

comms from europe

Simon Parker brings you the latest CB news from Europe, including new products from Team, a CB contest, a Czech pirate station, an inexpensive Moxon antenna that's built in Norwich and a massive amplifier on sale in Germany.

Welcome to the latest edition of Comms from Europe.

This month I have news from Team GmbH, including the MX8 in different colours, an innovative Bluetooth earpiece sized PMR446 receiver and the release of the TS-6M Multi. I've also found an appealing antenna from a small company in Norwich and an interesting pirate radio station in Pilsen but before I tell you about them, I have news of a contest you might be able to hear if you have an AM/SSB receiver.

CB Contest

Something readers in the UK can listen out for even though they are not legally allowed to take part in it is the forthcoming contest here in Germany on both AM and SSB. It will be on the channels that were once known as mid-band, 26.965 to 27.405MHz. The first part will be on Saturday May 8th and the second, SSB, part will be on Saturday June 12th, with both starting at 6.00pm and ending at midnight local time, which is one hour ahead of British Summer Time.

The event has been organised by the Deutsche CB-Funk Organisation (DCBO), which is the German national CB Organisation, and you can read more about it on their dedicated contest website.

www.cb-funk-kontest.de

If you can't read German, you can translate it with Babel Fish.

<http://babelfish.yahoo.com>

by Simon Parker
CB and PMR 446 DX activity from Europe

A Roundup of the CB Scene in Europe

There will be prizes for the winners but it's not known at this early stage what they will be. Last year they were radios donated by manufacturers.

I believe the German version of the Super Bowl will be announced during this contest. If you're not familiar with the Super Bowl in the context of CB, it's the name Americans give to their Channel 6 (27.025MHz) because that's the channel they use for their high-power Super Bowl contests.

Participants in these contests use massive antennas and amplifiers and anything less than 1kW is usually considered QRP. The contests can get quite hectic and heated even though the rules are simple. Two or more stations beam towards a receiving station and try to hold a conversation with him. The receiving station talks to the person he hears best until somebody else comes along and talks over the previously strongest station and the receiving station then switches to talking to him. He also keeps a record of the stations he talks to so that there's proof of who beat who. In big Super Bowls, there might be hundreds of stations all beaming at different receiving stations and the frequency can get very crowded.

As with all competitive activities, all sorts of tricks are used and rule bending is not unknown but in the end, brute power usually wins. Some competitors build their own amplifiers, some pay to have them built and some have been known to use modified commercial broadcast transmitters. A good Super Bowl antenna might be something like an 8-element beam optimised for forward gain on a 75ft boom! These

contests attract some of the biggest CB stations in the world.

Radio Activity Day 2010

Something else to listen out for is Radio Activity Day, which will be held on Saturday June 19th. It will be 24 hours of non-stop radio activity with people up in the hills calling on CB, PMR, Freetnet and many other frequencies. This event is always extremely popular and if the skip conditions are right, you should be able to hear some of it in the UK.

I like these events because there are far too many people these days who are happy to go on forums and blogs talking of the death of the radio instead of getting out and transmitting. Luckily, in the UK there are still some dedicated people who go up in the Cleve, Brent and Mendip Hills to transmit and keep the bands active. I'm fortunate where I live, some 1,000 miles from the UK, because the channels here are full in the summer and there's plenty of activity.

I'm not really keen on AM but I have ordered from Neuner a President Tommy to use during this event. It is too expensive and it is nothing special but I want to take part in Radio Activity Day and it will give me a good opportunity to try out this radio so I went ahead and bought it. Coincidentally, it's arrived just as I'm finishing off this column so although I don't have time to write about it here, by the time you read this, I will have posted something on YouTube.

www.youtube.com/simonthewizard

Team Colours

Some time ago, Team introduced the MX8, a modern UK/EU 80-channel radio that operates on 12 or 24V. It's a nice radio that has chrome knobs and a large blue/amber backlit LCD with scrolling text. Now they have released another version that's black and white so it's now available in three colours. I don't know if these changes are just cosmetic or if there is anything new inside nor can



Willkommen auf der Homepage der Deutschen CB-Funk Organisation



I say for sure if it can be modified for export use. However, there is a photo on a website that shows EX on the screen and next to that, there's A B C D, which makes me think it might be able to cover 26.515 to 28.305MHz.

I had one of the early versions of this radio and I thought the audio was rather nasal on AM but I've not tried one of the new ones so I can't say if that's still the case. I've been told that these radios are about to go on sale so you'll be able to try one for yourself soon, whether it's the black, silver or the original black case and silver front one.

Team TS-6M Multi

This radio has now been released and there are some differences in the version that's on sale to the one I had a while ago.

The electret microphone has been changed and the audio is now said to be a little sharper. Apparently, some users have found that putting a bit of paper tissue behind the 3mm hole that's in front of the microphone element makes it sound a lot better.

The output power on FM has been reset and it's now 3.82W. On AM, it's set within the legal limits at 0.9W for Germany and 3.88W on the Polish and EC Bands.

I should take a moment here to commend Team because they have shown that they do respond quickly when there's a problem. Some of their radios had a noticeable hum when they were left in standby mode. Other manufacturers have been known to wait until the end of a production run before they rectify problems but Team reacted immediately by recalling the radios and

The Team TS-6M Multi.



The Team MX8 in two of the three available colours.



replacing the relevant components right away. Maybe it's because they are a small company that they can do this sort of thing but whatever the reason, it's to be welcomed.

Rumours on the Internet and some European dealers are saying that the Team TS-6M will not be sold in the UK but one of the owners of the company has told me that is not true. In fact, I've just Googled it and instantly found one UK dealer who has it on sale at just under £70 so it will probably appear on sale in your local dealer soon.

Team RX-EP-U

I've just heard some early news about an interesting new gadget from Team GmbH. It's a receiver that works on the PMR446 band but it can be programmed to receive between 400 and 470MHz and it's about the size of a Bluetooth headset. It's an unusual idea that might catch on because it's ideal for those who need to receive information without needing to reply.

I don't have much more information about this unit or the price yet but I have been told that it will definitely be in their 2010 catalogue. As soon as I can get hold of one, I'll tell you more about it.

Radio Courage

Last month I mentioned the Czech pirate radio scene and since then I have carried out a little more research and it seems that there are many more stations



On the air with Radio Courage.

there than I first thought. One area that has quite a few is the Pilsen (Píseň) region, which also has the biggest brewery (Pilsner Urquell) in the Czech Republic, after which the popular pale lager is named.

One station from there that I like is called Radio Courage. It broadcasts sporadically on **94.4MHz FM** and the people behind it appear to use their time on the air as an excuse for a barbecue, a few beers and a nice day out.

Like most the pirates, they have jingles and a website, so to find out more about Radio Courage or to listen to their jingles, take a look at their site.

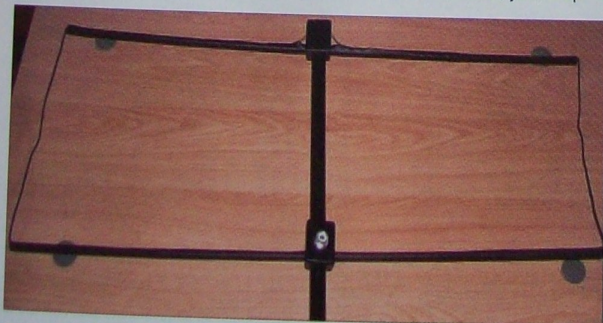
<http://944fm.borec.cz>

Moxon Antenna

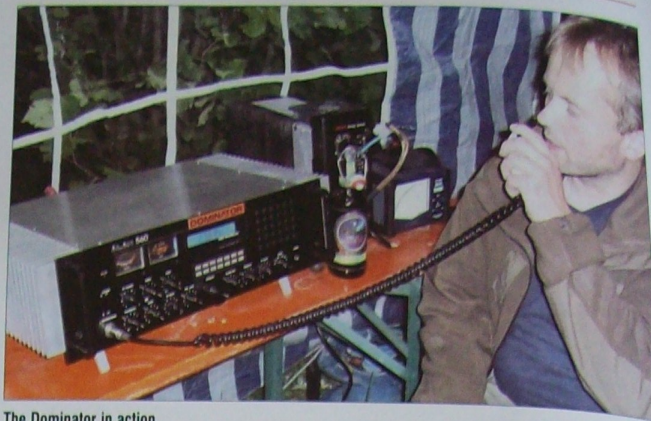
I've been thinking about getting a new portable antenna for when the snow melts and I can take to the hills again. One that I'm going to try out comes from a company that I stumbled across by accident when I was idly surfing the Internet.

I came across the MOCVO Antennas website and saw that Nigel MOCVO makes inexpensive versions of the well-known Moxon dual band (2m and 70cm) antenna, which was originally designed by Les Moxon G6XN. The one that caught my eye is the Mighty Moxon Mk II, which has a quoted forward gain of 3.6dBd (on 2m). It has an SO239 socket, boom length is just 300mm (the longest element is a mere 746mm) and it costs just £24.95. It looks ideal for portable use and it's light enough (250g) for me to be able to use it attached to the top of a long fishing pole when I'm out and about. I think it could be a great addition to the PMR backpack that I have put together over the winter ready for when the spring and summer weather eventually arrives, which could be some time away as it's currently the middle of March and there are still blizzards here.

Once the weather does change, I plan to try out this antenna at about 1100m ASL on 149MHz and once I do.



The Mighty Moxon Mk II.



The Dominator in action.

I'll let you know how well it works. In the meantime, you can read more about the Mighty Moxon and Nigel Booth's other antennas on the MOCVO Antennas website.

<http://mocvoantennas.webs.com>

Dominator

I have mentioned the Dominator amplifier that Hans makes here before and that attracted a lot of attention and e-mails. Now he has a new and completely updated version. He's called it the XXL and it consists of two KL500 amplifier boards with new finals installed in an Alan 560 – these boards are normally fitted in the well-known KVL-1000 amplifier. He also adds a TVI filter and new fans to dispel the extra heat.

In use, the radio gives out 10W and when hit the button on the back, you get about 1100W of FM going up into the antenna! I've seen it working and it's amazing, and the audio is great too. You can see it in the photograph, along with the small power supply that runs it.

Of course, it's not legal for use on CB and it is quite expensive but if you'd like more details, just drop me a line.

Mountain Men

Last month I reported on the return of the mountain men to the airwaves and I mentioned a couple of expeditions by the Jackson Dynasty, one at 3300m ASL on the Kitzsteinhorn and another at 3250m ASL on the Hintertux. Following on from that, several readers have written in asking if there is a website where they can see photographs of those expeditions and the people who took part.

I did give the Extreme Breakers website address last month but the details of these expeditions are buried well down in the site so here's a long

link that will take you directly to the photo pages.

www.extrembreaker.de/bildergalerie/extrembreaken-ab-2000-meter-enn/gedenkfunken-jackson-dynasty-2010?page=1

Finally

That's it for this month and until the next time, if you know someone who makes something interesting, whether it's for CB, PMR or any other band, then let me know so that I can share the information with everyone. Best wishes from the snowy hills here in Bavaria – 73 Simon.

