

BRASSPOUNDER

October 2008



For those within FISTS who enjoy a challenge

Welcome to the October edition.

Yet another month rolls by and I'm always pleased to hear from members who participate in the activities within the society. Foremost I think is the comments I receive with the logs regarding the words "Pleased to meet for the first time" etc. A warm welcome must be extended to Graham, G3ZOD with his first entry with his ladder and WARC Activity logs. I know Graham is looking forward to meeting members in both events. Graham is QRP with an indoor aerial. So every contact made is welcomed by him.

Lets look at this months postbag... firstly from Stan K4UK...

Not as much this month because of our trip to Arizona to attend a 50th Wedding Anniversary Party of our good friends. They had come to our 50th Party in December last year.

I did enjoy my QSO with Peter, M0CYR which gave me the IO83 Grid. Also our QSO allowed to correct an error in my Archive List of FISTS members because I had M0LYR shown for # 10897.

Also I had an enjoyable chat with Joe, DK7VW # 12532 in St. Wendel. His Grid JN39 was another new one for me.

And I had a QSO with Oscar, EA1DR on 17 Meters, so I've now worked him on two of the WARC bands.

Also had the big thrill of working VK9DWX on Willis Island - Grid QH53 on 30 Meters.

My QSO with Mike, G0CHV # 90 in Grid IO84 also was a new one. Fun talking with the guys who were the early members of FISTS.

73, Stan - K4UK

And From Graham. G3ZOD.

Hi Rob. Here's my first ever WARC Challenge submission. I'm QRP (5 watts)

30m has been great fun. I've had no problem working stations around Europe with QRP and an indoor antenna, and the folk on there are very relaxed about inter-European QSO's. Got a "G3?" out of a USA station, not a QSO but satisfying.

On 17m best DX was W9OA so pretty pleased with that too HI

Is there anybody on 12m? Actually, there was a single day I heard a few weak CW signals on 12m (and 10m) but otherwise I think I'm going to have to wait further into the sunspot cycle to get some QSO's on 12m.

I've also rediscovered pencils: in the middle of a QSO trying to jot some details down and my pen stops working. Grab another one and that one doesn't work. Grab a third one AND THAT DOESN'T WORK! Grab a pencil and all is well – lesson learned!

73 de Graham (Gra) G3ZOD

Fists #8385 Loc IO83WJ

Welcome aboard Gra. Pencils.. Yes. I also use them! Much to the amazement of the other family members! I'm considered to be some kind of "Relic" for using such an outdated writing instrument. But, being caught out, much the same as you, in the past; and being able to erase any mistakes because I'm very "Cutting Edge" As I have a rubber eraser atop mine! (Hi). Glad to hear you've been having fun on the WARC's. 12m... It's very marginal, but as you've quite rightly said, further into the cycle should yield some reward, although I have heard some weak EU stations on there intermittently.

From Peter. G4LHI.

Hello Robert,

I attach my Claim & report for October WARC Challenge.

Quite a busy month again, a fair bit of activity but the bands were not open quite as much as expected, however, very enjoyable as always. Not quite as many new grids

as previous months, but I guess this is to be expected as the year draws to a close & our grid square contacts keep increasing hi!, but with Nov & Dec still to come I may find a few more stragglers, so watch this space!. Very much better now local time & GMT are the same!

I was lucky to find four new members during the month, one in a grid I have previously claimed *. LA1ENA, Aage, JO49: K2MEN, Don, FM29*: N2LQ, Ken, FN02: & W4LZW, A.D., EM84: many thanks guys. QSL's in next batch to the Fists Buro.

A brief summary of my October WARC log for your BP Robert.

138 QSO's for 181 point and 5 multies.

My 5 October multies are:-

LA1ENA/qrp, Aage, JO49: S58MU, Mil, JN76: N2LQ, Ken, FN02: SM7ZI, Len, JO76: W4LZW, A.D., EM84:.

Very many thanks again to those new members in the new grid squares & also of course to those members & non-members not already mentioned in my report, but all the QSO's very much appreciated, also the five stations worked for the maximum of four QSO's again this month, Bob, Derek, Erkki, Tony, & Graham, look forward to 4 again in November guys.

I have also been following the progress of the Royal Research Ship, James Clark Ross, on route to the Falklands. The ships radio officer is Mike, GM0HCQ/mm, unfortunately not a Fists Club member, but very nice chap to chat, & one point each time for the log!, you will find all the very interesting info on his webpage if you put GM0HCQ in QRZ.com. That's all for now folks, very many thanks for yet another great month, & looking forward to November for another full log & many nice chats. I am always pleased to help if any members are after the "Rag Chewers Award" hi.

73/88 to all, have fun on the key, & good DXing, take care, Peter G4LHI # 2219 IO92

[And from Peter with his ladder summary.....](#)

Hello Robert,

Here we are again & yet another month almost ending, it only seems a few days ago I was sending you my Sept claims, I can imagine how you feel with all the claims etc coming in & the monthly BP to prepare mate.

Not a bad month for the Ladder, enjoyed it as always, a few time gaps in the log searching the noisy 80m band for QSO's, but quite pleased with my results, not

quite as many as some months, and thought the wet Sunday afternoon would result in a few more guys about, but must have been a good TV program on hi!

My score of 33 points is mainly made up with the good old regular stalwarts, very many thanks for their continued support and many thanks also to the two new members I worked this month, G3ZOD, Graham, 8385 in Stockport, we made it at last Graham and G4OYC, John, 14047 in Paignton. Welcome to the Club John & hope to find you on the bands many more times & pleased you found the Ladder Activity, look out for the G3ZQS Challenge on the WARC bands next.

That's all for the Ladder folks, soon be time for the WARC report & claim so must keep an eye/ear on the WARC bands for the next four days hi!

73 and many thanks again to all, de Peter G4LHI # 2219

And from G3ZOD

Hi Robert.

I decided to have a go at the Ladder, but I was advised that I needed to go on 80m to have a fighting chance of meeting up with other members. Now, 80m is a tough one using indoor antennas and 5 watts, so ended up trying to string up as much wire as possible around the rooms upstairs (very tolerant XYL!) to have a chance of being heard. Couldn't get the thing to tune at all and struggled until about 20 minutes after the start 14:00 session. Managed two QSO's with non-members but nothing else. Oh well ... it was a start.

Now at least the next session would be a bit more relaxed but I couldn't remember what the time was. Went on your web site and THAT was when I realised the Ladder is on Sundays and it was a SATURDAY!!! Argh! At least I got on the air promptly for the ladder on the following day HI.

I could only manage the first session on the Sunday but had fun and very pleased that my first ever Ladder contact was with Peter G4LHI.

73 de Graham (Gra) G3ZOD Fists #8385 Loc IO83WJ

Before I go on to show the results for this month... I thought I'd share with you something that I came across whilst idly surfing the web, on one of the few occasions when I have a spare few minutes to myself... Read on. This was taken from a question and answer session

"A lady from Belgium emailed me saying she was worried about the fact she keeps hearing Morse Code in her head without the aid of any radio receiver or other form of electronics. Scanning the internet I found a large number of pages giving 'hocus pocus and pseudo-scientific mumbo-jumbo' explanations - and worse, a lot of paranoia from those worried about everything including their own shadow. So I decided I'd better try and put the record straight. Here is my email reply to the lady"

Here is the answer to the individuals question.....

"No need to worry about this as it is a common occurrence and fully understood and explainable. Earwax and moisture on the outside of the ear, and electrolytes in the inner ear are ideal mechanisms for creating a 'rectifying or electro-mechanical action'. This means that the energy from a nearby radio transmitter gets converted into an electrical and/or mechanical signal in your ear. Any mechanical flexing of wax or rectification by the electrolytes will do the trick! And any direct conversion to an electrical current in the acoustic nerves, and ditto, you will hear it.

Another likely mechanism is the electrical signal to mechanical vibration conversion due to metal-based fillings in teeth and the associated moisture and acidity in the mouth. Sound propagation would then go via the jawbone to the ear.

The chemistry is a bit complex as is the electrical/mechanical conversion and can include several signals at once 'heterodyning or interfering' to give you a clear tone. But it is explainable - and you are not going mad. And I sometimes hear similar transmissions too!

Who is the culprit for the transmission? Not many people use Morse Code anymore but radio beacons, embassies and some news agencies do. So listen to the signal and see if it repeats regularly: If yes - then it is undoubtedly some form of beacon. If the Morse code is slow and deliberate it is most likely a human operator. If the Morse is incredibly fast it is most likely a machine. In either case it may be an embassy, the military, a news feed by an agency etc.

One of the last vestiges of a Morse generation is the amateur radio community. Just have a look around your community for unusual antennas on houses and buildings and see what you can find"

The author closes with this observation..

I found this rather more succinct explanation:

"We are largely made up of water, electrolytes, salts and sugars, which is an ideal soup for electrical rectification. Or to put it another way, our ears can look like a cats-whisker crystal set. The only problem with this phenomenon is its unreliability; you can never predict when it's going to work, and sometimes it really is an unwanted distraction."

It is interesting that we increasingly live with and rely upon our technology for our survival, and yet the web is full of superstition and unfounded explanations of what we have fully comprehended for decades. During my search I found all manner of discussion groups making a big and mysterious deal about cross-channel interference in analogue TV and radio systems.

The really worrying thing is that the people responsible seem to have lost the ability to search out the truth and would sooner perpetuate errors of understanding, half-truths and what amounts to worse than 'old wives tales'! Even more worrying: our education systems now seem to be almost encouraging this kind of nonsense.

As the number of people in society with deep technical knowledge (of anything) shrinks we may be left with more and more of this stuff dissipating human effort and resources, and goodness knows we can ill-afford such waste!

Does this answer mean we could all be subject to a visit by a neighbor concerned about his or her talking teeth!..... (Hi)

And I see that the answer suggests that we are one of the last vestiges of "Morse Generation" An interesting summing up....

I'd love to hear your thoughts on this item...

On to the results.

WARC CALL	TOTAL2008											MULTI Total	G- PWR		
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV			DEC	
G4LHI	201	182	152	166	231	172	230	239	212	181			1966	122239852	QRO
IK2RMZ	137	182	115	201	325	158	119	223	80	169			1709	107182863	QRO
K4UK	23	83	42	81	92	92	106	220	143	80			962	125120250	QRO
G6GUN	34	38	61	103	99	89	75	56	17	20			592	49 29008	QRO
OH7QR	87	57	101	66	87	59	59	38	33	91			678	27 18306	QRO
W4YE	32	48	46	15	46	14	29	60	61	66			417	37 15429	QRO
MØDRK	20	33	45	31	52	33	29	21	15	24			303	23 6969	QRO
KA3NZR	0	1	26	2	12	28	29	20	4	0			122	28 3416	MIX
G8XGQ	14	24	11	16	26	27	17	19	12	16			182	15 2730	QRO
W4FCR ©	0	11	0	14	8	9	8	30	14	2			96	27 2592	QRO
DL1GBZ/DP6M	0	0	117	0	21	18	0	0	27	25			208	10 2080	QRO
2E0TEK	0	0	0	0	44	0	21	30	0	0			95	12 1140	QRO
K4ORD	3	13	9	7	0	0	1	3	4	0			40	8 320	QRP
G0XAH	0	0	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			33	4 132	QRO
PA3AFF	0	0	0	0	1	10	8	6	0	0			25	5 125	QRO
G3ZOD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28			28	2 56	QRP

With just two months to go, the WARC is still closely contested with G4LHI and IK2RMZ matched for a final push to see who'll come out on top....

Onto the Ladder results..

LADDER CALL	2008											TOTALS	
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
G6GUN	22	34	43	37	43	40	36	35	32	38			360
G4LHI	30	25	37	32	36	37	35	34	36	33			335
IK2RMZ	15	33	18	24	9	17	25	25	15	2			183
OH7QR	14	27	7	14	14	21	15	9	12	23			156
M0DRK	16	10	18	15	17	10	11	13	11	25			146
G8XGQ	16	19	8	0	16	13	12	13	7	19			123
M0JRQ	24	13	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			45
2E0TEK	0	0	0	0	21	0	12	4	0	0			37
G0MRH	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			9
G3ZOD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4			4
DL1GBZ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1			1

Again, with just two months to go, the top two positions are closely contested. It'll be interesting who'll come out on top in the final push towards the end of the year...

Finally.....

PLEASE PLEASE Remember that we have re-instated the FISTS EU "Fist of the Year" Award.

This is where you, the membership vote for a society member who, in your opinion, has done the most during the year to promote the society and further the use of CW....

The autumn Keynote has a voting form enclosed, to save cutting it up you can take a copy or email me with your vote.... m0bpt(at)blueyonder.co.uk

Voting closes on the 31st of December 2008

USE YOUR VOTE!!!!!!

That's all from me for this month... As ever always a pleasure to hear from you with band reports general chit-chat etc. Without you there wouldn't be a BP....

73.

Keep "Bashing the Brass"

MOBPT

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