



Wythall Radio Club Newsletter Spring 2007

glwac@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	WAB Award Scheme	6
Contest Calendar	2	WARC DXCC Challenge 2006	8
Yuletide Foxhunt	4	Christmas Contest 2006	10
Reg Brown G7OJO Silent Key	5	Croatian CW Contest	11
Club Diary	5		

Editorial

A slightly thinner issue this time round as the club is in its quieter period. Many thanks to all who have contributed.

Our usual winter events, including the Christmas Contest and Foxhunt, went well again with a few new callsigns and faces. It is good to see that we are continuing our success in getting students through the foundation licence. Many of the new licencees are taking an active rôle in club activities, giving some of our older members

a chance to take it easy.

We have just held our annual rally, which this year had good weather, but parking was hampered by us being unable to use the usual field. More details in the next issue.

Looking forward, we will be running special event stations at a steam fair at Easter and at the Tolkien Weekend in May.

Contest Report

Later in the newsletter you'll find all the results from the Christmas Contest. Thanks to those who took part, and also to those who sent in logs. For those who didn't submit anything this time, I hope you will in future as it does help with the checking and statistics. From Cabrillo log to beermat, all log formats are welcome!

The HF bands have been in the doldrums of late, with no sunspots at all to liven things up. The long winter nights have been better for low band operation, although this is not everyone's cup of tea. For contests, this has usually meant very little in the way of 21 and 28 MHz activity in the daytime, meaning everyone is compressed onto 14 MHz.

Several club members enjoyed the 80m AFS SSB contest in January, and are now looking forward to taking part in the 80m Club Championships which resumed in February. I received 9 logs for AFS SSB in the end, which is 3 team's worth. I must get round to adjudicating that one soon too. It was pleasing to see that there were 9 contests alone in January 2007 which

were entered by two or more Wythall club members. This is great to see—keep up the activity and send me your scores.

We had a few more converts to RTTY last year—let's hope the enthusiasm will rub off onto some more people. Similarly, from the grapevine (a.k.a. the email reflector) there could be more CW operators from Wythall this year—some computer assisted and some letting their brain take the strain. Good Luck to everyone.

On the VHF side, the main areas of interest so far for 2007 have been the 144 MHz UKAC, and the 432 MHz AFS contests. Pete M0COP has been out portable, even in the Shropshire snowy winter conditions, to take part in some events. I think most of us will wait for more sun before heading out to the hills—but well done Pete for the effort. Some good tropo openings assisted recent 144 and 432 MHz contests—allowing some good distances to be worked even with low power and vertical antennas.

73, Lee G0MTN

Contest Calendar (times in UTC)

Rules & Info:

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

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

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

April

HF:

2 Mon 1900-2030

7-8 Sat 1500-Sun 1500

7-8 Sat 1600-Sun 1600

11 Wed 1900-2030

28-29 Sat 1200-Sun 1200

19 Wed 1900-2030

VHF:

3 Tue 1900-2230

8 Sun 0900-Sun 1200

22 Sun 0900-Sun 1200

80m Club Championship—CW

SP DX Contest (SSB/CW)

EA RTTY Contest

80m Club Championship—SSB

SP DX RTTY Contest

80m Club Championship—Data

144 MHz UKAC / Club Championship

1st 70 MHz

1st 50 MHz

May

HF:

5-6 Sat 2000-Sun 2000

7 Mon 1900-2030

12-13 Sat 1200-Sun 1200

12-13 Sat 1200-Sun 1200

16 Wed 1900-2030

24 Thu 1900-2030

26-27 Sat 0000-Sun 2400

ARI DX Contest (SSB/CW/RTTY)

80m Club Championship—SSB

Volta DX RTTY Contest

CQM (SSB / CW)

80m Club Championship—Data

80m Club Championship—CW

CQ WPX CW

VHF:

1 Tue 1900-2230

5 Sat 1400-Sat 2200

19-20 Sat 1400-Sun 1400

20 Sun 1100-Sun 1500

144 MHz UKAC / Club Championship

432 MHz Trophy

144 MHz Contest

144 Backpackers #1

June

HF:

2-3 Sat 1500-Sun 1500

4 Mon 1900-2030

9-10 Sat 0000-Sun 2400

13 Wed 1900-2030

21 Thu 1900-2030

23-24 Sat 1200-Sun 1200

NFD (CW)

80m Club Championship—Data

ANARTS WW RTTY

80m Club Championship—CW

80m Club Championship—SSB

King of Spain Contest (SSB)

VHF:

5 Tue 1900-2230

10 Sun 0900-Sun 1300

16-17 Sat 1400-Sun 1400

17 Sun 1100-Sun 1500

144 MHz UKAC / Club Championship

144 Backpackers #2

50 MHz Trophy

50 Backpackers #1

Wythall Yuletide Foxhunt

On December 27th a small band of intrepid amateurs armed themselves with various radios and antennas, wrapped up warm against the cold and met up at the Barley Mow in Studley for the annual Christmas Foxhunt.

This year we had 4 cars:

Alan and Chris M3IKN

Vaughan M0VRR, Sherryn M3SVR
and Colin M3OFW

Chris G0EYO and David G0ICJ

Chris G6KMQ and Reg G7OJO

The first fox was Chris and myself, so I found a lane that Vaughan would have been proud of, complete with impassable ford. Vaughan indeed would have found us from the clues if he hadn't decided that there was no way I was going to take my brand new BMW down such a road. We were found after three transmissions by Chris and David.

Chris and David went and hid and in due course were found by Chris and Reg.

Chris and Reg then had the bright idea



to hide in the complete open on the side of a main road. Needless to say it didn't take many transmissions before they were found by Chris and myself.

Chris and David seemed to be having major radio troubles again—well at least that was their excuse—and we didn't see much of them until lunch.

As Vaughan had not yet been the fox, he Sherryn and Colin hid and were found by Chris and myself after a couple of transmissions in a

back street in Studley.

Deciding that we had just enough time for one more fox before lunch, Chris and I hid next to a church not far from the Barley Mow in Studley. It did not take long until we were found by Vaughan and Sherryn.

The last fox well and truly found, we headed to the Barley Mow for a well-deserved lunch.

Once again a very enjoyable event helped by a reasonable attendance.

Alan



Reg Brown G7OJO Silent Key

It is with deep shock and sadness that we announce the sudden passing of Reg G7OJO who died peacefully in his sleep in the early hours of Monday 22nd January 2007 at the age of 66. All members of Wythall Radio Club offer their condolences to his wife Pauline and family. Reg participated enthusiastically in all club activities, his special responsibility being the catering at all the clubs outdoor functions, with a constant supply of tea, coffee and bacon butties.



In 2006, celebrating the club's 25th anniversary, Reg and Pauline surprised the club with a special anniversary cake.

He was one of the club's "characters", who would always do what he could to help anyone. He was active in raising funds for several charities including RNLI, Air

Ambulance and Guide Dogs. He supported the club's foundation class, acting as Chief Invigilator during the foundation examinations, and always providing help and encouragement to the "would-be" amateurs.



Reg was a keen participant in the club's Christmas and Foxhunt contests, but it was in the Christmas contest that Reg really demonstrated his competitive side, always in the top three and winner on a number of occasions. Reg touched the lives of so many and is greatly missed by all members. The Club has named the Christmas Contest 'The Reg Brown Cup' in his memory.

Reg Brown 1941–2007

Club Diary

Sunday March 11th	Wythall Radio Rally, Woodrush Sports Centre
Fri–Sun April 7–9th	Evesham Vintage Easter Gathering Special Event Station
Sat–Sun May 19th–20th	Tolkien Weekend, Sarehole Mill
Sunday June 3rd	Summer Fox Hunt
Sat–Sun July 7th–8th	VHF NFD

WAB Award Scheme

A brief introduction by Chris Colclough G1VDP

The Worked All Britain award scheme was devised back in 1969 by John Morris G3ABG. This was to promote interest in Amateur Radio in Britain, and to sponsor a number of awards based on the geographical area of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Since its inception the WAB award scheme has grown through the voluntary efforts of many individuals into one of the best award schemes in the world today. WAB aims to create more activity by British Amateurs, and to create friendships within the UK and also with Amateurs from overseas. Over the years many close friendships have been formed with regular on-air skeds taking place daily.

W.A.B. aims to improve and expand geographical knowledge of Great Britain, Northern Ireland and the Channel Isles. Indeed, the W.A.B. programme has encouraged many people to travel to the more remote parts of the country. At the same time it has encouraged overseas interest and encouraged many people to visit Britain and have hospitality extended to them by British amateurs.

Another aim is to encourage all radio amateurs and shortwave listeners to improve their operating techniques. Mobile and expedition activity is given encouragement. The expeditions will usually be to some of the remotest parts of Britain, or to the coastline, where normally no one would ever go. The perfect example of this is an area of Britain near to Robin Hoods Bay and Filey in North Yorkshire. The piece of land that is in the area is covered by water at high tide, but at low tide is accessible, albeit down a cliff and with the aid of ladders and ropes. An area for only the bravest to activate.

Definition of a WAB area.

The WAB areas are based on the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain National Grid References (NGR), for Northern Ireland the Ordnance Survey of Ireland “Irish Grid” and for the Channel Islands the “Universal Transverse Mercator Grid” (UTM). These three form the basis for the main WAB awards.

The NGR, Irish, and UTM divide the country into grids 100KM X 100KM, which the WAB call large squares. The NGR and UTM give each of these squares a 2 letter reference i.e. SP, HY, SN, SW etc. Whilst the Irish Grid use only a single letter i.e. C,D,G,H and J, This is shown on the Map.

The large Squares are then broken down to a 10KM X 10KM grid. These are then given a 2 digit reference (including the Irish Grid). The 2 digits are give names of “Easting” and “Northing”. The “Easting” is read from the top or bottom of the map, and the Northing from the sides.

These 10KM x 10KM “Small Squares” reference is made from the 2 letters and 2 numbers i.e. SP39, HY66, SN84, SW70, etc. Although the NGR, Irish and UTM are devised in the same way they do not exactly coincide, and therefore the Irish and UTM cannot be converted into an NGR.

At this point I must stress that not all maps have these numbers and letters in the correct order, but if you look at the Collins range of atlases they generally have them. So where I live in Nuneaton I am in the large square SP, the smaller grid is 39—but this is not the full WAB area.

To get the full area we need to know the county or unitary area for whoever collects the council tax. Using my own WAB area

my council tax is paid to the Warwickshire County Council, so my full WAB area is SP39 Warwickshire, or abbreviated (which most councils/unitary areas are) will be SP39WKS. All the information is in the books (or CD) for WAB.

What is the point of all this? For working these areas there are various awards available. Some are country specific i.e. Welsh Areas, English Areas, etc. There is then the Large squares award, Islands award, Book Numbers award, and Regions award. These are but a few that can be claimed. A full list with how to claim and a full set of rules are available on www.worked-all-britain.co.uk. No QSL cards are required for these awards.

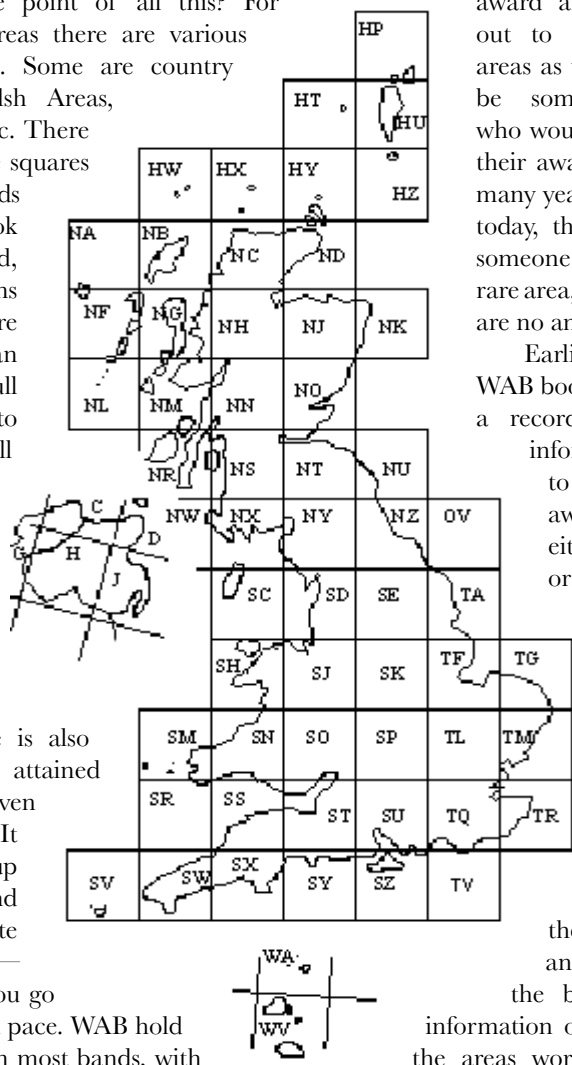
The scheme is also one that can be attained on HF, VHF, or even only on UHF. It can be picked up and put down and then at a later date have another go—in other words you go for it at your own pace. WAB hold nets most days on most bands, with a couple of popular spot frequencies being 3760 LSB, 7060 LSB, and 144.345 USB, but be aware these are only spot frequencies—search up or down to find

them if there is QRM or the frequency is occupied.

The other side to the award is activating areas. Whether you are on holiday, out for the day in the Cotswolds, or even if you want to attain the Activators award and specifically set out to activate as many areas as you can, there will be someone somewhere who would like the area for their award chasing. It was many years ago, and indeed today, that most weekends someone will be activating a rare area, or one where there are no amateurs living.

Earlier I mentioned the WAB book. This is basically a record book with the information required to start you off on the award. It is available either in book form, or on a CD. Each book is issued a number and you can hold as many books as you want. I currently have 2 books, one on CD and a full paper copy with the numbers 16213 and 17001. Within the book there is the information on the awards and the areas worked. This is then used to claim the awards as and when they are applied for.

If anyone is thinking of taking up the WAB award I will fully support you, and



help along the way with any information required. There is no annual fee for joining WAB, just the cost of the book which currently stands at £7.50. All information

on the scheme, and how to obtain a copy of the book, is on www.worked-all-britain.co.uk, and we attend rallies around the country throughout the year.

Wythall Radio Club Subscriptions

Radio Club subscriptions were due at the AGM last October 2006 but there are still a few outstanding. If you are one of the few unpaid members please contact me at the club, to settle up.

There are also a few Wythall Community Association renewals still outstanding so if you have had a letter from me please arrange to renew by the middle of March

to avoid paying the increased Subscription rate. The above contact details apply.

I look forward to hearing from those of you to whom this note relates.

David G0IC7—Hon Treasurer

WARC DXCC Challenge 2006 Results and Summary

Hello all, and many thanks to the club members who entered the DXCC Challenge. It was a slow start but I think most of you enjoyed it. I know it was fun for me to compare what I did in 2005, and I certainly worked a lot more in 2006. 2007 has got off to a slow start for me due to work and family commitments. But I fully intend to beat my score from last year.

With the introduction of the VHF and New Licensee categories I think this year could be fun and we may have some new names in there. On the VHF front there is no reason why you can't enter the VHF section and also any other sections. Would it be worth having just a HF section and losing the restricted section? Or do I leave it as it is for this year with the review of what is entered this year? Remember this is a club challenge so all input is from you guys.

The results of the WARC DXCC Challenge 2006 can be seen on the attached table. Well done to Tim (M3SDE) for

coming first in the open section—lucky for him he can get on the air when most of us are at work and the bands are not as crowded. Chris (G0EYO) was leading the restricted section right up to the end but decided to change category to the open section, and allowed Colin (M3OFW) to sneak in at the last minute. So well done to both the foundation licence holders. Will this be the same next year? Or is there going to be a serious entry from one of you other guys? I know Colin is going to have a go in the foundation class this year, so will he be challenged in that section and lose his crown? Trophies will be presented at the Committee meeting following the rally.

If any of you need a copy of the rules and logging spreadsheet, e-mail me at chrislvd@btinternet.com and I will send them on to you. Have fun and good DX.

Chris Colclough G1VDP

Callsign	Operator	160M W	80M W	60M W	40M W	30M W	20M W	17M W	15M W	12M W	10M W	6M W	4M W	2M W	70CM W	Total Points
M3SDE	Tim	0	17	0	49	0	212	128	126	74	18	112	0	34	4	774
G0MTN	Lee	50	78	0	93	4	128	1	115	1	72	4	0	6	0	552
G4VPD	Mike	0	11	0	11	0	22	4	28	1	25	118	22	34	0	276
M0COP	Pete	12	45	3	47	0	60	0	27	0	6	40	0	24	4	268
M0MXX	Callum	0	54	0	32	0	18	0	1	0	0	2	0	4	2	113
G0EYO	Chris	0	3	0	3	2	30	2	38	0	16	0	0	2	0	96
G1VDP	Chris	2	37	0	70	4	147	50	63	8	65	76	0	28	0	550
M3OFW	Colin	0	1	0	9	0	8	0	6	0	1	0	0	2	2	29
M3SSP	Sylvia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
		64	246	3	314	10	625	185	404	84	203	352	22	136	12	2660

Christmas Contest 2006/2007

Last year's Christmas Contest was another fun affair, bringing together members on air over the holiday period. For some, the contest is a greater motivator to get on the air. Most of the activity took place on 145.225 MHz FM, which has been commonly used by club members for local chat for many years. There were some forays to HF, mostly on 80m SSB and CW, both to try something different for the locals, and also to catch some of our out of town members for those all important multipliers.

Many congratulations to Chris G6KMQ for a deserved first place, with the highest QSO total, and tying with Reg G7OJO for the highest multiplier count. In second place is Jim M3JPP, who seemed ever present on the bands, and with a great antenna setup making the most of his 10 watts with a great signal. Just nine points behind in third place is Reg G7OJO. We'll all miss Reg in the 2m nets during the next contest.

It was suggested that as Reg liked the Christmas Contest format so much, and was a previous winner, that we should name the winner's cup "The Reg Brown Cup" in his memory. Chris KMQ has acquired a shiny new cup, which I was able to present to Chris at the February committee meeting.



Here are the overall results:

		QSO	Mult	Score
1	G6KMQ	52	20	1040
2	M3JPP	51	19	969
3	G7OJO	48	20	960
4	G0EYO	47	19	893
5	M3OFW	42	18	756
6	G0MTN	37	17	629
7	M0AEJ	41	15	615
8	G0ICJ	34	18	612
9				
10	M0VRR	28	13	364
11	M0COP	20	12	240
12	M0MCX	17	11	187
13	M3SVR	10	8	80
14	M3SSP	7	7	49

Despite receiving only 14 logs, it appears that there were at least 28 club members active during the contest period. Presumably Darren's log has a QSO with Carol too—which would mean 3 YLs were active. This is the list from the entered logs:

G0EYO, G0ICJ, G0MTN, G0NES, G1VDP, G4NRR, G4VPD, G6KMQ, G7DCM, G7OJO, G8MYK, M0AEJ, M0COK, M0COP, M0CZE, M0DGQ, M0MCX, M0VRR, M3IKN, M3JPP, M3OFW, M3POV, M3PSF, M3SDE, M3SSP, M3SVR, MW5HOC.

So it was a very open competition and could have been won by anyone—recalculate your own score with 5 or 10 extra multipliers and see how you jump up the table. Also remember the rules are designed that you don't need to be active for the whole week—only the best 5 days scores count. Some of the rarer

multipliers were found at the foxhunt—which is another excuse why you should go along this coming Christmas.

Several years ago Vic M0AEJ did some interesting and very funny analysis of contest logs, dividing the club up into fictitious teams (based on age, where they lived, Class A vs Class B, G1s vs G6s, Contest Committee vs Club Committee, those with a full head of hair vs those, erm, with less, or even based on what car they drove (I remember Team Volvo had a good showing!))

I can't repeat Vic's wizardry with the numbers, but it's great to see that a large proportion of the entrants to the contest being the newer 'M' licensees. Many of those are Foundation M3 licensees, and a couple brand new licensees too. I hope the rapid number swapping and a pileup of club members didn't scare anyone too

much. The club's intent to run Intermediate level courses and exams in future may swell the ranks of 2E0s who are presently quite rare at Wythall.

Our contest, of course, is just a fun one. Whilst it's great to acknowledge and reward the winners, I hope none of us take it too seriously. The usual rules say that the multiplier list is based on club members, and the reference for this is the membership list given on the back page of the newsletter. If taken literally, this could exclude some members that may have joined the club very recently, or just passed their Foundation exam. In practice anyone that we know is a member can take part and be scored in the results. I hope to incorporate this as a rule for the 2007/2008 event.

Lee G0MTN

Croatian CW Contest – or how I learned QRP is good

Many of you know that I do, occasionally, turn on my linear amplifier when taking part in a contest. However, the purchase last year of an FT817 made me wonder about QRP contesting. To start with, I had a play in the SSB Scandinavian Activity Contest, just with a Miracle Whip inside the house. Ironically my 5 watt radio was sat on top of my amplifier. It was not easy to be heard through the contest QRM on SSB. It was time for a rethink.

I decided upon a CW contest, because it would give the best chance for a weak signal. I also decided to plug the FT817 into my main antennas. This time I sat the little radio on top of my normal radio, where it looked very tiny indeed. With just a few hours part time activity, I worked over 100 QSOs all over Europe on 80m up to 15m. No great DX was worked, but I wasn't specifically chasing anything exotic.

What was most surprising, and for me the most pleasing aspect, is that I could still call CQ and get a reasonable rate of callers. In the last two hours of operation on 20m and 15m I worked 60 stations. It certainly made an enjoyable change from 100w (or greater) operation. In the 80m club championship contests, when conditions are reasonable, the QRP operators are working most of the stations the 100w guys are.

Top tips: CW helps a lot. Outside antennas do too. Whilst CQWW has the activity and big guns to pull out a QRP signal, there's something to be said for the quieter contests where there's more room for weaker signals. You'll still work people on SSB using a poor antenna on QRP, but it'll be easier if you don't.

So no matter how weak your signal, give HF a go. If I can do it, you can too!

Lee G0MTN