



Wythall Radio Club Newsletter Winter 2006

g1wac@wythallradioclub.co.uk
<http://www.wythallradioclub.co.uk>



Wythall Radio Club meets from 8pm every Tuesday evening at Wythall House, Wythall Park, Silver Street, Wythall near Birmingham. Visitors are very welcome.

Club callsigns: G1WAC, G4WAC, G7WAC, G0WRC and M5W

Wythall Radio Club is affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain



Contents

Contest Report	2	QSL Manager Report	13
Contest Calendar	3	GB0SH Strumble Head Lighthouse	14
Wythall Christmas Contest Rules	4	Chairman's Report	16
Anyone for a Foxhunt	5	HF SSB Field Day	17
Antenna Review TGM MQ-36SR	6	MU5W Alderney CQWW SSB	20
80m Club Championships	8	Club Diary	23
Hanbury Steam Fair	10	Members List	24

Editorial

I am pleased to announce that I am still your friendly Newsletter editor, and present another bumper issue for your enjoyment.

Once again the articles are dominated by Chris and Tim who seem to be our most active members at the moment. Many thanks to them and any others who have contributed to this issue. Keep the articles coming.

Getting into the festive season, in the next few weeks we have the Radio Club

Christmas Social, Christmas Contest and Christmas Foxhunts. The more members that are involved with these events, the more fun will be had by all.

As you will see from the top of this newsletter, we have had a slight logo redesign which will be used on the website, newsletter and QSL cards.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Contest Report

Welcome to the first post-AGM contest report for 2006-2007. Once again you will have the dubious pleasure of reading my reports and listen to me trying to get you to take part in more contests. Yes, by either luck, judgement, or maybe just the fact that no-one else wanted the job, I'm your Contest Group chairman for the next 12 months.

The Contest Group committee for this year comprise: Callum M0MCX, Chris G1VDP, Peter M0COP, and Mick G4VPD. Thanks for your support guys. The main task of the committee is to be the focal point for contesting in the club — be it from trying to be active in a few events, trying to answer questions anyone else has, and being responsible (sometimes!) for remembering those vital patch leads and connectors for Field Days.

Since the last Newsletter the club has participated in a number of big events — including its inaugural SSB Field Day contest, and a multi-operator expedition to Alderney for the CQ WW SSB contest. There should be more details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Between now and the next Newsletter, the popular Affiliated Societies Contests will be taking place on 144 MHz, 432 MHz, and the two 80m contests. In previous years we've seen a good team entry from local club members from home and in the club shack — let's hope we can continue with the winning formula.

Then starting in February will be the 80m Club Championships — these are short weekday contests lasting just 90 minutes. There are three each month until the summer time — one SSB, one CW, and one DATA (RTTY / PSK). The club

has finished high in the placings in the first two years that these contests have been run, due to having good support from the membership.

For those of you that prefer VHF, the Tuesday night UK Activity Contests continue right through the year. There is chance to operate on the 432 and 50 MHz evenings around the other club activities, and the 1st Tuesday of the month is especially dedicated to operating in the 144 MHz event. The new Heil headset for the Icom IC910 makes operating much more pleasant, as does the large LCD screen for the club PCs.

Finally, I should remind you about the two club events that will be held over the Christmas period. The first is the Christmas Contest, which runs from Christmas Eve until New Year's Day. It's a fun event — primarily aimed at giving us an excuse to get on the radio over the Christmas period, and also gives the club some on air. Most of the activity is on 144.225 MHz FM, but with some activity on the GB3DX repeater, and also on HF, so we can catch some of our 'out of town' members.

The second event is the annual Christmas 'fox-hunt' which gives the opportunity for a bit of fun driving in the countryside, and a little fresh air too. It's the perfect excuse to get out of the house after a few days in the house eating too much food and watching too much TV over the Christmas period.

Rules for the Christmas Contest and a guide to the Foxhunt will be elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Have a great Christmas.

Lee G0MTN

Contest Calendar

January

HF

1	Sun 0800 - 1100	SARTG New Year Contest — RTTY
6-7	Sat 1800 - Sun 2400	ARRL RTTY Roundup — RTTY
14	Sun 0900 — 1059	DARC 10m Contest
14	Sun 1400 — 1800	80m AFS — CW
20	Sat 1400 — 1800	80m AFS — SSB
20-21	Sat 1200 — Sun 1200	Hungarian DX Contest — CW/SSB
20-21	Sat 1200 — Sun 1200	UK DX RTTY Contest - RTTY
27-28	Sat 0000 — Sun 2400	CQ 160 CW - CW
27-28	Sat 1200 — Sun 1200	BARTG RTTY Sprint Contest — RTTY
27-28	Sat 1300 — Sun 1300	UBA DX Contest — SSB

February

HF

5	Mon 2000 — 2130	80m Club Championships - SSB
10-11	Sat 0000 — Sun 2400	CQ WPX RTTY — RTTY
10-11	Sat 1200 — Sun 1200	PACC — SSB/CW
10-11	Sat 2100 — Sun 0100	RSGB 1.8 MHz — CW
14	Wed 2000 — 2130	80m Club Championships - Data
22	Thu 2000 — 2130	80m Club Championships - CW
17-18	Sat 0000 — Sun 0000	ARRL Int'l DX - CW
24-25	Sat 1300 — Sun 1300	UBA DX Contest — CW
24-25	Sat 0600 — Sun 1800	REF — SSB

VHF

4	Sun 0900 — 1300	432 MHz AFS
----------	------------------------	--------------------

March

HF

3-4	Sat 0000 — Sun 2400	ARRL Int'l DX - SSB
5	Mon 2000 — 2130	80m Club Championships - Data
14	Wed 2000 — 2130	80m Club Championships — CW
17-19	Sat 0200 — Mon 0200	BARTG Spring RTTY Contest
17-18	Sat 1200 — Sun 1200	Russian DX Contest
22	Thu 2000 — 2130	80m Club Championships — SSB
24-25	Sat 0000 — Sun 2400	CQ WPX Contest — SSB

VHF

3-4	Sat 1400 — Sun 1400	144 / 432 MHz
-----	---------------------	---------------

Rules & Info:

HF: <http://www.rsgbhfcc.org>
<http://www.sk3be.se/contest>

VHF: <http://www.vhfcc.org>

Activity nights each month:

First Tuesday: 144 MHz, Second Tuesday: 432 MHz, Third Tuesday: UHF
Fourth Tuesday: 50 MHz, Fifth Tuesday: 70 MHz

Also, the 144 MHz Club Championship contest takes place concurrently with the 144 MHz UKAC on the first Tuesday of every month.

Wythall Christmas Contest Rules

1. Objective:

The objective of the contest is to promote amateur radio activity amongst members of Wythall Radio Club, and to gain some 'on-air' publicity for the club. The contest is open to members of Wythall Radio Club.

It is a social affair — no need to take it too seriously! Most of the activity takes place on 2m FM — usually from a "CQ Wythall Radio Club" call on 144.500 MHz, and most contacts end up on 145.225 MHz. Out of town members may be contacted using repeaters like the great GB3DX. It is asked that repeaters are only used when simplex contacts are not possible. Please try to maintain activity on 145.225 where possible — it seemed quiet there at times last year.

2. Dates and times:

Starts: 2000Z 24th December 2006

Ends: 2000Z 1st January 2007

3. Bands:

Any amateur band may be used. Cross mode and cross band contacts are allowed. Packet radio and repeater QSOs are allowed. Echolink QSOs are allowed — the only rule is that a real radio must be used by each party — but they are allowed to both access Internet linked repeaters like GB3DX.

4. Exchange:

Signal report + QSO number.

5. Scoring / multipliers:

Contact other members of Wythall Radio Club as listed in the club members list at

the end of the Newsletter. You can use any mode and any band. You score 1 point per QSO for each club member worked each day.

In previous years some entrants were disadvantaged by not being able to be on air for a few days due to family or work commitments. Then they just could not catch up with the leaders! So only the best 5 daily QSO totals will count for the final score.

Each Wythall Club Member worked over the contest counts as a multiplier.

The total score for the contest is the total of the best 5 days' QSOs, multiplied by the number of different club members worked over the whole contest. For example, if Les M0COK works 35 stations in his best 5 days + 10 different club members during the contest, his score is 350. If Chris G6KMQ claims only 30 stations, but 15 different club members, his score is 450. The multiplier total is the number of different club members worked over the entire contest — not just those worked in the best 5 days.

6. Logs

Logs in any format to me, Lee G0MTN, as soon as possible (31 Jan 2007 at latest), if you cannot calculate your score please send me your log and I will score for you. Full logs are better as the adjudication software will calculate the best 5 days and can cross check multiple logs.

7. Awards

The winner will receive the Wythall Radio Club Christmas Contest Cup (retained for one year). The winner, the second and third placed entrant will receive certificates of merit.

Special awards e.g. Leading Foundation entrant, leading SWL, may also

be awarded.

The results will be published in the Wythall Radio Club Newsletter following adjudication.

Disputes will be settled by the contest committee, whose decision is final. So there.

Lee, GOMTN

Anyone for a Foxhunt ?

More accurately known as Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF), but colloquially we call it foxhunting, our mid-winter event has been a traditional part of the Wythall Radio Club calendar for many years.

Essentially, it's a game of hide and seek played out on 2 metres. Several teams will gather in cars, fitted with a 2m FM radio, and then one is sent to hide somewhere inside a pre-determined area marked on a map. For two minutes every ten minutes, the hidden 'fox' will transmit from it's hiding spot. The other teams have to locate the fox by using small directional yagi antennas to judge the direction of the transmission, or even better by getting two bearings from different spots and using triangulation to track down their prey.

It's a lot of fun trying to work out likely hiding spots. Sometimes reflections or a poor reading can send you off track. Very well hidden foxes usually give out verbal clues to their whereabouts — which is not strictly how 2m ARDF was intended to be played — but at least it

gives more teams a chance of being the fox.

The playing area has been in the past centred on Wythall, or perhaps a little further south at Henley-in-Arden. The majority of the playing area is in the countryside, as taking bearings, or even stopping safely, would not be so easy or pleasant in built up areas. Please keep an eye on the Internet emailing list, or committee meeting minutes for a confirmation of the meeting place and time for this year's event, which will be held on December 27th. Don't worry if you don't have a yagi, or even a car. The most successful teams normally have a driver and a navigator / radio operator. Wives and partners have been known to come along and join in the fun too.

The Wythall foxhunt is also extra special in that it traditionally culminates in a (late) lunch and a drink or two at a pub, giving everyone the chance to exchange stories about how they almost got arrested, accidentally drove off the map, or managed to find the fox after only 30 seconds of transmission.

Good hunting !

Lee GOMTN

Antenna Review TGM MQ 36SR Mini Quargi

Reviewed by M3SDE Tim Beaumont

As many Wythall Radio Club Members will agree, living in the city causes many problems to the Radio Amateur, one of those problems being lack of space for one antenna, let alone the antenna array.

So the TGM MQ 36SR is to my mind the perfect antenna for the radio amateur who only has limited space in the garden or doesn't want to upset the Mrs or the neighbours.

MQ 36SR is a six band Hybrid Quad Antenna covering 6m, 10m, 12m, 15m, 17m, and 20m. It has a boom length of just 10' 3" and Element Length of 11' 9" with a turning radius of just 8' 3"

The sole importer of TGM Antennas to the UK is Waters and Stanton who give a RRP for the 36SR of £579.95. I recommend either that you haggle with the price or ask another retailer for a quote. Although they still have to get their supply from W&S they may give you a better price. I ordered mine from The Shortwave Shop, delivered for £540.

It took me six months to get my antenna because the sole importer had none in stock and insisted that no deposit was required. But months later they told me that if I didn't pay for one in advance they would not order one. So this is why I ordered through The Shortwave Shop.

At this time I did email TGM Antennas and explained the supply problem in the UK and to be fair they responded quickly to myself and to W&S to resolve this matter.

So after 6 months my MQ 36SR arrived at my door. TGM Antennas are hand made from their workshop in Ontario, Canada. Each part of the antenna is carefully wrapped first in newspaper — even the

elements! Each section of the antenna is individually hand marked in marker pen before being boxed up for shipping. Although it has been said to me that the instructions are poor I had little difficulty in constructing the antenna. However I did find that the drawings of the parts list do not look anything like the actual parts and in fact are the same drawings used for the original HQ 1 antenna designed in 1982, so this does need attention TGM! There were 2 hose clips missing from the box. No drama! A radio Ham always has spares!

The coils are very well constructed and also carefully packaged. It did take 2 hours to ensure that the spokes were correctly attached to the coils and tight enough not to vibrate out in the wind.

This antenna does not require a heavy duty rotator. I use a Create 5.1 Rotator. The antenna is now constructed and connected to my mast. Time to winch up the mast and see how this antenna performs in the real world! My first thought is, how can an antenna this small really compete in pile ups or in a contest in a crowded weekend on 20m?

I have now used the antenna for 4 weeks, and I am extremely impressed with it. Its performance really is very good, although it can never compete with the monoband yagi or quad. Remember any mini beam is a compromise, so if you are expecting monoband yagi results this antenna is not for you. But then again, if you had the space for a large yagi, you wouldn't be looking at a mini beam anyway!

So lets go through the antenna band by band.

20m

Each antenna can be adjusted so that the

