



Greetings one and all to another Brass Pounder

I mentioned last time that I hadn't worked many FISTS recently...well that changed!! I was on air using my Corsair 2 and Orion 2 (the significant difference being power. The Corsair runs 100 watts whereas the Orion runs 400 through a linear). Anyway, again I digress, the contacts!

I worked Peter, M5ABN F6423 in Torbay, Ray, G0EML F3774 in Shrewsbury and then Peter, G4LHI F2219 in Huntingdon. I then had a sniff around and spent the rest of the evening chatting to Lindy, G0GZN in Poole who is an incredible F37! 37th in the club...wow. I think she is the lowest number I have worked...tell me if your log says I am wrong please. Lindy and I have worked many times but this evening we were just rag chewing for what seemed liked hours.

I don't know about you but Corona Virus seems to have improved folks ability or desire to rag chew and the QSO always seem to end with a genuine "stay safe" comment.

I know I have worked other FISTS Martin, M0MWS for example and Dave, G0AYD. I also worked Bryan, G0GSY in Cleethorpes who I bump into quite frequently. I had a nice chat with Tom, GM0ZLC, F18896, from Glasgow. There must have been others because Inter-G has been stupendous the last few weeks but one I still cant raise is Keith, G0HKC, F16205 who I know is out there but our signals do not meet. Come on keith!

My apologies if I worked you and haven't mentioned you – I lose my bits of paper and if I forget to log them...sorry.

Who have you had good QSO with? Do let us know.

My call for info from members last time bore fruit from Dave, G0AYD, F15892, in the Wyley Valley who is a great devotee of the 1980s rig Omega.

Dave writes...

"Here are details and a write up of my findings of my Omega.

This was produced in 1983 in Ham Radio Today as a project for a 9 band all mode 10 watt transceiver produced by G3 WPO and G4JST and then sold as a complete kit of parts.

I first heard of the radio in 1985 but couldn't afford the cost of the project.

My friend Keith, G0HKC, had the magazine delivered so he had all the articles. As the years progressed so did my wages and I was able to buy one off a friend in 2008 for just over £100, it worked on receive but had issues on transmit. I had an operation on my right hand for carpal tunnel which meant I was in bandages for 3 months during which a very good friend Jim G4 NWJ [*Sadly SK since 2018. Ed*] said he would repair it for me and 3 days later he rang me up to say all was well and he was most impressed with it. My wife drove

me to his qth to collect the omega and I started to use it as my main station (picture on my qrz page) I'm 100% cw and gained my century award for fists (15892) using the Omega.

Then in 2019 the omega stopped working and I was unable to repair it as I had a mini stroke with left me with issues on my right hand so I made the very reluctant decision to sell it. The radio sold and prior to corona the guy collected the radio but during his visit I informed him I had 4 other Omegas in boxes. He said that if I let him have the box he would repair my set as he was a beta tester for it in 1983. Last week, 26-04-20, I was informed all was working again but this time with a variable 100 watt pa so I am waiting for the lock down to end and get my Omega back.

Until then I'm using a Ubitx version 3 with 2 line lcd and KD8CEC firmware. luckily my thumb and fore finger on my right hand escaped so am able to use my 35 year old bencher Paddle. Here are photos of the outside and my Version 3 and 6 Ubitx.

Regards Dave G0AYD.”





Dave, thanks for the photos and the lovely article. I have seen inside these Omegas – it is a haven for collectors of diecast boxes but a nightmare for the home repairer! Well done on keeping them going Dave, a good job! I think we all want to know what's under the dust covers...

Covid lockdown and Medium Wave!

I wonder what you've been up to during lockdown in terms of building etc? I must confess I returned to an early hobby and spent many hours building small radio controlled model aeroplanes – still making them as I type and awaiting a big batch of balsa wood. But I also played with a few things from Paul, MOBMAN. One item which I love is a small MW radio receiver. A very simple device (see photo) and it works a treat. If you fancy one of these see Phoenix Kits, www.phoenixkitsonline.co.uk. The kit might be suitable for a grandchild perhaps or some such. Easy to build, lots of space for inept fingers and real voices from the ether! This is a good kit, highly recommended.



Another person who has been using the lockdown to his advantage is Dave G0AYD (same as above!). He has been rejuvenating his love affair with his umpteenth uBitx radio transceiver. Dave writes:

“I first heard of the Bitx way back when it was a single band transceiver. Our radio club (Andover0) took orders for 15 or so as a group build project, but I already had a project on so never took it on. I then read the following year of the uBitx 8 band transceiver which I purchased then and built and then took over to my friend, Jim G4NWJ (now SK), to show him who said he “must have one of these”. A week later Jim rang me to tell me to take my bitx over so that he could load this excellent firmware he had found. So I had the firmware loaded and true to his word it transformed my radio. The way around the menu system was changed plus a couple of quirks the radio had were ironed out. I used the version 3 then as my main radio on 40 mtrs and left the Omega on 20 mtrs on the club-designed vertical (another of Jim’s projects). So, if I worked any FISTS club members in 2019 I was on the uBitx; prior to that , 2017-18, it would have been the Omega. Both uBitx and Omega deliver over 10 watts. I then tried the next version, version 4... what a disappointment! I quickly sold it. The version 5 that came into my hands next was much better but in MY opinion the V3 was a lot better. Then in December 2019 the v6 came out and I bought one of the first 250 but it was flawed with faults : the display was slow to load up on initial switch on; when you changed bands the 17 mtr segment on the display didn’t work (I later found out this was due a missing line on the firmware); and if you paused for a milli second it reverted back to receive and then you had to wait a couple of seconds before you could continue transmitting.

However I still preferred my v3 which has sentimental value for as my now sk friend had placed the firmware on it for me.

If I work you on 40 I’m on the V3 uBitx with just over 10 watts. I dont hunt dx, just take what comes out of the speaker, I’ve managed Pitcairn Island, Indonesia, most of Europe and the odd one on the east coast of USA. Ive added Pheonix kits Variable band width filter and as you can see in the photos 2 morse tutors. *(photos in earlier article above. Ed)*

Stay well safe and healthy.

Dave G0AYD 15892..CWOP 2159.”

Another FIST beating the corona blues is Keith, G0HKC F16205, who has been playing in the recent sunshine with his rather sexy looking magloop. He assures me he was using 2.5 watts when sat this close...pew!

Good luck Keith and let us know how it performs.



G0HKC plays magloop!

A little bit of C19 humour was sent to me by Martin, M0MWS...



Dunkirk.

An update on the Dunkirk activity: the actual sailing event is cancelled due to Corona but the radio FISTS activity will continue. See [website for details](#). I have secured the callsign **GB4DLS** for Dunkirk Little Ships and will be using that on and off throughout the period 10th May to 2nd June. If you hear me on and

work me I will allow that to be 10 points! Can I make the unusual request that you don't ragchew with that callsign please? Others will probably want it.

If you're interested in knowing more about the little ships and Operation Dynamo, see the website:
<https://www.adls.org.uk/>

If you are old enough to have been involved with Dynamo (unlikely I know) or have information from your parents, and I can reprint it, do let me know. It's fascinating history.

Word Search

Keep an eye out for the [next wordsearch activity](#)...I think you'll find it of interest!

Ladder

New to the 2020 Ladder this month is Norbert ON4ANE. Welcome Norbert!

Mixed conditions again but I think generally good. I was especially interested in Chris, G3XVL's entry on his mag loop. Chris, how about some photos and a few words for next BP please? I wonder how this compares to Keith, G0HKC's loop (Op Cit).

Jo PG4I #19288...keep at it! As is so often proved, it's persistence wot does it!!

I think that's me done Brass Pounders...till next month, stay safe.

73



David G4YVM F15868

Comments for Ladder April 2020

Entrant	Comments
Phil 2E0DPH	I hope all are well and staying safe during these difficult times. Thank goodness for radio!. Good to hear lots of activity again on the bands. Thank you all for your QSO's this month. See you all again for the Ladder during May 73 Phil
Nils DL3HR	Stay healthy, hpe cuagn all in May. vy 73!
Ivan G0BON	Lots of activity this month which was nice. Thanks all for the points and stay safe.
Richard G0ILN	Good condx again. Not a lot of continental activity. I am not sure whether that is condx or lock down? Good fun as always. Stay safe. Richard G0ILN Fist 398
Andrew G0OEY	Only the one this month
Peter G0TLU	Nice to work a couple of new (to me) stations this month, and one lapsed member, Brian G0WZX in Camberley. His QRP was hard to copy with my high noise level on 80m, but we got there in the end!
Peter G3JRH	Propagation in general not very helpful. Reasonable level of activity particularly in the evening sessions. Peter
Chris G3XVL	All QSO's on 80mtr using my home brew 1.6m magnetic loop and 40W or less
Tony G3ZRJ	HF pretty well dead here but some good contacts, thanks to all who took part and set up the Ladder
Peter G4LHI	G4LHI Claim for April 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. .Mni tnx to the organizers of this great event. 73 Peter
Richard G4TPJ	FT840 -50- watts- straight key
Paul M0GSX	Hi to David and the crew at FISTS, Hope all is well with all of you and your staying safe in these very challenging times. Please find attached my log for the 2 sessions during April 2020. Condx were good for both sessions with the latter having a little higher noise level than normal but still a few contacts made. 12 April: Condx were consistent throughout the ladder session and very good sigs with little QSB. 26 April: Condx for the whole of the session were gud with a little higher noise level than normal with little QSB. Thanks for all the great work you all do behind the scenes for us and Kind Regards to all..
Mark M0UZE	Thanks
Pete M5ABN	Thanks to all who came on for the ladder & hope to see you all in May. Please all stay safe and well during this difficult time. Vy 73 Pete M5ABN
Will MI0WWB	Thanks, enjoyed the contacts.

Erkki OH7QR	Hello David, please find attached my log for April Ladder. Conditions are still poor. Have a nice day and stay safe. tns es 73 de Erkki OH7QR nr 8318
Jo PG4I	I was hoping to climb a bit higher on the ladder but this month's propagation did not help, only managed 2 contacts. During the last evening session stations from the UK did not even hear me, this was a first for me... See you next month with hopefully more QSO's! 73 de Jo PG4I #19288

Results for Ladder April 2020

Callsign	Posn	Prev	Move	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
G0ILN	1	1	-	285	27	80	86	92
G4LHI	2	2	-	254	55	54	72	73
M5ABN	3	3	-	214	36	55	66	57
M0PBZ	4	4	-	182	36	33	58	55
G4IZZ	5	5	-	171		52	63	56
G0BON	6	16	↑	136		27	29	80
M0GSX	7	=7	-	129		37	57	35
2E0DPH	=8	11	↑	126	24	16	45	41
G4TPJ	=8	6	↓	126	21	15	60	30
DL3HR	10	10	-	112	16	36	39	21
G3JRH	11	13	↑	107	12	27	37	31
OH7QR	12	12	-	106	28	25	31	22
G3XVL	13	14	↑	95	24	27	16	28
G4LRG	14	=7	↓	94	24	27	43	
MW0BGL	15	9	↓	92		40	52	
MI0WWB	16	18	↑	74	10	36		28
G3ZRJ	17	17	-	63	3	1	45	14
G4XUZ	18	15	↓	57	9	18	30	
PG4I	19	20	↑	46			40	6
G0OEY	20	19	↓	44	20	12	9	3
M0DRK	21	=23	↑	39		6	15	18
G0DFC	22	21	↓	33		21	12	
G0TLU	23	=27	↑	27			12	15
GM0EPO	=24	26	↑	24			15	9
IW2JJS	=24	22	↓	24	7	4	13	
OH2BN	=24	25	↑	24	9	9		6
G0JHK	27	=23	↓	21			21	
G4TGJ	=28	=27	↓	12			12	
ON4ANE	=28	-	↑	12				12
G0DDX	=30	=29	↓	9			9	
M0UZE	=30	35	↑	9	3			6
SV2BBK	=30	=29	↓	9	2	3	4	
M0DHP	=33	=31	↓	6		6		
OZ8AGB	=33	=31	↓	6			6	
G4DNP	=35	=33	↓	4		4		
G7WHI	=35	=33	↓	4	4			

Upcoming Events

May 2020

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Sun 10 May		RSGB 4m CW Contest	0900-1200 UTC
Sun 10 May		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Mon 18 May	Fri 05 Jun	FISTS Eu Dunkirk Memorial	0000-2359 UTC
Sun 24 May		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC

June 2020

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Sun 14 Jun		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 28 Jun		RSGB 6m CW Contest	0900-1200 UTC
Sun 28 Jun		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC

July 2020

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Wed 01 Jul		EuCW Snakes & Ladders summer/autumn season starts	0000 UTC
Wed 01 Jul	Tue 07 July	FISTS Eu Straight Key Week (SKW)	1-hour periods starting at 00:00, 03:00, 06:00, 09:00, 12:00, 15:00, 18:00, 21:00 UTC
Sun 12 Jul		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 26 Jul		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC