

CHEPSTOW AND DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



September 2011

Editor Paul Dekkers M0SSJ (e-mail secretary@gw4lwz.com)

Diary dates:

Tuesday 13th September FoDARG Talk on VHF Communications

Tuesday 20th September CDARS Informal club night & *committee meeting*

Sunday 25th September Railways On The Air (ROTA) at Dean Forest Railway

Norchard station – setting up from 10am

Tuesday 27th September FoDARG Talk on using Linux in the Shack by Adrian Lane

30th September and 1st October National Hamfest, Newark showground

Sunday 16th October Blackwood ARS Rally, Risca

Sunday 13th November D Star Workshop, Cardiff (see item in newsletter)

Sunday 1st April 2012 South Gloucestershire Rally, put the date in your diaries or i-phone thingies

Jim Hewitt was hospitalised in Spain following a heart attack whilst on holiday. Luckily he wasn't at sea at the time. He is back home now on light duties and we wish him all the best for a speedy recovery.

Railways On The Air – Sunday 25th September:

Don't forget CDARS (and friends from the Forest of Dean Amateur Radio Group) will be operating from the Dean Forest Railway Norchard station, just north of Lydney, on Sunday the 25th September. We will start setting up at 10am on Sunday morning and expect to run through to 3 - 4pm.

This year as well as our radio activities there is a "Forties Weekend" (as in 1940's) at the station when there will be a number of old military vehicles as well as people in period military and civilian dress.

Please come along for as long or as short a time as you can manage, there will be lots going on at the station that weekend.

For Sale or Wanted: Jim has suggested we have a for sale or wanted section in the newsletter. The wanted could be hardware, technical advice, help setting up a new station, troubleshooting etc. Not necessarily every month but as required. So if you have anything along these lines e-mail me at the address at the top of the newsletter.

1. **Wanted** advice on buying 6 handheld PMR radios and chargers for an enduro motorcycle racing club I am involved in, can you recommend some reliable but not too expensive kit. Paul secretary@gw4lwz.com or Tel 01594 842580
2. **Wanted** source of the rectangular batteries for an Avometer Eight Mk 6, the battery I bought off the internet only supplied 15v but the one fitted appears to have 15 and 1.5v contacts Paul secretary@gw4lwz.com or Tel 01594 842580

HF SSB Field Day:

CDARS had an excellent HF SSB Field day weekend at Caldicot Castle; lovely location, good weather (although rain overnight Saturday woke the campers), good food (courtesy of Steve), good company with lots of laughs and the contesting was a good experience as well. Many thanks to Dan who was the motivating force and did most of the organising as well as the lions share of the operating. He was ably supported by Chris who only recently passed his Foundation exam and had a baptism of fire on the HF bands. Many thanks to all the other operators and supporters, including Mike and Adrian from the FoDARG.

We had entered the restricted section of the contest using a Trio TS 430 running 100 watts into a doublet antenna fed with twin feeder we had made at one of the club nights. The twin feeder was connected to a KW E-ZEE match ATU. The antenna was supported at the centre by an ex French military mast. The shack was located in Rod's ex BBC outside broadcast box trailer which worked really well. Power was provided by a Honda EU10i suitcase generator which seemed to run forever on a cupful of fuel. We had battery backup, but it was not required. Dan's laptop computer running SD Logger was used for logging and this was an excellent piece of software giving a running total of points and multipliers for each QSO as well as the country of origin of the callsign and highlighting any duplicate contacts.

Contesting was new for the majority of us but we soon got into the swing of things. The contact rate was not as good as Dan had hoped and there were different opinions as to whether it was better to sit on a frequency calling CQ contest or move around to call other contest operators. We operated from 13.00 to 23.00 (I think Chris would have gone on all night!) on the Saturday and 6.15 to 13.00 on the Sunday, all UTC.

The furthest contact was a VK station and overall we worked 238 stations. Dan has sent the log off to the RSGB and we need to wait to see our overall score which is based on contacts made and multipliers and how this compares with the other stations in the restricted section. Looking at last years results we don't think we'll be last so that's not bad for the CDARS contest virgins. Ideas are already in mind how we could improve things for next year.

We had a lot of fun at most people's expense over the two days, the most memorable quote:

"Will you please shut the door we are suffering QRM from the sizzling sausages!"

See the picture of Steve creating very tasty QRM later in the newsletter.

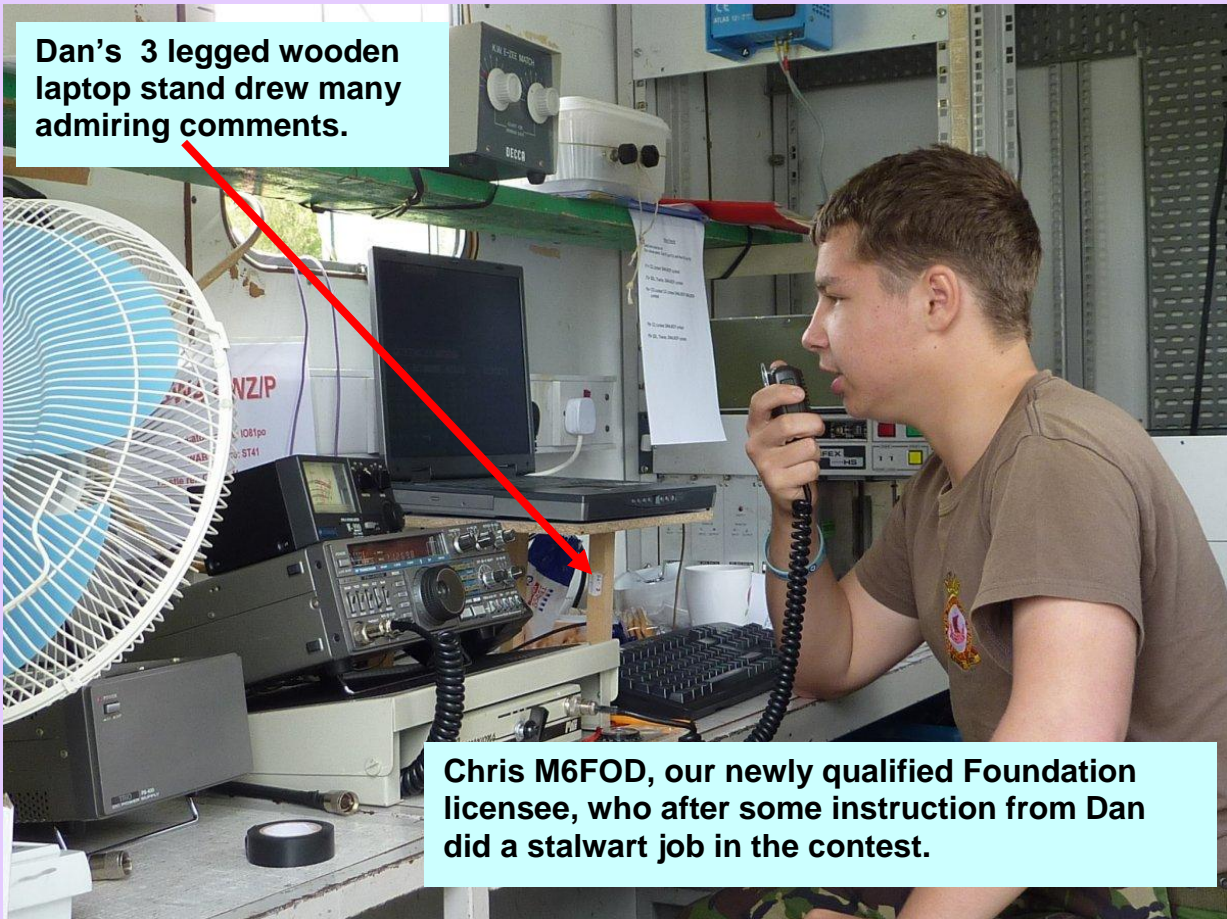


CDARS Field Day set up, Caldicot Castle in the background

HF SSB Field Day pictures...



Steve and Chris levelling the antenna mast tripod, supervised by Rod, Dan and Mike.



Dan's 3 legged wooden laptop stand drew many admiring comments.

Chris M6FOD, our newly qualified Foundation licensee, who after some instruction from Dan did a stalwart job in the contest.

More HF SSB Field Day pictures...



Our two most experienced contesters hard at work – Nick and Dan

We even found something for the acting chairman and secretary to do:



Steve does an excellent full English breakfast...



...and Paul made tea!

D-Star Digital Workshop

Newcomers Most Welcome

E-Mail: dave.2w0ruh@ntlworld.com

Date: 13 November 2011

Time: 010:00 to 17:00hrs

Want to learn more about D-Star, Radio Programming,
Operating or data use,
Demonstrations.

Simplex Gateway Advice

Repeaters and Reflector use.

Navigating your radio.

Using the software packages.

Cloned Radio Files available.

We'll even program for you.

Or Bring your kit we'll help you.

Bring a copy of your licence to operate our D-star station on the day.

Talk in on Vhf:- 145.55000

County Hall

Atlantic Wharf

Cardiff

CF10 4UW

This months quiz question (courtesy of Steve Trott) : Multimeter polarity.

When using the resistance range of a multimeter to check the forward resistance of a diode why is it that on a digital multimeter you connect the positive red lead to the diode anode whereas when using an analogue multimeter you typically have to connect the black negative lead to the diode anode?

**OFCOM have recently published the results of a survey of over 2000 stakeholders.
Some of the headlines:**

Total UK broadband take-up has now reached 74 per cent

On average, internet users spent around 50 hours online on PCs in April 2011 (equivalent to 1 hour 40 minutes a day).

Over a quarter of adults (27 per cent) and almost half of teenagers (47 per cent) now own a smartphone

An average of five text messages per day were sent for every person in the UK in 2010

Nearly 10 million TV sets were sold in 2010, almost all of which were HD ready

Viewers currently watch just over 4 hours of TV a day, up by approximately 18 minutes over ten years

The full results can be found here, with regional breakdowns:

<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/market-data/communications-market-reports/cmr11/>

Due to lack of space the report on the Optical Communications talk will be in next months newsletter.

Comedian Nick Helm won the award for the best joke at the Edinburgh Fringe (as voted by digital TV channel Dave viewers)

“I needed a password eight characters long so I picked Snow White and the Seven Dwarves”

News from space:

Follow this link <http://www.rwonline.com/article/asteroid-fly-by-will-produce-radio-echoes/24264> to find out more about the intention to bounce signals of a near earth asteroid in November.

(News feed courtesy of the RSGB)

Featured websites:

Whilst researching the answer to this months quiz question (I do my best to find out the answers before I post the questions!) I came across a couple of useful websites. Both are particularly helpful if you are just starting out, the first covers theory and the second has a useful section on recommended tools and using basic test equipment

<http://www.learnabout-electronics.org/index.php>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Meenambigai>