

# BRASSPOUNDER

January 2020, Issue 140



Welcome to this edition of *BrassPounder*, which covers FISTS CW Club Europe's [on-air activities](#).

And welcome to a new year and all that comes with that! In a few days we shall have finally gone through Brexit, whatever that means...maybe a few special events stations or even some special prefixes? Hmm... maybe.

Well, the Straight Key Week was superbly well attended - 23 logs submitted this year as opposed to 16 last time. Well done to all who entered and I am glad you found it fun. One member who stood out – so much in fact that I felt obliged to clarify that he had used a SK - was, William, MI0WWB. I emailed him because not only did he do exceedingly well at SKW but that cryptic comment “do I use a paddle or SK?” made me wonder whether he *had* used a SK all the time. Well, for the record...he WAS using a SK and the comment simply refers to his radio life post-SKW. William has been such a convert to the Straight Key that he tells me he is also now a *de facto* collector! William, I am sorry my friend...there is no known cure!

## Contests

I know contests get a great bashing generally, and from no one more than me in fact, but recently.... Well, I had to know. There was a contest recently called the RSGBAFS, which is for RSGB Affiliated societies. Anyone who is a member of the affiliated body can join, whether or not they are RSGB members. This seemed too good to miss because it means anyone can help promote the name of the club – in my case Andover Radio Amateurs Club.

So I looked into it and, long story short, downloaded N1MM logger and joined in. Sadly it was all SSB, I missed the CW one but never mind. Well we did quite well but this got me looking further (which is really where this is going) and I discovered a thing called a Winkeyer. Now, a winkeyer is a device that plugs into your pc or laptop and then into your rig like a keyer and allows keyboard Morse or macros to be sent - the usual “599 001” etc or whatever ever. Well, I didn't have a Winkeyer and I wasn't likely to buy one coz they are not cheap (and I can send 599 001, thank you!).

Lo and behold, Paul, M0BMN, FISTS electronics designer and guru emailed me and says “psst, wanna buy a winkey kit?” Amazingly, he had just put the finishing touches to his own design of winkey emulator and Morse keyer. Now a keyer is a useful thing if you use older rigs, as I do, and another keyer with 12 memories etc is always welcome. Paul asked me to “hammer” the kit and tell him what I thought before he decides to sell it commercially. Well...a keyer and a winkeyer in one package! I say now, if you are scared of software but would like a bash at contesting, download N1MM and buy a kit off Paul. N1MM is brilliant and more than adequate. It is easy-ish to get running but all the problems are well sorted and there are many folks on hand to help. Paul's kit plugged in and went well. I loved it. As luck would have it, that weekend there was a Topband contest on. Also this weekend my wife and kids were away in London – it was just me at home...with a new keyer, a topband contest and nothing else to do! Wow.

I emailed Paul my response...this is it verbatim...

Paul

I used the Keyer extensively over the weekend, both for normal QSO and contest. The contest was the 160m 30 hour contest - great fun.

I used the Keyer via the computer as a Winkeyer and also as a standalone Keyer with my rigs internal Keyer turned OFF. My rig is a Tentec Orion 2

I used the Keyer with N1MM contest software using both macros and paddle

I used the Keyer with Logger32 using macros and paddle

I cannot fault it.

There was an issue with latency on Logger32 - the delay between me hitting the paddle and the first sound was frustratingly long - a fraction of a second, but enough. This turned out to be a setting in Logger32 which does exactly what it says on the tin...delays the first sound. It was set to 100ms so I turned it to zero and that sorted that. All macros worked.

The ONLY issue is with the command to set the Keyer sidetone OFF which I always wanted. I never want the Keyer sidetone on because it masks what the rig is doing but the process dint always work. Sometimes I send an "o" but the sidetone stays ON. If the Keyer is unplugged the sidetone, if OFF, comes back ON. I cannot fathom this...either it's working or not...but that's not the case. Sometimes it takes three or four attempts to set the s/t to OFF

All in all, a perfect winkeyer kit. It's superb value for money and it works fine. I didn't test the memories on it...I didn't have time to be honest, I really have been using the Keyer non stop over two days. Its been turned on and off many times, its been soaked ON for hours. I cant fault it apart from the sidetone command.

If you intend to kit them for general sale let me know and I will happily send reviews out.

Regards

D

As you can tell, the keyer works. The issue with sidetone is probably my fault but nevertheless Paul has modified future kits with a switch I believe. I can't tell you a price for this kit yet but I can tell you it is the cheapest kit out there for such a design. The price I was quoted was less than £30 but I know it is still in a state of decision so don't hold me to that please. Parts go up and down in price as he orders them in.

I will do a full review in due course but for now, if you fancy contesting or need a keyer, email Paul.

Back to that SSB contest...we came about halfway...a most satisfying event. Here's a thought: is FISTS RSGB affiliated? We could really field a good result for FISTS if we are. Hmmm.

What's on now???

### **Low Bands Day-hopper**

**January:** Sat 25.

**February:** Sun 02, Mon 10, Tue 18, Wed 26.

**March:** Thu 05, Fri 13, Sat 21, Sun 29.

This has has three, 1-hour sessions per day starting at 0800, 1300, & 1800 UTC on each day.

### **Ladder**

Okay, the results for the ladder...

**Ladder** located anywhere section: **1st G4LRG, 2nd I5EFO, 3rd G0ILN.**

**Ladder** located outside England section: **1st I5EFO, 2nd DL3HR, 3rd OH7QR.**

And for SKW...

**Straight Key Week: 1st G4LHI, 2nd MI0WWB, 3rd M0PBZ.**

**Well done chaps!!!!**

Well, that's me done I think for this month. I hope to see more of you on air in the next few weeks, I have not been around the FISTS freqs much so have missed you all. If you fancy a go at a contest and use that N1MM software do feed back and don't forget Pauls kits.

Have fun!

Best 73

David G4YVM F15868

### Comments for Ladder 2019

Entrant	Comments
Phil 2E0DPH	Thanks to all those worked on the Ladder in 2019 I wish you all a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2019. 73 Phil
Ivan 9H1PI	Conditions very bad 73's Ivan 9h1pi.
Tom DK3DUA	tnx for qso's , merry xmas and hny 2020 de DK3DUA
Nils DL3HR	I thought, the Sessions in November have been the worst Sessions ever - they weren't. The Conds in December were poorest ever. TNX to all who caught my tiny Signals. I lost Chris, MI0AHH and MIWUB on 08.12. and GM4NFI on 22.12. in QSB, SRI. I hope we will meet again next year - until then my best 73, merry XMAS and a happy new Year 2020.
Ivan G0BON	Could only get on the evening sessions. Conditions were extremely challenging and even more so on the 2nd evening. Thanks all for the points and Happy New Year.
Richard G0ILN	Good fun as always but really a struggle in poor condx. Richard
Andrew G0OEY	Just the one contact this month.
Andy G0UYG	Great day, some hard, but nice contacts.
Chris G3XVL	Only managed 1 QSO on the ladder this month
Robin G4DNP	With best wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year to everybody and looking forward to 2020. Robin
Peter G4LHI	G4LHI Claim for Dec Ladder gud fun as usual, but I'm afraid the band condx were not at their best, lots QSB & QRM but I got a few QSOs in spite of that Hi. Happy Christmas & a Healthy QRM/QSB free 2020 G4LHI # 2219 73 k
John G4LRG	Hard work again with all contacts in the afternoon sessions. Poor band conditions but thanks to all who took part. Seasons greeting to all members.
Richard G4TPJ	Kenwood ts 530 - Pwr 100 watts - Doublet - Himound Straight Key

Ray G4XUZ	My December ladder log attached. Very little time on air this month so a particularly feeble entry from me!  Very best 73,  Ray G4XUZ
Dave G7WHI	Great to catch up with everyone again, thanks for the qso's and great to wrk a few new stations. 73 for another month erry Christmas and HNY to all
Emil I5EFO	Season's greetings. Happy New year 2020.
Pete M5ABN	I wish all members a very happy 2020, and look forward to many more QSO's this year. Pete M5ABN #6423
Jarmo OH2BN	Here's wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Looking forward to meeting many of you on the Ladder in 2020. May the band conditions improve a little now that Cycle 24 is finally bottoming out...
Erkki OH7QR	Hello David, please find attached my log for December. Many thanks for your good work with our logs. All the best in 2020. 73 de Erkki OH7QR

### Final Results for Ladder 2019

Callsign	Posn	Prev	Move	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
G4LRG	1	1	-	973	76	79	100	67	81	64	81	91	84	99	76	75
I5EFO	2	2	-	852	44	72	54	48	69	57	64	96	106	111	83	48
G0ILN	3	3	-	821	65	59	86	60	74	71	79	85	90	83	43	26
G4LHI	4	4	-	757	78	78	64	72	55	49	59	54	55	60	66	67
M5ABN	5	5	-	604	36	61	47	54	41	46	66	53	70	82		48
M0PBZ	6	6	-	463	36	22	42	43	57	49	45	36	39	43	51	
G0BON	7	7	-	440	42	42	6		57	58	49	72	54	30		30
2E0DPH	8	8	-	436	42	51	24	43	30	21	42	40	24	40	46	33
DL3HR	9	9	-	424	27	37	52	37	31	28	33	34	41	49	28	27
OH7QR	10	10	-	400	26	52	40	37	15	40	49	41	24	46	15	15
MI0WWB	11	12	↑	333	15	14	20	25		51	36	27	42	42	31	30
MW0BGL	12	11	↓	330	42			42	48	37	48	46		39	6	22
G7WHI	13	14	↑	295		26	48	21	49	18		64	27	24		18
M0GSX	14	13	↓	283	22	18	39	24	48	57	48	27				
G0JHK	15	15	-	245	33		42	42			27		31	70		
G3XVL	16	16	-	244	30	57	41	27	18	4	9	12	6	18	21	1
G3ZRJ	17	17	-	190	18	25		8	12		62	24	26	15		
M0DRK	18	18	-	168	7	9	18	18	18		13	22	9	24	18	12
G0OEY	19	19	-	123		26	10	13	7		23	10	6	7	18	3
SP9NLI	20	20	-	95	12	19	12	6	3		7	30	6			
G4XUZ	21	23	↑	90						15	18			24	24	9
OH2BN	22	22	-	89		9		20	3	15	12	6		15	6	3
M0UZE	23	21	↓	88	6	19	9	24	6	3	6	3	6	6		
9H1PI	24	24	-	82	29	19	17	14								3
IW2JJS	25	25	-	67		23			15	11				18		
G0UYG	26	27	↑	62	6		29				12					15
G4DNP	27	28	↑	53	6	9	5					5	12	7		9
G0XAH	28	26	↓	48				21	18	9						
G3JRH	29	29	-	42									25		17	
G4KLE	30	30	-	34										34		
OZ8AGB	31	31	-	33			3	3	3	6		12	3		3	
G3ZOD	32	32	-	30							15			15		
G0TLU	33	33	-	28							6		3	16	3	
G4TPJ	34	-	↑	24												24
M0DHP	35	34	↓	18										18		
SV2BBK	36	35	↓	17				4			3	3			7	
SP2SWI	37	36	↓	15	6					9						
M0SHM	38	37	↓	12								6				6
DK3DUA	39	-	↑	9												9
IU0ITX	40	-	↑	2												2

## Comments for Straight Key Week 2019

Entrant	Comments
Phil 2E0DPH	Varied condx to say the least Hi!, thanks to all, it was good fun and great to hear much activity for SKW. 73 Phil
Alain F6CAX	Hello dear friends, Here is the record of my modest participation in the 2019 SKW Week. Thank you to everyone who gave me a report. See you next year.  73 de Alain F6CAX FISTS : 19291
Mark G0TMT	This is the first FISTS event I have entered since joining. I've given away a few points in the ladder before when I've been available but I decided I would use SKW to hopefully increase my speed. ... I enjoyed the event (activity not contest?) enough to want to do others and keep working on the key. It was good fun.
Peter G3JRH	Very enjoyable week. I can't remember when I last used a straight key in anger. Splitting the day into 8 1hr sessions worked very well for me.
John G3NCN	I have used a Marconi 365 straight key for the last week.  73, John Ellerton G3NCN
Chris G3XVL	Great event!
Tony G3ZRJ	Some great fists on air
Robin G4DNP	It was great to see so much activity but quite challenging with QRP. Many thanks also for patience with my QRS and also to MT. 73s Robin/G4DNP
Peter G4LHI	G4LHI Claim for Dec SK Week gud fun as usual, but I'm afraid the band condx were not at their best, lots QSB & QRM but I got a few QSOs in spite of that Hi. G4LHI #2219 73 k
Ken G4RHR	A very enjoyable activity, and thoroughly enjoyed using my straight keys for the week, and meeting many friends on the air in doing so. Thanks to all who I had a QSO with.
Ray G4XUZ	Really enjoyed SKW, and my SK sending noticeably improved over the week. I will definitely use the SK more in future as well as the paddle - they are equally satisfying.  Best wishes,  Ray G4XUZ
Richard G6HH	Not too many entries but I did enjoy using my straight keys. Even reverse beacon recognised my fist!  Keys used 1st to 5th December Raymart speed key. Key used 7th December Marconi PS 213 Copy.  Richard G0ILN Fist 398. Hastings Electronics and Radio Club (HERC)
Steve GM0HUU	1st ever FISTS contest. I had only limited time for radio during SKW. Hence, only 3 contacts! Nice to meet a few FISTS members and have a few FB CW QSOs.
Carl GW0VSW	Key used was a WT 8amp No2 MK2 Xiegu G90, 4w to an inverted G5RV  Carl Mason GW0VSW QRP 1887

Vanni I5ECW	hi,here is my little skw log! very poor conditions and less attendance. 73 Vanni fists 16505
Pete M5ABN	Very enjoyable activity, many thanks to all who came on. Pete M5ABN #6423
William MI0WWB	What a great week, my dilemma is do I use a SK or a paddle?
Erkki OH7QR	Hello David, here comes my log for SKW. I enjoyed the activity very much and met some new members during the week. Looking forward to SKW in 2020! Merry Xmas and a very Happy New Year! 73 de Erkki OH7QR
Jan PA0SIM	Hello Fists, was fun doing the straight key week activity and using the SK again. It was a bit rusty, but still ok. Conditions where difficult even during day time. Will join next time. I like this activity and the timing at the cardinal times.  73 Jan PA0SIM



**Results for Straight Key Week 2019**

<b>Callsign</b>	<b>Posn</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>G4LHI</b>	1	347
<b>MI0WWB</b>	2	219
<b>M0PBZ</b>	3	170
OH7QR	4	165
G3NCN	5	150
G0DFC	6	125
G0TMT	7	103
G4XUZ	8	78
2E0DPH	=9	70
M5ABN	=9	70
G3XVL	11	68
G3JRH	12	59
G3ZRJ	13	55
G6HH	14	43
G4RHR	15	41
I5ECW	16	33
F6CAX	=17	27
M0DRK	=17	27
PA0SIM	19	22
G4DNP	20	18
GW0VSW	21	12
GM0HUU	22	9
M0DHP	23	6

## Upcoming Events

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### February 2020

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Sun 02 Feb		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Day Hopper</a>	0800, 1300, 1800 UTC for 1 hour
Sun 09 Feb		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Ladder</a>	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Mon 10 Feb		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Day Hopper</a>	0800, 1300, 1800 UTC for 1 hour
Tue 18 Feb		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Day Hopper</a>	0800, 1300, 1800 UTC for 1 hour
Sun 23 Feb		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Ladder</a>	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Wed 26 Feb		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Day Hopper</a>	0800, 1300, 1800 UTC for 1 hour

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### March 2020

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Thu 05 Mar		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Day Hopper</a>	0800, 1300, 1800 UTC for 1 hour
Sun 08 Mar		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Ladder</a>	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Fri 13 Mar		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Day Hopper</a>	0800, 1300, 1800 UTC for 1 hour
Sat 21 Mar		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Day Hopper</a>	0800, 1300, 1800 UTC for 1 hour
Sun 22 Mar		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Ladder</a>	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 29 Mar		<a href="#">FISTS Eu Day Hopper</a>	0800, 1300, 1800 UTC for 1 hour