	JPN	22	2	1/2/1	84
JK1BVN	KAT	26584	JPN	18	1	1/3/1	68
JS2BGJ	MATT	27288	JPN	16	3	0/1/1	63
JJ1FXF	HIRO	22608T	JPN	12	2	1/1/0	49
JK1BZC	Mac	26553	JPN	14	1	0/2/1	39
7L2DXD	YUTA	NONE	JPN	13	1	0/2/1	38
JF1EPL	YOSHI	26458	JPN	12	1	0/2/1	37
JF1JDG	HIRO	26409	JPN	6	2	1/1/0	37
JR2IUB	Take	11167S	JPN	5	1	0/2/0	25
JO1ZZZ/1	A1CLUB	16199	JPN	14	1	0/1/0	24
JG1BGT	UJIE	26599	JPN	7	1	0/1/1	22
JG2LGM	Yoshi	26989	JPN	9	1	0/1/0	19
JF1NHD	Ino	NONE	JPN	9	1	0/1/0	19
VR2CO	Solo	13192	HKG	8	1	0/1/0	18
JK1AKA	Kei	25478	JPN	2	1	0/1/1	17
JA9MAT	HIDE	12796	JPN	4	1	0/1/0	14
JS2PHO	YOU	13443	JPN	2	2	0/0/0	4
BI8CZM	Cheng	23269	CHN	3	1	0/0/0	3



73, YUTA 7L2DXD



CONDX was not so good.
73, Hide JA9MAT



Thank you for your call!
Sorry for poor operation...See you next
SKSA! 73, Matt
JS2BGJ

QRP'ed the first one
hour as my own call sign.
CONDX seemed not so
great and no DX contacts
except for a call from
HKG. My keys are ebony
base straight key and
Vibroplex Original with
some additional weights.
TNX CALLS. 73, Hiro
JJ1FXF

I like CW. I do love QRP
more. <https://kurobe3463.blogspot.com>
73, Ujiie JG1BGT



Today's Keys. Thank you
for FB QSO! 73, Yoshi
JF1EPL



My key is HK-704
Himond. 73, Mac JK1BZC

The GADS Antenna

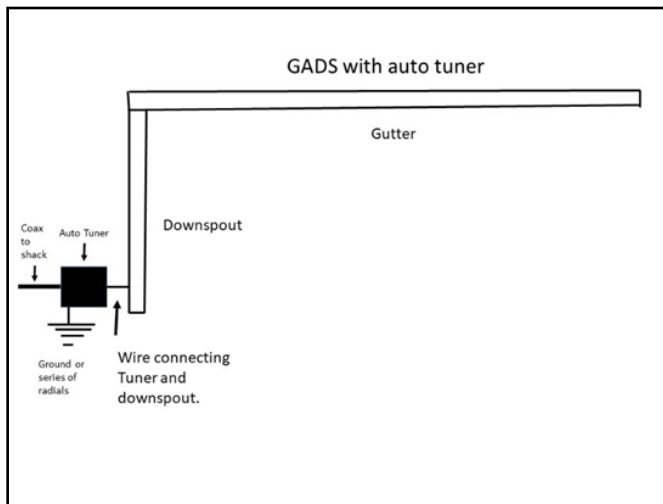
De Randy KB4QQJ

Got a friend in a strict HOA and we set him up a GADS antenna (gutter and downspouts), to date it's not been contested and he is very active on ssb.

First we made sure all gutters were electrically connected and had continuity. His were but if needed we could drill and pop rivet pieces together. Basically all we did was attach a #14 wire to his downspout with sheet metal screws and washers. Attached LMR 400 Center conductor to that wire. Shield side went to his copper water pipe under the house via #12 wire. They still used copper in those days. Now days I guess you might want to use a suitable ground rod. Lots of people used various ununs, baluns, transformers etc. etc. between downspout and coax, but with his two-story house and 18 ft vertical downspout and 38 horizontal feet of gutter we didn't have need of any. Connected the coax directly to an Icom AH-4 remote tuner. That worked out great for him running 100w on 40 thru 10. It would easily tune 80m and 160m but with miserable contact results. Next step was to electrically connect all gutters and downspouts via #18 wire. That totaled about 140' if I remember correctly.

Never had decent results on 160m but 80m out to 800 miles was normal. Always checked into 3905 and OMISS SSB nets. After that one I have helped several others with a similar setup.

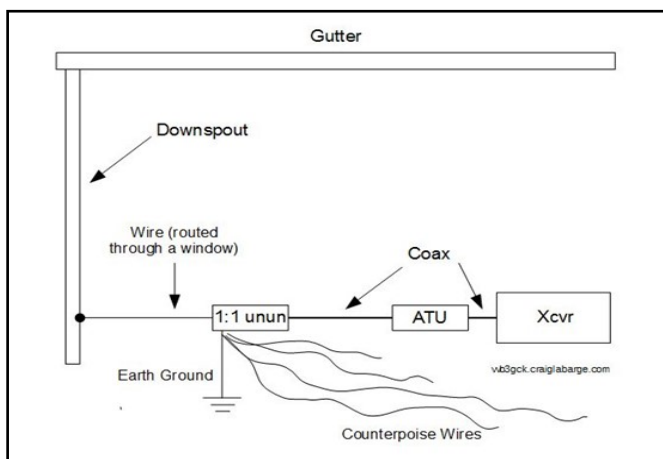
Possible GADS Setups



This system with a remote antenna tuner ensure that only the gutters and downspout are the multi band antenna.

Use of a 1:1 unun may be necessary between the coax and tuner.

Grounding is necessary, radials of various lengths would be better than a ground stake.



This system uses the tuner in the transceiver and tunes the coax as part of the antenna system.

The radials help make the antenna a better multi band antenna.

Oceania QRS Saunter July 15, 2023

Oceania QRS Saunter Results

Results for Oceania QRS Saunter: 15 Jul 2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
VK2GAZ	Garry	5460C	AUS	10
VK4EV	Ron	10775	AUS	1
VK4JAZ	Grant	4502	AUS	3
VK4JE	Ron Burchell	24961	AUS	7
VK4JM	David	26246	AUS	6
VK4FMX	Mark Bowdidge	26845	AUS	3
VK4SE	Jeff	26260	AUS	1
VK4TJ	John	4474S	AUS	10
VK8MC	Phil	22693	AUS	9
ZL1ARW	Jim	16633	NZL	6
ZL3TK	Stan	16208	NZL	15



Another great day of enjoying CW. It was very pleasing to have made 10 contacts, they were:

20M Mark VK4FMX, Stan ZL3TK, John VK4TJ, Ron VK4EV, Jeff VK4SE, Phil VK8MC

40M Brendan VK3BAP, Stan ZL3TK, David VK4JM & 80M George VK2DLF. Thank you to all who took part in this month's Saunter. 73, Garry VK2GAZ

TIME	FREQ	CALL	MODE	POWER	STATION	NAME	ADDRESS	QSO
0002	7.250	ZL1ARW	SSB	50W	NZL	JIM	AUCKLAND	16023
0045	14.050	VK4EV	SSB	50W	AUS	RON	MALDEN	20851
0053	14.051	VK4JE	SSB	50W	FL	KEITH	OVERSEA	71801
0114	14.051	VK4TJ	SSB	50W	AUS	JOHN	MURPHY'S CREEK	44749
0221	14.051	VK2GAZ	SSB	50W	AUS	GARRY	RICHMOND	5460C
0303	14.051	VK8MC	SSB	50W	AUS	PHIL	DARWIN	22693
0339	14.051	VK4JM	SSB	50W	AUS	DAVID	WYNNUM	26246
0422	7.037	VK2GAZ	SSB	50W	AUS	GARRY	RICHMOND	5460C
0635	14.037	VK4FMX	SSB	50W	AUS	MARK	CARDWELL	26845
0831	3.200	VK4TJ	SSB	50W	AUS	JOHN	MURPHY'S CREEK	44749
0936	3.200	VK4TJ	SSB	50W	AUS	JOHN	MURPHY'S CREEK	44749
2119	21.040	K2FW	SSB	50W	TX	LARRY	WYATTSON	24409
2250	21.040	K2FW	SSB	50W	TX	LARRY	WYATTSON	24409
2311	21.040	K2FW	SSB	50W	TX	LARRY	WYATTSON	24409
2346	14.050	VK4TJ	SSB	50W	AUS	JOHN	MURPHY'S CREEK	44749

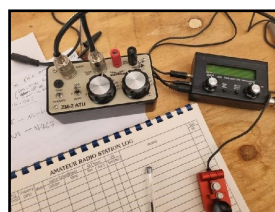
Frequent use of the SKCC sked webpage proved most fruitful. Wouldn't say the bands were open exactly, nonetheless was quite surprised by the DX calls which came in, proving they're there if one calls and waits long enough. A very enjoyable day, thanks for everyone's persistence and patience. Be advised all outgoing signal reports are RSN, for the reasons described on my QRZ page. Rig IC-735, Power 95 W, Antenna EFHW on 80 m, Key early WW2 Wigram straight brass, castings along GPO/NZPO style with unique large wooden base, manufactured by an RNZAF recruit at Wigram Air Force Base (near Christchurch). 73, Stan ZL3TK



Conditions were poor but nevertheless I headed out to Elanora Park in Wynnum and set up my QRP station. Rigs were: Elecraft KX1 at 3W and Hendricks DC40A at 0.6 W. I worked VK2KJJ Joe with the KX1 and VK4JM with both radios. My key was the American Morse KK1B. I look forward to more QRP fun next month. 73, Grant VK4JAZ



Thanks to All for making a Cold and Wet Saturday very enjoyable. 73, Cheers Ron VK4JE



Thanks to all. It was fun. Special thanks goes to ZL3TK (Stan). It was a struggle for both of us, but we got there in the end. (LOL) I was going to go QRP as usual, but the noise level was a bit high for 5 watts, so I switched from my QSX to my Kenwood and cranked up to 25 watts instead. Looking forward to next month. 73, Mark VK4FMX



First OC saunter and my first QSOs using a straight key! Operated 5W QRP using a Ten Tec Argonaut VI. 73, David VK4JM



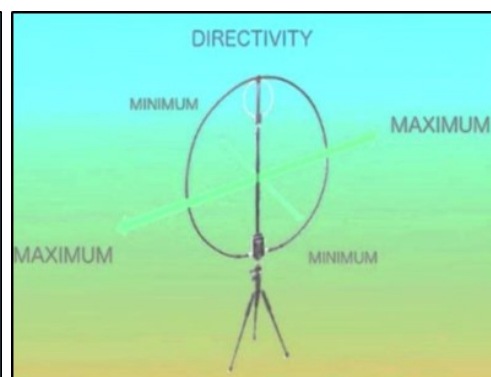
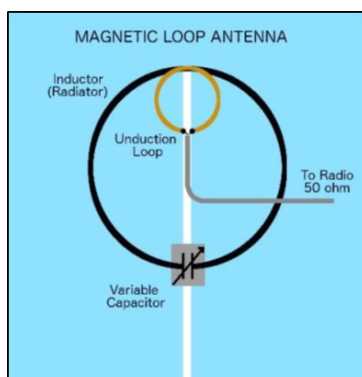
Another enjoyable event, although band conditions were not great at my end. All contacts were made on 20m using a K3 running 100 watts into a 2 el. yagi. 73, Phil VK8MC

My HG3 Plus QRO Magnetic Loop

Living in an HOA I want the best antennas I can to work SKCC events. I recently added the Precise RF HG3 Plus QRO Magnetic Loop antenna to my antenna arsenal. This antenna is rather costly and I really didn't need the QRO model as I run usually 100 watts but do have a KPA 500 if needed.

My order came very quickly from "Precise RF," no more than two weeks from order to delivery. It was well packaged and was very easy to assemble. I did use my own tripod for a more secure permanent mounting outside (in Michigan it better be secure!). Here is a picture of my installation which is placed between my neighbor's shed and bushes in front and to the side between our homes

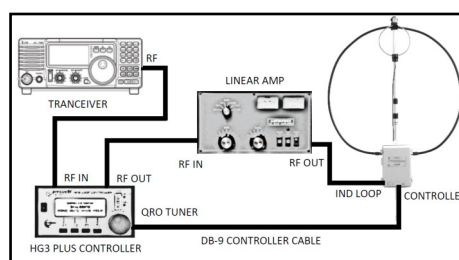
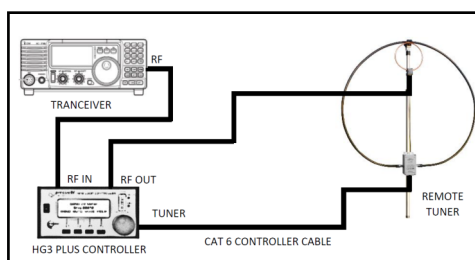
This is a selection of photos showing how the loop works as a design and hook up options:



Following the manual for tune-ups on bands was a bit difficult and perhaps some better explanations are in order. Even so, after a few "botches" I caught on to what the manual was trying to tell me. I worked only 40-10 meters and found I could tune the loop on all bands to less than 2:1 and on several bands a 1:1 was achieved. Here is a chart of the different features between various available models from Precise RF.

	EXPRESS	PRO	QRO
Resolution BW	13.5 KHz	13.5 KHz	600 Hz
Max Power*	100W	100W	1,500W
Bands*	40-10 meter	80-10 meter	80-10 meter
Tuning	Manual	Manual Auto	Manual Auto
SWR Bridge	No	YES	YES
Antenna Rotor	No	YES	YES

Depending whether you run QRO or 100 watts, you have a choice of how to hook up the antenna to the transceiver. For now I have the simple transceiver direct to the antenna and will add the amplifier hook up at a later date.



I gave the antenna a pretty good workout in the July SKS. contacts were made. Perhaps you worked K8AQM ...the big signal on the band....LOL?

I had always heard magnetic loops were quieter than dipoles so I was quite surprised to see there was more noise with my loop than with my flagpole vertical dipole, about 1 S unit noisier than the flag pole vertical dipole. I have much more testing to do and perhaps a rotor would improve noise and signal strength as loops are quite directional. I found adding a common mode choke reduced the noise noticeably. I also have to modify (easy) the unit to operate on both 80 and 60m soon.

One feature I don't like about this antenna is a returning of each band change is required unlike my automatic antenna tuner on my Greyline vertical dipole flag pole. Perhaps future models will have the ability to have a "memory" for each band like my MFJ autotuner.

My mantra has always been, "You just can't have too many antennas." The loop is easy to hide and many ops have the antenna inside a garage, in an attic, mounted on an old satellite dish mount or even in an adjacent room running QRP! This is just another antenna to the HOA arsenal.

73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM

Struggling to Balance Ham Radio and Daily Maintenance Chores . . .

Hello everyone, posting this with a heavy heart...

As much as I love Ham Radio, it takes up too much of my time and I am struggling to keep up with the everyday basics such as cleaning and maintaining my home, so something has to give. I will be getting rid of my equipment. Below is a list of what's available. All FREE of charge, but to good homes only.

Serious inquiries only please. Thanks for reading and understanding...

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Dustpan and brush | 8. Laundry detergent |
| 2. Sponges | 9. Fabric softener |
| 3. Dusters | 10. Laundry baskets |
| 4. Mop and bucket | 11. Toilet brush |
| 5. Window cleaner | 12. Cleaning sprays |
| 6. Vacuum | 13. Scrubbing brushes |
| 7. Dishwashing liquid | |

Had you going at first, didn't I?

A man with a clock always knows what time it is.

A man with two clocks is never sure.

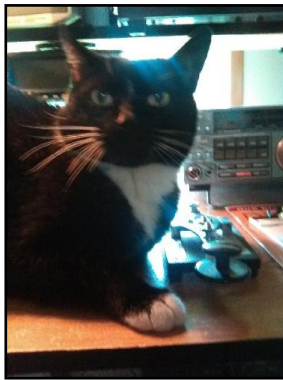
-- A derivative of Segal's law

David J. Ring, Jr., N1EA

July 26, 2023 SKS



Started on 15M, but nothing heard. I switched to 20M till it seemed to cool down. Then worked a few on 40M and 80M. Hope the next one 15M will be hot with SKCC signals. Thanks to all who pulled out my 4W QRP signal. 73, Steve K4JPN



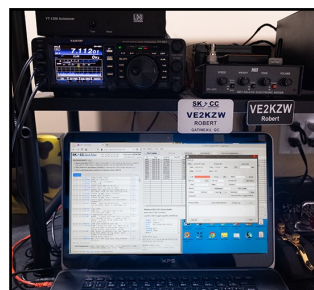
Had dinner with friends and didn't get on the air for the first half hour. Twenty seemed to be good at first, and even heard a signal on 15 that disappeared before he answered me. Weird propagation, as usual lately. Tnx to all that gave me Qs. Hope to see you all next month. Great fun! Even the cat had a good time! 73 all, Jerry N3KRX



Very strong signals even with lots of noise. Nice to hear N8KR back with a very big signal and a pleasure to work KA9GKE, Rose and Cathy W4CMG. New bug and magnetic loop work very well. 73, Ted K8AQM



2 station multi operation with the new tower and new 40 rotatable dipole. The antennas went up this morning and the station, which has been silent for the past few months, is back on the air. Ed - WA9BBN was at the 40 meter station and I stayed on 20 with the TH-5. Many local SKCC members helped with the process of replacing the tower. See you all next month! 73, Ken



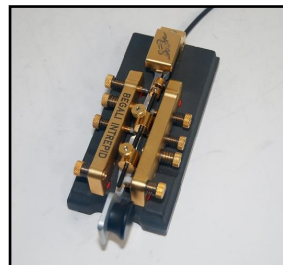
Spent the two hours on 20m. No noise and very strong signal, both ways. I used my FT-991 at 80w with the Buddipole set as a flat top dipole and my Begali Spark. Thanks for the QSOs and 73, Robert VE2KZW.



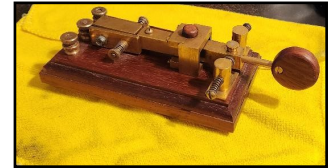
Started on 20m good activity finished on 40m better activity. Good conditions overall. 73 & STAY TUNED! Daryl



Nice to work Ted on his new bug! Always a nice event. TNX! Cathy for stepping up to keep it going! Tried 80m a couple of times but had the most success on 40m. My bug behaved itself for a change ... HI HI C U next month. 72, Steve NQ8T



Conditions were good on 20 and 40. Had 21 contacts on 20 and 8 on 40. Almost forgot the event but thanks to Cathy's reminders I made it by 0025z. Used my Begali Intrepid for all qso's. Rig: K4D and KPA-1500 and the 20 meter antenna was the OB 10-3 @ 50' and for 40 used the 130' EF at 50'. Been under the weather with some sort of virus for the last 10 days but I persevered to at least get on the air. 73 de West Virginia, Dave W3NP



Always fun when I get in the shack in time to play in the SKS!! This time I brought out my MTR4b and fed it into an old Ten-Tec 405 amp for about 50w out. Bands seemed in great shape in NC for a change. I use all three methods of sending with SS, SK and a Bug. 73, Randy KB4QQJ



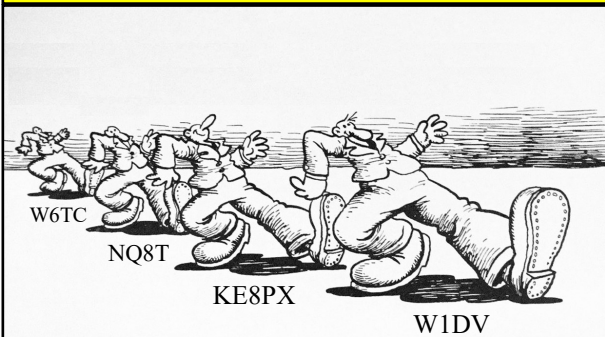
Rig is QRP Labs QCX+ (20m). Antenna is PAR EndFedz EFHW (20m). Key is PUTIKEEG straight key with navy knob. Worked a station in my city (Gatineau, QC), one on the west coast, and one on the east coast. Fun evening of QRP CW. 73, Tom VA2NW



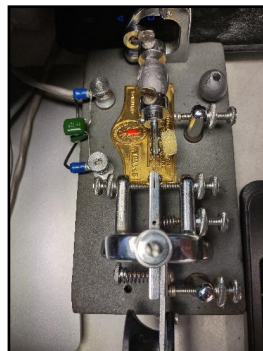
First Sprint with my new Bug. (TU for your patience with me!) Great fun even under poor conditions. 73, Blu W1BLU

August 1, 2023 Slow Speed Saunter

Slow Speed Saunter



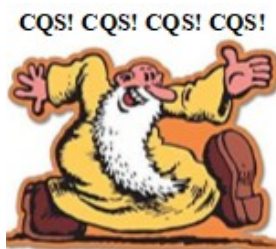
Afraid I could not make many QSOs on this one. Funny, I have a neat collection of keys but always seem to reach for my 1943 Lionel J38. Maybe it was because it was gifted to me by an Army MARS member who has since become a SK. But it does have a good feel about it. Really hope to make more contacts in these events. 73, Curt K2CWM NJ



Thanks to all the folks who copied my weak signal and 'fishing sinker' bug. I had a great time making new friends & finding old ones. 73, Bob AF5Z



Another good SSS - most of the action I found here in western NC was on 40, although there was some activity on 20. Good to hear so many new members with high skcc numbers, and "re-treads" re-learning cw from decades ago! See you next month SSS - 73 de Dave W1DV



Slow Speed Saunter Results

Results for Slow Speed Saunter: 1 Aug 2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
N1TX	Larry	11052S	AK	9
W07T	Mark	3298	AZ	4
KN6ZOO	Steve	27699	CA	1
W6TC	Joel	22307	CA	20
W0NV	Niles	5595T	IA	1
W9GOO	John	21474S	IN	3
KA3LOC	Ric	660S	KS	8
KC3SSC	John Armato	27648	MD	8
KK4ITX	John	19567	ME	1
W1DV	Dave	1433S	NC	25
K2CWM	Curt	3018S	NJ	4
LA7HAA	Svein Perander	26677	NOR	0
KC2PSA	Ron Roberts Jr	27162	NY	2
NC2M	George	26325T	NY	1
KB8QPT	Sergio	26908	OH	2
KE8PX	Ron	26949T	OH	23
NQ8T	Steve	5919S	OH	21
SN9MT	Mirek	24394	POL	4
W4CMG	Cathy	20093S	TN	3
AF5Z	Bob	27159T	TX	16
K5ENS	Ken	19964S	TX	10
KA5TJS	Allen	5172S	TX	1
W15H	Mike	11770S	TX	2
KM4GC	Doug McNulty	20739	VA	2
KK0I	Jack	2370S	WI	4



Thanks to all who participated. I was busy and only had a few hours to participate. But still had fun. 73 & God bless. Ric KA3LOC



Great to work Ken and his new call, Milan in SVK, Toly in UKR and Larry in Fairbanks. TNX! Dave for making this event going! 73, Steve NQ8T



I have had my number for a few years but used it for the SSS for the first time. I used a key that my late Dad made for me. 73, Joel W6TC



Limited time with out-of-state visitors. Hopefully next month. 73, Jack KK0I



N8KR Tower Project

On Friday, March 31 of this year, a big storm hit the Fort Wayne area. Few people knew that there was an EF2 tornado that touched down in a small area in the northeast portion of the town with a "bulls-eye" in my neighborhood! Trees down, fences destroyed, sheds collapsed, roofs damaged and . . . one ham radio tower damaged. Deb and I returned from Florida on April 3rd to find the damage including the roof of the house.



The force of the wind buckled the house brackets attached to the Rohn 25 tower. Below the brackets one tower leg broke where two sections came together. That leg also bent causing the tower to lean over the house.

While no damage was done to the Hygain TH-5 antenna, all of the wire antennas were on the ground and it was very apparent that there was no safe way possible to climb the tower. Meanwhile, with a damaged roof and missing shingles, it was time to get the insurance people involved along with a reputable roofer. Thanks to a good insurance company, everything was covered, including the tower, so it was time to begin the tower replacement. With the tower in the fenced back yard, finding a bucket truck to reach the antenna was difficult. The first bid was a crane operating from the street at a cost of nearly \$3K. I soon noticed all of the tree trimmers and bucket trucks cleaning up neighborhood trees. A little "side job" for a few hundred and the tribander and rotor came down along with the top three sections of tower.



Once the bucket truck was done with the top of the tower, the bottom 20 feet was simply cut with a saw and pulled safely to the ground. After this experience, I decided the best replacement tower would be the heavier Rohn 45. Needing a yard of concrete to hold the base, it was necessary for me to “jack hammer” the old concrete base, enlarge the hole, and prepare for the larger and heavier footprint of new tower.



In the meantime, 4 sections of Rohn 45 was procured from the Chicago area with the help of Josh – W9HT and his pick up truck. While all of this was happening, I decided that as I continue to age, tower climbing will soon end. So, I decided to invest in RT Innovations *Razor*: similar to the Glenn Martin Hazer but built for Rohn 45. With the help of QTH, I found a new unused one in North Carolina . . . Road Trip! Deb and I had a fun long drive to the east coast of NC. I was pleased to find this one with the stainless steel options.



With the tower in the back yard and the difficulty bringing in a cement truck, I decided to mix the concrete onsite. How many bags of concrete???? 28 bags filled the hole. Fortunately, a portable cement mixer can be rented for a few bucks and does a stellar job doing all of the work mixing the concrete with water. Once again, Josh – W9HT as assistant! After 3 weeks for cement curing, it was time to erect the tower. Working with Rohn 25 is a piece of cake compared with the heavier Rohn 45. Even though the tower sections were new, nothing wanted to fit together perfectly. At one point we needed to use a come-a-long on the legs to make the next section fit. . . and that was done on the tower! But a good crew, good gin pole, good ropes all made it happen.





Once the tower was up, and special thanks to Jim – KR9U who joined me on the tower, it was time to get the Razor installed along with the antennas. Along with the TH5 tribander, I decided to add a Cushcraft 40 meter rotatable dipole. Since the Razor stops 1 foot under the top of the tower, a long mast was needed. Once again, a road trip to Michigan netted an 18 foot T-6 aluminum $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wall mast: perfect! How does one haul an 18 foot long mast? Boat trailer! An electric (AC) winch was purchased, a used and regreased TB-3 thrust bearing was bought online, and I was ready for the final install.



Early on Tuesday morning, a small crew assembled to get the tribander on the tower. Since the tower is next to the house, we had to maneuver the elements to miss the house windows and reach roof level (Yes, I still have to climb but only roof level to work on antennas). As you can see in the picture, the rotor is accessible from the ground. Once mounted a simple push of the button and the antennas went up the tower where they rest to this day! Finally, a job complete and just in time for the fall contest season. Thanks to Josh-W9HT, Jim-KR9U, Dave-AA9H and son, Al-K9FW, Bruce-N9DGL, Ron-KD9FBD, Ed-WA9BBN, and Scott - plus a very patient wife and generous insurance company for the new tower and new roof!



I am very happy to report that all works well. The first night both antennas were used simultaneously in the SKCC July 2 hour SKS sprint. Ed-WA9BBN joined me and we cranked out 105 qso's! My last project will be to add the 80 and 160 meter wire antennas. They will be attached to the top of the Razor. No climbing needed, though, as a push of the button and down comes the Razor! Pretty slick!

Antenna Work at W9HT

Here is a recent tower addition at W9HT. Josh W9HT is very active from the Fort Wayne group and with the N8KR gang. Josh sent along pictures of his last edition to his antenna farm.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3

In Photo1 Josh is adding a 6m antenna to the tower. You can see Josh's flagpole with his multi band antennas fed there with the same balun and coax. Photo 2 showing tightening the last bolts to complete the project. Photo 3 is one happy amateur with a secured new antenna in place. Now to fire-up the rig and begin to bring that DX in! Well done Josh!

SKSE August 3, 2023



Not many contacts in this SKS-Eu but the pleasure to get 5 new SKCC members : SV8SXF, CT7AZH, G0TUE, DL2KCD, DJ2SX. Thanks also to usual friends: F5JBR, DJ5CW, SN9MT, DM1AA, DL8FMA, N8KR, I4IKW and F6GCT. On the right side of the photo are the biggest and the smallest keys in my collection. 73 and see you soon, Bernard F5DE

Straight Key Sprint Europe Results

Results for SKSE: 03-Aug-2023

Overall | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | SWL | By SPC | Soapbox

Overall results

Rank	Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
1	IK2CFD	GRAZIANO	22069T	ITA	14	14	5/4/0	311
2	I4IKW	Mark	24889	ITA	17	13	3/3/0	296
3	F5JBR	ANDRE	2574T	FRA	18	11	2/2/2	258
4	ON5GL	Geert	25713	BEL	14	7	0/5/1	153
5	F5DE	Bernard	6247S	FRA	13	8	1/3/0	149
6	SV8SXF	Kostas	27644	GRE	10	5	2/3/0	110
7	DL2KCD	Jo	27055	GER	9	7	1/3/0	108
8	F6FJE	Peter	27045T	FRA	8	7	0/4/0	96
9	ON7DQ	Luc	14984T	BEL	8	7	0/3/0	86
10	M0MCL	Kevin	20026	ENG	9	7	0/1/0	73
11	N8KR	Ken	7559S	IN	7	3	2/2/0	71
12	SN9MT	Mirek	24394	POL	6	5	1/2/0	65
13	HB9CPS	Geo	20350	SUI	7	5	0/1/0	45
14	M7TSM	Alan	26780	ENG	5	4	0/2/0	40
15	DL8FMA	Manuel	24047T	GER	2	2	1/0/0	19
16	WL7WH	Bob	2940S	AK	1	1	0/1/0	11
16	W4NLT	Andy	16400S	VA	1	1	0/1/0	11
18	PG4I	Jo	11019S	NED	1	1	0/0/0	1



McElroy Model 600 Deluxe Key



Here is a nicely refurbished McElroy Model 600 Deluxe with the marble finish. The pictures were taken from the web site, [CW Bugs, Keys & Paddles](http://www.cwbugs.com) which is a great site to see some keys from very serious collectors.

Some folks enjoy th "original" condition of the keys when they purchase them but personally, I'd much rather use the refurbished key on the right!



A Family Bond Built on Dots and Dashes: How a Father Daughter Team Conquers The Code

At just nine years old, Nova has already achieved something that many adults have never even attempted. She has learned the language of morse code and made her first on-air QSO.



It all started when her dad (me) jumped into amateur radio with both feet. Fascinated with listening to the dits and dahs I made, she asked me what it was for. I explained that it was a way to communicate with people all over the world using a simple handheld lever, commonly known as a straight key. Nova was never one to shy away from a challenge, so when I suggested she give it a try she was more than up for learning the language of dots and dashes.

She started off slow, practicing just a few letters with me each day. It was sometimes a frustrating process as she went back and forth between a reference chart and her key trying to recall how many of each dit and dah made up the character. Discouraged by the anemic progress both of us were making, I set to work to find a resource that could assist us in learning this new language.

Enter the Long Island CW Club

Founded in 2009, the Long Island CW Club (LICW) is a vibrant community of amateur radio enthusiasts that meets virtually every week on Zoom to practice and improve each other's CW skills, learn from each other, and have fun while doing so. Part of LICW's base curriculum is about hearing the "music" of morse, the unique sound of each character and not the separate dots and dashes. Nova and I joined in on the weekly kids program and it wasn't long before the music of Morse began to come together for us.

The following weeks, in between classes and daily family activities, we would "code talk" with each other and her younger brother, sending simple messages keeping the code fresh in our minds. As the classes continued Nova was introduced to the standard POTA QSO protocol, something she was already familiar with from listening in on my CW POTA adventures.

One particular evening after class, I asked her if she wanted to try it out on the air with someone. I had already contacted a friend who was only a few hours away and had things set up for her as a "sked" - short for scheduled contact—if she was willing. She was!

Following me down to the shack, Nova took her seat in front of the radio, with my Navy Flameproof key sitting ominously in front of her awaiting her hand. She watched patiently as I tuned in a frequency and we listened for the call. Then we heard it...dididiDAH dit dididi-DAHDAH...her heart raced as she heard the dits and dahs of my callsign through the speaker of the radio.

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With shaking hands, she tapped out my call sign on the key and to her delight, a voice came back answering her call. Over the next couple minutes, Nova conversed with someone she'd never met, but with whom she already shared a common language. They traded standard POTA information (RST, QTH) and their names so they both knew who they were speaking with. And before she knew it, Nova had completed her very first on-air QSO. Needless to say, Nova was over the moon. She couldn't believe she was able to communicate with someone so far away using nothing but a few simple taps and clicks of a key.



Now that she's made her first QSO, Nova is more hooked on amateur radio than ever before. She spends time during the weekends practicing her morse code and continues to attend the LICW Kids program with me. She's even given the LICW club permission to onboard me as one of the kids program instructors, under the condition she gets to attend my sessions!

For Nova, amateur radio has become more than just a hobby – it's a passion. And who knows? Maybe one day we'll be reading about her again, this time as a seasoned operator who's pushing the boundaries of what's possible on the airwaves.

As for me, I couldn't be prouder. Seeing my daughter take on a new challenge and thrive in it was a moment I'll never forget. Nova is a shining example of what can happen when you're willing to step out of your comfort zone and try something new. - 73 DE VE3NGN dit dit

A Very Good Deal!

Two weeks ago I sent in my LDG auto tuner back to the company for repair .. I think I've had it for at least five yrs would not tune anything at all ... I got an e-mail yesterday from UPS that a package would be arriving today from LDG !!!! ... I called LDG thinking they sent it back as scrap but the guy on the phone said they replaced a relay and recalibrated it .. I asked "how much do I owe you??" ... NOTHING! ... not many companies support their products but in this case I was IMPRESSED !!!!! .. thanks LDG !!!!! ... de George N2JNZ



SKSA August 11, 2023



Results for SKSA: 11-Aug-2023

Overall | QRPp | QRP | QRO | QRO+ | Multi-Op | By SPC

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC#	SPC	QSO's	SPC's	S/T/C	Score
JA1IAZ	NORI	25300T	JPN	29	9	5/3/1	371
JF1UOX	MISA	26413	JPN	24	9	2/5/0	296
JA0FVU	TAKA	13456	JPN	26	6	2/4/1	231
JJ1FXF	HIRO	22608T	JPN	18	5	2/2/1	145
JR6CSY	TAKA	26476	JPN	23	4	1/2/1	132
JF1NHG	Ino	NONE	JPN	20	3	1/3/1	110
JF1JDG	HIRO	26409	JPN	15	4	1/3/0	105
JF2FIU	Mark	NONE	JPN	19	2	0/4/1	83
JK1BVN	KAT	26584	JPN	17	1	0/2/2	47
JA0IND/1	Jin	8240	JPN	14	1	0/2/2	44
VR2CO	Solo	13192	HKG	8	1	0/2/1	33
JK7UST	Sugi	8239C	JPN	11	1	0/2/0	31
JM4AOA	KEN	26423	JPN	15	1	0/1/1	30
JO1ZZZ/1	A1CLUB	16199	JPN	9	1	0/2/0	29
JI4JGD	TAKA	5393	JPN	9	2	0/1/0	28
W1PR	Paul	23091T	CA	8	1	0/2/0	28
JK1AKA	Kei	25478	JPN	3	1	0/2/0	23
JG2JKR	Roy	10424	JPN	4	2	0/1/1	23
JA9MAT	HIDE	12796	JPN	7	1	0/1/1	22
BI8CZM	Cheng	23269	CHN	3	1	0/0/0	3



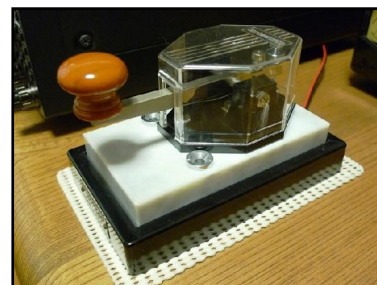
73, HIDE JA9MAT



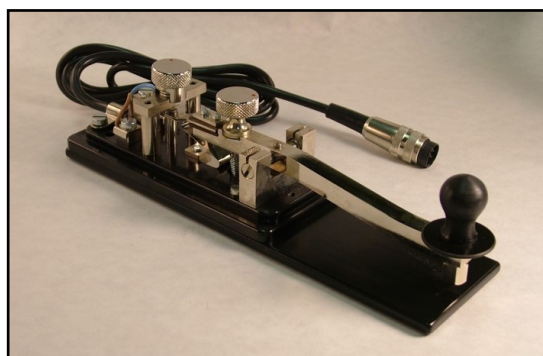
Thank you all stations! Tenosynovitis.
73, Mark JF2FIU



The conditions were not very good, but I enjoyed participating for the first time in a month. 73, Ken JM4AOA



Thank you for QSO all stations. I used HIMOUND HK-3 today. It's probably 40-50 years old. It's very old, but still works well. 73, Taka JR6CSY



Wanted!

Does anyone have an Amplidan or M.P. Pedersen Morse key they would be willing to sell?
Asking for a friend who asked me if I wanted to sell mine, but I want to keep mine. 73, David N1EA

The Rube Goldbug

By Warren N5GW

Occasionally I participate in the SKCC's monthly WES (Week End Sprint). Each month there is a theme to the sprint, and in August it is "home brew keys". Bonus points are awarded to those making contacts using hb keys. Since I had previously constructed straight and iambic keys, I decided to tackle a really challenging project - build a semiautomatic "bug" key. It turned out to be more difficult and frustrating than I had imagined, but after a few weeks I had a working "bug".

All the parts came from my big junk box. The two pics show the gadget. I named it the "Rube Goldbug" after the renowned cartoonist Rube Goldberg and his "impossible" machines. However this gizmo is not a true RG - it actually works!

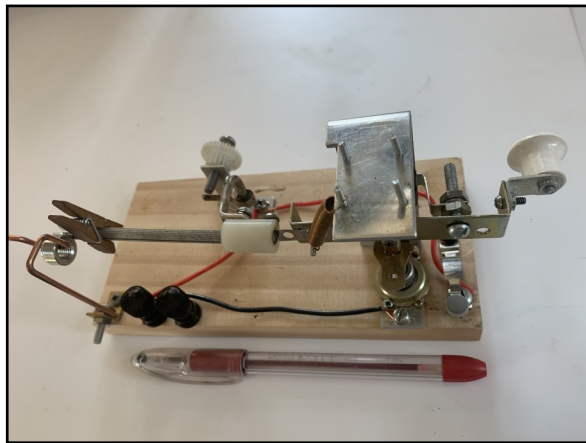
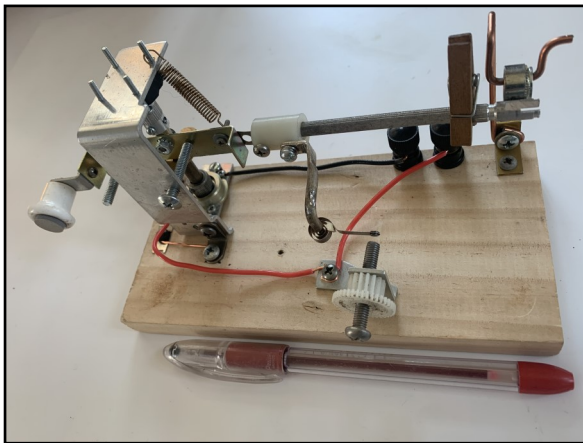
Here are some details:

I fabricated the pivot using a pair of small bearings attached to a U-shaped bracket.

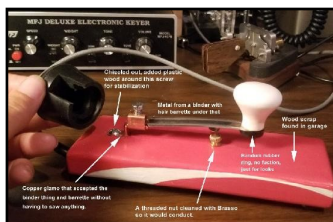
The pendulum (arm) is an extension shaft from a vintage volume control. The arm's spring is a piece of flat, springy metal of unknown origin. A vintage thermostat coiled spring serves as the dot contact. The damper is an aluminum nut suspended on a stiff wire holder. I made the dash key a simple straight key to avoid interaction with the dot lever. For the wooden base I used a Victor rat trap because it was the correct size (there's a message here somewhere, but I don't want to dwell on it!)

Adjusting the RG was a real adventure, revealing several quirks. The dots had to be sent slowly, about 12 wpm or they would run together. At first the dots sounded scratchy. Using a magnifying glass I traced this to a high frequency vibration of the thermostat coil. However, placing a small piece of double sided foam tape inside the coiled spring solved the problem. Apparently there is enough compliance in the spring to prevent contact bounce. Holding down the dot key allowed a maximum of 7 or 8 dots; however only 5 are ever needed! Timing of dots and dashes is different than a regular bug and somewhat tricky since it is possible to depress both the dot and dash keys at the same time. But after a bit of practice I was able to send Morse that other ops could actually read!

I was able to make 90 contacts during the recent WES using this contraption ...er... device. Overall I learned a great deal about how bug keys work. However I would not recommend trying to build one unless you have machinist skills!



WES August, 2023



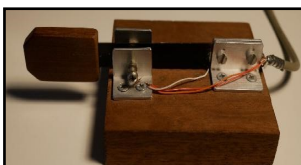
Whoops - had to resubmit with the 5 point bonus +100 for using homebrew for entire sprint. By chance of luck I just joined, then discovered this sprint while I happened to be piecing together a key out of household stuff, not wanting to drop \$ on one not knowing if I'd like manual keying. Turns out it exceeded my expectations, so I called it a keeper, painted it red, and did the sprint! That darn WAE contest was enticing/distracting, but I stayed with you and was glad I did, because you're such a friendly and welcoming group! Thank you for making this so fun! Every QSO was a joy, as was finding F5UQE on both 15 and 40, plus EA3NO and KH6ZM on 15, and PG4I on 20. Say, was anyone on 80, or was my loop out of order? Nothing on 10 either, but I wasn't checking too often. As for the key, I'm not sure I'd change anything... but then again, I'm not sure what a key is supposed to feel like so I just acclimated to its light touch. A brass pounder it wasn't, but it was a great tin tapper, easy on the wrist. Closeup pictures of key are here: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/TX6GmtSrdNr1k72R8>. 73, Doreen



Put together the basic saw blade cootie a few days before. Too lazy to wire anything, so I used alligator clips which held together and didn't sound scratchy at all, and used a c-clamp to hold it to the table. Never sent with a cootie before, but used my right hand instead, so I didn't mess up my left hand sending too much (at least, more than it already is). 73, Bill K3QP



Very poor signal reports received this weekend which is unusual for me. Most 439 to 489. Can I blame my home made side swipper ? which I used for all contacts. Same icom 7300 @ 80 watts and Carolina window at 40 feet. Hope conditions will be better next month. Thanks to all who participated. 73, Frank



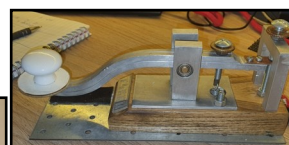
WES done with home made saw blade keyer. Made initially to be used with electronic keyer (work perfectly well) but used for this WES in cootie version (very bad : dit and dah are too close) and also used in vertical position like a straight key. (preferred solution) :-) 73 Herve F8EHJ



Didn't have much time to operate with all the other chores, but got in for a short on Sunday. Decided to play with my Adventurer in this WES. only 25watts and an EFHW, but still fun while it lasted. 73, Colin K4CML



Thanks for the QSOs, the bands were certainly exciting! It was great to work my CW Guru Doug, N3PDT. When my fist sounded bad I was using this homebrew key. That's my story and I'm stickin' to it. 73, Jim AD0AB



Thank you to those who responded to my calls sent by my Marconi type home made key. 73 CUAGN Tom F4GOU



I had a great time working the WES, both from GA and weekend shack in NC. I was able to get all the QSOs needed for my Tx8. See you next month! 73, Meg de K5MEG

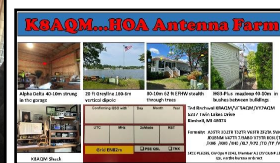
I started out strong on the KX3 but started stuffing parts in a QRPLabs QMX kit, got carried away, and completed it this morning. I made several contacts with it. I used last year's homemade cootie key. 73, Steve K9NUD



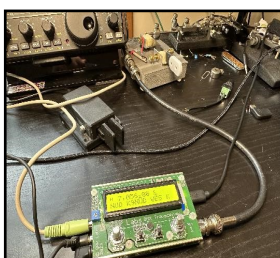
A lot of splatter of the WAE contest. Few stations heard. See you at the next WES. 73, Leo EA7Q



20m QSOs only this WES and great fun despite lack of contacts. Many thanks to PA3JD Joop, PG4I Jo, F8EHJ Herve, IU2KBN Paolo. All on 20m. Rig TS440s, 100 watts to a ground mounted vertical 20ft tall. Morse key a Marconi P.S.No213A beautiful straight key. 73 John G0RDO SKCC



Thought the bands were bad but Qs kept coming! The K4 ears hear much better than the transmit mouth...darn! Slow but sure I'm developing an HOA antenna farm! 73, Ted K8AQM/VE9AQM



WES August, 2023 II



My vintage station used for this event. NC 300 receiver and a Johnson Viking 1 transmitter. Antenna is a G5RV. Its like driving a 57' Chevy! 73, Jerry K9PMV



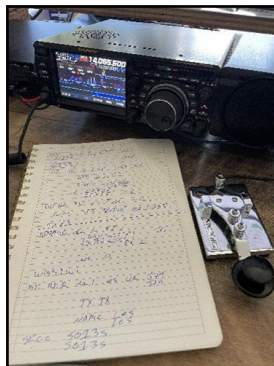
Qs on both 20 & 40 meters. Seemed like activity was down a little this month. Overall good conditions. Some QRN/QSB. 73 & STAY TUNED! Daryl K9QEW



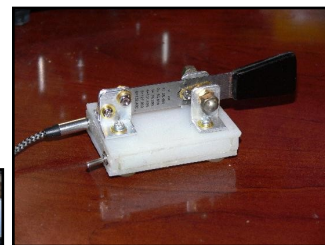
Thanks to all who participated. Family activities and thunderstorms limited my participation. I hope to work many of you in the Brag Program. May God bless you and your family. 73, Ric KA3LOC



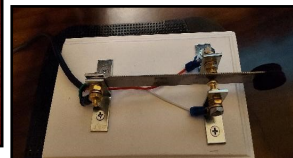
Between Thunder storms and family commitments I had very little time to operate, but fortunately I had a whole lot of fun. Using my QRO key and a QRP key (shown) I managed a few contacts. It was nice to see several LICW members participating. Best surprise was working friend Jon G4IVV. Most fun was working new operator John KC3SSC. See you all next month. 73, Randy KB4QQJ



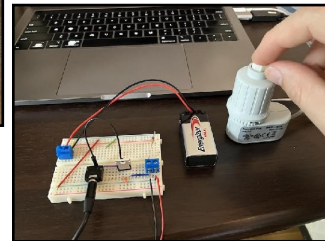
Great Fun and TNX to all the QSOs. Time to start designing home-brew Key for next year. :-) 73 DUGBO KD7DUG



Thank you all my contact for copying my homemade sideswiper CW key. I know it was tough :-) 73, Sergey KD9EBS



I was very pleased with my home brew cootie key. I copied the design from a ham on YouTube with a few of my own modifications. I never used a side swiper before and it took some serious practice to get used to it. I feel bad for the first 20 contacts. Ha ha. I would polish the saw blade and brass screws more for better contact however, it worked great for 137 contacts. The only key I used for the WES. 73, Ron KE8PX



I loved every minute of building this project and using it for CW, and I'm quite proud of how it turned out. This is my most memorable WES so far. 73, Andy KI5PED



In 8/11 Friday night I made a new straight key using half a library card, with the intention to use it in my left hand, even I'm right-handed. Finally I turned on my radio in the last hour on 8/13 Sunday and had two QSOs with K9PM and N8KR, but I don't know how to tell them that I was using my weird new DIY straight key... Each of them should have 5 bonus points, sorry. The new key works in my 'new' hand, need more practice to be fluent as my right hand. Also the half card is a little too small, therefore I'm making another bigger one in Sunday night, not finished yet. My intention is to use it in SOTA activation in my left hand while pressing down the paper logbook, while my right hand can write down QSO log. A little addicted to SOTA and POTA. 73, Jun KG6YJ

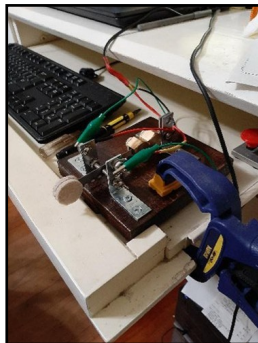


Limited time with out of town company visiting. Many thanks to all those who contacted me. Hopefully, next month will be less hectic. 73, KK0I jack dit...dit



My Home brew key performed better than expected. I had less wrist fatigue with this design than I get on my portable CWMorse Camelback which I use in the field. Only thing I would change is to the tension spring I added to the lever. It should be a little stiffer just to help the return a bit. Very pleased for sure. 73, Gary KI7PBR

WES August, 2023 III



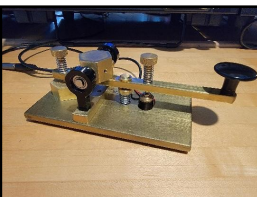
My first attempt at a homebrew key...the well known hacksaw blade. It's kind of touchy but found a sweet spot and got the hang of it. I had not used a cootie until I made this. Couldn't figure out how to keep it from walking away so I clamped it down! Trying to put together a portable station and was testing things out this weekend so I was running QRP off a battery and a severely compromised antenna with a (tr)uSDX all from the comfort of my shack. 73, Ted KN4ZXG



To my surprise my paper clip key held up. Held down with double backed tape. At times I would have to clean the 'contacts' with paper. I think I will leave it in the lineup until the end of the month... 73, Rick N8XI



Enjoyed the sprint! Lots of QSB but still made great contacts. I started out on my Mountaintopper in the backyard on 40M while it was still in the cool of the day (early morning) then switched to the air-conditioned comfort of my shack. Unfortunately, I only have a 20M monoband wire up for my shack since my doublet is in the process of being replaced. But had fun. Thanks everyone! 73, Carolyn KX4QF



Another great WES! I used my HB key which I started building in March. It took me 3 versions to get it mostly right. I have to admit it works pretty well, is rock solid on the desk, and is easy on the wrist. For anyone interested, this is actually my second HB key attempt. The first is in Dec 1977, "QST", Pg. 19; "A Key to Success". 73 and thanks to all for great QSOs, Dan N1BYT

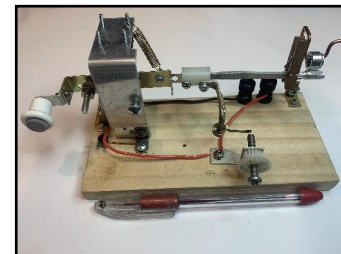
Some nice openings on 15 and 40 meters, not so many on 20. Curiously, everybody I worked this month I did not work in July's WES, and vice versa. Thanks to the old and new friends I contacted. Looking forward to a good August on the bands. Picture is the key of choice for this month's WES - not homebrew, but a Signal Electric R-63, probably from the 1920s. Best 73, George NC2M



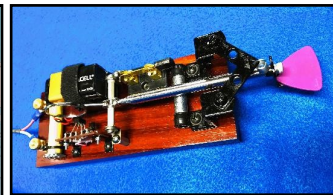
I didn't get much time on but it was Fun. 28MHz 4ele NBS Yagi - <5W - Home Brew Keys SK + DSK + "Slow Hands" BUG. TU everyone for the QSOs. BCNU 73, Walt LW3EX - .. ZUT



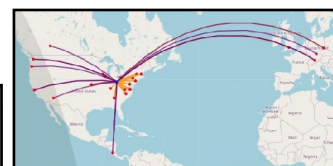
Argo 6 and amp, 80wts, g5rv, ma5b at 35ft.no qrp for me this WES.. on 40 and 20mtrs, had total 65 qsos, to make LEGAL QRM.. haha..was on new key, my nmbr 88 key.. 89 will be made.. tnx to SKCC club workers.. so tnx to all and will c u in next month to make more QRM.. ha.. i worked 30 states ans Canada.. so. C u all agn, takecare and now,,7three and if u were qrp, "7two" to u.. Takecare Dave Larsen n9zxlqrp@gmail.com



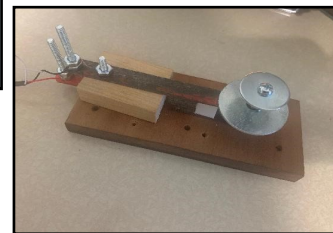
I was using a home brew bug - quite a construction project to undertake! However after I got most of the bugs (!) ironed out, other SKCC ops were able to copy my fist. 73, Gene N5GW



WOW! Tough sledding this time! Signals weak, bands cr---y. 20 was best, sort of, 15 hit and miss, 40 was useless out here. Thanks all for hanging in there. Pictured is this year's homebrew key used in the WES. It is optically driven by the pivoting of the telescoping handle inspection mirror in front of an infrared TX/RX LED device which drives a single transistor inverter/relay driver. This fires the reed relay located near the output terminals to avoid any damage to low level electronic parts. The short galvanized pipe serves as a travel stop for the overhead tension spring. The knife switch kills power to the circuit to avoid battery run down. All parts except the wooden base, 9V batteries, and guitar pick finger piece were junk box inventory. I have to say that this may be the smoothest feeling key I have ever used, it will get plenty of regular use. 73, Chuck N0CW



Picture is of my Straight Key RBN! 73, Chris N8PEM

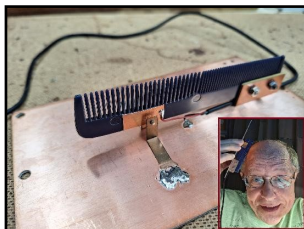


Had a fun time using my HB straight key. Had trouble with it staying in one place on the desk but that's what the left hand is for. 2nd year operating with this key and it is as bad chirping as I remember. Still lots of fun. 73, Vern NJ8L

WES August, 2023 IV



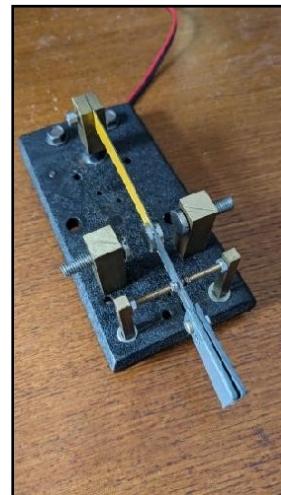
Bad band condx, storms and other things took away op time but still lot of fun as always. Elecraft K4 at 100 watts, OCF dipole and CD Zepp both at 30'. Bug was a KN4YB. 73, Bill NZ0T



Only had time a few hours on Sunday, but had fun using my "Cute Comb Cootie" (see pic). It has the teeth up, so it can still be used as a comb (see inset), and believe it or not, you can even comb your hair (or in my case, what's left of it) AND send CW at the same time, hi. See a short video I made here : <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/T63bbeTxDgE>. 73, Luc ON7DQ



Working portable for a couple of hours with 12 batteries and solar power. Using the MACkey and a bug. 73, Joop PA3JD



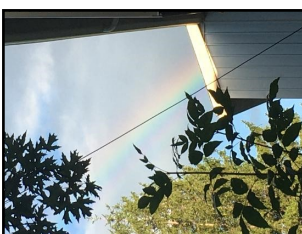
Despite the solar flux not cooperating I had some nice contacts, e.g. Max KH6ZM on 15 meters and Walt LW3EX on 10. Enjoyed using my home-brew cootie made of a saw blade and some magnets for damping, it's a keeper. Worked N3KRX and K3EW on 3 bands, thanks Jerry and Phil! 73, Jo PG4I



This wooden key used for all WES QSOs. Return spring is a piece of junior hacksaw blade. The key worked well (I hope the other end of the QSOs agree), but won't replace my usual Kent straight key! Thanks to all.... 73, Ben VE1AHX



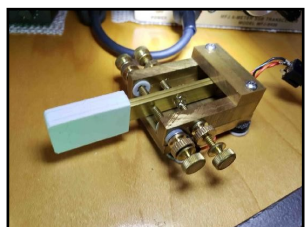
Thanks everyone. Great Fun! 73, Sam VE3WH



Well 4 QRP QSOs in the last hour of the WES is not too bad when one uses a random end-fed wire antenna that happens to glow in 5W and in so many colours... 73 de Jose VE3DTI.



As always great fun. Next year I'm going to make a home brew key to earn the extra points. 73, Drexel W4DHT



WES sure gets tougher when running QRP. 73, Bill W2EB



Off and on operations during the weekend. Band condx were not great but they have been much worse. All S&P this time. Picked up 5 new Tribunes. Rig: K4D/KPA-1500. Keys: Begali Intrepid and Junker SK. Picture is of the house from the rear taken with my drone. The larger yagi is the Optibeam 10-3 for 20-15 and the smaller ones are a Optibeam 6-2 for 12 & 10 and a 3 ele 6 meter on top. Horizontal loop is barely visible. Thanks for the QSO's and the HB keys sounded great. 73Dave W3NP de West Virginia



Was only able to spend a short time on the air Saturday, but, as always, what a blast! 73 Rod W4NNF!

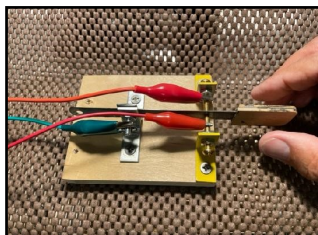


Between hosting our two grand-kids at Camp GrammanGrampa for the week, and the threatening wx on Sunday, I didn't get much WES time. The key I built using a force sensing resistor pad was lousy, and I gave up on it after a couple of QSOs. Did the rest of the contest on my normal Western Union key. Conditions were lousy to EU on Saturday, but better on Sunday, at least in the limited time I had. Otherwise, plenty of signals to choose from. Hoping for more WES time next month. Now back to the kids... 73, John W1TAG

WES August, 2023 V



Alternated between WES and WAE CW all weekend. It was hard to find clear frequencies, and very few takers and quite a few I couldn't hear on 15m, even with tons of RBN spots. 52 QSOs (3 deleted for mis-copied or incomplete exchange) is in my usual WES count range. Pretty exciting surprise contacts with Lluís EA3NO and Tom VK2IR on bands I didn't know were open! Saw Bert F6HKA on WAE, too; he recognized and greeted me, but I couldn't speak human at that point; SRI! This year's key is a wooden, magnetic "topswiper". This configuration is tricky to adjust, with the magnets trying to find ways to realign themselves, rather than stay opposed. A metaphor for something, I'm sure. I'll be missing September WES, so I'll see you in October, and plenty of other times until then! 73, Jordan W7VC



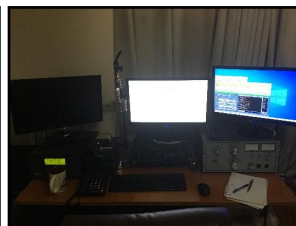
Lots of noise on the bands, fading, sometimes over-coming all signals, but we worked through it. I used my all-wood cootie again after checking for bugs and warping, enjoyed using it. Thanks for all the QSO's. 73, Gene W9KMK



Only about an hour on Sunday but bands were good. It was fun. 73, Les WB5JWI



Had a good time chasing contacts. 73, Jerry WA4JK



I operated part of Saturday only from my boat while anchored in Dutch Harbor, RI (next to Jamestown, RI). I used my KX3 at 5W into a 9:1 UNUN and 35' wire held vertical with a Jackite pole. I connected the UNUN ground to my rudder for good connection to the ocean. It was nice to operate in such a low QRN area away from houses and power lines! 73, Howard WB1AJX



Fun as always, and bettered my last score. The SS got the bulk of my use versus straight key. A couple thrills with Australia VK2IR, and Spain EA3NO SKCC members worked. Still wishing for more action on 10M. 73, Mark WO7T

Ft. Wayne Area SKCC Gathering De Ken N8KR



Nice gathering at the Auburn, IN Hamfest last month! Nice to hang out in an environment where everything on display is older than we are!

My Story!

My straight key for this month's WES was a Rain Bird RSD-BEX rain sensor! What would be the scientific purpose of doing this? **Revenge!!!**

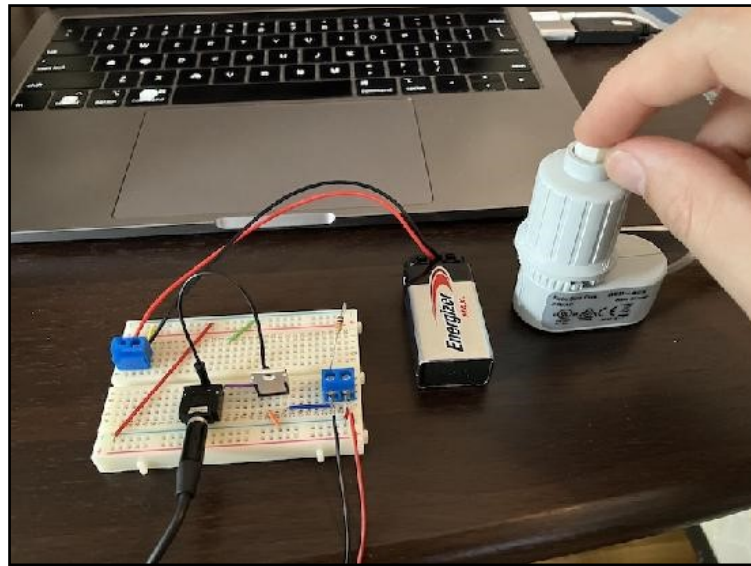
73, Andy KI5PED

I loved every minute of building this project and using it for CW, and I'm quite proud of how it turned out. This is my most memorable WES so far.

A couple of months ago, I bought a replacement rain sensor for my sprinkler system and fought with it for several hours trying to get it installed, but nothing worked, so I swore I would have my revenge by making it a part of a useful, working project. The rain sensor is a simple switch, but it's press-to-open (opposite of a usual straight key). I can't connect it directly to the rig unless I want to send code

"backwards." I designed and built a little circuit around a MOSFET to change this. So now, button depressed = switch open = 9 volts reaches FET gate from battery = rig sees it as key-down or contacts closed. And vice versa (button not pushed, sensor switch closed, resistor grounded, 0 V to FET, rig sees it as key-up).

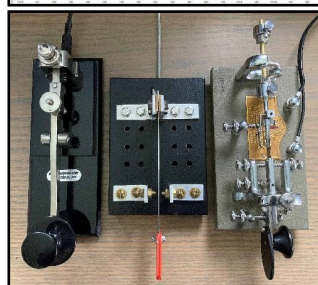
The main design considerations were: gate voltage (to ensure FET well into the linear region, given the rig's key voltage), finding the proper polarity of the rig and my TRS connector to connect to the FET, resistor large enough to promote battery life, and resistor small enough to give good CW time-scale performance with the FET's gate capacitance. Parts: FQP 30N06L MOSFET, 10 kOhm resistor. The rest is "just wires": screw terminals, TRS jack, 9V batt connector, and assorted breadboard stuff. For the mechanical engineering portion of our show: The white chunk that I'm touching is a bit of pencil eraser that I custom-cut to protect my finger from a pointy part in the original rain sensor. Also, the sensor comes attached to a bracket adjustable by a wingnut, which worked great to hold it to my desk without screws.



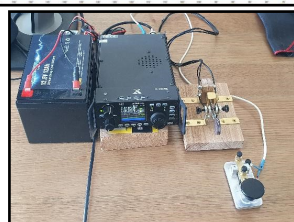
It's a pretty basic circuit, but I designed it all on paper and it worked the first time, which I could hardly believe. (I know a fair amount of EE fundamentals, but I don't really "do" circuits in practice that much.) Even more unbelievable, it's not hard to send clean code with it. Let that be a lesson to the rest of you home hardware parts. Work correctly, or be repurposed as radio parts!

Thoughts for increasing efficiency and/or coefficient of fun: Can I make a circuit that draws no battery current when idle? Can I power it using rig key connection voltage only? Try using a BJT? Something truly retro like a triode? Final bonus feature: The rain sensor contains small discs that swell when wet, and these depress the button and break the circuit. So if I carefully control the rainfall inside the shack, I can send VERY very QRS signals. Maybe 1 dit per day, or 2 months to send the characters "CQ." :-P

Oceania QRS Saunter August 20, 2023



I enjoyed my first SKCC QRS Saunter. The SKCC sked page and FISTS Discord app helped get some of them. I had 8 QSOs:
 40M: 6 QSOs: Brendan VK3BAP, Colin VK2DVA, James VK2TER, Stan ZL3TK, Phil VK2GBR, Phil VK3VB
 20M: 1 QSO: Mike ZL1RA
 15M: 1 QSO: Bert W5ZR
 The photo shows the keys I used: Straight key made by Phil Boyle (G0NVT), HB sideswiper made from a steel ruler, and Vibroplex Original bug with a pendulum extension to slow it down. 73, Pat VK2IOW



Had a great QSO with Pat VK2IOW but due to time, didn't get much of a chance to check out other activity during the event. Tried a CQ using my homemade cootie key but didn't get a response, which is just as well because my sideswiping is pretty rough and needs a lot more practice before it's ready for the air. 73, Brendan VK3BAP

Oceania QRS Saunter Results

Results for Oceania QRS Saunter: 19 AUG 2023

Overall | Soapbox

Overall results

Callsign	Name	SKCC #	SPC	QSO's
VK2GAZ	Garry	5460C	AUS	6
VK2GR	Allan	7823S	AUS	3
VK2IOW	Pat	20814	AUS	8
VK2TER	James	26421	AUS	6
VK3BAP	Brendan	27533	AUS	1
VK4EV	Ron	10775	AUS	3
VK4JE	Ron	24961	AUS	8
VK6CK	Terry	27671	AUS	0
ZL1ARW	Jim	16633	NZL	2

Participants and QSOs by SPC

AUS: 8 / 35	NZL: 1 / 2
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Thought I would go QRP this month and used my TR-45 Lite, T1 tuner into a EFHW and the key was the Blade. Although every contact is great, the highlight this month was a QSO with John G4RCG using just 5 watts RST received as 529. 73, Garry VK2GAZ



Thanks to all that joined in and made this another fun event. Special thanks to:
 ZL1RA
 ZL1ARW
 ZL2BLQ
 VK2TER
 W5ZR
 LU1HCC
 DF2IC
 N1FG
 for the QSO's
 CU all next month.
 Cheers, 73 Ron VK4JE



Try as I did I did not get ONE contact....lol. I only heard 2 stations and they were very, very weak. That may tell the story. Better luck next time. 73 all Terry VK6CK

Confessions of a Casual Contester

Vol. 4 Issue 1
from the shack of David VE4DL

I am not now, nor ever have been, a Contester. I don't see myself becoming a Contester either, if one defines the term to include round-the-clock operations, intravenous fluids and diapers, and frequent relays of cold, one-hand meals. Not my thing, at all. BUT.....

Summer has whipped past barely seen. My beam is still on the patio, but I have borrowed the Club's packable vertical to see if I can achieve something in the meantime. I took the Cable Shop out to a hamfest in Austin (MB, not TX), always a good one. Didn't come home with any desirable door prizes. Virtuously abstained from acquiring a very pretty National shortwave radio (like I need 3!) Had an adventure with a Club member driving off with my truck key, but fortunately still in cell phone coverage. Now I'm re-ordering crimp-on connectors to complete all the coax orders.

I've pretty much given up on the Flex6400 remote operations. Yes I can connect to the radio, but sometime in June I lost the ability to use my ACLog or N1MM+ with it. It still appears to be there, but no communication occurs. It would be okay for casual QSOs but useless for contesting.

I have spent some time re-organising the shack, swapping some boxes from one location to another to improve (or just change) the ergonomics. A Heathkit SB-600 has replaced the Kenwood SP-23 for improved sound. I've added some more task lighting. I sold at the hamfest a whole shelf of never-used but useful-to-others gear. I'm staring at all the parts to complete my paddle/key switchbox. Only ambition is wanting at this point.

We're off on a week's vacation soon, hitting the bright lights of Montréal and visiting the no-longer-family farm. It's been quite a while.

September will bring the SKCC Canadian Operator Event back to the airwaves. Once again I am the sked co-ordinator for 6 callsign areas of Canada. Check online for details at [VC3K Home \(skccgroup.com\)](http://VC3KHome.skccgroup.com). Canadian CW ops will find themselves verry verry popuwaaar.....

This will be a season of change in the ham radio community in Manitoba, I think it will renew and refresh the hobby for many.

But it isn't contesting. Nope. Not at all. Well, maybe.... yes it is!



W9SA

Since my photos on WES Results always get turned sideways I'll post this weekend's rig here. 73, Bill W9SA

Editor..... No worries Bill, any picture submitted for "ANY" SKCC event ALWAYS is published here in the Rag Chew and is ALWAYS right side up!

SKS August 23, 2023



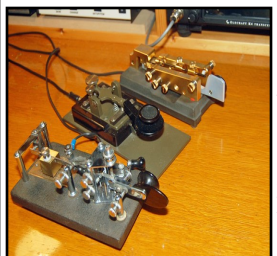
Nice thing about CW is you can eat while u talk! SWR here was squirrely with the wind and rain. 73, Doreen AA0AJ



Great conditions on 40 tonight and 80 not bad either and we were able to work Ted K8AQM on both bands as he was about 10 db over on both, didn't get on 80 until last half hour but only heard a couple other stations there. 73 from the shores of Lake Erie, Larry K8TEZ



TNX! to all!! A very nice way to spend an evening! Apologies to Doreen, My brain was still in POTA mode FINALLY found Ted!!! C U Next month. 72/73 Steve NQ8T



Had a good time. Bands noisy and some stations very weak and could not pull them out. Ran most of the time and did S&P for a short time on 7m and 20m. SK, New W1SFR "Green Mountain" Cootie, and Intrepid Bug depending on other stations. 73, John Paul AB4PP



Some activity on 20m more activity on 40m but the band was short. Over all conditions good. IC7300, J38 key to a 4BTV. 73 and STAY TUNED! Daryl K9QEW

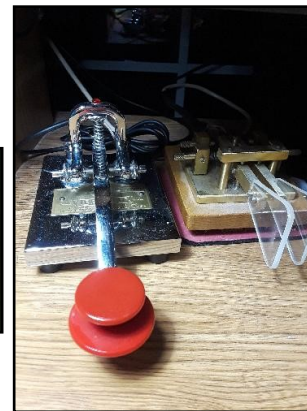


20 meters wasn't good after a few minutes here so QSY'd to 40 which was great until the last 40 minutes then pretty slow. But SKS is always fun! Used my usual combo of K4, OCF dipole or doublet at 30' and KN4YB bug. 73, Bill NZ0T

Stayed on 20 for most of the time. Went to 40 for the last 35 minutes - both bands were good. Put my 1953 Lightning Bug in service after years on the shelf. Rig: K4D/KPA-1500. Ant: 3 ele yagi on 20 and horizontal loop on 40. 73 de West Virginia, Dave W3NP



20M was good for out West, then it went out and I had fun on 40M. Thanks to all who pulled out my 4W QRP signal. 73, Steve K4JPN



Enjoyed it! Started on 20 meters, which died a little and then moved to 40 which was quite good. Never did find the bonus station, maybe next time. Thanks to all who gave me Qs. 73, Jerry N3KRX



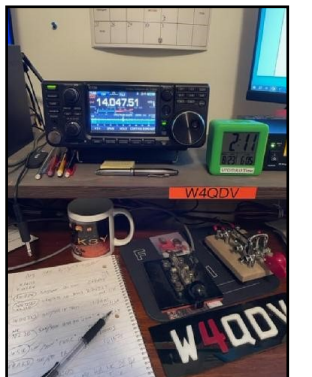
Nice conditions for a change; spent entire time on 40 meters. Ted K8AQM still puts in great signal, even after serious downsizing from his former super station. See everyone next month / dit dit / 73, Dave W1DV



Multi multi effort with AC8W Stan. Not bad for wires and so-so band conditions. People need to start checking 80m the last half hour now that the noise is down some. Multi multi with great friends is a blast! 73, Stan and Ted AC8W and K8AQM



Had a lot of fun! got to play for 1 Hour 30 Minutes. All done with my McElroy Bug. 73, Tom KC3SVR



Best SKS ever--lots of great ops and good conditions. Thank you, Ted K8AQM for being the bonus station on two bands. I had a lot of fun and thanks for the QSOs, friends! 73, Dave W4QDV

Building and Mounting a Dipole ala N8KR

I have always been a firm believer in resonant dipoles. When cut to the band/frequency that you intend to operate mostly, there will be no need for a tuner and the antenna will be most efficient. After my big tower project this summer, I decided to throw away my old 80 meter dipole and redesign how it will be put together and mounted on the tower. Parts list is very simple: 132 feet of #14 insulated copper strand, a Budwig dipole center, an RF Choke Balun from Texxcomm, 50 feet of RG-213, 5 feet of 1 inch PVC, a PVC elbow, and a 1 foot of plastic conduit or PVC. I paint my PVC first making sure I sand it lightly and wipe it down with alcohol to remove any oil. Black or gray works well and less noticeable than the original white!

First step was to insert the round end of the dipole center into my 12 inch pipe. Since it is larger than the inside diameter of the pipe, I simply used my Dremel and made the inside diameter large enough to accept the dipole center.



I attached my RF Choke Balun to my dipole center. (I don't use a traditional W2AU type balun with the fear that 1500 watts could fry it! The Coax Choke Balun uses 60 small common mode chokes around coax.) Use super glue or PVC cement to attach the dipole center to the 12 inch pipe.



The rest of the assembly is pretty simple. It took a little work to get the balun into the elbow. Cutting the shrink wrap to move the outer PL-259 connector hood in was the trick. A little tape put the shrink wrap back. With everything inside the PVC, there is no work of water contamination. I still used some Scotch 88T on the joints. Since this is my 80 meter dipole that will attach to my Razor (see the article on my new tower), I used a 5 foot PVC pipe for support.

A good soldering of the antenna to the dipole center and I'm good to go!



All ready to go! I should note that I also marked a point 5 feet from the end of each dipole leg where I can relocate the end insulator should I desire to operate with a resonant antenna in the 75 meter phone band . . . HA!



EMARC Seaway Trunk Swap



Drone photo by K8JAD

I live in a wonderful area, it is called “The Blue Water Area” and by this photo you can see why. This photo doesn’t really do it justice either as the sun wasn’t really shining brightly on the water. One left side of the river is Port Huron, MI and the right side of the river is Sarnia, ON Canada.

The local radio club in Port Huron is known as “EMARC” (Eastern Michigan Amateur Radio Club) and

every year they hold “The Seaway Trunk Swap.” It’s free to attend and to setup, it’s small (less than 100 people) but it is in amazingly beautiful setting. The location is known as Desmond Landing or “Vantage Point” and is a great site for many to watch the lake freighter and ocean going vessel traffic.



The tents are available on scheduling and trunk sales take place under the tents and walk way along the shore. Truly a unique and beautiful place for a hamfest...and it’s all free!



Left to right: Lee N8LJ 9954T, Jeff K9JP 3008S, Ted K8AQM 1629S and Stan AC8W 2813C

SKCC was represented by those four scurvy characters in the picture! Come join us next year for the fun and beauty.

