

Newsletter

Chesham & District Amateur Radio Society

www.g3mdg.org.uk

August 2021

We meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at the Ashley Green Village Hall, Ashley Green, HP5 3PP

Welcome

With restrictions being eased and the majority of the 'older' population having been vaccinated we're on track to getting a little more normality in our lives with the extra freedom, maybe not as we knew it, but it's a step nearer.

August is 'HF contest free' so we've dug out the Long Grass contest in an attempt to increase interest in the HF band this month, it's a bit of fun, any band, any mode, we've tried to keep it simple, why not submit a log and give it a try.

Meetings at the Ashley Green village hall are now becoming a regular part of the clubs activities with new faces appearing almost on a fortnightly basis.

Mike Richards (G4WNC) has Zoom talks on offer, please check out page 6 for what he has offer and let me know your 1st and 2nd choices, from the descriptions these promise to be an interesting evening.

Guy (M0GUY) gave a great presentation on his GB7GP Digital Repeater, he appears in the August edition of RadCom, James (M0JCQ) is in the same RadCom edition with his VHF/UHF regular column, it seems we have budding stars amongst us!

Bryan M0IHY

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Contact details

Chairman - Jeremy Browne (G3XZG) Secretary - Malcolm Appleby (G3ZNU)
Treasurer - Matt Whitchurch (M1DTG) Editor - Bryan Page (M0IHY) Angie Page (M6WTL)

All the above are members of the committee and can be contacted on cdars-committee@googlegroups.com

Chairman's Ramble

As I'm writing this, the 26th July, the weather has cooled down and I'm wondering if we have had our week of summer for this year.

It seems though that the weather is becoming more colourful. There is a lengthy Frank Zappa track called "don't eat that yellow snow", somewhat surreal in itself, and while yellow snow could be a euphemism for an illegal substance, we have in the past week had both amber heat and yellow rain warnings. Is someone in the Met Office suffering from a specialised form of synesthesia, or are we going to have to develop a new way of describing the WX to other amateurs. "The WX here today is yellow, with touches of green and a turquoise fringe to it." For the moment, in CW at least, I'll just stick to "cloudy" or "sunny" as the idea of yellow rain sounds more like the result of some chemical disaster than a consequence of climate change.

Talking of disasters though, I was cheered up by the justified criticism levelled at a broadcasting station, I think from South Korea, for the visual symbols that they had used for some countries at the Olympics opening ceremony. Apparently they had a picture of a Pizza for Italy, Riots for Haiti, and a picture of Chernobyl for the Ukraine. I did not hear what representation was put forward for the UK.

Back to matters radio. We had a successful meeting centred around the club calls 80 metre SSB contest on the 14th, and the club is holding its place well in the overall table, 18th out of 50 I think.

We are looking forward to a talk from Guy this Wednesday. Guy and James have articles in this month's RadCom and the club is also mentioned in the programme of events for region 9. A great effort by all those in raising our profile, which can only result in attracting new members.

In August we will start planning for SSB field day on the week-end of the 4th and 5th September. We will also be going through the items now stored at Ashley Green, and starting to sort out and test the coax we have, for feeders. That will be the start of a more general audit of equipment, deciding what as a club we have which is useful to us, and also what the gaps are.

Once again, many thanks to all who have supported the club over the last month, taken part in activities and just given support and encouragement.

73, Jeremy.

Editor's Muse

As I wrap up this edition I look back on this months weather, from super hot days, to high humidity (especially at night), to record rainfall and now having to close the shack window because it's cold, a complete yo-yo. Angie recalls me saying "roll on winter, let's have some snow" at some point during the 'hot' period!

Radio-wise it's been even quieter this month, with temperatures and humidity in the shack rising, the last place you wanted to be is somewhere uncomfortably hot, having said that, with the cooler weather now upon us I find myself getting back into PSK31, the shack is not a forgotten project.

The NRC at Bletchley Park has opened its doors to the public again and Angie and I resumed our volunteering duties on the 1st of August, albeit once a month.

I've played with my Raspberry Pi4B, overclocked to 2GHz with a heavy cast 2-piece aluminium heatsink, it runs all day long at no more than 50°C, that extra 500MHz makes a huge difference. I have WSJT-X, JS8Call and FLDigi running with at least one QSO per mode to prove it works, all good stuff.

Bryan M0IHY

10 Watts Jim, but not as we know it...



During the club meeting of the 14th July I was talking to one of the visitors to the club (forgive me, I can't remember his callsign) about the new E.M.F. regulations, he said to me that it didn't affect Foundation Licencees, I've heard this mentioned before, so to put the record straight...

In Ofcom's "[General Notice of Final Decision on Licence Variation](#)" PDF document, page 5, section 1.13, it states: "**We explained that the new EMF licence condition will only apply to licences that currently allow equipment to transmit at power levels in excess of 10 Watts EIRP (or 6.1 Watts ERP)**", this includes all classes of our licences, the magic word is "**EIRP**", an approximate calculation is **$ERP * 1.64 = EIRP$** , so for your **10 Watts ERP** output it equates to **16.4 Watts EIRP**, which is above the limit of 'non-compliance'.

As an example, Matt (M1DTG) with his Yaesu FT817 and Guy (M0GUY) with his IC705 on battery (5W, 13.8V=10W), if they're not using an amplifier, are not required to comply as their output equates to **8.2 Watts EIRP**, or **5 Watts ERP**.

Hopefully this has cleared up an otherwise rather confusing subject and we can put it to bed.

Beam me up Scottie...

Bryan M0IHY

No, this is not a dig at FT8, but how very true...

In the August edition of *Practical Wireless*, page 56, Mike Richards (G4WNC) has his usual column about Raspberry Pi's and Digital Modes, his article is entitled "**Start Communicating!**" and talks of our roll in emergencies and possible cyber attacks, he also talks of analysing data drawn from PSK Reporter, namely 1.3 million QSO's, of which 99.66% were FT8 and the other 0.34% split amongst open systems such as PSK31, RTTY, and others.

Whilst most would never think of a cyber attack having much affect on them, it is in reality, highly likely. Mike goes on to say we should be prepared for such an eventuality and names a few likely candidates to help us on our way, such as FLMSG, part of the FLDigi suite, PSK31 and MFSK, all readily available, he then adds "**As an individual, you can help by giving FT8 a break and using more free-form modes such as PSK31 and MFSK. One thing for sure, if we suffer an attack, FT8 won't be much use!**", how true.

In our quest to get as many QSO's/miles under our belts, have we forgotten the primary objective with Amateur radio, namely (as quoted by Mike Richards in his article), "*the hobby provides opportunities for us to self-train, make friends, share knowledge, help in disasters and more*".

Yes, undoubtedly FT8 has it's uses, but what are we doing as 'individuals'/'the club' to promote the primary objective? Should we investigate ways in which this can be achieved, contact Raynet (www.raynet-uk.org) and find out what we could do as a club for instance, could this be a 'club' project, what are your thoughts?

Just my thoughts.

Bryan M0IHY

July Committee Meeting

CDARS

Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday 15 July 2021

Present: Jeremy Browne; Malcolm Appleby; Bryan Page; Angela Page; Matt Whitchurch

1. Apologies

No apologies received.

2. Minutes of previous meeting, and matters arising

No corrections.

3. Treasurer's report

We have £4,256, with few outgoings currently. We are likely to break even over the year.

We can pre-pay at Ashley Green to take us up to the AGM, this was agreed.

It's possible we will pick up new members as some new faces have appeared at recent club meetings.

4. VHF Field Day, SSB Field Day

There had been a complaint of TVI when we operated at the field in Wigginton during VHF NFD. Jeremy has written to the Secretary of the Wickfield Trust, but is yet to receive a reply. It was agreed that Jeremy will not follow this up further unless and until the Trust replies.

We will approach the Trust Secretary again to request use of the field in September for SSB Field Day, and offer to attempt to resolve any TVI issues when we are on site. We can also point out that we will be using the same equipment as we did 2 years ago, so there are unlikely to be any problems.

An alternative site for us to operate SSB Field Day is Ashley Green; if we ran from the rear field, we will be away from most housing so the generator is not likely to cause a problem. Malcolm to raise the question with Jill at Ashley Green.

Action: Malcolm

5. Amersham & Tring Repeater Group

The repeater group had recently posted on the CDARS Facebook group to say that the GB7WL DMR repeater has been reinstated, and reminding us that the repeater group exists and is asking for donations. It was agreed that we should make a donation, and in return we can invite the group (Chris Taylor G0WTZ) to come to a club meeting and give a presentation. Malcolm to invite Chris Taylor to a club meeting (September or October).

Action: Malcolm

6. Future programme and events

August is currently sorted: SSB Field Day briefing (10th) and a workshop on computerised logging (24th).

For the 8th September meeting, we can ask Dave G8FMC to bring the beam (ex-Jim) so we can re-furbish it and decide its fate. This is also a part educational exercise.

We will see if Chris Taylor can come on 22nd September, Jeremy will ask Graham G0MK1 to see if he will give a talk as a fall-back on that date, or for the October meeting.

On other "first meeting of the month" evenings, we can sort out coax cables, terminate those that need it, measure lengths and electrical performance, and label them.

It is our turn to host the inter-club quiz with Aylesbury. This will be on 10th November. Jeremy to contact Aylesbury.

Action: Jeremy

7. Club Newsletter and net

Jeremy asked if we should continue the club net, as these were started when we went into lockdown. Attendance has been patchy in recent weeks. We generally agreed that we should continue, but we will ask members what they think via the Newsletter.

Bryan raised the topic of the Air Miles programme, and whether we can make it a bit more “interesting”. One thought is to have targets that people can aim towards, such as specific letters in callsign's worked (last letter, A - Z). We discussed whether to include contest QSOs, and agreed we would still not allow these.

With no RSGB HF contests in August, Bryan suggested we run a “Long Grass” style event; he and Angie will check on the rules we set last year.

Action: Bryan, Angie

8. Club equipment

It was agreed to scrap the old tower PC, Malcolm will take it to the tip.

Bryan suggested we catalogue all the equipment that is in the store cupboards, and decide what to keep and what we can offer for sale to members (or elsewhere). This could raise some funds for the club and free up some cupboard space.

We also need to decide what to do with the ex-military poles that Terry G0VFW has at his home. It is possible they may not be of use, in which case we can decide how to dispose of them. Jeremy will contact Terry and arrange a time to bring them to Ashley Green.

Action: Jeremy

9. A.O.B.

Matt offered to give a talk on vertical antennas when there is a slot.

10. Date of next meeting

Proposed: Thursday 7th October @ 8.00pm, via Zoom.

“Long Grass” is here again

CDARS Long Grass Contest



As the month of August is quiet HF contest-wise, we've decided to run the CDARS Long Grass Contest again.

In an attempt at keeping it as simple as possible, the contest will run along the style of the monthly Air Miles contest, all you have to do is make contact with others, it doesn't matter how many, or how few contacts you make, just a single contact could put you at the top of the Long Grass leader board. We've come up with the following categories:

- 2, 3, 4, or 5 matching letters/numbers in a callsign
- A 'G' in the callsign
- Longest QSO
- Lowest power
- Best miles per watt

Please submit your logs in ADI format where possible. Your log cannot include contest, nor Air Miles logs, but above all **HAVE FUN**.

G4WNC Zoom talks

Mike Richards (G4WNC) has four Zoom talks on offer, these could be a filler for the inbetween Wednesday night club meetings, especially as autumn and winter are approaching, subjects are:

1. *Pictorial Introduction to Data Modes*

This talk is designed for those who are either new to data modes or are considering starting data modes. Topics include: [What are data modes](#), [Why bother](#), [How they work](#), [What do you need](#) and [Connections](#).

2. *SDR Technology without Maths!*

This is a look under the bonnet of SDR transceivers where I show you why IQ signals are important and explain how they work. The talk uses illustrations to show how SDR systems operate and avoids maths where possible. I cover a variety of SDR techniques and conclude with a look into the next generation of SDR's.

3. *Raspberry Pi in the shack*

A run through the Raspberry Pi range, including the new [Pico microcontroller](#). I cover several amateur radio orientated projects, including the [RadioBerry](#) direct sampling transceiver.

4. *Introduction to Digital Mobile Radio*

Intended for those new to digital voice. This talk explains the challenges of digitising speech and shows how the popular systems work. I also provide some jargon-busting explanations to help you make sense of digital mobile radio operation.

We're trying for the 29th of September, so If you're interested in any of these talks please email the members email group with “**G4WNC Zoom Talks**” as the subject and your callsign and 1st and 2nd choices in the body, the date will be subject to whether Mike can do it, or not, I'll keep you posted.

Ashley Green awards



Guy with his award for best newcomer

Ashley Green awards



Malcolm for 'best on the key' award, get the silver polish out Malcolm!

Ashley Green awards



Angie with her award for services to the club.

August HF

Day	Date (2021)	Time UTC	Contest Name
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Contest holiday, check out Long Grass on page 6.

VHF

Day	Date (2021)	Time UTC	Contest Name
Tue	03 Aug	1900-1955	144MHz FMAC
Tue	03 Aug	2000-2230	144MHz UKAC
Wed	04 Aug	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC
Tue	10 Aug	1900-1955	432MHz FMAC
Tue	10 Aug	2000-2230	432MHz UKAC
Thu	12 Aug	2000-2230	50MHz UKAC
Tue	17 Aug	2000-2230	1.3GHz UKAC
Thu	19 Aug	2000-2230	70MHz UKAC
Tue	24 Aug	1930-2230	SHF UKAC

September HF

Day	Date (2021)	Time UTC	Contest Name
Sat-Sun	04-05 Sep	1300-1300	SSB Field Day
Mon	06 Sep	1900-2030	Autumn Series SSB
Wed	15 Sep	1900-2030	Autumn Series CW
Thu	23 Sep	1900-2030	Autumn Series DATA
Mon	27 Sep	1900-2030	RSGB FT4 Contest

VHF

Day	Date (2021)	Time UTC	Contest Name
Sat-Sun	04-05 Sep	1400-1400	144MHz Trophy Contest
Sun	05 Sep	1100-1500	5th 144MHz Backpackers
Tue	07 Sep	1900-1955	144MHz FMAC
Tue	07 Sep	2000-2230	144MHz UKAC
Wed	08 Sep	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC
Thu	09 Sep	2000-2230	50MHz UKAC
Tue	14 Sep	1900-1955	432MHz FMAC
Tue	14 Sep	2000-2230	432MHz UKAC
Thu	16 Sep	2000-2230	70MHz UKAC
Sun	19 Sep	0900-1200	70MHz AFS Contest
Tue	21 Sep	2000-2230	1.3GHz UKAC
Tue	28 Sep	1930-2230	SHF UKAC

'Air Miles', how far have we gone? / results

James is absent this month.

So, how have we done this month?

CW rules the roost this month, followed by FT8, 6m is the favoured band

(Running totals in red)

General

Most Miles

G3XZG		65,155	519,682	
G3ZNU		63,480	780,782	
M0JQCQ			2,914,100	

Most QSO's

G3XZG		56	362	
G3ZNU		34	729	
M0JQCQ			1,404	

Longest QSO

G3ZNU		KP4TG(6791)	YB1BML(7316)	
G3XZG		W7AAZ(4821)	VK4DX(10286)	
M0JQCQ			VK6LC(14540)	

Shortest QSO (miles)

G3ZNU		G8FMC(28)	G4WJS(7)	
G3XZG		G4CZB/P(46)	G4UZE(8)	
M0JQCQ			G3MEH(0)	

Average per QSO (miles)

G3ZNU		1,867	1,071	
G3XZG		1,163	1,436	
M0JQCQ			2,076	

Maidenhead Squares

G3XZG		47	309	
G3ZNU		26	433	
M0JQCQ			780	

QSO Economy Drive

High miles per Watt

G3ZNU		67.91(100)	73.16(100)	
G3XZG		48.21(100)	102.86(100)	
M0JQCQ			145.40()	

Low miles per Watt

G3ZNU		0.28(100)	0.07(100)	
G3XZG		0.46(100)	0.08(100)	
M0JQCQ			0.03(100)	

By Band

160m	30m	12m	2m
	G3XZG 3 56	G3XZG 7	G3ZNU 7 87
		M0JQCQ 31	M0JQCQ 244
80m	20m	10m	70cm
G3ZNU 12	G3XZG 12 124	G3XZG 1 11	M0JQCQ 25
	G3ZNU 35	G3ZNU 1	
	M0JQCQ 665	M0JQCQ 13	
60m	17m	6m	23cm
	G3XZG 1 11	G3XZG 38 148	
	G3ZNU 44	G3ZNU 27 543	
	M0JQCQ 208	M0JQCQ 189	
40m	15m	4m	
G3XZG 1 9	G3ZNU 7	M0JQCQ 3	
	M0JQCQ 29		

'Air Miles', how far have we gone? / results

By Mode

CW

G3XZG		56	362	
G3ZNU			25	

FT8

G3ZNU		27	619	
M0JCQ			600	

JS8

M0IHY		1	
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SSB

G3ZNU		7	83	
M0JCQ			268	

MFSK

M0JCQ			536	
G3ZNU			2	

PSK31

M0IHY		3	
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By Country

G3XZG		20	146	
G3ZNU		17	171	
M0JCQ			219	

This month's totals

Countries visited	-	28
Most visited Country	-	Germany - 13 times
Total Mileage	-	128,635
Total QSO's	-	90
Average miles per QSO		1,429.28
Total locators visited	-	71
Most visited locator		JO60 4 times

'Air Miles' theme for August

"EVERY LETTER OF THE ALPHABET" is this month's theme. QSO's with the last character of the callsign being alphabetic (thanks to Malcolm (G3ZNU) for that) will count towards a bonus, your quest will be to get the whole alphabet. Should you have QSO's where the last character is a number, these will count towards your Air Miles score, but not towards any bonus.

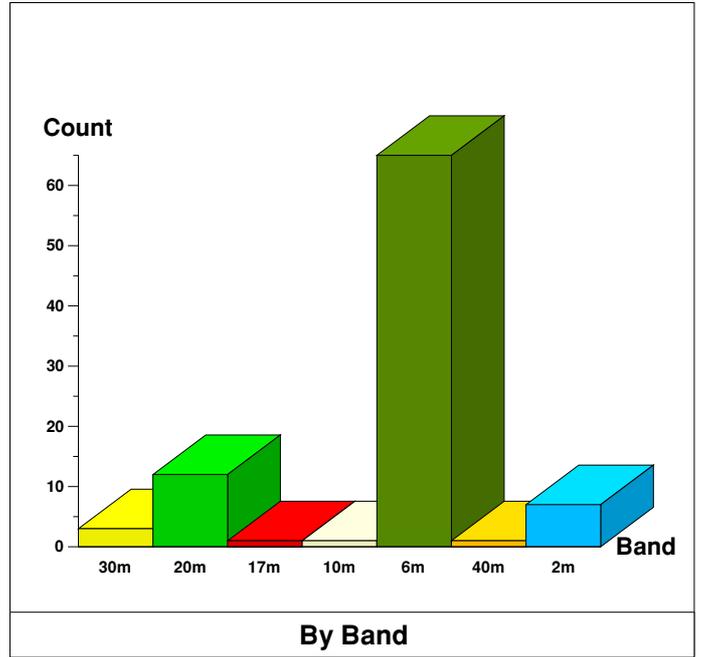
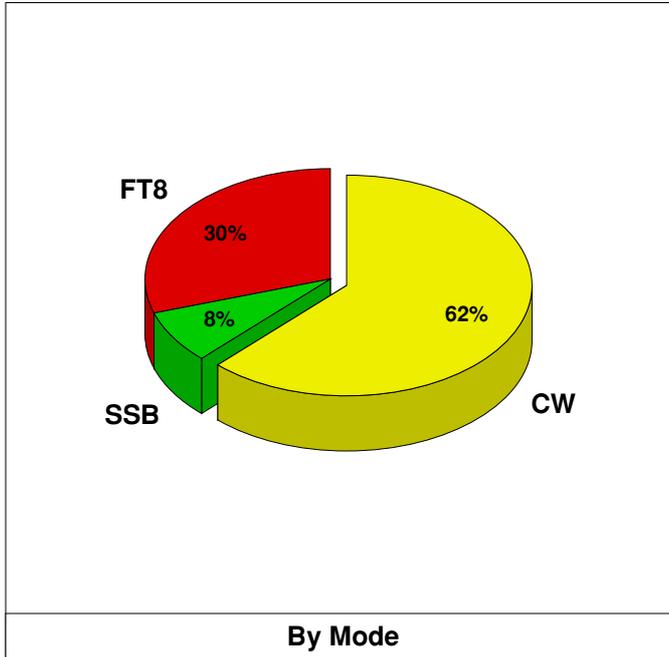
How this is to be scored is yet to be decided.

Watch out for more interesting themes for Air Miles.

Bryan M0IHY

'Air Miles', August at a glance

This month at a glance (accumulative)

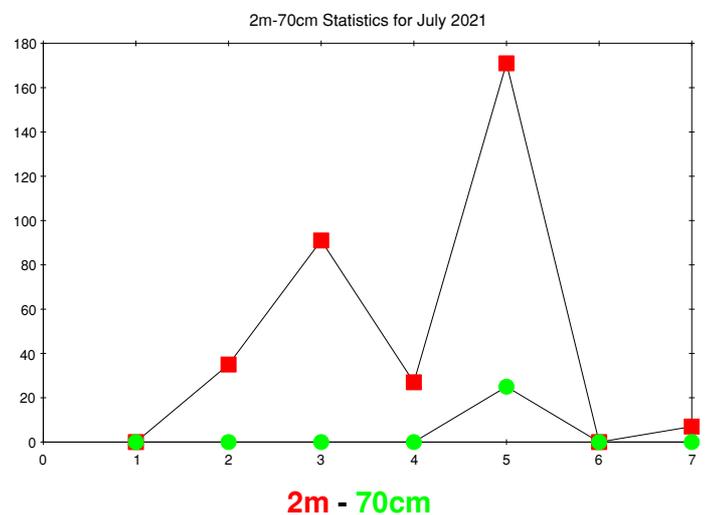
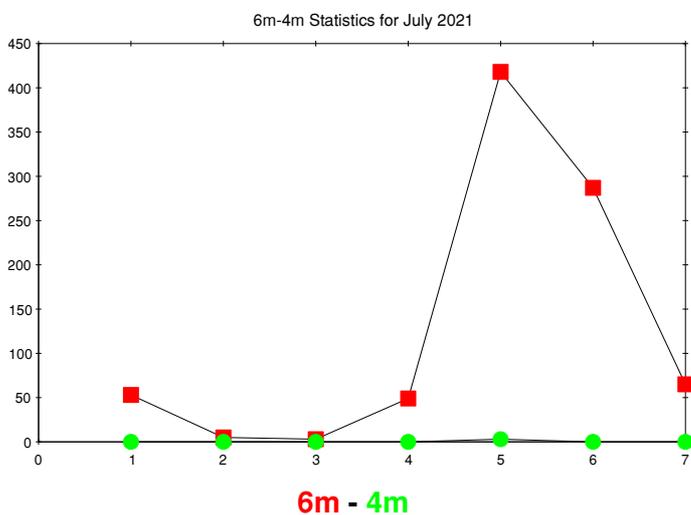
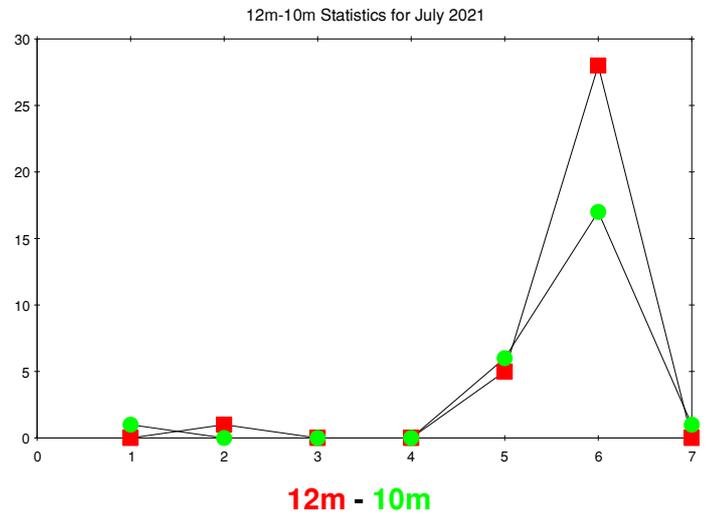
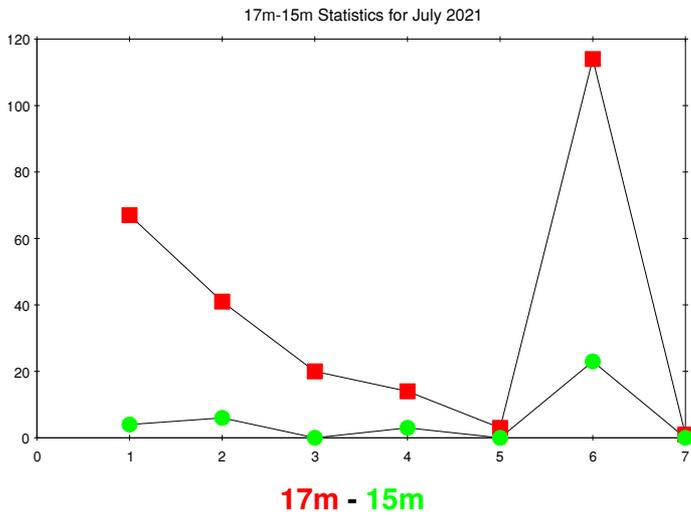
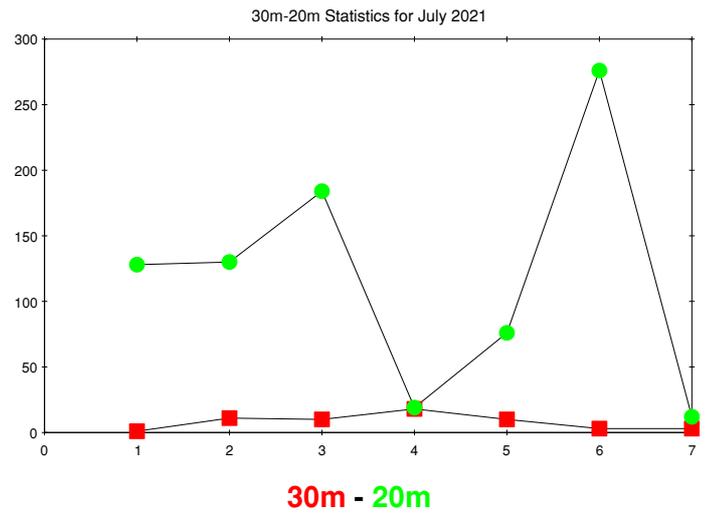
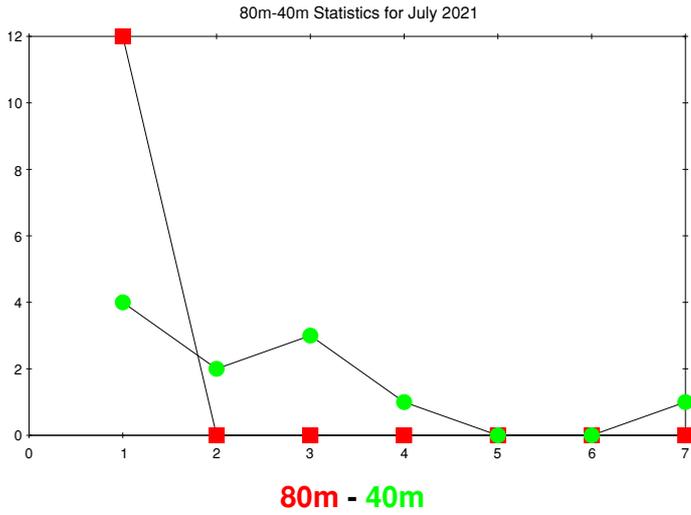


No pretty display this month, far too crowded requiring a magnifying glass to see the results!

Germany	13	Latvia	2
Italy	10	Poland	2
United States	8	Russia	2
England	8	Serbia	1
Sweden	5	San Marino	1
Hungary	4	Algeria	1
Spain	4	Malta	1
Ukraine	4	Iceland	1
Czech Republic	4	France	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3	Estonia	1
Switzerland	3	Belarus	1
Finland	3	Austria	1
Greece	2	Qatar	1
Croatia	2	Wales	1

QSO Countries

'Air Miles', bands by the month



Any other business

Club Equipment

During this coming month we will be cataloguing what equipment we have in the 2 cabinets in Ashley Green village hall, it's possible the club may have equipment for sale.

Slim Jim's 2m antenna kits

The club has a couple of 2m Slim Jim antenna kits for sale at £9 each, the kit comes with all the parts you need plus an illustrated assembly sheet, if anybody is interested please contact me via the members email group. If you check on the club site for October 2020 you'll see details on page 6.

Ferrites

The club has 3 31-Mix clip-on ferrites, bulk purchased to get a discount, normally sold at £14.50 each plus postage & package, we can sell them for £10.00 each. Ideal for putting round the coax coming into the shack.

GB3TU Repeater

We have successfully used the GB3TU repeater during the pandemic and would like to know whether you want to continue using it on a regular basis, the committee certainly think so but we would like your opinions.