MORSE FORUM

Ian Poole G3YWX hears about the biggest CW party of the European year.

Technology and the ever increasing complexity of electronic goods seems to be apparent in all walks of life today. Cars are less DIY orientated than they used to be, and how many of us would like to dive into the back of a tv or video recorder?

Amateur radio is following suit. One only has to listen on the bands to hear people announcing what they are using — this rig or that with dozens of memories and so forth.

Many people do not want all this complexity and it is often refreshing to use equipment which is simple and effective. It is possible to do this using CW. It has been said that an engineer can do for a few pence what anyone else can do for a few pounds. This is very much the spirit of amateur radio and CW in particular.

CW as a mode has the elegance of simplicity while retaining its efficiency. I have proved this time and time again. It is possible to make DX contacts on CW where sideband would have been a hopeless case.

For the home constructor there is also the possibility of being able to build the whole station comparatively easily. A direct conversion receiver and a QRP transmitter are within the reach of many people. But how many could build a full sideband transceiver? Even for trained electronics engineers the time and cost factors make it prohibitive.

Shop window

Building kits is one way in which a professional finish can be brought to a piece of home built equipment. Fortunately the variety of kits available to the amateur seems to be on the increase now and home construction is very much alive.

One kit manufacturer is Lake Electronics. They produce a number of kits, including their DTR3 80 metre CW transceiver. This is a compact QRP transceiver intended for base station or portable operation. The construction has been simplified by the use of modular techniques. Each board is built and tested separately so that any faults can be found more easily.

The transmitter includes a VFO which covers 3.5 to 3.6 MHz. The output delivers 1.5 watts to the aerial and it is well filtered to remove any harmonics. In addition to this the keying is shaped to prevent any key clicks, and there is an adjustable sidetone.

The receiver is a direct conversion type featuring a dual gate mosfet fed via a double tuned filter. There is also an input attenuator which can be switched in to prevent overloading if there are strong signals around. The receiver also boasts a sensitivity better than 1 microvolt and a passive audio filter which has a 250Hz bandwidth at 6dB down and is 45dB down at 3kHz.

The transceiver comes in an attractively finished black PVC coated steel case with aluminium chassis. The front and rear panels have white printing on a black background. This makes it look very neat.

And the price? £74.25 plus £2.00 post and packing for the kit or £126.50 including carriage if it is ready built and air tested. Further details of the DTR3 or other Lake kits can be obtained from Lake Electronics, 7 Middleton Close, Nuthall, Nottingham NG16 1BX. Tel. 0602 382509.

FOC joins EUCW

From 1st August 1989 FOC (the First Class CW Operators Club) has become a member of the European CW Association. This means that all the major UK and European CW clubs are members of EUCW.

FOC is an active club whose members are expected to demonstrate very high standards of CW and operating practices when on the air. In fact it is a great honour to be invited to join FOC especially as its membership is limited to only 500 worldwide.

An EUCW representative said that he was delighted to welcome FOC to the ranks of EUCW and he felt that they could make an important contribution to the cause of promoting amateur CW operation.

Correspondence

Angie Sitton G0HGA wrote to comment on the "his/her" remark on the G-QRP Certificate. It seems from her certificates from most other organisations and her QSL cards that she has changed sex. On top of this a lot of people on the air refer to her as 'Dr OM Angie . . .'! Maybe we will have to introduce a new abbreviation OP for old person to replace OB, OM etc, etc.

Stephen Pearson had some interesting comments about computer methods of sending and receiving morse. He says that having had considerable success with a computerised morse reader there should be little need now for "manual" reading of the code. In fact, he takes the argument further by saying that there should not be any need for a