

BRASSPOUNDER

May 2021, Issue 156



Well here we are again folks so welcome to this May BP

As I type I am looking out of the window onto the Bristol channel again – I have typed many words sat here and done a few book reviews too and it's a wonderful view with some great memories...sadly though it's a dreadful place for radio. I've stayed here with Martin M0MWS and Dave G0AYD, both still good mates. Also with Jim, G4NWJ although Jim is sadly now SK. I've rarely had MUCH success from this QTH and this time round was no exception: the house has terrific QRM and the location seems to be in a radio shadow. I brought a few [Bantenna](#) aerials with me to try out this time and hopefully get some photos but as it happened the weather has been both cold and wet so my chances to get out were severely curtailed. Furthermore band condx haven't been great though I did manage a DL and an OZ before my fingers fell off. I was using the Bantenna Sleeve and 10w from a KX2.

I also brought up a homebrew miracle whip type antenna which loads well 40m to 10m and RBN seems to like it but sadly no QSO. Hardly surprising because these teeny weeny whips are indeed miracles - it's a miracle if you get a qso! I know they do work and one can get a QSO - I have - but it's chance not physics. I did manage to work out the value of the coils required and wound these onto a plastic pipe using copper wire as large as I could reasonably wind by hand. I made simple taps and established that I could use one coil for 20m and above and then add the second coil to get onto 40m. I added a few counterpoises as per the Elecraft version and it worked as well as they suggest. I looked up the Elecraft version on Eham and the responses there are interesting. A few impartial reports giving very low scores and some users giving it 5 stars. Reading the 5 stars is revealing too...one or two give 5 stars for construction (daft in my view!) and some for RBN reports. I also use [RBN](#) for Bantenna so am fully aware of its limitations. Very few eham users actually quoted QSO results and I suspect these were the usual brace of Americans sat atop 12000 ft mountains! Given good condx and high ground, I am sure these miracle whips work well indeed. All in all I'm happy mine works but unless I get many more QSO it wont be offered as a Bantenna product. It is worth the fun factor though so if anyone fancies experimenting email me and I will send you details. If you really want to buy one, ditto...



This is my Mwhip type antenna. Note the untidy coils, hand wound obviously and taped into place. There are several coils here beneath the tape as I was adding and subtracting Henries, but found the answer eventually. There are in effect now two coils, one for 20m and one more for 40m.

The photo below shows detail of the whip mount. The BNC whip is fastened to a BNC chassis socket hot glued and heatshrunk to the tube. Non-production quality but works well for fun. The antenna is actually quite robust, just not very effective!



Croc clips act as coil jumpers. Hard to tell the difference between mine and Elecraft's... (Really? Ed.)

Caveat emptor

You will recall my G90 which finally went back to China eventually for repairs – well they confirm receipt and urge patience on my side. Thanks Xiegu...I'd rather have my rig though. Anyway, you recall too that I had a nice mcHF going strong with it's internal ATU. I was using the rig when I received an email from someone who I cant recall now saying that whilst I was transmitting in QSO on 3.558 he ws also getting me 599 1.5KHz above! I checked my signal on another receiver and lo and behold, every 1.5KHz up and down, my signal is bright as a button. Having made many enquiries this seems to be a unique failure mode. I have isolated and checked the PA, the drivers, the PIN diodes etc etc and still no fix. All in all, a real nuisance.

Why am I telling you this? Well, I started this year with a “fistful of dollars”, a desire for a portable radio and a belief that the tried and trusted Elecraft KX2 was just *too* expensive given the range of cheaper radios these days. I bought a G90, an X5105 and an mcHF. All told, *more* than an Elecraft KX2! I have ended up with...an empty fist, a broken G90, a broken mcHF and no 5105 but an Elecraft KX2. I could have bought a KX2 AND a new Icom 705!! As the saying goes, buy cheap, buy twice. Caveat emptor.

Members activity

Dave Dixon, G0AYD, Fists 15892, is planning a mini trip shortly and tells me this:

Hello all,

A friend and I are doing a 4 day cw stint in the ooloo from the afternoon of 29th July for 4 days. Band conditions will determine which bands we can use but suffice to say we will use fists frequencies and we will keep the speed down to give everyone a chance to work us. This is not a special event but we are doing this in remembrance of a great friend of ours GOBKU who went SK 7 years ago and as a mark of respect to him my friend Hugh MOWDX and I have done this every year so far. Huw plays the last post at 20.30 each night. There is no mains electricity or water at the site.

We will be using the site of 2 meter repeater GB3 JB situated at Willoughby Hedge at 850 asl with 360 take off, (To find us use what 3 word “mild.whisker.crows” or IO81VC.) the nearest habitation is 2 miles away. We will also use 2 meters fm/ssb/cw at various times. We will use 4 radios:

*a Yeasu ft 290r,
an Icom 706 mk2g with 50 watts
a version 6.2 mchf with 10 watts and
a 40 meter 4 watt home brew transceiver.*

We have a generator for the 4 days as there is no mains power. We will use a Bantenna 10 TO 80 meter aerial kindly donated by David G4YVM, and we will try to borrow a 2 mtr beam for horizontal mode so if there's anyone local to either myself or Huw who could loan us a beam for 2 meters and drop it off please let us know we are both correct on qrz.com. Any help would be appreciated.

Huw and I will be staying for the 4 day duration so if anyone wants to visit us please feel free - you are most welcome to come and visit us during the 4 days we are up on the site. Please bring CAKES. My mobile is 07735944744 or contact me via email. Heres hoping for good operating conditions and weather. Any further info please drop me a line to daveg0ayd@gmail.com Regards Dave G0AYD Fists 15892..Cwops..2159...Rsars 2149...Gqrp 3309.Dave G0AYD.

Dave, thanks for the heads-up on this and I really hope you have good condx and better weather than of late. I know from my own memory that Dave and Huw almost always get rained on (sometimes rained off!!) so fingers and toes crossed my old friend. If anyone has a 2m beam he could borrow let me or him know and we will sort out carriage if at all possible.

[Builderthon, anyone?](#)

This from our on Paul...

Hi All

I have a nice little project that would make a cheap build-a-thon project, if anyone is thinking of organising a Build-A-Thon is interested contact me off list and I will send you full details, if still interested then I will be happy to send you the kit to play with FOC

Regards

Paul

MOBMN m0bmn@yahoo.co.uk

Interesting activity ahead

I was approached by Will, MIOWWB, F18434, with a new activity idea. Will is the founder of the Radio Security Services Memorial radio society, GI5TK (<https://www.grz.com/db/GI5TKA>), and has come up with a novel challenge which I am very happy to support. This is NOT a FISTS activity.

The activity is like this:

RSSA Activity

Listen out for CQ CQ VI de GI5TKA GI5TKA

Exchange will be RST Name QTH and FISTS number (if applicable)

Pass back to GI5TKA who will respond in kind and continue to transmit a short code, the key of which will also be transmitted with the code.

DESCRIPTION Objective is to correctly copy the code, which will be letters in groups of five, apply the key as stated above and email your answer to w.r.bradley@btinternet.com. The activity is meant to be reminiscent of the Y Service who copied and sent 5 character groups of code.

A different code will be transmitted in each of the three sessions

Note: we are not breaching licensing laws as the code key is supplied in the transmission.

DATES and TIMES ONE hour periods commencing at the cardinal times of the clock (think radio room clock silence periods) This is 1100, 1400, 1700, 2000z on **SUNDAY JUNE 13TH**

FREQUENCIES Will BELIEVES 20M WILL BE THE BEST BAND but I suggest you also listen for other bands. I imagine Will's station will be 'spotted' too should you need help.

EXCHANGE Standard RST and name. HE will send YOU the 5 letter groups. You may ask for repeats.

SCORING No scoring as such.

Send in your decode to w.r.bradley@btinternet.com and please include your callsign and name.

LOGS

The email address for questions and entries is w.r.bradley@btinternet.com

May and June are busy months with activities:

Thursday 01 April 00:01 – Wednesday 30 June 23:59 UTC:

Word Search (FISTS CW Club Europe): Have QSOs with **anyone, member or not**, and use a letter from their callsigns to build up

'I wandered lonely as a cloud That floats on high o'er vales and hills, When all at once I saw a crowd, A host, of golden daffodils'

No minimum exchange. Bands are 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 & 2m. Two sections: QRP and Open – you can include QSOs for either or both in your log.

(If you are entering the Open section only, you can opt to have the letters chosen automatically for you.)

Sunday 23 May 14:00-16:00 UTC & 18:00-20:00 UTC:

Ladder (FISTS CW Club Europe) sessions include friendly, conversational QSOs with a minimum exchange of:

RST, name, QTH, member number (if available).

Activity is typically around 14.058 MHz, 7.028 MHz, and 3.558 MHz. One QSO can be claimed with an operator per 2 hour session.

Tuesday 01 June 00:01–23:59 UTC (and 01 of each month May–December)

Mechanical Key Days (FISTS CW Club Europe) – Call CQ and have QSOs using any mechanical key (straight keys, side-swipers, semi-automatic (bug) keys). Friendly, conversational QSOs; exchange a minimum of:

RST, name, QTH, member number (if available)

FISTS Log Converter users - DON'T FORGET to add **MKD** to your logbook's *Comment* (or similar) field. Logs are welcome but not essential - the main objective is to enjoy the QSOs.

The ladder is a good one this time: This month the following are new to the 2021 Ladder: Greg DL3GJ and Ken G4RHR.

Greg has an interesting QRZ page and uses a Schubert magloop as a main antenna. This is new to me so I looked them up. They seem decent and well priced: <http://www.schubert-gehaeuse.de/magnetantennen.html>

Ken, G4RHR has an interesting QRZ page too with a nice photo of his key collection:



His key collection contains many keys similar to my own, and presumably yours. I guess a good key is a good key to us all! I love the Czech mil keys, a lovely feel but sadly unavailable now I think. I guess they've all been sold! I confess I have no bugs in my collection now....

Welcome Greg and ken, hope you have many happy activity sessions ahead.

That's me done. See you next time.

David G4YVM

Comments for Ladder April 2021

Entrant	Comments
Phil 2E0DPH	Thanks again. Stay safe and well. 73 Phil
Grzegorz DL3GJ	The Log Converter said it is worth to submit - so why not? First time ever! I am usually not active on weekends - due to the family life requirements... But sometimes it happens... So here is my submission. 73 de Greg DL3GJ

Nils DL3HR	11.04. Afternoon session: on 40m in the middle of a Contest - no chance to get feet on the Ground. Karl, OE6LKG from Graz has heard me and made a response. Evening session: better on 80m, but I think my tiny Signal could not be heard by some of Fists called cq. 25.04. Afternoon session: 20m quiet, 40m quiet, 80m quiet, too. Called cq on 40m, a Romanian Stn answered but was unfortunately not loud enough to work. Later Phil, 2E0DPH saved the Session for me. In the Evening session just like two weeks ago the conds has been better. tnx to all, hpe cuagn in May - vy73!
Ivan G0BON	My entry for April. Second evening I suffered with a lot of background noise S7-S8 so was hard work pulling the stations through. Very enjoyable once again
Richard G0ILN	Mixed bag of conditions but good fun as usual. Richard G0ILN
Mike G0JHK	sorry I'm late...needed to download latest 406
Peter G3JRH	Operated on all 4 sessions. Condx not brilliant, particularly in the afternoon sessions. Peter G3JRH
Chris G3XVL	What would we do without the old faithful 80m ?
Tony G3ZRJ	Glad to give out some points Keep safe 73 Tony
Robin G4DNP	poor daytime condx combined with modest QRP set up resulted in only 1 QSO. Hopefully, better this month
Peter G4LHI	G4LHI Claim for April Ladder . but I'm afraid the band condx were not at their best, lots QSB & QRM but I made it in spite of that Hi .Mni tnx to the organizers of this great event. Keep Safe & HN Y73 Peter
John G4LRG	Afternoon Sessions were hard work - much better in the evening. Thanks to all for the points.
Richard G4TPJ	Always good fun - good cw practice.
Ray G4XUZ	Good fun as always. Afternoon condx pretty dire but evenings much better. 73, Ray G4XUZ, Fists 777.
John G4YTJ	Another month where I've managed all for sessions but no Fists QSOs in the afternoon events. Weak signals and QSB on 25th meant that I couldn't complete with G0OER, but with four contacts in the evening session. I think I'm getting better at this lark.... Just managed to squeeze Paul M0GSX in at the end of the evening with a very strange sounding signal- almost echo like - maybe a mix of ground wave and sky wave?
Chris G5VZ	I operated FISTS club call GX0IPX in all four Ladder sessions in April - so I hadn't expected to submit a log for G5VZ. However, at around quarter to three on the second Ladder Sunday, I made a rapid tail-end to G7WHI and used my own call - G5VZ. My fingers just sent the call sign without my brain engaging. To avoid confusion I stuck with it and worked Dave, then immediately called him back using GX0IPX! He recognised me - causing some confusion after all - and making this an amusing tale, I guess. It's been great to meet so many FISTS members on 80m while I've been operating GX0IPX.
Dave G7WHI	Very variable deep QSB on 80. Tried a few calls and 40 and 20, but nothing heard Stay safe 73 Dave G7WHI
Paul M0GSX	Hi To All, Hope all is well at FISTS, Please find attached my Ladder Log for April, Managed 3

	<p>sessions this month with better condx on the evening sessions as expected for this time of year, the 80M Band being at its best for both evening sessions with good sigs and little QSB towards the end of both sessions, even managed a 56 Minute Ladder QSO with GW0WLQ Thanks Rob.</p> <p>Nice to see the bands very busy with FISTS members and plenty of contacts with old friends on the Key ..</p> <p>Paul.. M0GSX #17642</p>
Gabor M0LPZ	Thank You!
Steve M0SHM	Quiet this month, some poor condx at the moment. Antenna down at end of March.
Mark M0UZE	Thank you all. Please keep safe
Pete M5ABN	Very enjoyable activity, many thanks to the hard working guys at Fists. Stay safe. Vy 73 Pete M5ABN
Will MI0WWB	Just for the record.
Erkki OH7QR	Hello David, please find attached my log. Keep safe. 73 de Erkki fists 8318
Norbert ON4ANE	no qso with GX0IPX yet, heard mni times. 73 DE Norbert ON4ANE
Jan PA0SIM	Sri, only a few points this month. 73 Jan PA0SIM
Adam SQ9S	Tnx for all QSOs in FISTS Ladder April 2021. Best 73 Adam SQ9S #20019

Results for Ladder April 2021

Callsign	Posn	Prev	Move	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
G0ILN	1	2	↑	374	67	88	106	113
G0BON	2	1	↓	364	70	96	106	92
G4LRG	3	3	-	344	85	73	96	90
G4LHI	4	4	-	280	79	69	59	73
M5ABN	5	5	-	272	51	68	76	77
G4TPJ	6	6	-	221	48	60	54	59
M0GSX	7	7	-	204	30	57	55	62
2E0DPH	8	=8	-	202	57	51	30	64
G3XVL	9	=8	↓	174	51	47	40	36
DL3HR	10	10	-	170	42	42	49	37
MI0WWB	11	11	-	136	33	24	58	21
G0JHK	12	14	↑	129	48	19	17	45
MW0BGL	13	13	-	123	19	24	42	38
G4XUZ	14	16	↑	106	18	21	38	29
G7WHI	15	=24	↑	100		48		52
G5VZ	16	12	↓	96	40	38	15	3
G3JRH	17	28	↑	90			39	51
G4YTJ	18	18	-	88	15	25	24	24
ON4ANE	19	19	-	86	12	19	25	30
G0DFC	=20	23	↑	85		12	38	35
OH7QR	=20	17	↓	85	24	23	21	17
M0RSU	22	15	↓	83	26	33	24	
G3ZRJ	23	26	↑	81	45			36
M0DRK	24	=24	-	75	21	12	15	27
M0SHM	25	=21	↓	69	30	12	9	18
PA0SIM	26	=21	↓	63	21		30	12
G4KLE	27	30	↑	59			35	24
PG4I	28	20	↓	52	33	19		
SQ9S	29	29	-	51	1	15	20	15
HA2ZB	30	27	↓	41		14	27	
DL3GJ	31	-	↑	32				32
IZ0ONL	32	31	↓	29			29	
G4DNP	33	32	↓	28	7	6	12	3
G4RHR	=34	-	↑	27				27
M0UZE	=34	33	↓	27	9	6	6	6
G3ZOD	36	35	↓	24	6		9	9
M0LPZ	37	37	-	18		3	6	9
SA1CCQ	38	34	↓	17	17			
PA0VLD	39	36	↓	14	14			
IW2JJS	40	38	↓	8	5		3	
G0TLU	41	=42	↑	7			4	3
G0LLX	=42	=39	↓	6			6	

G4TGJ	=42	=39	↓	6	6		
LB5DI	44	41	↓	5			5
IK1VQO	45	=42	↓	4			4
OZ8AGB	46	44	↓	3	3		
MX5IPX*				15		15	

* *Check log*

Comments for Mechanical Key Days May 2021

Entrant	Comments
Peter G3JRH	Didn't hear a lot of activity. Heard G3XVL calling CQ MKD so dug out my Kent pump handle and gave him a call, signals not very gud. Then wk'd LA5ZO in the evening again using straight key. Peter G3JRH
Peter G4LHI	G4LHI Claim for MKD 2021 but I'm afraid the band condx were not at their best, lots QSB & QRM but I made it in spite of that Hi .Mni tnx to the organizers of this great event. Keep Safe & HN Y73 Peter
Paul M0GSX	<p>Hi To All at FISTS,</p> <p>Hope everyone is safe and well at Fists, please find attached my log for the May Mechanical Key Day 2021.</p> <p>Condx were not too good on the lower bands in the morning, but improved later towards Tea time with signals getting much stronger and less deep QSB to tend with.</p> <p>I've been practicing with my Vibroplex Paddle shorted to make a Cootie Key with the Radio keyer turned off and am progressing quite well, so thought I would try Sideswiper mode instead of using the Vibroplex Bug Key.</p> <p>The bands were a little quiet compared to last year but thanks for all the QSO's and nice to hear Manual Morse a very nice change.</p> <p>Thanks again and c u all next month on Mechanical Key Day..</p> <p>Paul M0GSX #17642</p>
Mark M0UZE	Thank you all. Please keep safe

Results for Mechanical Key Days May 2021

Callsign	Position	Points
M0GSX	1	15
G4LHI	2	7
G3JRH	3	4
M0UZE	4	3

Upcoming Events

May 2021

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Sat 01 May	Mon 31 May	FISTS Eu Word Search Month 2 of 3	0000-2359 UTC
Sun 23 May		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC

June 2021

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Tue 01 Jun	Wed 30 Jun	FISTS Eu Word Search Month 3 of 3	0000-2359 UTC
Tue 01 Jun		FISTS Eu Mechanical Key Days	0001-2359 UTC
Sun 13 Jun		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 27 Jun		RSGB 6m CW Contest	0900-1200 UTC
Sun 27 Jun		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC

July 2021

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Thu 01 Jul		EuCW Snakes & Ladders summer/autumn season starts	0000 UTC
Thu 01 Jul		FISTS Eu Mechanical Key Days	0001-2359 UTC
Sun 11 Jul		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 25 Jul		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC