

Classic Exchange Newsletter Winter 2021

CQ CX de K3MSB.....

Well, we somehow made it through the propagation doldrums of another CX – and still managed to have some fun, with 25 unique stations sending in logs!

80M And 40M were once again the mainstay bands for the CX with 20M coming in as a very lackluster performer. JO3TAP commented that he hopes he will be able to work some US stations during the next CX. That may be optimistic (feel free to prove me wrong Tomonori!), but it should certainly be possible in another year or so. I remember my first CX around 2001 or so. I called CQ CX on 10M CW and was stunned to get a reply!

State QSO party contests provided some “challenges” for this CX as indicated by several comments. The good news is that Ron and I discussed this and we decided to add 7100 to 7125 Kc for the next CX in the hopes of mitigating this issue.

Once again we received quite a few positive comments about the “CX Chat Room”. Unfortunately, the person hosting the CX Chat Room suffered a server failure and that particular option is no longer available for us. Ron and I are looking into another venue.

Once again we had quite a few folks send in some nice soapbox comments and pictures and I'm sure you'll enjoy reading them.

As always, Ron and I are always open for suggestions to improve the CX. Let us know what's on your mind.

The dates for the Fall 2021 CX are currently on the CX web site.

73 Mark K3MSB
CX Newsletter Editor

The Sweet Chirp Awards!



Congratulations!

Howie WB2AWQ/7 for his BC-458A on 40M, and his CBY52208/ATA on 80M

Mark K3MSB for his TBW-5 on 80M

Howie's CX soapbox was self-incriminating for a "Sweet Chirp" nomination!

I received 4 RSTs that had a "C" at the end! Details in my soapbox comments.

CW CX Scores

4 OR MORE TX/RX PAIRS

CALL	NAME	CW SCORE	BONUS	Total
JA3KNB	MATSAMURA	409190		409190
N6KN	ROCCO	371415		371415
K2RP	RON	180278	3000	183278
K4BSK	EARL	24246		24246
K3OS	GARY	9100		9100

3 OR FEWER TX/RX PAIRS

CALL	NAME	CW SCORE	BONUS	Total
K9VKY	BRIAN	25800		25800
K3MD	JOHN	20672		20672
NZ0T	BILL	16284		16284
JO3TAP	TOMONORI	16182		16182
WB2AWQ	HOWIE	15543		15543
N5GW	GENE	13872		13872
KF6C	BRIAN	10325		10325
W5FRS	DENNIS	7203		7203
W8KM	GARY	5950	1000	6950
K4KGL	GREG	4700		4700
K3MSB	MARK	3102		3102
W8VE	ROGER	2160		2160
W6PAP	MAYNARD	2106		2106
K9HF	PAT	1832		1832
N2BE	JOHN	1404		1404
W6MZ	PAUL	896		896
WB9LWO	JIM	846		846
N4API	BRIAN	720		720
WA4ZOF	TOM	192		192
N6HCN	JOHN	176		176

Phone Scores

4 OR MORE TX/RX PAIRS

CALL	NAME	PHONE SCORE	BONUS	Total
JA3KNB	MATSAMURA	490110		490110

3 OR FEWER TX/RX PAIRS

CALL	NAME	PHONE SCORE	BONUS	Total
JO3TAP	TOMONORI	20832		20832
K2RP	RON	9940		9940
WB9LWO	JIM	2448		2448
W6PAP	MAYNARD	900		900

Mixed (Phone + CW) Scores

4 OR MORE TX/RX PAIRS

CALL	NAME	CW SCORE	PHONE SCORE	BONUS	Total
JA3KNB	MATSAMURA	409190	490110		899300
N6KN	ROCCO	371415			371415
K2RP	RON	180278		3000	183278
K4BSK	EARL	24246			24246
K3OS	GARY	9100			9100

3 OR FEWER TX/RX PAIRS

CALL	NAME	CW SCORE	PHONE SCORE	BONUS	Total
JO3TAP	TOMONORI	16182	20832		37014
K9VKY	BRIAN	25800			25800
K3MD	JOHN	20672			20672
NZ0T	BILL	16284			16284
WB2AWQ	HOWIE	15543			15543
N5GW	GENE	13872			13872
KF6C	BRIAN	10325			10325
K2RP	RON		9940		9940
W5FRS	DENNIS	7203			7203
W8KM	GARY	5950		1000	6950
K4KGL	GREG	4700			4700
WB9LWO	JIM	846	2448		3294
K3MSB	MARK	3102			3102
W6PAP	MAYNARD	2106	900		3006
W8VE	ROGER	2160			2160
K9HF	PAT	1832			1832
N2BE	JOHN	1404			1404
W6MZ	PAUL	896			896
N4API	BRIAN	720			720
WA4ZOF	TOM	192			192
N6HCN	JOHN	176			176

**WB2AWQ/7 – Howie
Reno NV.**

Howie writes:

Howdy CXers!

This CX I ran the three or fewer deal, because the XYL had broken her ankle a couple months back, and I didn't want to leave her totally on her own on CW Sunday. But it was a good run! Had some interesting highlights.

First, Mark K3MSB (one of the honchos for CX these days) and I had a WW2 TBW to WW2 GO-9 QSO on 80M. Now, the GO-9 and TBW RF sections are externally mirror images of each other. Power supply sections are a bit different, but the basic RF electrical circuitry is the same. The TBW has a modulator in the PS, the GO-9 doesn't. The TBW was made for beachhead landings by troops, while the GO-9 was made for the PBY Catalina reconnaissance seaplanes. But they're about as close to twins as radios get. Furthermore, Mark was on the east coast (PA), and I'm in NV. And me with my low 7 ft high dipole, but we made a good QSO out of it!

[Editor's Comment: Indeed we did Howie! What a QSO!]

Second, Ron K2RP (the other honcho for CX) was running a Heath SB401/SB303 pair. Now while there's not much unique in the Heath pair, this was the pair he built waaaay back in the late 60s. He's the original owner. How cool is that?

Third, Paul K2LMQ from Kingman AZ, who has been doing CX since the Jurassic age, ran a bunch of WW2 mil gear in our QSOs: A WS-19 tank radio, an ART-13, and a TCS-12 TX/RX pair. Couldn't hear the TCS relays clacking.....They all sounded great, glad Paul keeps them on the air.

Fourth, what's with all the Heath HW-16s??? I worked three separate units, from Bill NZ0T, Ron K2RP, and Rob N6KIX. That was a pretty popular Novice rig back in the day. All sounded great!

Fifth, Ned AC6YY was using a new Russian QRP rig, the LAB599. Looks like something a tank could roll over and nothing would happen to it. Neat rig, and sounded fine. First I've worked.

And sixth, 5 (count 'em) coast to coast QSOs: With Ike WB4LAL and Rory N7CR in Alabama, Mark K3MSB in PA, Wilson (or WC) W4BOH in NC, and Al K2BLA in Florida. Three on 20, and two on 80M. In a CX where all the other QSOs I had were with west coast or central US stations.

[Editor's Comment: One of the nice things about the "3 or fewer" category is that you can quickly qualify the radios and then just relax and make contacts with folks. For me on the east coast, it's always a thrill to make a transcontinental QSO and that includes the lads in VE7 land!]

On Sunday conditions were cruddy on 20M. Made just one QSO there. If it weren't for the dozens of NCQP stations, the band would have been dead for me. On 40M it seemed like the world was centered on 7045: Between the NCQP gang, an Elecraft net, two guys just having a rag chew, and us CXers, it was like the old days. But 40 still came through with my highest QSO count, just one over 80M. Tuesday things were better than Sunday. Made 5 QSOs on 20M, one with Bill KV0I running an Icom 756Pro II. Hard to believe that radio is almost 20 years old! Al, K2BLA from FL was running a "zero years old" homebrew SS 50 watt radio. Sounded sweet.

I ran some pretty old stuff: I paired my WW2 GO-9 with three different receivers: a 1938 HRO Sr, a Hallicrafters SX101A (originally mostly for 20M although that was a flop), and a homebrew 1932 Jim Lamb Single Signal superhet built out of the 1932 QST by a dear SK friend, Art Hale W4AWS. The HB worked great on 80, OK on 40, and I didn't even try it on 20. The other transmitters I used were both WW2 Command types, a BC-458A on 40, and a CBY52208/ATA on 80. Nice chirpy signals from those two. In fact I had an email inquiry from a new ham in Zero-land wanting to know why my signals had a strange sound (chirp) when no others did.....wanted to know what technical marvel generated the unique signals! Told him sometimes the stuff ages, sometimes, they just chirp!



None of these older radios run phone, so I'll just sit by and listen in 2 weeks.

*See ya all in Sept!
73, Howie WB2AWQ*

**K3MD – John
Winfield PA.**

John writes:

Got wiped out by the NC QSO party. OK on 80 Sunday night.

Did not hear anyone on 20 CW.

Had to run the local club meeting Tues. night.... I am Pres. of Susquehanna Valley ARC. Very stressful.

I got an N3ZN DDS VFO and modified junkbox 6CL6/6AQ5 (2.4 W now instead of 1.0) working, but could not qualify the 6AQ5.

It only took about 7 or 8 redesigns HI HI. The process of redesign took 9 months. I Changed the power supply to a full wave bridge from a half-wave, driver, driver tuning, final tuning, 3 different tube combos, 2 different keying combos, 2 different VFO/ Xtal control combos, voltage regulation on oscillator screen, etc. Works fine now with ARC-5 self-contained 12 V peak-to-peak VFO driving it.

Gave up about 5 times.

[Editor's comments: Wow! A story of perseverance to be sure! We are close enough to work and I hope to do that for the next CX !]

**K3MSB – Mark
Airville PA.**

For a while before the Winter 2021 CX I had been working on a new acquisition, a WW II era Navy TBW-5 transmitter. I managed to get it operating on 80M a day or so before the CX and kept to 80M for the entire event.

The TBW transmitter is housed in a movable power supply, the combined weight around 200 pounds. I paired it with my Drake 2B/2BQ receiver with 2AC calibrator. The small aluminum box on the top right (atop the antenna tuner) is a homebrew TR relay; the white power strip dangling to the right of the transmitter is my "ON/OFF" switch for the relay – photo below.

As originally designed, the TBW used 837 Pentodes for the Oscillator and Intermediate Amplifier and an 803 Pentode for the PA stage. My unit has had the 803 replaced with an 813. Normally the TBW-5 is powered, through a rectifier/modulator unit by an 800 Hz gasoline generator. Since an 800 Hz gasoline generator is unobtainium, the previous owner, Bob Lackey W4QBE constructed a power supply for it (on wheels). The TBW slides out on a shelf for maintenance.

As I write this in July, the TBW is running nicely on 80, 40, and 20M CW (and probably on 30 and 17 as well but I currently don't have any antennas for those bands).



I was absolutely delighted to work Howie WB2AWQ from Reno NV who was running his Navy GO-9 transmitter and a homebrew 1932 receiver. The GO-9 was used in aircraft such as the PBY Catalina flying boat while the TBW is a ground based portable transmitter..

If anyone knows the last time there was a TBW to GO-9 QSO on 80M or any other ham band, let me know!

Chirp! I received 4 RST's with a "C" at the end. After the CX I investigated this and found the HB voltage regulator hanging off the Oscillator tube was not working at all. There was a difference of about 30V between key up and key down!

**K3OS - Gary
Hickory NC.**

Gary writes:

The suggested frequency for both 80 and 40 CW got clobbered due to two other large contests running that day. The band around 3560 and 7060, however was relatively clear both Sunday afternoon and evening here in North Carolina. I'd like to suggest moving the frequency. It could also have been over the frequencies above x.100 on both bands. Nothing was heard on 20 or 15.

Was there any phone operation? I listened but heard nothing.

The highlight for me was working N2BE who was using a homebrew 100mw transmitter! Pretty good for a busy weekend and from NJ to NC. During a QSO with Brian, K9VKY, I said I'd "kill" to have a Johnson Navigator. He replied that he had left specific instructions with his wife that it be buried with him :)

Thanks for the fun.

[Editor's Comments: Hi Gary. As is stated on the first page of this newsletter, we've added 7100 to 7125 Kc for the next CX. Hopefully this will alleviate the congestion issue. Ron and I do our "due diligence" and more in picking the CX weekends, but there are a lot of contests and only so much spectrum.]

JO3TAP - Tomonori Osaka City, Japan

Tomonori writes:

I had a lot of trouble with AM QSOs due to the malfunction of my Drake R-4C in the previous contest, but this time it worked well, so I was able to have a comfortable QSO.



The long-distance QSO of HF is very bad and almost impossible, but at the suggestion of JA3KNB (Kazu), the QSO of 50Mhz AM (QRP) was a very enjoyable experience. Using the first machine (AM-3) devised by ICOM President Inoue about 50 years ago, this QSO seemed to return to the old boyhood and was a memorable moment.

We hope that the next CX will be able to contact with US stations.

N4API – Brian Centerville GA.

Brian writes:

This was my 1st Classic Exchange event. I was concerned that people with multiple rigs would try to exchange all rigs at one time, and QSB would set in before I got a chance to exchange with anyone. Fortunately that did not occur as everyone just exchanged one rig, and waited until later to change out their rigs.



I wish more people had used the Sked page, as there was lots of other activity on the

bands, and posting of their frequencies would have aided in locating them.

The event was "very fun" and will see you in the next one.

Editor's Comments: Hi Brian and welcome to the CX! There were a lot of folks running HW-16's this time. I've the the privilege of working on two HW-16s for people and they are a nice rig. See you next CX OM !]

N4KGL – Greg Dothan AL.

Greg writes:

This was my first Classic Exchange. I loved it, especially the drift and chirp. It gave my three old rigs a workout. Twelve of twenty QSOs were QRP. Thanks for pulling me out. This is a great warm-up for Novice Rig Roundup.

73 Greg N4KGL





W5FRS – Dennis Irving TX.

Dennis writes:

These are my "daily drivers" for the past 26 yrs. The Millen's are recent additions, and my first time to run 'em in CX. They are from 1947. I didn't count them in my score since they were driving my HB 40 and 80 M amps with tubes older than 1947.



Millen 90800 Exciters



Homebrew 808 based amplifier - 40M (left) 80M (right)

Also included the very ugly homebrew 20/17/15M exciter with 5763-5763-6146 tube lineup. This drives the HB 3C24's on 20M..



My 20M vertical is made from scrap aluminum I found in the back yard and added to a base mount of unknown origin. The radial system is chain link fencing around the yard as well as neighbors yards. It seems to work quite well!



One concession to modernity, I use an N3ZI DDS for frequency source..

Lots of fun on CX, my favorite radio event of each year.. Thanks for putting it on.

73 de W5FRS

Dennis

N5GW – Gene Jackson MS.

Gene writes:

“Here are my CX toys: on top an HW-8 and WM-2 wattmeter; middle a Triton 544; bottom an SB-102; foreground a left handed bug including magnetic weights to slow it down; on the right a balanced L-network for my doublet.”



[Editor's Comments: Green grass and a nice outdoor setting... in winter... green grass.... sigh....]

**N6HCN – John
Yorba Linda CA.**

John writes:

Sure enjoyed the CX CW. I was setting up my all-vintage station in a new homebrew station desk. I know the TS-520S isn't as "vintage" as most of the guys' but at least I have two more tubes now since Santa brought me a "new" SB-200 amp. I was happily breathing solder fumes all of January cleaning it up (if Santa built that kit, he can't solder worth beans, and drilling a hole in the front panel like he did.. well we won't comment on that, I made the best of it with a standby switch).



Ironically all this work cut into CX operations, I had three hours on-air time free, and wound up in two QSOs: one for an hour and one for two hours. But I sure enjoyed hearing N6KIX Rob's HW-16, and the beautiful sounds of chirp on the bands. At some point someone broke in and accused Rob of key click (I didn't hear it) and without missing a dit he responded "YOURS IS WORSE" and went right on with the QSO. Priceless.

*Very 73,
John N6HCN*

[Editor's Comments: Hi John. There is a whole cadre of followers of the early hybrid radios, so you are in good company. Holes in front panels... ah yes. Every time I see a nice ARC-5 radio with an additional hole in the front panel I want to.... well, it's a good thing ammo isn't cheap right now....]

N6KN – Rocco Rancho Palos Verdes CA.

Rocco writes:

CW Report: I Prepared for the CX by digging out my Eico 720 and a Lafayette HA-20 VFO from under the desk. After replacing a few electrolytics and applying DeOxit, I had a working rig suitable for CX CW and the upcoming NRR. The VFO was a bit unstable, but it was good enough!



It's way more exciting to operate the Eico 720 like this! Note ceramic "safety" cap on 6146 tube.

I began on 40 CW at 1400 with the beam pointed east and 600 Watts. Earl, K4BSK, had a good signal from NC, and Gene, N5GW, was easy to copy with his HW-8 from MS. I had a couple of hours on 40 with diverse reports from all over the country, plus XE2HQI, Saul, in Mexico.

At 8 AM, Ron, K2RP and I met with John, K6KOI, and Doug, WT6R on 3545. Ron and I ran through a pile of rigs quickly. My "reliable" 32S-3 would not transmit (I did not have the

VOX sensitivity set correctly!) Also, my SR-150 carrier oscillator was MIA. Oh, well. Later in the afternoon, I tried 20, but conditions were pretty poor, and I gave up.

On Tuesday, conditions were much better for me on 40 as the day began. I worked Mario, N2AK, at 1403 with his nice sounding Apache, followed by Earl, K4BSK, also with an Apache. After working a few east coasters and Midwesterners, I traded QSOs with Mark, W7ESN, with his wonderful HB transmitters and receivers. I had the beam to the north, and after Mark and I signed, DS5USH called in with a strong signal at 1527Z. I did not expect that!

Ron, K2RP, met me again at 1600 on 3545, and we qualified another pile of radios. At 1800, I tried 20, and the band was wide open. Devin, AG4ZV, had a great sounding FL101/FR101 pair, and Dan, W3DF, called in with his Eico 720 (I wish I had mine warmed up at the time!) Twenty meters stayed open until 2247Z. Later, I tried 80 again with Ron, K2RP, and we qualified the remainder of our piles of "junque."

All in all, most of the stuff worked – except, sadly, my HRO-500, which croaked after two QSOs. What a heart breaker. 80M was very productive, which is unusual for me. I attribute some of this to our local power company fixing some of the arcing lines in the neighborhood over the last year.

SSB – Was trapped up at my Portland QTH and forgot to bring my short paper log back to CA, so zero points for me!

W6MZ - Paul Del Mar CA.

Paul writes:

Mostly non-CX contacts; glad to work more CX veterans this year. The chat room helps. Spent the last 3 hours ragchewing instead of contesting but it's all good!



Rig: Drake TR-4 100W
Antenna = 20m/40m dual resonant Inverted Vee up 45 ft.
Ground elevation 270 feet above sea level, 0.3 mile from Pacific coast
Grid square = DM12iw

-- 73, Paul W6MZ

W6PAP – Maynard Citrus Heights CA.

Maynard writes:

It was a lot of fun although my oldest, and favorite receiver, a BC-342, was down. Maybe by next time I'll have enough energy to move it to a surface where I can work on it.

I had trouble finding participants, but maybe it's better to contact those who don't know about the event because now they do.

73,
Maynard Wright
W6PAP

Rigs:

Swan 270B transceiver (SSB and CW)
Multi-Elmac AF-67 transmitter & Hallicrafters S-40B receiver (CW only)

W8KM - Gary Parma MI.

Gary writes:

As always the CX was a fun event. However, if it weren't for the second day my score would be zero. An awful lot of QRM from the various QSO Parties and other things that were going on the first day (Sunday). I was surprised, since the "bonus points" were for Johnson transmitters, that I didn't hear more of them. Luckily both my Valiant and Ranger were able to participate this year.

I had 3 "boat anchor" stations set up. The top photo below shows the Valiant/75A-4 and the Ranger/HQ-170A stations. The bottom photo is of the 32S-3/75S-3C station.

73,
Gary W8KM



W8VE – Roger Canton OH.

Roger writes:

As you can see by my picture of my ham shack. I also have a Collins S line vintage 1960, Elecraft K2 (Vintage 2002), Drake 7 (vintage 1978), Drake 2B vintage 1961. Not shown in the picture is my new addition of a Yaesu FY990 vintage 1991). Also shown is a Kenwood TS 440S (vintage 1990). Again thanks for your efforts to run a neat contest.



**WB9LWO – Jim
Jacksonville IL**

Jim Writes:

This was my first time in the CW portion of Classic Exchange. I fired up my old Heathkit DX 60B (which I built) and used a Heath HR 1680 & Realistic DX 300 for receivers, which have much better selectivity than what I used back in the day. Also, in addition to using an HW 22 and Ten Tec Corsair in the SSB portion of the CX, I used my Drake TR5 which I wished I used in the Fall 2020 CX. Oh well, better late than never.



**K9VKY – Brian
Fombell PA.**

Jim writes:

Hello Ron, Mark, and the CX Crusaders---

Another CX has come and gone, although the smell of warmed mildew and beeswax lingers here all year long. It was fun to hear the greats of yesteryear from Collins, Hallicrafters, Heathkit, Johnson, and some WW2 veterans as well. A special tip of the hat to John, N2BE, for jumping into the fray with his homebrew 100 mW transmitter, and to Tim, W3TIM, with his homebrew 1929 Hartley transmitter and regen receiver. I'm already looking forward to the next CX, albeit in the summer soldier, three rig, CW only category. Cheers to all.

NZ0T – Bill Shell Knob MO.

Bill writes:

I ran the three rigs on the top shelf in my pic. From left to right: Kenwood TS-530S, Heathkit SB-104A and a Heathkit HW-16/HG-10B. The majority of my time was spent on the HW-16.



I will admit to using a Timewave DSP-9+ to help out on the HW-16 receive and used Bencher paddles with a PK4 keyer kit built into an old MFJ Econo Keyer II enclosure. My old fist just doesn't like to use a straight key as much as it used to!

[Editor's Comments: Hi Bill. Well, as we get more “seasoned” our wrists and ears don't work like they used to! I love a straight key but I've been using a bug more and more as it's easier on my wrists. I also use a Timewave DSP-599zx in the audio chain, primarily for NDB hunting on LF/MF but on occasion for CW work in general.]

I had a blast and worked a lot of really interesting gear. Thanks for putting on such a fun event.

73, Bill NZ0T