

BRASSPOUNDER

November
2015
Issue 90

www.fists.co.uk



I'd like to welcome you to this Brasspounder.

Comments received:

Philippe F5IYJ (ladder)

My log from the October ladder activity.

I must try to participate more, it is definitely a lot of fun.

Thank you and 73,

Philippe

Laurent F5OGJ (ladder)

Very nice condx during October sessions. I was very happy to work a lot of new friends. See you in November.

Vy 73

Jim G0HGH (ladder)

Haven't been able to play much radio from home for a while but should be getting on more soon. Some very poor condx on HF whenever I have had the chance to be on air. Nice to make some ladder QSO's on last session of the Month.

Richard G0ILN (ladder)

It has been nice to hear new ops on the ladder.

The last ladder session for me was very busy.

I intended to spend some time on 20 Mts but just did not get a chance!

All good fun.

Richard G0ILN.

Michael G0POT (ladder)

QRP effort using MTR and 2W for the first session (conditions not great) and an HB-1B and about 2W for the 2nd session. Got caught out by the clocks changing and couldn't raise a single UK station during the session on the 25-Oct but was pleased to work some new non-UK stations instead. Happy hunting everybody...Michael

Graham G3ZOD (ladder)

Really good session on 20m on the afternoon of the 25th - many FISTS QSOs in progress. By the time I got to 40m, there was only 5 minutes left!

73 de Graham G3ZOD

Peter G4LHI (ladder)

Was like old times on 40m this Sunday (25th) - the band was wide open & plenty of activity, Will keep our fingers crossed for November!

73/88 to all who are helping to keep CW alive. Peter G4LHI # 2219.

Ken G4RHR (ladder)

My first entry into the ladder. I did work 2 other German stations who answered my CQ and also had a chat with them.

Enjoyed it very much.

Pete M5ABN (ladder)

40m was certainly better this month - let's hope it marks an improvement in conditions

73 Pete M5ABN #6423

Michael OZ8AGB (ladder)

This was my first FISTS Ladder and my very first QSOs using a straight key. Big challenge but I had lots of fun.

Here are the Ladder 2015 results in order of Points.

New! Graham has asked that I award certificates to the highest placed three entrants that are not in England (DXCC 223). These are in addition to the standard ("any country") three certificates that will be awarded. So, an entrant outside England could receive certificates for both the "any country" and "outside England" categories.

The October Ladder had a record number of logs sent in – 22 in total – aided by very good propagation on 25. October. Thank you to all the entrants for the excellent support.

I'm delighted to welcome the following new entrants this month:

Andy	SP9NLI
Jean	ON7AMI
Ken	G4RHR
Michael	OZ8AGB
Phil	F5IYJ

In the October results, the top two entrants (Pete M5ABN and Peter G4LHI) remain unchallenged. I said last month that Phil 2E0DPH's 3rd position was at risk, and sure enough, Richard G0ILN has now moved up to 3rd position, pushing Phil down to 4th position. With two more months to go and just 18 points between Richard G0ILN, Phil 2E0DPH, and Erkki OH7QR, the competition for 3rd position is set to continue!

In contrast to the September Ladder, this time only seven entrants stayed in the same position.

Five entrants are now equal 26th and have a good opportunity to climb up over the next two months.

Callsign	Posn	Prev	Move	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
M5ABN	1	1	-	380	45	48	41	39	41	32	38	23	32	41
G4LHI	2	2	-	354	36	44	41	35	36	34	30	23	36	39
G0ILN	3	=4	↑	300	28	29	34	27	35	23	29	26	30	39
2E0DPH	4	3	↓	297	23	44	25	38	32	37	24	28	22	24
OH7QR	5	=4	↓	282	31	35	31	17	29	29	33	26	30	21
G4KLE	6	6	-	231	19	25	22	43	38	35	27		22	
M0DRK	7	7	-	164			24	11	24	22	21	22	16	24
G0DDX	8	8	-	107	10	10	12			9	18	22	20	6
G3XVL	9	10	↑	97	32				17	10		7		31
G0TLU	10	9	↓	79	4	20	14	13		8	6	4	2	8
F5OGJ	11	13	↑	77							18	8	18	33
G3ZOD	12	11	↓	76	10	2	18	2	10	4		4	14	12
OH2BN	13	12	↓	67		4	2	10	12	11	6	4	10	8
G0POT	14	14	-	46				4	15	1	11		7	8
G0HGH	15	15	-	40					22	13				5
G3ZRJ	16	=17	↑	36	24									12
2E0JCY	17	16	↓	31					31					
M0GGK	18	=17	↓	24								6	18	
F5IYJ	19	-	↑	20										20
SP9NLI	20	-	↑	17										17
G0OTT	21	19	↓	16	16									
ON7AMI	22	-	↑	14										14
OK2VWB	23	=22	↓	12								6		6
G0MJP	24	20	↓	10	10									
G7JMZ	25	21	↓	7							2	5		
2E0EML	=26	=22	↓	6				6						
G0DJA	=26	=22	↓	6					6					
G4RHR	=26	-	↑	6										6
MI0AHH	=26	=22	↓	6						6				
OZ8AGB	=26	-	↑	6										6
GM0EPO*				4	4									
MX5IPX*				70		13		15	10	18			8	6
GX3ZQS*				10	10									

* is a check log.

Coming Soon

November is a busy month for our club activities; don't forget to take part in these:

- [Ladder](#) on Sunday 22. November, 1400-1600 and 1800-200 UTC.
- [Straight Key Week](#) Sunday 29. November 0001 to Saturday 05 December 2359 UTC (7 days).
- Final [Fifth Sunday](#) session on 29. November, 1300-1700 UTC.

Straight Key Week (straight keys and sideswipers ("cooties") only – no bugs or keyers) is one of the most popular club activities – don't miss it!

QSOs that take place during the Fifth Sunday activity using a straight key or sideswiper can be claimed for both Straight Key Week and Fifth Sunday.

Activities for 2016 - Again

Finally, Graham G3ZOD has been back in touch about the Activities in 2016:

Chris, please can you include the following in the next 'Brasspounder'?

I would like to pass my thanks on to the members who provided feedback on my thoughts on the 2016 Activities and helped firm-up the ideas. Here is an update – still subject to change:

- Logs:* All logs must include "RST sent" and "Mode" (set to "CW"). "RST sent" has always been required in the on-air exchange, so the only difference is that it must now also be logged. Including "Mode" is just to help with administration.
These items make no difference to users of "FISTS Log Converter" as the version for 2016 will automatically add them to entries.
It's always been the case that Ladder logs should be sent in at the end of a month/the start of the following month. The rules need this clarifying; specifically, whilst sending in logs after the 2nd Sunday and again after the 4th Sunday is acceptable provided the second log contains both sessions being claimed, there is no point in sending in a log after the 2nd Sunday. For all activities, sending in claimed points will become optional.
- QSY Rule* This will continue to apply to 80m and 40m. While 20m activity has been far livelier in recent months, I don't feel that we are at the stage yet that 20m needs to be included in this rule.
- Frequencies* As a regular participant in the activities, I'm becoming concerned that non-QRP Ladder QSOs are taking place very close the QRP centre of activity frequency – sometimes as close as 500 Hz. It may be desirable to tighten up the rules on this by specifying that (for example) QSOs must be on or below 7.029.0 and on or above or 7.031.0. I don't really want to make the rules more complicated than necessary, but neither do we want the club to have a reputation for being inconsiderate. (An alternative would be to say that on 160m – 10m, QSOs can only be on the FISTS centre frequency or lower, but it would be a pity to exclude the under-used CW segment up to 7.040 MHz, which also gives participants the chance to earn more points in [EuCW Snakes & Ladders](#) activity.)
- Exchange Your Age Week* Due to several requests, this is making a comeback in 2016. The rules will be as in 2014.
- Ladder:* This will continue as before except that the same operator may be contacted in both sessions on a single Sunday (as before though, only 2 out of the 4 sessions per month can be claimed). This is to end an obscure anomaly in deciding which the highest-scoring sessions are. (Also it can't hurt to encourage more QSOs.)
In order to help with cross-checking logs, I may also change "FISTS Log Converter" to submit up to four sessions but claim 0 points for QSOs in the sessions that are not being claimed.
- Straight Key Week:* This will continue as before.

- Fifth Sundays:* This will change to a QRS activity ("Fifth QRSundays" ?) that runs from 00:00 to 23:59 with entrants sending at no more than 14 wpm (it does not matter what speed your QSO partner is sending at, i.e. "one-way QRS" is acceptable). Probably the same exchange, bands, and scoring as for the Ladder, although I am considering relaxing the requirement for exchanging FISTS member numbers to make the activity more accessible for less experienced participants (I think it's still reasonable to ask for RST, Name, and QTH to be exchanged).
- Two Metre:* As in 2015 except that it will be for one month in the first 6 months of the year and a second month in the last 6 months of the year. Due to some strong lobbying from participants (!), the times are changing so that both Saturday and Sunday sessions start at 9am UK local time (i.e. 0900 UTC or 0900 BST (0800 UTC) depending on the time of the year). While (at least in recent years) we have not had an activity change its UTC times during a year, a preference has been expressed for the 2m activity to start reasonably early in the morning (and getting up in time for 9am is the earliest that G3ZOD is willing or able to cope with on a Sunday! HI) I intend to recommend that QSOs take place centred on 144.052.0 and at least 1 kHz away from 144.050. Calling a non-participant who is CQing on 144.050 is acceptable provided you QSY for the QSO as per the previous sentence. The intention is to catch more passersby than using 144.058.0 can. Also I may recommend that calls are "CQ" rather than "CQ FISTS" for the same reason.
- RX Challenge:* Each entrant must obtain a three letter word and a three digit number in advance (from the website's Members Area, by emailing me, or by post if all else fails) that they will send to their QSO partners. There will be a bonus for each word/number received correctly in addition to the usual information (RST, etc.), so QSOs with non-members, or members who haven't got a code, will still count. This will probably be two sessions: one in a Sunday afternoon slot, maybe deliberately timed to coincide with a Ladder session, and another in a weekday afternoon slot. The second session will require different words/numbers to the first session.
- Mechanical Key Days:* Two full days (48 hours) on a consecutive Friday and Saturday. Usual exchange and use of mechanical keys only (i.e. bugs, sideswipers, and straight keys only).
- FISTS Log Converter* For each claimed Straight Key Week QSO, its log entry must include "SKW" in the Comments / Notes (or similar) field. This is so that anyone having other QSOs (e.g. during CQ WW CW using a keyer or keyboard) can easily submit just the qualifying QSOs. Similarly, for "Fifth QRSundays", the Comments / Notes (or similar) field must contain "QRS", and for Mechanical Key Days the field must contain "MKD". There will be quite a number of changes required to FISTS Log Converter to incorporate the above activities, so I expect that the next version will include the 2016 Ladder but other activities will probably be added to the program in subsequent versions.

Well, that was way longer than I had intended (!), but I hope that it gives the opportunity for any further comments. I can be contacted by email – see the website's Contacts page
<http://fists.co.uk/contactus.html>

73 de Graham G3ZOD.

73 and keep on pounding the brass!

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