

BRASSPOUNDER

January 2011 Issue 58

Welcome to the first edition of a new year.

The previous months have been “interesting” weather-wise with all varieties being thrown at us; As I look out of the window this morning whilst preparing BP, I see a hard frost covering the ground and adjacent properties, this is after the strong winds that have been buffeting the island over the past days.. I hope your aerals have survived the weather?

The Four Seasons Activity (FSA) became active on the 1st of January, and already I’ve received entries from members with comments suggesting that it is a welcome addition to the activity calendar. I do hope more of you will find time to join in over the coming months.

On to comments and band reports received during January.

I’ll start with words from the FSA entrants; firstly Erkki, OH7QR.

Hello Robert,

Please find attached my Four Seasons Activity Log for January. I created my log using the Fists Log Converter Program. Many thanks to G3ZOD for this program; it saves much work and time. My computer log program is AcLog.

Statistics on January:

In total 82 QSOs of which 23 Fists QSOs with 14 individual members and 59 QSOs with non-members. As I had anticipated I had many QSOs with my friend Peter G4LHI even so many that we exceeded the time limit of 90 minutes, HI. Total time spent during QSOs: 14 hours 42 minutes.

Many thanks and 73

Erkki OH7QR fists 8318

Hello Erkki, good to hear from you, glad to hear that you've managed such an impressive first month of on air time. This activity is designed to get members on air and have a chat...

A warm welcome goes to Dick; SV0XBN/9 on the island of Crete; who joins us for the FSA.

Hi Rob...

Attached my entry for the January section of the Four Seasons Activity;

Made some contacts, but regrettably no FISTS Members.

I have left in some 'non-scoring' QSOs (in Red) as they show that these quick merchants were in amongst those who took their time . . .

Am 'booked' for several contests over the next couple of months but my aim will still be to have one 'proper' QSO a day . . .

However, I expect my entry in the Spring and Summer sessions will be greatly reduced due to the much better WX and visits from 'family' who suddenly appear when you live on Crete. The first arrivals are expected at the end of March.

Wonder if there will there be a score update on the website each month?

73 hope you get a lot of entries...

Dick. SV0XBN/9

Welcome Dick. Hope you're enjoying the FSA. I expect as I write this many will be making a mental note to look for you on the band(s) during the year. I look forward to hearing from you and band reports throughout the year. The monthly results will be published both on the FISTS UK Web-site, and also by visiting <http://m0bpt-fists.webs.com>

Another warm welcome goes to Mike, GM0OAA in Glasgow who joins us in the FSA.

Rob

what a great idea: the antidote to contests! I have been using the soldering iron more than the Morse key this month, so not a great score. I do hope this activity gets a good response from members.

The highlight for me was a chat with G4WJM in Lincolnshire on 30M - at ten-thirty pm! He was a big 599 for seven or eight minutes, but signals began to fade and a little later we lost each-other in the noise. The Chilton ionogram for that time shows that the shortest F2 skip on 10 MHz should have been around 2,000 km, while the path between Bill & I was only a little over 400 km. However it also shows strong E-layer ionisation peaking (above Oxfordshire) a few minutes after the time of our QSO - so this must have been a case of sporadic E on thirty metres.

The set-up here is very simple - an old Ten Tec Argosy feeding twenty to thirty watts into a

fifteen metre length of wire slung between two bay windows of my first-floor flat. The finger interface is an original Kent twin paddle controlling a new K1EL kit-built keyer.

73 de Mike GM0OAA (FISTS 791), Glasgow.

Welcome Mike. Pleased to hear you've enjoyed your first month in the FSA. Thanks for your kind words. I'm hoping that many will join in and enjoy the activity during 2011.

From Martin, IK2RMZ/DL1GBZ who comments.

Hi Robert,

I sure like the FSA; it's one of the most enjoyable activities in ham radio I have ever experienced.

On Feb 13 exactly 30 years ago I passed my very first ham radio exam and a few days later I got my first call DL1GBZ

My February result will be much less glorious than my January entry because the latter was boosted by a long Xmas holiday.

During the last week in February I will be in Germany and I will try to use the call DA2MORSE which is assigned to the FMC (Friends of Samuel Morse Club) that I am a member of. I should be on air on 80m during evening hours. The call should be on air the whole year 2011 with several ops.

73. Martin

Good to hear from you once again Martin. Congratulations on reaching your 30 year milestone in amateur radio. I hope many of you will listen for Martin during February with DA2MORSE! And of course, throughout 2011.

From Piet, PA3AFF

Robert,

Here is my first entry for the FSA of 2011. Enjoyed working for the 4 seasons activity. I noticed it motivated me to call and work stations calling CQ with QRS speed.

73 Piet, PA3AFF, Fists #445

Good to hear from you once again Piet. And pleased that you've enjoyed your first month in FSA.

And from FISTS NA member Stan K4UK who joins us in the FSA

Rob

Attached is my log for January in the Four Seasons Activity 2011.

We did a clear-out of cards here at the QSL Bureau, so I wasn't able to do much operating this past month.

Unless golf interferes in February I hope to do much more hamming. - Hi!

73, Stan - K4UK

Good to hear from you and have you on board once again Stan. I look forward to your reports during 2011.

And from Peter G4LHI who comments;

Hello Robert,

I attach my claim & report for the January FSA, the first claim for the first quarter of 2011.

Well, I do hope that those joining in the FSA for this new activity enjoyed it as much as I did, & I hope that Rob got a lot of claims for this first month & the FSA will prove to be a very interesting activity to add to the others on the calendar for 2011.

I would like to thank those members & non members for helping me to gain such a good score, certainly much more than I had expected (118 QSO's) & for keeping within the time factors set out in the rules for this event to gain the various points. It is certainly an event that keeps you on your toes hi. I managed to make QSO's on 80, 40,30,20,17 & 2m.

I also was very pleased to work four new members during the month & hope they will all join us again in the next & following months of this event & the other activities in Robs Activity Calendar.

It also gave me great pleasure to be able to QRS with one or two members & to help them to enjoy a nice steady QSO, which they appreciated.

It will be very interesting to see how many claims Rob gets in for this new venture, I certainly did not hear any one calling CQ Fists FSA, but they could have been on other bands, there are certainly plenty to use if conditions are favorable?

I do hope there will be activity on this nice new event & Rob does not have to cancel it through lack of interest. Come on guys, Rob puts so much into our Fists Club, we must support him.

That's all for now chaps, look forward to plenty of activity in this event & the Ladder during February.

73 for now keep bashing the brass!!

Peter G4LHI # 2219

Hello Peter. Good to hear from you. I'm pleased that you've met new members in the first month of activity. A rewarding comment made by yourself regarding being able to QRS for amateurs is what FSA is there for! As I never tire of pointing out, to perpetuate the mode, we need to nurture newcomers to the mode.

Let's look at some of the reports/comments received regarding the ladder.

From Greg; G0DUB who comments,

Hi Rob,

mixed results in this months activity. The session on 9th January was a bit of a washout for me due to the clash with the RSGB AFS contest. The 23rd was a bit better but conditions in the afternoon were difficult, losing as many QSO's in QSB as I made.

This years target is to finish in the top half of the table - not making life easy for myself at this rate!

73,

Greg, G0DUB #6095

Welcome Greg. Good to hear from you once again. Early days yet, over the years I've noticed entrants leap up the results table as the months go by; eventually racing towards the finishing post!

From Erkki; OH7QR

Hello Robert,

Here is my first ladder log in 2011. On the first day the band was quite crowded. I heard Gra, G3ZOD calling me but at the same time there was also another station on exactly the same QRG. Although I sent that I'll listen only for Gra, along came the other station again and I didn't copy G3ZOD at all! Sorry Gra, hope that we'll have better luck next time. I managed 9 QSOs with Fists-members (2 QSOs with G4LHI as usual, thank you very much

Peter) and 9 with non-members. Dan G0SXM - although not member - has been active many times in the ladder giving points.

73

Erkki OH7QR

Hello Erkki, good to hear from you. I've noticed over the years that G0SXM is active during the ladder; I imagine that he enjoys catching up with old friends.

And from Graham, 2E0JYK

Hi Rob,

Nice to be involved in the activity ladder again, I am really enjoying taking part in the fun on CW. The taking part also helps me to learn and progress with my CW at the same time; which helps me a lot. Attached is my log for January 2011.

73 for now Rob, one day I shall make a contact on CW with you.

Regards, all the best for 2011

Graham 2E0JYK

Hi Graham, Very pleased to hear that you're having fun and enjoying your CW. Natural progression comes with use, enjoyment, and gaining confidence. More importantly; having good friends/members who are prepared to spend time with you helping you to progress; long may it continue!

From Phil; M6PHL

Hello Rob.

Firstly congratulations and well done to Peter G4LHI in topping the Ladder again for 2010 and to Bill GOBAK for a very close run in, coming in just behind me in third place, I thought you had done enough to get second place Bill. Also thanks to all the other members taking part and making the Ladder a success again.

For me, a steady start for the January Ladder, the first Sunday of 2011 being virtually a total wipeout, at least the second Sunday of the month was much better.

So good luck to you all and I hope we see even more members taking part this year.
73, Phil M6PHL Fists 14543.

Welcome Phil. I'd noticed the close run in between yourself and Bill developing over the latter months of the ladder 2010. Congratulations go to all three of you for getting the top three podium spots.

From Bill; GOBAK

Hi Rob

Firstly, a Happy New Year to you and yours;

Find attached my Ladder log for January. I could only manage the afternoon session on the 9th and as soon as I switched on the radio I realised this was going to be bad. The Contest had taken over the band and left no space to sit to call CQ. Signals seemed quite good on this day however most of the CQ calls ended with a "TEST". I only managed 3 QSO's and none were Fists members, in fact none were UK contacts. I did hear a G station calling CQ a few times, however when I answered him and gave my details, nothing; obviously, too much to ask for a simple sri test only. All in all a disaster of a session.

Again on the 23rd I could only manage the afternoon session again. Once again I had a poor afternoon. Conditions were very poor with me on all bands and 80 metres seemed dead. I could just hear Peter g4LHI but not for an exchange. I told him I was going to try 40 Metres; however that too seemed very poor. Later on in the afternoon I could hear members working each other on 80 metres, however signals were very poor with me. I only managed to work Peter late on in the afternoon back on 80 metres. Only 3 other non UK stations worked on that session, very poor indeed.

So; off to a very poor start in 2011 with a very low score of 9 points. I hope others found the conditions a lot better than me.

Best Wishes, Bill GOBAK Fists 13262

Welcome Bill, everyone was suffering with the "Test" calls during the ladder. As you'll have seen by my earlier comments to Greg; I'm sure you'll leap up the table as the year progresses (Hi)

A "Welcome back" to Graham; 2E0TEK.

Hi Robert

Graham 2E0TEK here; thought I would send you my claim for the January ladder, you should be hearing a bit more from me again as I am getting back in the swing of CW and FISTS again. Hope you are well and look forward to mailing you throughout the year.

Graham, 2E0TEK Fists 8947

Welcome Graham. Good to hear from you once again; pleased you're finding time to get back into the mode once again, know many will look forward to hooking up with you once again throughout the year.

And from Peter; G4LHI

Hello Robert,

I attach my claim & report for the January 2011 Ladder.

Band condx did not favor us yet again this month & the "contest" on the 9th afternoon from 1400 to 1800 did not help. Anyway very enjoyable as always, & I think we may have a good turnout for 2011, there seemed to be a fair number of members about & I hope the FSA may also have been a contributing factor?

I managed 6 QSO's for 11 points on first day & 9 QSO's for 17 points on the second for the Ladder this month. For a final score of 28 points, so let's hope we get a good clear run for the 2011 Activities.

Very many thanks to all once again for the very enjoyable QSO's including extra points for the new FSA, this looks like being a very interesting event & I do hope that there will be a good few members & non members joining in during the year.

Let's give our Rob the biggest number of claims & scores during 2011 & let's hope we get many new members joining us "Oldies" for a very interesting new calendar of activities.

That's all for now folks, hope to see all those that joined us in January many times again during the year & lots more new members joining us, there certainly are a lot of new call-signs & big new numbers on the Webpage every time you look at it.

Keep bashing the brass! Hope you all have a very good Healthy 2011.

73 de Peter G4LHI # 2219.

Hello Peter. Once again thanks for your concise round up the January happenings. I look forward to receiving reports/comments from you during the year; I have a good feeling about 2011, that many new members; and the more seasoned members of the society will be joining us throughout the year.

From Gra; G3ZOD

Hi Rob. 9th January Ladder: In the afternoon I couldn't quite make it with Erkki OH7QR on 20m. I went down onto 40m and found a gap between the contest stations but couldn't get anyone's attention. A visit down onto 80m was no better; contest stations tightly packed around 3.558 and no chance at all for me to be heard. Fortunately I'd started the afternoon on 6m with Ian G6TGO, so I avoided a "duck". I tried 40m and 80m in the evening session, but this time did successfully achieve a "duck"!

23rd January Ladder: I didn't succeed in any contacts on 20m or 40m (both sounded "flat") during the afternoon. Going down on to 80m yielded a difficult contact with Peter G4LHI with not much in the way of signal strength. I could hear a few other stations but all were barely hovering above the noise and would not have heard me. The evening was slightly better with two contacts on 80m. Overall though, a disappointing start to the 2011 ladder; or the alternative view is lots of opportunity for improvement, HI!

Four Seasons: I've not really had time to put a serious effort into 4S so far, but will aim to try harder in spring!

VHF CW: The final results for the 6m UKAC 2010 were 74/214 for my-self, which I'm quite pleased with, and 29/48 for "FISTS CW Club". For anyone who'd like to contribute a few points to "FISTS CW Club" in 2011, the club name has now been added to the list on the RSGB entry webpage for convenience. Also, since FISTS is affiliated to the RSGB, any FISTS member can put an entry in on behalf of FISTS even if they're not an RSGB member.

Construction: I finally got my soldering iron out and have been spending a bit of time on some kits. Something I came across: I had a li-on battery that has been stored for quite a few years. As expected it retained not very much charge. Then after around 5 re-charge cycles its capacity suddenly went back to normal. Is this normal behaviour? I thought that kind of effect went out with NiCad batteries?

Events diary: I've been putting together a list of events in diary form and intend to slot this into the FISTS website at some point. For example;

Event Diary Feb-Mar 2011:

Feb 13 FISTS EU Ladder (1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC)

Feb 27 FISTS EU Ladder (1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC)

Mar 6 FISTS EU Exchange Your Age Week (All day UTC)

Mar 7 FISTS EU Exchange Your Age Week (All day UTC)

Mar 8 FISTS EU Exchange Your Age Week (All day UTC)

Mar 9 FISTS EU Exchange Your Age Week (All day UTC)

Mar 10 FISTS EU Exchange Your Age Week (All day UTC)

Mar 11 FISTS EU Exchange Your Age Week (All day UTC)

Mar 12 FISTS EU Exchange Your Age Week (All day UTC)

Mar 27 FISTS EU Ladder (1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC)

73 de Graham G3ZOD FISTS #8385

Hi Gra. Thanks for the round up of your activity during January. Good idea regarding the diary of events on the FISTS Web site; this may encourage visitors to come along and join in any activity throughout the year.

Let's look at the results tables for both activities for January;

Firstly the ladder.

CALL	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL	POWER
G4LHI	28													QRO
OH7QR	27													QRO
M6PHL	20													QRO
2E0TEK	17													QRO
PA3AFF	13													QRO
2E0JYK	10													QRO
G0BAK	9													QRO
G3ZOD	5													QRO
G0DUB	4													QRO

And the FSA Winter period

CALL	JAN	FEB	MAR	CLASS
G4LHI	409			A
IK2RMZ	233			A
OH7QR	193			A
PA3AFF	76			A
SV0XBN/9	50			A
K4UK	48			A
2E0TEK	35			A
G0BAK	35			A
G3ZOD	30			A
GM0OAA	22			A

Both activities have got off to a steady start, many thanks to you all for your continued support of the activities within the society. It's very pleasing to see you all here once again; a warm welcome to the new entrants to our activities; namely Dick; SV0XBN/9 and Mike,

GM00AA. Graham. 2E0TEK who joins us once again. I know that many will be looking to make your acquaintance over the coming months.

That's all from me for another month.

WHILE I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION!!

DON'T FORGET THE EYAW ACTIVITY!!

Running from the 6th to the 12th of March.

Full rules/dates, etc. To be found by going to this link.

<http://www.fists.co.uk/activitiescalendar.html#fistseyaw2011>

Till next time;

Keep well;

“Keep pounding brass”

73.

MOBPT