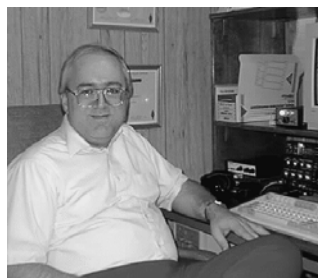


The Editor's Keyboard

By Dave Pruett, K8CC
k8cc@ix.netcom.com



What does the MRRC membership want from club meetings? We have never been much of a formal organization, relying on the minimum amount of bureaucracy that would meet the intent of the ARRL Affiliated Club rules and keep the club running. We rarely have a formal program at our meetings, just take attendance, collect dues, and discuss any business of the moment. Most members seem to like it that way.

The number of meetings we have each year depends on several factors. The ARRL requires that we have at least four and we've usually tried to have at least six. Three meetings are MRRC traditions, perhaps because these are associated with hamfests or special events: Dayton, Findlay, and the Christmas Party held at K8MR's.

When we've tried to have additional meetings, the attendance is usually very poor. For quite a few years now, our membership has been pretty evenly divided between Ohio and Michigan. However, rarely will Ohio people come to Michigan meetings, and other than the group which comes to the Christmas Party with me, Michigan people don't make much of an effort to travel to Ohio either. Part of the problem is that some members have the mindset that "I'll make my two meetings and that's that". That's not hardly fair to the club.

The Adrian, MI meeting showed the potential of smaller, local meetings. Although only seven people attended, but four of them renewed or signed up for the first time. These small meetings run the risk of creating a division within the club by relieving the need to go to the "other" state to a meeting. Perhaps this is still better than fewer meetings

For any club meeting to be "official", a club officer must be present. I interpret the club officers to be the two elected officers (president and treasurer) plus the two volunteers (scorekeeper and newsletter editor). I would like to propose creating several "regional vice-president" positions, perhaps for one each for Michigan, northern Ohio and southern Ohio. These regional VPs would be empowered to moderate more "local" meetings, write a regional update for the *FLASH*, and act as the local coordinator for MRRC efforts like SS.

The 1999 meeting schedule will be discussed and approved at the Christmas Party meeting. Plan to attend and contribute your ideas.

73, de **Dave, K8CC**

MRRC Scores

Collected by Jim Stahl, K8MR
k8mr@barf80.nshore.org

AUGUST NAQP CW

K8MR	384	150	
KT8X	350	119	
KU8E	244	110	
K8DD	200	86	
K8MAD	155	86	K8CC op
N8KR	101	66	
K9TM	79	31	

AUGUST NAQP SSB

N8VW	550	182	The former K8LR...
------	-----	-----	--------------------

ARRL UHF CONTEST

WA8RJF	222	15	12
	432	18	13
	903	3	3
	1296	7	6
	2304	2	2
	5760	1	1
Total Score:			7215

MRRC SEPTEMBER CW SPRINT

K8MR	310 x 44	13640	
KU8E	290 x 44	12760	
KW8N	302 x 42	12684	
K4LT	281 x 44	12364	Non-team score
K8CC	279 x 43	11997	
W6UE	262 x 44	11528	W4EF opr
KM0L	258 x 41	10578	
N8VW	231 x 41	9635	low power
K9TM	44 x 21	924	1 hour

INTERESTING WEB SITE

There was a rumor going around a year or so ago that Henry Radio had stopped making amateur radio amplifiers. The real story is that the marketing of Henry amateur equipment has been taken over by Dan Magro, W7RF. He offers the full line of Henry amateur amplifiers at a modest discount over retail. His web site at <http://www.radiodan.com> has a complete catalog of Henry gear with specifications and data sheets. Jeff, N8CC recently bought an amp through Dan. He has also helped K8CC obtain a manual (at no charge) for his second-hand 2002A 144 MHz amp. Dan Magro is trying hard to support current and future Henry customers, so stop by and check out the line of equipment.

Fixing Feedpoints on HyGain Beams

By Goose Steingass, W8AV

After a number of years in the air, a problem develops with with the connection between the feedline and driven element on certain Hygain monoband antennas. We first saw this at W8AV on a 204BA about four years ago. A receiver connected to the antenna would appear dead. However, when power was applied the VSWR would appear normal, and when the rig was returned to the receive mode, the antenna sounded OK, for "fixed". A rig problem was immediately ruled out due to the fact that operation on another antenna did not exhibit this problem. We became more suspicious when the problem appeared again after a couple of weeks of inactivity. Once again, after applying power to the antenna, the symptoms disappeared.

The antenna was removed from the tower and upon close inspection, it was discovered that there was no longer a solid connection between the feedline and the driven element /matching section. The years of weathering had caused the predrilled holes in the driven element to become enlarged to the point that the self-tapping stainless steel screws used at the attachment point could no longer maintain a secure mechanical connection.

To fix the problem, the self-tapping screws were removed and a 3/16" drill bit was used to drill completely through the element and boom at these points. #10 stainless steel hardware was installed through each side of the driven element and the beta match and feedline were reattached to the element. In similar fashion, the beta match was affixed to the boom.

The antenna was reinstalled after the modifications and has performed flawlessly for the past four years. This technique has been employed on each of the other Hygain antennas at W8AV as preventive maintenance with exceptional results.

Notes on Vertical Antenna Systems

By Greg Surma, K8GL
gsurma @ wnem.com

Many MRRC members have had a fair amount of success with vertical systems on 160, 80, and, in my case, 40 meters. One thing about verticals is that you truly must be a "believer" to have them work. Somehow having a positive karma concerning their effectiveness adds the elusive 3 dB to your signal!

My 160 meter vertical is built around my 80' Heights tower capped by a 5 element 20 meter yagi. I simply run a cage of wires around the tower, spaced some 24'-30" from the tower, up approximately 40'. At the top I tie all the wires together and to the tower. At the bottom I tie the wires together. The "Q" of this system is real low and the radiator is electronically very "fat". My bandwidth on 160 is incredible. I have also used this radiator very successfully on 3.5 MHz. CW.

Members who attended the Antenna forum at Dayton will recognize this as being the heart of the K1VR 3 element vertical array for 160 meters. He bent and squeezed a reflector and a director off the top of the tower and ended up with enough gain to make it worthwhile. One thing about it is that it adds approximately 5 dB to his signal towards Europe. Another thing is that it costs less than \$100 to build, even if direction changing relays are added. 5 dB on 160 in both transmit and receive puts the contester a notch or two up on the competition, and may preclude the need to add beverages in order to hear well. Arrays of this nature should also work well on 3.5 and 7 MHz. Imagine having gain and directivity on 80 meters with a 60' tower and a simple tribander on top!

It is no secret that top contest stations are employing directive vertical systems on both 3.5 and 1.8 MHz. I had the fortune to have a squashed 4 square on 80 meters in my 140' x 140' lot back in 1993. That array was a definite winner. I'd be happy to relay my Flash article on the antenna to any one who is interested.

The question often asked about vertical arrays is: How many radials? Elevated or ground mounted? The few times I've had the chance to elevate radials I noticed a dramatic increase in performance. One winter I elevated 5 radials on my 160 meter system. With 100 watts I snagged many Europeans and the KH1 expedition. I've had similar good results with my 40 meter systems. ON4UN relates similar successes in his antenna books.

If elevated radials are not practical, the generally accepted optimum number is 120 radials per vertical. Practically speaking, I've had good luck with 15-20 radials on 80 in my 2 element phased arrays, and noticeably better luck with 30 to 35. During one January thaw I had the chance to add 20 radials per vertical to my 2 element array, putting the total count at around 35 radials per radiator. That night I "owned" 3508 until I pulled the plug at approximately 1 in the morning. I worked over 40 Europeans on a single CQ, something I had never been able to accomplish with the lesser radial count. The amplifier was an SB220 in the CW position.

Putting the radials down and making it aesthetically pleasing is another matter. My method is to cut the grass as short as possible, then lay the radials directly on the ground and "pin" the ends down with some sort of clip. Grass will eventually grow and assimilate the wire and provide a non-trip hazard installation in a few months. W8WD, K8CC, and K3LR have successfully employed this method. My theory is to use wooden "clothes pins" at the end and at select mid-points, in order to better force the radial into the ground and to be environmentally friendly.

A second method was proposed by K3ZAP in the October 1980 issue of Ham Radio. Vance suggests getting some 3/16" dowel and sharpening it in a pencil sharpener. On the other end you drill a small hole in order to thread the wire through. These

(Continued on page 4)

Vertical Notes (continued)

(Continued from page 3)

needles are then used to “sew” the radials into the grass. Possibly this would be a good method if one is too anxious to wait for the grass to grow over top-laid radials. In any case, this seems to be much preferred to manually spading.

I’ve looked into renting trenchers in order to automate the process of spading the lawn. The quoted price for 24 hours is enough to make one shudder.

I’ve had good success picking up plastic coated #20 or #22 wire at the Findlay swap or at the Cleveland surplus store during the January K8MR bash. I like insulated wire because it is protected from the damaging effects of soil contact. I still dig up plastic #24 wire in my dad’s yard in good shape, even though they have been in the ground for 30 years. You should be able to find wire for a penny per foot.

One added bonus of looking up the aforementioned article in the 1980 magazine will be the chance to read the N8ET article in the same issue concerning his 40 meter switchable quad array.

Good luck on implementing these inexpensive arrays as part of your arsenal!

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?



On the next page you’ll find the 1998-99 MRRC Roster. If your name is not on this roster, then according to our records your dues have not been paid and this is the last *FLASH* you will receive. We’d hate to lose you, so reconcile this situation with club treasurer **KE8OC** today!

Articles of Association For The Mad River Radio Club

This group is formed in order to enjoy the company of each other, to foster a healthy spirit of competition in the pursuit of amateur radio, and to attempt to contribute to the progress of the art.

- I. The group shall be known to all as THE MAD RIVER RADIO CLUB, having been formed in the muddy waters at the mouth of the Mad River, and shall remain so named until its members see fit to change the designation.
- II. Membership is open to all amateurs of honorable nature, determined to progress in the art of amateur radio, and eager to flood credit upon this group and the achievements of its members.
- III. There shall be officers with such duties as the members of the group from time to time deem necessary, and there shall be at all time a Big Fish who shall lead and report the activities of the group.
- IV. Rules and regulations will be held to a minimum so that maximum effort may be placed upon fishing for new ways to win the next contest, bragging about DX, QSLs acquired, etc. Additional rules may be made when the group feels the need for them.
- V. It is understood and agreed that crummy signals, shoddy operating practices, and discourtesy will not be tolerated. Persistent conduct unbecoming a gentleman and a member of this group shall constitute grounds for giving a person the silent treatment. Should he fail to correct his practices in a reasonable time, he shall be adjudged a Sick Fish, and all rights, privileges, rank and fame of membership shall be withdrawn and he shall again become free to pollute other organizations.

This group is officially formed, hook, line, and sinker, on Saturday, April 24, 1971.

Editor’s Note:

These are the articles of association originally written when MRRC was founded back in 1971. Are these articles still appropriate today? Read them through and offer your suggestions for improvement either to the newsletter editor or via the MRRC Reflector.

The First *FLASH*

On this page you will see a reprint of the first MRRC FLASH newsletter, Vol. I, #1. No date is shown on my copy, but its likely to have been published during the early summer of 1971. The newsletter appears to have been originally done on a mimeograph machine, and we attempted to reproduce it here just like the original appeared. In reading it you see that our forefathers had many of the same concerns for our club as we do today.

Vol. I, #1

THE MAD RIVER FLASH

Gentlemen, The Mad River Radio Club formation could start a new saga in amateur radio in the USA. We have many things to do if we are to be a real contest club worthy of the honors several clubs on the East Coast have held for too many years. The original brainstorming a few weeks ago provided the name and I have taken the liberty to apply to ARRL for club affiliation, including writing our Articles of Association.

Other decisions were made beside our name. The first contest we will participate in as a club will be the 1971 ARRL Sweepstakes. Many of us have our favorite mode; however, it would help our score if you could spend a reasonable amount of time the other weekend suffering through the "other mode" to provide some points.

It was also decided that we should increase our membership by each of us asking contest-oriented amateurs to join our group versus a shotgunning membership drive by advertisements in QST and so on. In this manner we stand a better chance of forming a strong base that can attract others if we wish to enlarge our ranks in mass. This in no way hinders you from contacting active contesters who have proven themselves or have shown potential and asking them to join now. It would put us in a good position if we had 50 contesters with us as we go into SS. Please forward all new member's names, call, address to me.

We also decided that we should get together on the air on the Wednesday before and after each contest. May I suggest 3835 kHz as a starting frequency—subject to change.

The next publication will be out in a month; please feel free to provide input. It looks like we can get a maximum of five pages mailed per issue. It would be good to let the club know you ideas on "The 60 foot antenna with 12 dB gain in all directions", or "How to run 50 contacts per hour while mowing the grass, baby-sitting, and having company over all at the same time".

Vy 73 es will be waiting for your comments, new members info, and any gripes you may

Editor's Note: The author of this first FLASH, **Dick Bennett, K8EHU**, was MRRC's first 'Big Fish' and is still active in the club, later holding the calls KA8HFO, NZ8O and his current call **K8MZ**.

Treasurer's Report

By Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC
ke8oc@mediaone.net



Club finances are looking good this month, now that most members have paid their dues. Thanks to W8AV for the final accounting of the Dayton Suite - gee, if we can just get the room for free we can make money!

<u>Balance from 7/98</u>	\$712.42
<u>Income</u>	
Dues	\$224.00
Suite Revenue	\$235.15
<u>Expenses</u>	
Checking Acct Maintenance	\$ 8.00
Dayton Expenses	\$162.83
ARRL Plaques	\$100.00
FLASH Printing	\$ 54.00
<u>Balance 9/98</u>	\$846.74

Respectfully Submitted,
Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC

Club Meeting Notes

Compiled by Dave Pruett, K8CC

September 13, 1998 - FINDLAY, OH

36 people attended the meeting at the Findlay Hamfest, moderated by 'Big Fish' KU8E. K8CC distributed ARRL contest certificates. K4LT won the RUFZ code-copying contest (again) but runner-up K8GL was awarded the prize (a new keyer paddle). Dayton was discussed, and it was decided to pursue the fleamarket hospitality site - K8AQM volunteered to lead the preparations. The club meeting schedule was discussed, W8AV and K8CC volunteered to host meetings next year. It was decided have a meeting at the Adrian hamfest the following week.

September 20, 1998 - ADRIAN, MI

Seven people attended the meeting at the Adrian Hamfest, moderated by newsletter editor K8CC. Three of these were inactive members, while another was a first timer, all of whom paid dues. Welcome aboard to AA8U, K8MJZ, KG8CO and W8MC. K8CC reported on the latest CAC happenings with regards to the SS multi-op rules debacle. Further discussions centered around the Michigan QSO Party and how to improve it. The group decided to make a proposal that the Michigan MRRC contingent to take over sponsorship of the event.



MAD RIVER RADIO CLUB
Dave Pruett, K8CC
2727 Harris Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48198 USA

MAD RIVER RADIO CLUB OFFICERS

President:
Jeff Clarke, KU8E
2896 Minerva Avenue
Columbus, OH 43231
(614) 895-9840
ku8e@worldnet.att.net

Treasurer:
Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC
39991 Finley Drive
Canton, MI 48188
(734) 397-9732
ke8oc@mediaone.net

Scorekeeper:
Jim Stahl, K8MR
30499 Jackson Road
Chagrin Falls, OH 44022
(216) 831-6954
k8mr@barf80.nshore.org

Editor:
Dave Pruett, K8CC
2727 Harris Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
(734) 481-0755