

Colorado QRP Club
The Low Down

Promoting QRP Since 1994

Club News...

2008 Officer Elections

The May meeting of the Colorado QRP Club will be the annual election of CQC Officers. The positions are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. If you are interested in trying your hand at one of these positions you can contact Marshall Emm N1FN who is the nonnomination chairman. Contact Marshall at n1fn@mtechnologies.com

CQ CQ CQ Net controllers

The Colorado QRP Club is in need of Net Controllers for the Monday night 2M nets. It's easy and it's fun. We provide you with the script and you can take it from there to develop your own "Net-tique". If you live on the Denver Front Range from Ft. Collins to Colorado Springs please consider a try at the mike. Contact Jim Pope - KG0PP at Ejim@aol.com



NOLX/mm on Prospect Lake. 1 March 2008

NOLX/Marine Mobile with Three Antennas

for 15-17-20 meters
By Jake Groenhof NOLX

This was the first marine mobile day of the year. The ARRL Worldwide DX contest was in full swing, and I knew there would be little chance for any nice, long chats. I wanted to try 15 meters, so earlier in the day I made up an end-fed wire for the band using 24-ga. stranded wire. The photo above shows my usual 17- and 20-meter wire, using a Molex connector to change bands, supported by an MFJ 33-foot pole. The new 15-meter wire is mounted on a Cabelas 20-foot pole. I detected neither assistance nor interference with the close proximity of the two masts. The next picture shows the minimalist rear seat arrangement. My radio, an FT-817, hangs out of the photo at the edge of the middle (rowing) seat. I was out on the water by 1:50 p.m. Mountain Time (2050Z), and operated until 6:00 p.m.

Here is a rundown of the day's contacts:

15 meters:
21.370 VP5H Turks & Caicos Isl.

For more information, visit our website at www.cqc.org

Issue 63 April/May 2008

Picture credits to

Vince Kumagai - KI0RB
Dave Miller

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Our next Regular meeting will take place
Saturday, May 10, 2008 at 10:00 am

Meeting Location: Offices of
Milestone Technologies
10691 East Bethany Drive,
Suite 800
Aurora, Colorado



Colorado QRP Club
Post Office Box 17174
Golden CO 80402-6019

The Low Down

Officers

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Secretary:	Vince Kumagai KI0RB	303-341-5320	KI0RB@ARRL.NET
Treasurer:	Roger Wendell WBØJNR	206-202-2212	CQC@ROGERWENDELL.COM

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Awards Chm:	Marshall Emm N1FN	303-752-3382	n1fn@mtechnologies.com
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The Low Down

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QRP Information Net: The Colorado QRP Club also meets on the air every Monday evening at 2000 local time on the 147.225 repeater serving the eastern slope of the Rockies from Cheyenne, WY, to Pueblo, CO, with linked repeaters in Boulder (145.46) and Colorado Springs (145.16). Backup frequency: 145.145. The Club's Denver metro simplex liaison frequency is 146.445. Meeting Dates: 2004 Meetings: Jan. 10, Mar. 13, May 8, July 10, Sept. 11, Nov. 13 at a location to be determined. Annual Picnic: Sat. Sept 18, 2004. Annual Banquet: To Be Announced. Changes will be announced on the Monday evening Net and posted on the WWW,CQC.ORG website, if time permits.

Informal Monthly QRP Gatherings: Members meet informally at a local restaurant -- details on the web-site. Annual Dues: \$12.00. Join via the internet at WWW.CQC.ORG. Or, send dues and requests for membership applications to: CQC, POB 17174, Golden CO 80402-6019.

Internet: WWW.CQC.ORG. Information, membership, renewals, officers, activities, CQC Swap List and CQC-List subscriptions.

Correspondence: Editor, The Low Down POB 17174. Golden CO 80402-6019.

CQC Logo mugs

Don't leave your shack without it!! Vince, our club Secretary, arm-wrestled a half dozen vendors until we got a good deal on a few dozen of these beautiful, cobalt-blue coffee mugs. Get yours while supplies last!!

Photo courtesy Marshall Emm N1FN



Photo courtesy Marshall Emm N1FN

\$10.00 (Pick one up at our meeting or other gathering)
\$4.00 (Shipping and handling if we mail one to you...)
Order from our web site using our PayPal secure service.

Photo courtesy Marshall Emm N1FN

CQC RFL-10 QRP Dummy Load Kit

The kit consists of 2 5W metal oxide resistors an SO239 socket and includes adaptors for connecting to either SO239 or BNC antenna sockets. Rates to 10W continuous power for at least 60 seconds, with a flat SWR across the HF spectrum.



\$9.00 - Members
(Includes Shipping and Handling!)
\$11.50 - Non Members
(Includes Shipping and Handling!)

New
CQC Logo Tee Shirts

These beautiful tees are 100% cotton with the club logo and motto. Your call sign and name call can be added for \$2 Available in sizes XXL, XL, L and M

Photo courtesy Marshall Emm N1FN



Photo courtesy Marshall Emm N1FN

\$12.00 plain or \$14.00 with Call and/or Name
\$4.00 Shipping and handling
Order from our web site or pick one up at the next meeting and please specify size.

Photo courtesy Marshall Emm N1FN

Tentative Meeting
Schedule for 2008:

- May 10 - Regular
- June 14 - Chat 'N Chew
- June 28/29 - Field Day
- July 12 - Chat 'N Chew
- Aug 9 - Regular
- Sept 13 Annual Picnic
- Oct 11 - Regular
- Nov 8 - Chat 'N Chew
- Dec 13 - Regular

Regular Meeting Location:
Offices of Milestone Technologies
10691 East Bethany Drive,
Suite 800
Aurora, Colorado

- 21.370 KH6LC Hawaii
- 21.352 KH7X Hawaii
- 21.305 KH6MB Hawaii
- 21.290 AH6RR Hawaii
- 21.254 LV5V Argentina
- 21.236 HP3BS Panama
- 21.221 CE1KR Chile
- 21.227 XE1XOE Mexico
- 21.335 KH7Y Hawaii
- 21.338 PY5HOT Brazil
- 21.303 PW2D Brazil
- 21.295 YV1CTE Venezuela
- 21.373 PY2EX Brazil
- 21.262 ZX5J Brazil
- 21.242 HK3JJH Colombia
- 21.270 LT1F Argentina
- 21.300 LP1H Argentina

17 meters:

- 18.148 JO1DZA Japan
- 18.165 JH1OCC Japan

20 meters:

- 14.342 KK4PQ Georgia
- 14.314 6Y1V Jamaica
- 14.310 KH7X Hawaii
- 14.300 NP2CB Florida: Maritime Mobile net
- 14.294 P40V Aruba
- 14.277 P40A Aruba
- 14.266 8P1A Barbados
- 14.248 KH7B Hawaii
- 14.224 XE2WWW Mexico
- 14.215 HC8A Galapagos Islands
- 14.301 KH6MB Hawaii

With five watts, I reached 13 DX countries (plus Hawaii) and 31 total contacts in four hours. Not too bad for QRP at the bottom of a sunspot cycle.



Here is a picture of the boat taken the very next morning. Typical Colorado weather!

Log Notes

By Dick Schneider, ABØCD
CQC #155

Any way you cut it, ARRL Field Day was a blast!

Aloha. It's the traditional Hawaiian greeting. And many visitors and participants were greeted at the 2007 Colorado QRP Club's Aloha Field Day site at Cherry Creek State Park in the southeastern Denver metro area.

With many new club members it seems logical to rekindle our efforts to provide a non-competitive Field Day site in the metro area, to encourage new hams, old and rusty hams, and hams who just like to hang out, swap stories and operate from time to time. Of course, the Aloha site complements the CQC-sponsored competitive site located on Rampart Range southwest of Denver. The swiftness and seriousness of the competitive site can be a bit daunting, even for the best CW operators. So Aloha was born about 10 years ago to provide a CQC-sponsored alternative.

In 2007, we gathered at the Cherokee Group Camp Site in the park. We had spaces for six RVs and six tents. The campsite boasted water, electricity, a very nice group eating and cooking area with a fire ring. We could walk right across the road to brand new washroom and shower facilities – all funded by the compulsively hopeful who dump hundreds of millions of dollars a year into the state lottery.

The overnighters at the club's Aloha site included four RVs and a single tent – so there's plenty of room for 2008!

Just like the Rampart Range site, the Aloha site faced antenna challenges. When Rampart unloaded the club's Field Day Antenna Trailer, the competitive boys discovered some scofflaw had stripped the trailer of most of the elements for the beams – cashing them in somewhere for what? Ten, twenty bucks? One fix! And speaking of fixing, the Aloha troops faced fixing their antennas, and abandoning a few grandiose plans.

ABØCD's Gap Titan was slated to be the “easy-up” answer for an all-band HF station number one.

Not!

Once up, the Gap refused to resonate anywhere. After up and down and up about four or five times, pulling off the PL239 connector and soldering on one attached to a short piece of coax, sending someone off the HRO for more connectors, trying two antenna analyzers, running around a lot, drinking a lot of water, soldering in the field, trying to decipher the Titan's assembly instructions (the worst ever written), Aloha finally got it to resonate on 10, 15 and 20 – sort of. Scott Garcia, KCØHSV put in a lot of hours on this project. Then, with a few military surplus fiberglass rods brought in by ABØCD, Scott got a skyhook in place to hold a 40-meter inverted V in place, so we had an antenna for HF station number two. The easy part was using a few more of the green fiberglass poles to hoist a six-meter/two-meter/70 centimeter tribander beam 20 feet into the air for the VHF station.

So, Aloha did make it on the air, running FT-817s, one of which was powered by solar-fire batteries, for the two HF stations and an IC-746 for the VHF station.

And then the true magic of the Aloha Field Day operation unfolded throughout the weekend. We had plenty of

visitors, including ARRL Rocky Mountain Division (Jeff & Tim), a number of other hams who heard about the operation, friends, family, other park campers, and a pile of kids. Many of our visitors, including a half-dozen kids, got on the air to call CQ during Field Day. Plus, a few CW operators settled in at various times during the event to run some contacts.

We're already planning for 2008. The antenna situation has already been worked out. We're searching for a used HF6V Butternut vertical and we've already got a 102-foot G5RV we're thinking about running up a 40-foot mast for an inverted-V. We've got some other options in the works for the VHF station. BUT NO GAP TITANS!

A footnote: ABØCD, when reassembling his Titan back at the home QTH discovered that the four main tuning rods had been installed upside down. In fact, they had always been upside down! GAP's assembly instructions do leave something to be desired.

All in all, ARRL Field Day 2007 was a fabulous weekend, especially at the Aloha site.

And, in case you didn't know, it's also the traditional Hawaiian farewell:

Aloha.

Dick Schneider, ABØCD, is a former editor of The Low Down. He can be reached at AB0CD@arrl.net. □ Dick Schneider

Pedestrian Mobile from Mt Galbraith, Golden, Colorado

By Jake Groenhof N0LX



Mt Galbraith as seen from my front yard above the neighbor's house

On Friday March 31, 2006 I hiked up to a nearby mountain and operated QRP pedestrian mobile. I used my FT-817 and a 20-foot end-fed half wave antenna. Below are two photos of the area. After that follows a brief report on the day's activity.

I began the day on 17 meters. My first contact was with Ken, WB9QDL, about 20 miles away and mobile. Then several East Coast contacts followed. At 2245 Zulu, I heard the familiar call JA1CG. It was Haru in Japan. We had talked several times before, and this time he gave me a 57 report.

A couple QSOs later I was talking to Bob, KC2MWA in Connecticut. As I passed on my 73 and said goodby, I was immediately called by Carlos, LU2NI in Argentina. I reported his signal as 57 and he returned a 54 to me. Four minutes later I finished with Carlos and again heard another familiar call: JH1OCC. It was Yuu in Japan. Yikes! Back-to-back DX hearing my QRP signal. And so near the bottom of the solar cycle.

At 0000Z I turned off the radio, replaced the eight rechargeable AA batteries and switched the antenna to 20 meters. The sun would soon set so it was time to begin heading down the mountain. I was a hundred feet below the summit and calling CQ when Scott, N9WDH/mobile in California replied. Then Ralph, N7KGA near Seattle. They were both on the other side of the mountain from me. About halfway down I worked YN2N, Octavio, in Nicaragua, followed a few minutes later by V31SF, Marcos, in Belize. A final chat with Alan, W4LGH in Florida and I was at the bottom of the mountain. There are power lines between there and the 3/4-mile walk to home, so off went the radio, and down went the big antenna.



Looking north toward my home QTH and my mountaintop pedestrian mobile location.

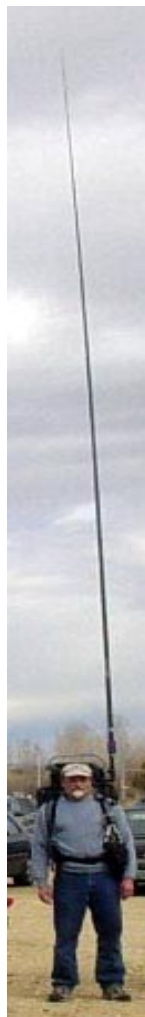


Photo by Dave Miller

The President's Corner

"What goes up...."

As the old saying goes, "What goes up, must come down." So it seems with the stock market (let us hope that it is now "down," and soon will go "up"), and with the Sunspot Cycle. As a retired person with time to do all those things that working people only dream about, I do spend a lot of time listening to my rigs. Lately, listening has been confined mostly to 20 meters during the day, and 40 and 80 meters during the evenings and on into the night.

Oh, I know that there are openings from time to time on 10 meters. It is just that my rigs are not tuned to that band unless and until I hear from someone that there is an opening. Clearly, we are at the bottom of a Sunspot Cycle. This has been a long and drawn out Sunspot minimum. Some say we have passed the low point. Others say we are not there yet. Hard for an amateur to tell, as even the pros don't agree.

On the other hand, though, there is still plenty to listen to on the HF bands. Each Tuesday and Thursday evening during these winter months many QRP addicts chase "The Fox." I confess my addiction. Not, mind you, that I am all that successful in catching either one of the two elusive Foxes that appear on 80 meters on Tuesdays, and on 40 meters on Thursdays. Looking back at my log, or even at the score card kept by our own Al Dawkins, K0FRP, I seem to do much better on 80 meters than on 40 meters. Clearly, that is an indication of, among other things, like antennas, that we are at, or near, or, hopefully, already past the sunspot minimum. Our own Marshall Em, N1FN, is the Fox program coordinator.

Recently I have noticed an increase of DX on 20 meters, especially in the late morning hours. Europe has not been heard at my QTH for quite some time. But, just the other day I had a QSO with France, and two with Germany. As well, in the evenings I have managed to listen to two big Dxpeditions on 40 and 80 meters. TI9KK, from the Cocos Islands in the Indian Ocean, was creating quite a pileup on 80 meters the other evening. That is a long haul from Denver, especially for 80 meters. Then, on or about Feb. 12 & 13, VP6DX was heard loud and clear on 7.002 MHz. This is another major Dxpedition located on Ducie Island. Ducie is also way out in the Indian Ocean, somewhere northwest of Australia. Strangely, in both instances, the rest of the bottom of those two bands was relatively quiet. Needless to say, I don't yet need the QSL info for either Dxpedition. When there are hundreds, if not thousands, of hams around the world trying to work one of these stations, a five watt signal is tough to hear, unless it is being managed by a real QRP pro with a very large antenna system.

What is the point of all this? Well, I guess it is mainly to suggest that we don't need to be discouraged and turn off our radios just because we are in a sunspot minimum. Does it make working QRP more challenging? For sure, for sure. Am I tempted to turn the power knob to see if I can work that elusive DX station. You bet, and I sometimes do. One theory is to work them first, then work them QRP if you can. I know that many of you have no radio in the house that will transmit at more than 5 or 10 watts. I came to QRP late, and already had several 100 watt rigs. I don't plan to throw them away any time soon. But, they are easy to tame with the WM-2 Wattmeter.

Turning briefly to news that more directly impacts the CQC Club, we held our latest executive board meeting on Saturday, Feb. 10, just before our Chat & Chew session. Two interesting topics discussed included Field Day and meeting programs and presentations. We again plan to have both a "Serious" Field Day site up on the Rampart Range, and an "Aloha" Field Day site, again at Cherry Creek State Park. Both Field Day's were a smashing success last year. I encourage everyone to reserve the fourth Saturday and Sunday (and Friday afternoon for setup) in June. Try to get to both, if you can, or at least to one. Make it a point to operate, but pick wisely, as one operator is only allowed to operate at one site according to my interpretation of ARRL Field Day rules.

We also felt strongly the need to ensure that future programs would continue to be of high caliber and interest to club members. Toward that end, Al, K0FRP and Dick Schneider, AB0CD, agreed to co-chair the Program Committee. We are working on some interesting presentations. At the same time, they would like to hear from you about any program topics that interest you. You don't have to design or present the program. Just let Dick and Al know what you want, and they will run with it if they can. If you have an idea, you can either contact Al or Dick directly, or just throw it out on the club list reflector, cqclist@yahoogleroups.com. If you are not already signed up for the club list, do so. There is not a lot of traffic, but what there is keeps us abreast of club news.

If you have not been to a CQC Club meeting lately, try to make it to one of the upcoming meetings. Our next meeting is on Saturday, March 8, 2008. Meeting time is 10:30 AM. Full details are available on our Club website, at www.cqc.org. I hope to see you all there.

Finally, our annual election of Club officers is scheduled for our May meeting. If you have an interest in running for office, or know of someone whom you think would do a bang up job, just contact Marshall, N1FN, with your ideas. He is chairing the nominating committee this year.

Pete, NO2D
President, CQC.

SCHEUNEMANN MORSETASTEN PROFESSIONAL PADDLES

Made in Germany

Successor to the world-famous Profi 2, the Scheunemann Morse Dirigent will set the standard for years to come.

Dirigent is German for “conductor,” as in the conductor of a symphony orchestra. Scheunemann’s Morse Dirigent features a sleek new style with tapered front, and separate tension adjustments for the two levers.

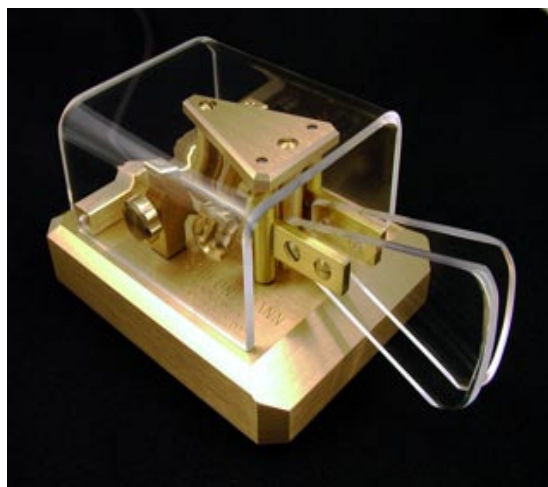
The Dirigent comes complete with tilt-open dust cover and connection cable. Large adjustment knobs for contact spacing and spring tension allow precision adjustment while preserving stability-- a Scheunemann paddle virtually never needs to be readjusted. Adjustments can be made by hand and there is no need to touch the locking screws.

The contacts are convex, and gold plated. The hand-finished fingerpieces are shaped for maximum comfort while preserving precise control. The base is machined from a solid block of MS-58 surgical-quality brass and is coated with a trade-secret polymer that resists wear, staining, and pitting over a lifetime of use.

Weight: 53 oz.

Size: 5.5”x3.2”x2.3”

SM-1001 Scheunemann Morse Dirigent: \$349.95



a division of Milestone Technologies, Inc.

“Everything for the Morse Enthusiast!”

Stories and pictures for the CQC Low Down are provided by CQC Club Members. Please consider sharing your QRP experience with other members and friends. All stories are welcome and appreciated. They can be submitted to KI0RB@arrl.net

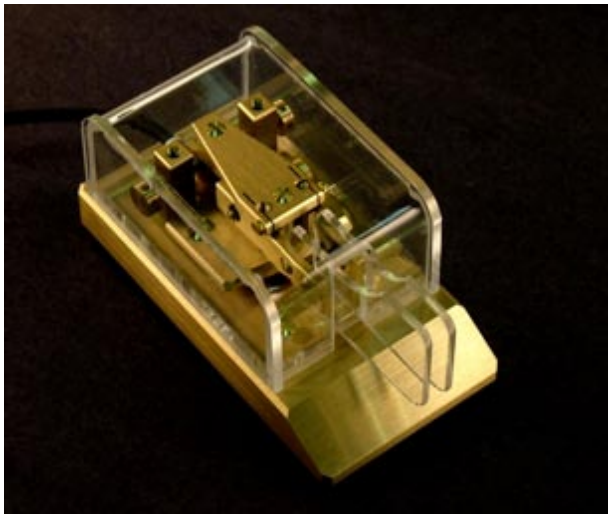
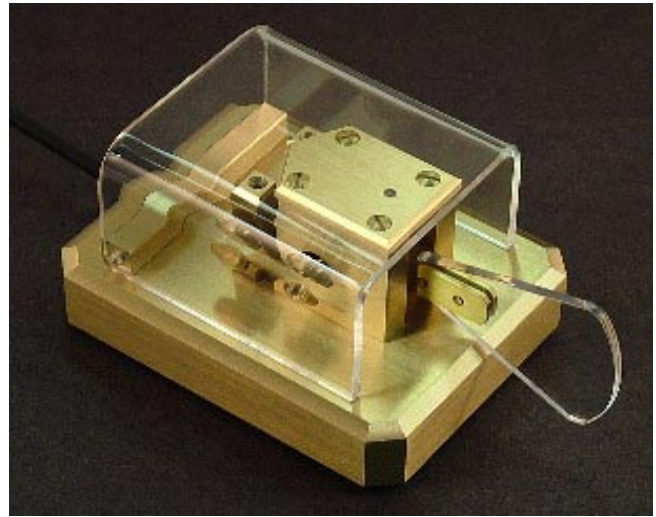
Scheunemann Morsetasten
EINHEBEL

Developed by Uli Scheunemann based on the Profi II, the Einhebel is possibly the very best single-lever paddle in the world. Designed specifically for European-style high speed operation, the Einhebel can be adjusted to suit any taste. The Einhebel (Single Lever) comes complete with tilt-open dust cover and connection cable. Large adjustment knobs for contact spacing and spring tension allow precision adjustment while preserving stability. Adjustments can be made by hand and there is no need to touch the locking screws. The contacts are convex, and gold plated. The hand-finished fingerpiece is shaped for maximum comfort while preserving precise control. The base, machined from a solid block of surgical-quality brass, is coated with a trade-secret polymer that resists wear, staining, and pitting over a lifetime of use.

Weight: 51 oz.

Size: 5.5"x3.2"x2.3"

SM-002 Scheunemann Einhebel Price: \$299.95



Scheunemann Morsetasten
PORTABLE 2

The famous Portable Wabblers is perfect for the traveling ham. It is about 25% smaller than the Profi. Complete with dust cover, cord, and adjusting tool. Weighing just over 2 Lbs, the Portable 2 is heavier than many standard paddles, giving it superb stability comparable to the Profi. Because the dust cover surrounds the mechanism on all 4 sides, it's hard to appreciate the detail of the mechanism, which you can see by clicking here for a photo of the Portable II with the cover removed.

Weight: 34.5 Oz

Size: 4.6" x 2.3"

SM-003 Schurr Portable 2 Price: \$259.95

Order on-line, or call 800-238-8205 for credit card orders or call 303-752-3382 for more information

<http://www.mtechnologies.com/scheun/>