

C.D.A.R.S.

October 2026

CHESHAM & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The Jeremy G3XZG Tankard Trophy Announcement

We meet the 2nd Wednesday each month at The Golden Eagle Pub in Ashley Green and every 4th Wednesday each month at the Ashley Green Memorial Hall, Ashley Green, HP5 3PP



For Sale & Wanted

Still Lots of Items
Up For Grabs

Regulars

- *Dates For Your Diary
- *Radio Rally Dates
- *Contest Results

Want to write something for the newsletter?
Then you can contact me on
cdarsnews@gmail.com

Can't find that elusive part or have anything for sale?
Why not drop me an email and put it in
'For sale and wanted'.

Learn About.....

What are you interested in? Here are a few useful links:



FISTS CW Club

Promoting Morse Code for 36 years 1987-2023

<https://fists.co.uk>

VK3TBS

Learn About VARAC

<https://vk3tbs.home.blog/2024/03/06/vara-varac/>

Essex Ham

FT-8 Basics

<https://www.essexham.co.uk/ft8-basics-explained>

Essex Ham

What is PSK31? The Basics.

<https://www.essexham.co.uk/psk31-the-basics>

Welcome to LCWO.net

Learn Morse Code (CW) Online!

<https://lcwo.net/>

Electronic Notes

What is RTTY? The Basics.

https://www.electronics-notes.com/articles/ham_radio/digimode/s/what-is-rtty-radio-teletype.php

Meshtastic and MeshCore

Information and Downloads to build your own LoRa Node or Repeater

<https://meshtastic.org/>
<https://meshcore.co.uk/>



Morse Code by Ray Burlingame-Goff (SK - 29th July 2021)

<http://www.g4fon.net/>

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Chairman	- Dave Keston (G8FMC)	Secretary	- Malcolm Appleby (G3ZNU)	Treasurer	- Matt Whitchurch (M1DTG)
	- Guy Plunkett (M0GUY)		- John Hall (G0ODQ)		- Peter Holliday (M8PTH)
	- Roger Fellows (M8TGU)				

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

Newsletter Editor - Roger Fellows (M8TGU) newsletter submissions to: cdarsnews@gmail.com

Welcome

Welcome to the October edition of the CDARS Newsletter.

Following on from last months newsletter regarding the GB3TU Repeater hopefully those that contacted their respective MP have now had a response via their case worker from Ofcom. While it was a fairly standard reply at least it has prompted the relevant people to realise that someone with more clout are aware and on their case. If you are able to make a follow up submission it can only help with the overall cause.

Regarding this months newsletter I have made a couple of small changes. The main one is below. The details of club nets / meetings were way down the newsletter and were easily missed. Bringing them to this page puts the details in a more prominent position.

Enjoy.



Roger M8TGU

CDARS Net and Club Meetings Dates

(Start times are all at 8pm unless otherwise noted)

October 2026

7th - Club Net on 2m SSB - 144.320 USB

14th - Informal Meeting at The Golden Eagle, Ashley Green

21st - Club Net on 2m SSB - 144.320 USB

28th - Formal Meeting at Ashley Green Memorial Hall.

Andy Cook G4PIQ presents a talk about the WRTC Contest which took place in the UK earlier this year.

The presentation is via Zoom.

**Slow Morse most Thursdays at 14.45 BST on
144.060MHz SSB.**

**Please see the weekly email from Malcolm G3ZNU for any
changes to schedule.**

Chairmans Ramble

I realise that those with no interest in 'Contesting' may pass over my 'other' pages. However if you want a bit of a laugh at my expense, have a read of the paragraph on the SSB Field Day on Saturday 5th Sept. It came out quite well in the end, so maybe I have the last laugh?

I thought that running just 5W SSB on HF might be rather masochistic but was surprised at how well it went. My thoughts and advice for success can be summarised as follows:

5W SSB DOES get through, IF more powerful stations are NOT transmitting at the same moment. If not getting an answer, pause and see if there are many other loud signals replying to the CQ call? If so, note call and frequency, then move off for a bit and try another.

Don't bother to try calling the weaker stations, stick to those that are well over S9

A fairly efficient (near full-size) antenna makes a massive difference. (I was using a 105ft Open-wire Doublet, for 80m, 40m & 20m; 10m AGL in the middle, but with bent down ends)

5W SSB PLUS a compromise antenna is probably going to be rather hard going?

If using a compromise (i.e. fairly inefficient) antenna then probably 25W or 50W might be the minimum to make the attempt worth while?

Above all, try a few options and do what you enjoy. If SSB is not 'cutting it' with your setup, then FT8 will usually produce surprising DX on a modest system. (So I am told. Never got around to FT8 myself, but keep thinking about it!)

I was planning a fairly comprehensive run-dawn on my CatKnobz unit for my FTDX-10. However I have not had time for much further appraisal, so a full report is not available yet. Those at the club meeting on the 26th August had a reasonable demo, showing great promise.

A rather short page this month, sorry. I have been rather swamped with domestic stuff; including moving EVERYTHING out of my lounge & dinning room, prior to new carpet being fitted on Thursday 1st October! All a bit stressful for this old geezer.



Dave G8FMC

73 all, Dave K, G8FMC (Chairman & Contest Coordinator)

UKAC's 2026: (CDARS + Associate members only)

This year continues to be a bit of a struggle, but we are now 4th overall, with Northampton ahead of us & Spalding biting at our ankles in 5th. We are now 3rd on 2m, but still in the lead (just) on 70cm.

Autumn Series (80m - Northampton):

This is almost the same as the spring CC's, with a few rule tweaks. Mainly John G4CZB & myself, with help from Dave G1MZD on the SSB sessions. I actually quite enjoyed my last CW session where I managed 45 contacts in the 90 mins, all S&P of course. The 'CW Decoder' software actually behaved quite well.

I have found that with a full-size antenna on 80m, the background noise is such that the starting point is pre-amp off and -15dB of attenuation. Recently I have also backed off the RF gain control a bit. Since this is really a threshold control on the AGC rail, it blanks off background noise some more and prevents the 'CW Decoder' from searching for Morse characters amongst the noise & throwing up random characters along with a few E's and I's etc. It is much better to have some blanks rather than spurious decodes. I missed the Data session the other day, so just one session of SSB & CW for me. Northampton is 11th out of 28 after just the 2 scores in.

SSB Field Day 5-6th Sept:

CDARS don't seem to be active for this one in recent years, mainly because it clashes with the 144MHz trophy, which for some is the major 2m event of the year.

Your scribe was encouraged by John G4CZB (Northampton) to have a bash in the 'QRP Renewable Energy' category. Just 6hrs of the 24hr contest, battery or solar power & just 5W output. I had plans to 'camp-out' on John G0ODQ's field, but that was not possible as he had visitors staying that weekend.

I used the Club call of G3MDG/P for this event. Plan B was to set up a temporary station in my garden! My old original Elecraft K3 (with an excellent auto-ATU) LiPo battery, all under my Gazebo and an open-wire doublet on temporary masts. Thankfully it was warm and flat calm, so the lack of side-screens on the Gazebo was not an issue.

I decided to do a 3hr stint and started at 1341 UTC on Saturday until 1651 (3hr +10mins) I then took a meal break for a little over 1hr. (The rules dictate that one can split the 6hrs into several 'Bites' but any break has to be at least 1hr) Unfortunately after the effort of sorting the station in the morning (assisted by Peter M8PTH) I was a bit shattered and fell asleep! I awoke with a jolt and stiff neck, realising it was quite late and dark. Ah well 80m would be working well in the dark. My log re-starts at 2007 UTC, so a break of a little over 3 hrs! I did a further 2.5hrs, so a bit short of the 6hrs.

It was 11.30pm local & I was a bit concerned about neighbours hearing some idiot in the garden talking to himself? Anyhow it turned out to be a very productive 5.5hrs with 85 contacts, in 23 DXCC, mainly on 80m, 40m & a few 20m contacts, which has bagged me 2nd place in that category.

continued.....

144MHz Trophy 5-6th Sept:

This is part of the VHF Championship and we had a few representing CDARS this year. Joules G5GHZ/P (was M0UGA) and Pete G1DFL got 4th spot in the Open section. Phil M0N (M0NVS) got 2nd place in the Single Operator Open section. John G0ODQ managed to escape his visitors for a while to put a log in the 6hr Single Op Fixed category. I made a nominal entry, just on the Sunday, primarily to support the Back-Packers.

Thanks to those significant contributions listed above. It helped to maintain our placing in the VHF Championship – see below.

VHF Championship:

We have now had 8 of the 11 sessions and still in 3rd position. We have pulled away from Parallel Lines in 4th and Harwell in 5th, but Hereford and Sheffield are way ahead of us in points. No hope of catching them!

The 1.3GHz & 2.3GHz Trophy events are on Sat 3rd October, where we are a bit weak on support. It might mean Parallel Lines or Harwell might catch us and take 3rd place on the final run-for-home?

73, Dave K, G8FMC

The Jeremy G3XZG Tankard Trophy donated to RSGB Contests

VHF National Field Day used to be the largest event in the VHF contesting calendar, with clubs and contest groups across the country setting up their portable stations for the first weekend in July. Large groups used trailer-mounted Versatowers, or similar, to loft multi-bay and stacked antennas typically 60 or 80ft above ground.

As resources became more stretched and clubs thinner on the ground, support for VHF NFD waned. To combat this decline, the VHF Contests Committee decided to increase the sections in the contest so that groups with different capabilities could still enter and stand a good chance of doing well in their category. In parallel with this diversification, a number of trophies were assigned to the winners of the different categories as further encouragement to enter. The trophies were presented at the annual RSGB Convention.

When CDARS was considering entering VHF NFD we looked at the various categories and decided that the so-called Multi-Single (MS) category would be suitable for our modest capabilities. Multi meant multi-band (you have to choose three bands out of the five available, 6m, 4m, 2m, 70cm and 23cm) and Single meant only one transmitter could transmit at any time. Single also meant one single antenna mast carrying all the antennas, with no part of the antenna system more than 12m above ground. Anyone who has visited our Field Day site will see that we fully comply with these conditions.

CDARS has done very well in this category, winning it in 2024 and 2025, and coming second in years previous to this. However there are not many entrants in the MS category, and we felt that one reason was there was no trophy awarded to the winners.

We therefore decided to donate a trophy to the RSGB Contests Committee to be awarded to the winner of the VHF FD MS category, as an extra incentive for smaller clubs to enter – making the whole competition more exciting. We further decided to dedicate the trophy to our former (and late) Chairman, Jeremy G3XZG. Jeremy much loved his beer, so the idea for a tankard carrying his name and callsign was born.

We'll be taking the new tankard to the RSGB Convention in October, and cheekily ask for it to be presented to us for winning the MS section of VHF NFD last year! I say cheekily, as it's not a trophy that has been announced as yet. We don't get to keep the trophy for the year, nor do any contest winners. The logistics of having around 200 trophies returned to the Trophies Manager on time became impossible, so the RSGB now retains all the trophies centrally and brings them to the convention for presentation. We do at least get to keep the photo and a certificate!



Malcolm G3ZNU

Contest Calendar for October & November 2026

October - HF

Day	Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Mon	05 Oct	1900-2030	Autumn Series CW
Wed	14 Oct	1900-2030	Autumn Series DATA
Thu	22 Oct	1900-2030	Autumn Series SSB
Mon	26 Oct	2000-2130	RSGB FT4 Contest

October - VHF

Day	Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Sat	03 Oct	1400-2200	1.2GHz Trophy
Sat	03 Oct	1400-2200	2.3GHz Trophy
Sat-Sun	03-04 Oct	1400-1400	Oct 432MHz-245GHz Contest
Tue	06 Oct	1800-1855	144MHz FMAC
Tue	06 Oct	1900-2130	144MHz UKAC
Wed	07 Oct	1700-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	07 Oct	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	08 Oct	1900-2130	50MHz UKAC
Tue	13 Oct	1800-1855	432MHz FMAC
Tue	13 Oct	1900-2130	432MHz UKAC
Wed	14 Oct	1700-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	14 Oct	1900-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	15 Oct	1900-2130	70MHz UKAC
Sun	18 Oct	900-1300	50MHz AFS Contest
Tue	20 Oct	1900-2130	1.3GHz UKAC
Tue	27 Oct	1830-2130	SHF UKAC

November - HF

Day	Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Mon	02 Nov	2000-2130	Autumn Series DATA
Wed	11 Nov	2000-2130	Autumn Series SSB
Sat	14 Nov	2000-2300	Club Calls (1.8MHz AFS)
Mon	16 Nov	2000-2130	RSGB FT4 Contest
Sat	21 Nov	1900-2300	2nd 1.8MHz Contest
Thu	26 Nov	2000-2130	Autumn Series CW

November - VHF

Day	Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Tue	03 Nov	1900-1955	144MHz FMAC
Tue	03 Nov	2000-2230	144MHz UKAC
Wed	04 Nov	1700-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	04 Nov	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Sat-Sun	07-08 Nov	1400-1400	144MHz CW Marconi
Tue	10 Nov	1900-1955	432MHz FMAC
Tue	10 Nov	2000-2230	432MHz UKAC
Wed	11 Nov	1700-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	11 Nov	1900-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	12 Nov	2000-2230	50MHz UKAC
Tue	17 Nov	2000-2230	1.3GHz UKAC
Thu	19 Nov	2000-2230	70MHz UKAC
Tue	24 Nov	1930-2230	SHF UKAC

Dates For Your Diary



Listed below are dates of other RSGB, UK and International contests for October 2026.

SARL 80m QSO Party	1700Z-2000Z, Oct 1
URC DX RTTY Contest	0000Z-2359Z, Oct 2
German Telegraphy Contest	0700Z-1000Z, Oct 3
ARS Spartan Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, Oct 6
Makrothen RTTY Contest	0000Z, Oct 10 to 1559Z, Oct 11
Scandinavian Activity Contest, SSB	1200Z, Oct 10 to 1200Z, Oct 11
Worked All Germany Contest	1500Z, Oct 17 to 1459Z, Oct 18
CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB	0000Z, Oct 24 to 2359Z, Oct 25

Full details and more contests at: <https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html>

Please double check dates, start/end times etc in good time prior to the event.

Radio Rally Dates.

Full details of the events are available in Radcom & the RSGB website.

October 2026

4th - Welsh Radio Rally, Llanwern High School, Hartridge arm Road, Newport, NP18 2YE

9th to 11th - RSGB Convention, Kents Hill Conference Centre, Milton Keynes.

11th - Annual Hornsea Rally, Driffield Showground YO25 9FB.

24th - Essex CW Amateur Radio Club Boot Canp and CW Conference, 3rd Witham Scout & Guide HQ, (See details in September Radcom for registration details)

25th - Galashiels Radio & Computer Rally, The Volunteer Hall, St. Johns Street, Galashiels, TD1 3JX.

(All information courtesy of Radcom & the RSGB website)



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For Sale and Wanted

SK sale of the shack contents of the late Bryan M0IHY (Items with Dave G8FMC)

ITEM	ASKING PRICE or O.V.N.O.
1. Power Mag 145 – large magnetic mount + cable (new £30) New & boxed.	£20 (<i>price reduced</i>)
2. Comet CHA-250HD/BXII Multi-Band HF Vertical Antenna (new £350) 250W SSB 75W Data. See March 2024 PW review. As new, unused	£220
5. Modified Cobweb antenna (Polish) (new £200)	£70
6. Sangean ATS-909X2 all-band portable receiver £225 ish new boxed	£150
7. QRM Eliminator X-phase 1-30MHz - £45 new	£25
8. Kent Straight key	£65
9. CW Keyer TC 701 - £70 new	£45
10. Soldering Station (basic) 60W	Offers
11. IGEN Max regenerative receiver. eBay US has an unbuilt kit at £160.	£50
12. Lead-free solder & cleaner (in bag)	Offers
14. Austcol Radiation Meter MT525 -£25 online average price new.	£10
16. Metro VNA in case (£270 new)	£175
18. Prepp Comm multi-band morse transceiver. Approx £358 new.	£225
19. MFJ Super Hi-Q Loop Remote Control . Unknown model.	Offers
20. QRP Kits EFHW Tuner	Offers

Please initially contact Dave G8FMC if interested in any item :- g8fmc547@gmail.com