



Western Suburbs Radio Club Inc.

December 2005 Newsletter

ZL1AC, Branch 03 NZART 3000 Great North Road New Lynn, PO Box 15-122, New Lynn.

President: Andrew Barnett ZL2ALW, Secretary: Ross Reddell ZL1VRR

Newsletter Editor – John Neill ZL1NE

VHF Club Net Wednesday 07:30pm 146.525 MHz, HF Club Net Fridays 07:30pm 3.623 MHz

Website <http://www.gsl.net/zl1ac>

Club Calendar

Monday	12 th	December	Christmas Social Function - Bring a plate and your Partner – Start time 7:00 pm
Wednesday	15 th	February	Amateur Radio Promotion Branch 65
Saturday	26 th	February	Field Day – Date to be confirmed
Sunday	27 th		
Saturday	26 th	February	Amateur Radio Promotion Branch 29 – date to be confirmed
Sunday	27 th		
			Musick Point Open Day – Date to be confirmed details to follow

December Club Evening

The December Club meeting will be a Social occasion. All Club members and their partners are welcome at this function and as usual we extend a warm welcome to visitors. Bring a plate, either sweet or savoury, and your own drinks. The club will supply some nibbles and juice. Please also bring a few dollars as there will be raffles of meat packs and other goodies.

Waitakere Sprints 2005

The results will be published here as soon as I am given them.

Clubrooms

A big thanks to all who helped in scrapping the obsolete equipment that had been donated to the club. The clubrooms are now free of all the excess of gear round the walls and on the stage. This dismantled equipment has been taken to the scrap metal dealer for which we received some money for the club for our efforts. Some equipment had no value and had to be dumped at the transfer station.

Digipeater

Our APRS digipeater, ZL1AC, has been off the air again due to a computer crash after someone had turned off the power switch and pulled out all the plugs. Please leave this equipment alone as it needs to function 100% of the time to provide a continuous ARPS link. If you notice any faults please let one of the committee know so that repairs can be made.

UK radio amateurs don't want lifetime licenses, poll indicates (Oct 31, 2005) –

The majority of the United Kingdom's radio amateurs want to keep the existing Amateur Radio licensing structure or have longer license terms rather than switch to a license that's good for life. That's one conclusion of a MORI poll commissioned by the Office of Communications (Ofcom), which regulates Amateur Radio in the UK. The survey of 1572 hams also revealed that two-thirds of the respondents believe the current licensing structure to be "about right." The Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) points out that the poll does not represent the conclusions of Ofcom's still-pending consultation into the future of Amateur Radio but "just one small part" of the overall process. "Ofcom is keen to issue Amateur Radio licenses for life," the RSGB said. "But 52 percent of respondents to the survey said they prefer either the existing arrangement or an extended renewal period." The RSGB said the lifetime license proposal was even less popular among its members, with around two-thirds favouring the current arrangement or longer terms. Of those who wanted longer license terms, 60 percent preferred a

five-year renewal period, the Society reported. Only 1 percent of those surveyed said they wanted to abolish the licensing arrangement altogether.

Woodhill Horse Event held at Fletcher Road 27 / 28 November

This AREC exercise was held over two days of indifferent weather with rain on Saturday and pleasant sunshine on Sunday. Our section team members were Ross ZL1VRR/ZL1EK, Merv ZL1SK/ZL1EKT, Brian ZL1MW, Brendan ZL100, Errol ZL1BID, Ellwin ZL1CCJ, Jacquelyn ZL1JAQ and Andrew ZL2ALW.

We left with light rain falling, but as we drove north the rain got heavier. On arrival at the site at the Wool Shed there appeared to be not much activity happening. We unpacked our vehicles and carried the equipment into the shed, but did not set up until a phone call to one of the organisers confirmed that the event would go ahead. Base was set up and we proceeded to put the repeater on the nearby hill which gave us good communications with all stations. The first event was a 50km ride making up of 1 x 30km loop and 1x20 km loop back to finish. Then there were 2 x 30km rides plus a 20km fun ride.

This year we had a computer program to enter in all results. As we entered the results from the field, the times were up-dated instantly with overall time and time between checks were being displayed. Brian ZL1MW bought his white board and ruled boards to keep a live indicator of where each horse and rider were on course. This was in case of a computer crash, which did not happen until we got to the very last entry and print out.

After raining all day, the rain suddenly stopped, and the evening cleared. No horses got into trouble, or were vetted out and all returned to the finish. There were two checkpoints in the forest and both had good communications back to base. On checking on reverse were able to copy both positions, with one in Pulpit and one in Mushroom. The horse people had one problem on Sunday with the forest owners, after plotting their course through a restricted area of the forest, but all horses had passed through that part of the course by this time. Some brief messages were logged and passed onto the organiser's to rectify. This was written up on an incident report form that ZL1SK had produced for an emergency or incident.

Some radio club members stayed over and slept on site while others went home coming back Sunday morning for a 6 am start. The day was the opposite of Saturday, with now warm hot weather throughout the day. Sunday saw only two events, an 80 km made up of 2 x 30km loops and one 20 km loop back to the finish and a 50 km course made up of one 30km loop and one of 20 km back to the finish. Almost all horses made the course with no problems with only two horse's being vetted out due to more heart beats per minute than were allowed.

Due to smaller fields we finished earlier than expected so began to dismantle the gear and pack up from the wool shed and the repeater that was located close by. The repeater performed well and did not give us any problems. A small realignment to widen the input deviation by 2 KHz improved its performance and stopped the repeater dropping out while transmitting to it.

A great weekends event and thanks to all who assisted. The computer program worked especially well, thanks to Merv ZL1SK with the horse people getting the results within a few minutes of the last horse crossing the finish line. They were impressed. We wait till next year when we do it all over again.

Ross ZL1VRR / ZL1EK

Automated Contesting Robot (ACR)

How wonderfully advanced the new ham contest stations are now, with operators reaching maximum scores through machine-like precision! A few buttons are pushed by the contest operator to send callsigns and automatically generate signal report numbers. Computers log and check everything, rotate beams, switch antennas, and even QSY in response to a rare DX cluster spot.

Well, the time is now, to take contesting to the next logical step in ham radio evolution: eliminate the human factor entirely! Enter the ultimate appliance: the Automated Contesting Robot (ACR)

Automated Contesting Robot, containing the most advanced computing power available, is so much better suited to contesting than humans are. ACR doesn't need a human to press the start and stop button, because the time/date of the contest is automatically downloaded from contesting websites. ACR roams all the amateur bands freely, quickly and efficiently exchanging reports with other ACRs and ACR is so much more capable of exchanging accurate and truthful signal reports than humans. After all, computers don't make duplicate QSO errors! ACR doesn't take it personally if a frequency is already in use, or if another ACR tries to take over its frequency. ACR simply increases transmitter power, swings the beam, or QSYs.

ACR doesn't get weary during long 48-hour contests. As Automated Contesting Robots become fully utilized by every great contest operator in the world, the duration of contests will be expanded to weeks, months, or even the entire year. Just think, contest lovers, we can soon look forward to continuous contests on the ham bands! ACR does all the preparation for a contest beforehand, without procrastination. The stored credit card information entered by the purchaser of the ACR is used for other functions:

1. ACR orders the 6-over-6 stacked beams required for every band and emails contracts to construction crews for installation of the entire contesting station hardware system.
2. ACR orders the IC-7800s and high-powered amplifiers for each band and has them installed by qualified technicians.
3. Of course, from time to time, the ACR would also order hardware upgrades for itself, such as 100GB of RAM to continue to operate at full potential.

And ACR takes care of all that messy after-contest work before resetting for the next contest:

1. ACR exchanges databases with all other ACR's in the world, comparing scores within microseconds.
2. ACR orders the immediate delivery of award plaques and gold trophies online, which are Fedex'd overnight to the "Contest Operator" for instant gratification.

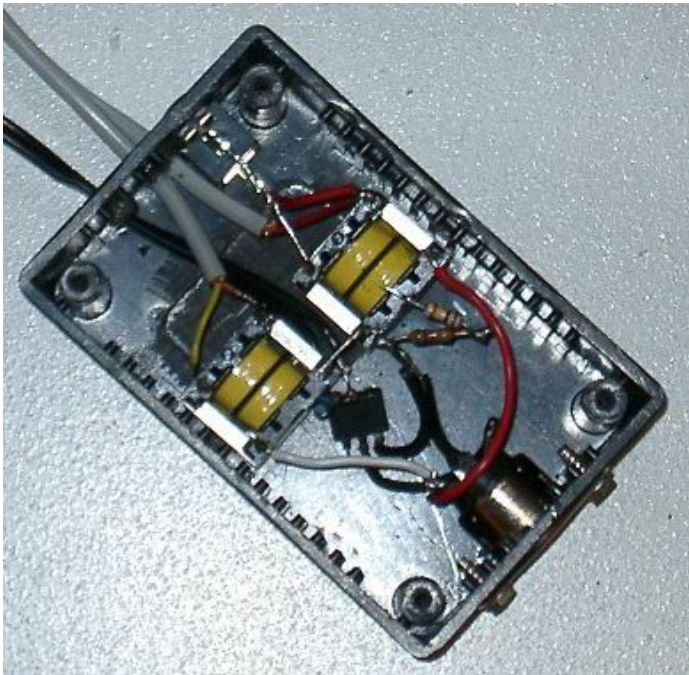
The mundane chores of contesting are now completely solved by the ACR appliance, leaving the ACR owner to maintain high standings amongst the ranks of the World's Greatest Contest Operators, while basking in the eternal adoration of fellow hams.

Club Nets

VHF Net 146.525 MHz 7:30pm every Wednesday, HF Net 3623 KHz +/- QRM/QRN 7:30pm every Friday. All are welcome to check in on the nets. The HF Net Roster can be found on <http://www.qsl.net/zl1ac/wsrc-hf-roster.html>. Wee looking for more members to take a turn at running the net. If you would like to be rostered on, then contact any of the people mentioned below.

2 December 2005	ZL1MW	Brian
9 December 2005	ZL1JL	John
16 December 2005	ZL1NE	John
23 December 2005	ZL1ACZ	Barry
30 December 2005	ZL1WI	Roy
6 January 2006	ZL1VRR	Ross
13 January 2006	ZL1MW	Brian
20 January 2006	ZL1JL	John
27 January 2006	ZL1NE	John

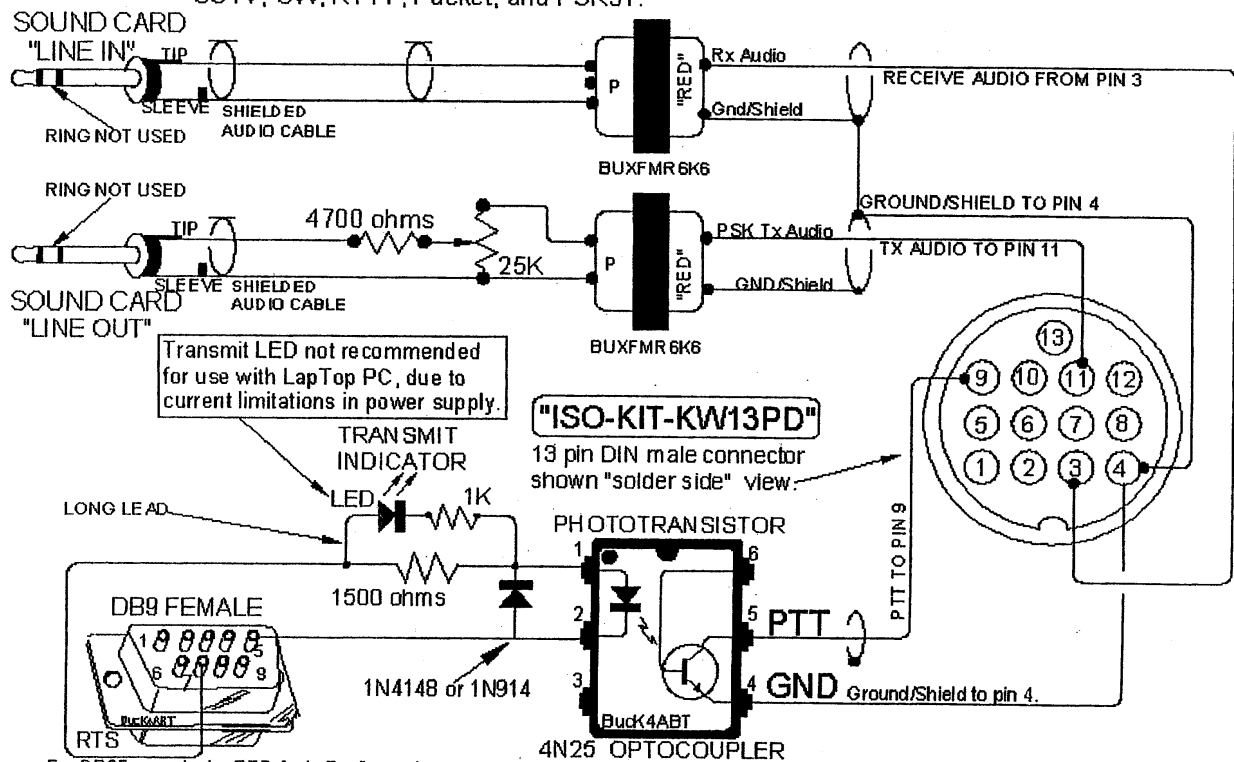
Digital Modes Radio/Computer Interface



I pictured last month an interface to isolate the computer from the radio transceiver. I did not include a circuit diagram, as it was not available at the time. I received a call to include this diagram, so here it is. The one I built was largely modelled on the circuit below, which I got from the Howick Radio Club's newsletter a few years back. The main differences were that I left out the LED and did not include the accessory plug, opting instead to have simple connections to the microphone, PTT and headphone plugs. I also left out the 25k pot and installed a 5 pin din plug on the radio side of the black box so that I could change leads easily for different radios.

ZLINE

(NOTE: This interface may also be suitable for Sound Card applications such as: SSTV, CW, RTTY, Packet, and PSK31.



For DB25, use pin 4 = RTS & pin 7 = Ground.

As a starting point, go into the sound card parameters and set "LINE OUT" half open, and set "LINE IN" half open.

KENWOOD Transceivers with 13 pin DIN ACC2 data I/O port to PC sound card for PSK31 mode.

TS-140, TS-450, 680, 690, 790, etc...