



Extracts from.... **THE VMARS NEWS SHEET**

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5 MHz AM New Year's Day Net

The VMARS News Sheet Issue 117



An historic occasion as the first 60 m AM Net got under way at 9.00 a.m. on New Year's Day. Net Controller Stuart McKinnon G0TBI is pictured here calling on 5317 kHz using his Plessey RT 320/2

The first VMARS/all comers AM Net took place on New Year's Day at 0900 hrs. In fact, Dave Evans GW4GTE and Ian Underwood M0YMK are claiming the first ever UK amateur AM QSO on 60 m. From about 0802 hrs on 5316.5 kHz they coincidentally put out CQ calls and, although were

both aware of another station on frequency, they were both too weak to make contact. At 0814 hrs, as it got lighter, the band very suddenly opened and both stations immediately heard each other 59+, which was extraordinary. There had been talk of a sked just after midnight, but inter-G conditions would have been useless. This is generally the time when US stations can be heard and it is reasonable to assume that propagation would have stayed on long skip until it opened for inter-G in the morning. Dave and Ian, therefore, claim the prize unless someone else has prior claim, of course! About 10 minutes before the Net started they moved to 5317 kHz because it was understood that the 320/2 which Stuart McKinnon G0TBI was planning to use (please see photograph on the front page of this Issue) only tunes in 1 kHz steps.

The following stations participated at 0900 hrs on a frequency of 5317 kHz (signal reports G0TBI): Gary GW2ABJ Tonna South Wales 5/9, Keith G3XGW Evesham Worcestershire 5/9, Paul M0YMJ Canterbury Kent 5/8, Ian M0YMK Petworth West Sussex 5/9+, John G3YPZ Long Sutton Lincolnshire 5/8-9, Robin G0GNE/P Brooklands Motor Museum Surrey 5/8, Alan G4GEN Pippingford Park Sussex 5/9 +, Nigel G6EED Norton Fitzwarren Somerset 5/6, Dave GW4GTE Buckley Flintshire 5/9+, Don M5AKY Farrington Gurney Nr Bristol 5/5-6, Ron M0WSN Sheldon Birmingham 5/5, Martin G4JSX Brinklow Leicestershire 5/7.



Air portable lightweight Landrover belonging to Robin Maddison G0GNE used as a radio communications vehicle on the 5MHz net

It is no wonder that there were few takers for the 80 m New Year's Day Net controlled by Broniek Wedzicha M0DAF.

Ron Swinburne M0WSN writes: the icing on the cake for me came at 1304 hrs after hearing Ian M0YMK and Dave GW4GTE in QSO. I dropped my call sign in there and was pleased to receive reports of 5/4 to 5/7. There was nothing unusual in that except that I was using my WS19 'barefoot' with 5 W carrier showing on my Palstar power meter. Can I claim the first ever contact on the new 5 MHz band using a WS19? I really enjoyed the New Year's Day AM Net on 5 MHz; it revived a memory or two that's for sure. I first used a WS19 when in the CCF at my local grammar school here in Birmingham c. 1954. There were also WS18s and various other bits and pieces of equipment as I remember. I last operated on 5 MHz in 1960. Stuart G0TBI makes a similar point that it is 31 years since he had used AM on 5 MHz, probably with C11 or A13 or even Clansman, as they had just been issued with that equipment in Germany. Ron subsequently worked John G3YPZ in Long Sutton Lincolnshire at 1620 hrs and received a 5/8 (with QSB) report from him using his WS19, of course. He also mentions that there were many callers on 5317 kHz after the Net; many were using modern rigs in the AM mode, most for the very first time. Ron wonders if VMARS has really started something here. Perhaps it is our down to earth but gentlemanly attitude.

In contrast, Robin Maddison G0GNE operated (as far as we know) the only portable station that day at the Brooklands New Year Gathering. Whilst it is really just a huge car fest, the Landy (on the right hand side above) belongs to Robin and the antenna is a 44 ft end fed stretching loosely to the tree. A three piece counterpoise was run out from the vehicle in three directions. Signals were in the 5/5 to 5/7 region from the VRC321.