

REVIEW:

KW Ten-Tec Argosy



The view has often been expressed in these and other columns that there is a distinct lack in the new equipment market these days of rigs designed with the CW operator in mind. Usually CW seems to have been included as something of an afterthought, and to obtain a transceiver with anything more than very basic CW facilities from any of the Japanese manufacturers it is usually necessary to buy one of the more 'up market' models, thus paying for features such as RF speech clipping, IF shift, variable selectivity and so on, none of which are of any great use to the amateur who operates exclusively CW. It is a refreshing change, therefore, to come across a rig like the KW Ten-Tec Argosy, which appears to have been designed with just such an operator in mind. This is not to say that it will not appeal to the SSB enthusiast who is looking for a cheap rig, but it comes in the form of a basic, no-frills transceiver of good performance with a large number of optional extras, enabling the CW man to improve the rig's CW performance without having to pay for an improved SSB performance as well.

Review of the KW-TEN-TEC "Argosy"

By Richard Davis
G3TDL

General description

The Argosy is a small, lightweight, well constructed, all transistor rig covering all the HF bands with the exception of 1.8, 18 and 24MHz, and produces 50 watts output with a switchable power reduction to 5 watts. In its basic form it provides all the features to get one on the air, and there is an extensive range of additional modules and accessories. These are listed in Table 1, and it can be seen that, by suitable selection, the rig can be optimised for SSB or CW as desired. All the additional modules and filters can be fitted by the user and thus the rig can be bought in its basic form and upgraded later; a useful feature for anyone whose bank account is not too healthy.

The general appearance of the Argosy suggests that it has been designed with ease of operation in

mind. The front panel is neat and uncluttered with all unnecessary controls eliminated — indeed, the writer was surprised to note the absence of an RF gain control or attenuator, and more will be said about this later. Besides the main tuning and the band selector switch, the front panel controls are the mode selector, (the modes being SSB NORMAL, SSB REVERSE, CW and LOCK, the latter putting the rig into transmit with inserted carrier for ATU adjustment), OFFSET (RIT), AUDIO NOTCH, DRIVE/MIC GAIN, and AF GAIN. In addition, six pushbuttons select forward or reverse power metering, noise blanker, calibrator, crystal filter, audio filter and wide or narrow settings for the latter. With the exception of the SWR meter all the facilities controlled by the pushbuttons are optional extras, although all wiring for them is already fitted which means that, as mentioned earlier, the user can buy any of them at a later date and just plug them in. The front panel layout is completed by a sliderule tuning dial, an illuminated meter which indicates forward or reverse power on