



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

This is the last one this year, so I hope you all had a super Christmas.

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Straight Key Week (SKW)

This was amazingly well attended this year and it seems that everyone really enjoyed themselves. I managed to get on a few times but insufficiently to really warrant joining. I was just too busy with finding a job and the church work. I am very pleased to announce that my efforts have borne fruit and I now have a new seat in an aircraft! Just before Christmas is a rotten time to lose one's job but, let me tell you, it's a great time to find a new one! If you're interested Google 'Nextant 400'. That's my new mount. Very different from previous machines (my largest offices were the Lockheed Tristar and McD Dc10) but looks rather fun.

Anyway, I digress...SKW..., a good number of Logs came in and results will be delivered in due course. I do have one issue to gripe about...and those who are guilty please take heed!!!

Someone was in the habit of hogging the FISTS CoA. C'mon chaps...the rules are clear. When you have QSO'd, QSY!!! The rules state:

The following rules apply **only** if you are sending in an entry:

- You can use any amateur radio band in your licence except for 12m, 17m, 30m, 60m, and bands lower in frequency than 160m.
- Keep at least 1 kHz away from QRP centre of activity frequencies unless running QRP. (For 80m, 40m, and 20m, these are 3.560, 7.030, and 14.060 MHz.)
- After you finish a QSO on 3.558 or 7.028 MHz, unless you replied to a CQ or tail-ended a QSO, you must QSY by at least 500 Hz for a minimum of 10 minutes.

Now, according to those rules I would be in the right to cancel the entry of the hogger, but this time round I won't. But this is a warning shot.

Another complaint...there is a good deal of moaning at the moment on 2m contests about the cleanliness of high power signals. Sad to say that there has been one notable member who has a similar problem on HF...you're running a lot of power apparently and annoying people up to 2KHz away. IF YOU are running a linear PLEASE check your signal. Again, this time round, no action will be taken but do note, everyone of us, that our actions are observed and we are supposedly a club which puts 'courtesy above all'. Spectral purity is one thing, hogging the freq in direct contravention of a FISTS rule is another. QSY!!

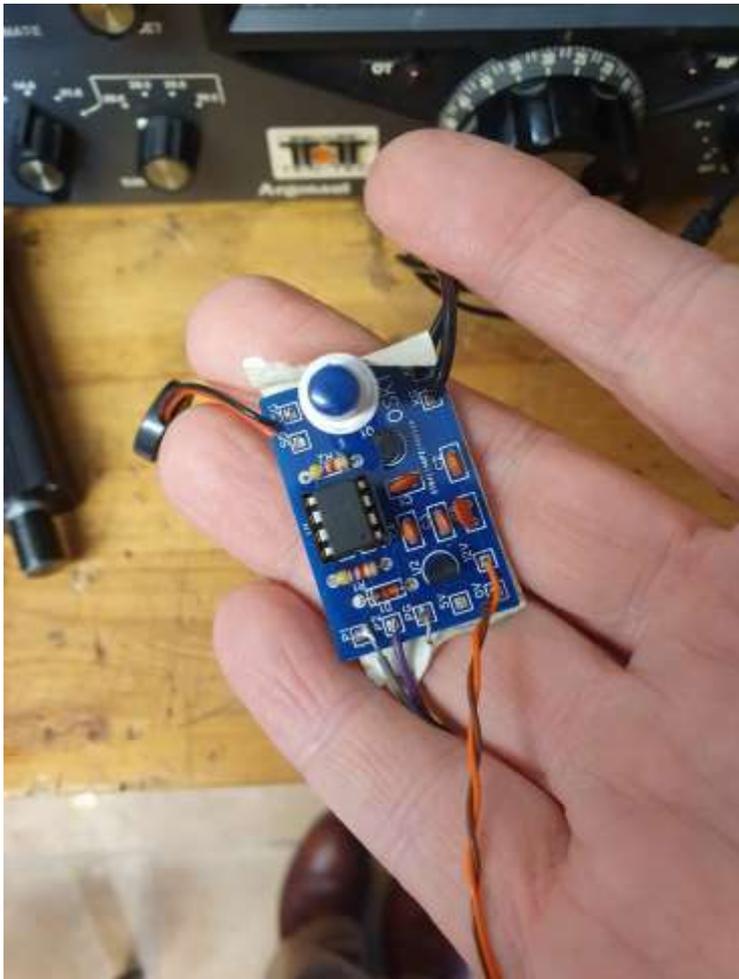
Moan over...let's move on.

Small Kits

Paul, M0BMN, has been busy again with his electronics business and has produced a couple of very nice kits. One is a simple keyer with memories etc and the other is a noise source (RF and AF) for help when building kits etc. I haven't yet made the noise source but the keyer is running well and is blooming good. See my photos. This keyer is the Mk 1 version (I built mine then sent Paul an email saying that to turn it from really good to VERY good I'd like a little rotary knob to enable speed changes on the fly..."that's mark 2" he sent back fast as an electron.).

The keyer is very tiny, as you can see and has one push button. This is really neat because if you press it once you get "IMI" sent. If you then send the number "1" (or 2,3 or 4) you get an "R". You then send a message which is recorded! Now when you get the "IMI" next time if you send "E" (or "I", "T" or "M") it transmits the message in that memory! Clever huh?? I have hooked mine up to my 2m rig and it's fab. Contact Paul to let him know where to send yours!!!

The keyer has a paddle input, a trig output, a small buzzer and 2 power inputs: it can be fed from 9v or less or 12v or more. You choose (But choose wisely, Grasshopper...the smoke is lively and seeks freedom).



Paul has taken the steps, I think I am right in saying, to remove the kits from FISTS officially. This means that the kits are his as is the liability, and not FISTS. There's nothing sinister in this it just tidies things up a bit...so for now, email Paul not FISTS.

The kit took me about an hour to build and wire up, maybe a bit less. I also built the latest version of the Magic Eye in the same evening so not too taxing. Paul has quite a collection of kits available now...well worth emailing him and telling Santa!!

He is also working on a very simple but most useful reverse polarity protection circuit. Gotta keep that smoke in!

You can email Paul on
m0bmn@yahoo.co.uk

2m

How are you getting on with VHF? I managed a few very exciting days last month, working Manchester via what I THINK was aircraft scatter (G4DEE, not a FISTS) and the signal was at times 599. Very good!!

I began to wonder about the ears on my rig though (breaker breaker, got yer ears on?) and so did some tests. Sure enough, my Icom 706 proved to be a tad deaf against my FT817 but then I borrowed an old FT221R from a mate and it is MUCH better than my Icom 706, so that's the unit I am using now. Be warned though...the 221 has a dial – it is not digital – so I might not always be exactly where I think I am!! I'm sure we all forget to tune around, being so certain we're bang on freq...well using these old radios is a stark reminder of where we come from. Enjoyable, but different!! I would love a 221RD (ideally with a Mutek front end)...but wouldn't we all? If you have one gathering dust you know my email

This photo shows my set up on 2m and my trusty TenTec



Keys

In that photo above you will see an old Marconi 971 key which I recently acquired from a good friend. It's not in the best of nick but it works. It's a most peculiar thing both to look at and to use – quite harsh and unforgiving – but for the sake of using something interesting, very good. As I was tidying my bench this morning and re-arranging a few things I had the thought go through my head that “I need another paddle”. I never thought I'd say that but there we are. I have a Begali and a Bencher so I need something different. Maybe it is time to make one. I already have a key sized slab of marble in fact, so the omens look good.



The fun of activity

Just a few final thoughts....I used to have some really good ragchews with a German station, Wang, DK4AN wherein we'd discuss all sorts of stuff including my dog, Yagi. Well, I lost touch with Wang a while back now but the other day, just creeping out of the ether, there he was. Joy of joys. I liked that.

Another station I haven't worked in years was M0MMX, Dennis, F12590. It was lovely to bump into him again after over 2 years. This is what it's all about isn't it?

Ladder

Well done on all who climbed the ladder this year. I'm not making changes for next year, so if you were an 'also ran' or a 'wannabee'...polish off that key and let's get going.

New year activity: Low Bands Day Hopper 2020

We run the risk of a quiet Spring and as we haven't run the autumn Day-Hopper, how about we have it in the first three months of 2020?

Low Bands DAY-HOPPER 2020	
DESCRIPTION	The idea is absolutely NOT a contest but a means of enabling us to meet each other on air.
BANDS	Operation only on 160, 80,40 and 2m bands. NOTE band restrictions for this one!
DATES and TIMES	Friday 17 th January , Saturday 25 th Sunday February 2nd, Monday 10th, Tuesday 18 th , Wednesday 26 th , Thursday 5th March , Friday 13 th , Saturday 21 st , Sunday 29th Three periods per day 08-0900, 13-1400, 18-1900 Zulu.
FREQUENCIES	FISTS CoA . Perhaps call "CQ FISTS".
GENERAL	Members can submit reports of numbers worked, soap-box comments etc. etc. as a "Round-up news" at the end of the session (by end Jan 2018 please) to hopper@fists.co.uk Please email David G4YVM with any questions: hopper@fists.co.uk

Finals for 2019

Well, I think that's it from me this year. I really enjoy meeting you all on the bands and I always enjoy hearing what kit you are on. As you can tell if you read this newsletter frequently I do enjoy trying new equipment, especially if the new stuff is actually old stuff! Keep the faith, enjoy the bands and the Morse Code and I look forward to QSO-aplenty in the new year.

Very best 73 and all blessings to you all,

David G4YVM F15868

Comments for Ladder November 2019

Entrant	Comments
Phil 2E0DPH	Varied conditions yet again. Many thanks to all. Good to see the Ladder being well supported. See you all again next month. 73 Phil
Nils DL3HR	on 24.11.2019 have been the worst Sessions ever during Contest - so sri Derek, M0DRK, lost ur 559 Sig in 9+20db-Contest-QRM. Hpe cuagn all in December, vy 73!
Richard G0ILN	Good fun as always but really a struggle in poor condx. Richard
Andrew G0OEY	A better month but only one session. Didn't bother the second weekend due to the band being full with the contest.
Peter G3JRH	Not a lot on 10th, too many of the wrong kind on 24th.
Peter G4LHI	G4LHI Claim for Nov Ladder, gud fun as usual, but I'm afraid the WW CW contest clashed with the final session, but we got a few QSOs in spite of that Hi. G4LHI # 2219 73 k
John G4LRG	Thanks to all for the points. Very hard work during the CQ WW contest so thanks for struggling through to give out the points!
William MI0WWB	Can I claim points for testers who came back to me?? Joke!!
Erkki OH7QR	Hello David, Please find my Ladder log for November. I missed the second Sunday, hope better in December.

Results for Ladder November 2019

Callsign	Posn	Prev	Move	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
G4LRG	1	1	-	898	76	79	100	67	81	64	81	91	84	99	76
I5EFO	2	3	↑	804	44	72	54	48	69	57	64	96	106	111	83
G0ILN	3	2	↓	795	65	59	86	60	74	71	79	85	90	83	43
G4LHI	4	4	-	690	78	78	64	72	55	49	59	54	55	60	66
M5ABN	5	5	-	556	36	61	47	54	41	46	66	53	70	82	
M0PBZ	6	6	-	463	36	22	42	43	57	49	45	36	39	43	51
G0BON	7	7	-	410	42	42	6		57	58	49	72	54	30	
2E0DPH	8	10	↑	403	42	51	24	43	30	21	42	40	24	40	46
DL3HR	9	9	-	397	27	37	52	37	31	28	33	34	41	49	28
OH7QR	10	8	↓	385	26	52	40	37	15	40	49	41	24	46	15
MW0BGL	11	11	-	308	42			42	48	37	48	46		39	6
MI0WWB	12	14	↑	303	15	14	20	25		51	36	27	42	42	31
M0GSX	13	12	↓	283	22	18	39	24	48	57	48	27			
G7WHI	14	13	↓	277		26	48	21	49	18		64	27	24	
G0JHK	15	15	-	245	33		42	42			27		31	70	
G3XVL	16	16	-	243	30	57	41	27	18	4	9	12	6	18	21
G3ZRJ	17	17	-	190	18	25		8	12		62	24	26	15	
M0DRK	18	18	-	156	7	9	18	18	18		13	22	9	24	18
G0OEY	19	19	-	120		26	10	13	7		23	10	6	7	18
SP9NLI	20	20	-	95	12	19	12	6	3		7	30	6		
M0UZE	21	21	-	88	6	19	9	24	6	3	6	3	6	6	
OH2BN	22	22	-	86		9		20	3	15	12	6		15	6
G4XUZ	23	25	↑	81						15	18			24	24
9H1PI	24	23	↓	79	29	19	17	14							
IW2JJS	25	24	↓	67		23			15	11				18	
G0XAH	26	26	-	48				21	18	9					
G0UYG	27	27	-	47	6		29				12				
G4DNP	28	28	-	44	6	9	5					5	12	7	
G3JRH	29	=32	↑	42									25		17
G4KLE	30	29	↓	34										34	
OZ8AGB	31	=30	↓	33			3	3	3	6		12	3		3
G3ZOD	32	=30	↓	30							15			15	
G0TLU	33	=32	↓	28							6		3	16	3
M0DHP	34	34	-	18										18	
SV2BBK	35	36	↑	17				4			3	3			7
SP2SWI	36	35	↓	15	6					9					
M0SHM	37	37	-	6								6			

Upcoming Events

January 2020

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Sun 12 Jan		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 26 Jan		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC

Also see Day Hopper 2020 dates on page 5.

February 2020

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Sun 09 Feb		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 23 Feb		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC

Also see Day Hopper 2020 dates on page 5.