MAGAZINE REVIEW

By Tony Bailey G3WPO

Shortwave Magazine

The first off the pile this month is Short Wave Magazine, the only other independent publication aimed entirely at Amateur Radio, to the exclusion of other electronic pastimes. It has a regular following and seems to be back in gear after a few problems in the last couple of years.

Regular features are columns of VHF and HF activities, where operators can write in with their DX worked and views etc., and a Clubs section, similar to our own.

The December issue contains a series of articles by the Rev. G C Dobbs (G3RJV) on constructional practices, an excellent writer and one who would be very welcome at a club lecture, if he does such things. A 10MHz antenna, and the start of a Microprocessor controlled morse decoder, together with a review of the Datong FL3 (we reviewed it last month) and a theoretical article on Line Termination in Aerial design (W5JJ), completes the main offerings. If you like to read general chitchat on what other people have worked, then you will find the two regular columns covering HF and VHF essential reading.

R & EW

January R&EW gives the basics of a 10 metre transverter based on the previous 6M design, together with a simple CMOS keyer, with integral paddle. A review of the IC730 is one of the main features, but sadly tells you little of what the rig is like to use, just giving 5 pages of detailed circuit analysis. The overall opinion is very favourable in this respect.

Practical Wireless

Practical Wireless for January concludes the RFI series with a useful diagnostic chart for hi-fi amplifiers, plus all the details of the cures normally adopted for this type of interference. An "Active ATU", a guide to QRP operation and the start of a series on RF dummy loads completes the main line-up. The latter gives details of a syrup tin type dummy load using silver sand as the heat exchanger — a different approach to the more normal transformer oil.

Ham Radio

Ham Radio, (the US one that is) contains an extremely interesting article on low-cost linear design for HF. Some excellent advice is given on selecting valves for this purpose, with details of sweep tubes and calculation of dissipations for the various modes of transmission. The preference is for 813's, and the use of three is recommended for a full-kilowatt amplifier. The article runs to 11 pages, and is well worth reading.

A rather different rotary dial and encoder project, using microprocessor control, and capable of looking after 4 dials at once, say for frequency, bandspread, filter frequency, and keyer send speed control looks interesting if you want to keep your station up-to-the-minute. Together with a 40M Tx/Rx, Battery Charge sensor (for Ni-cads), the theory behind receiver dynamic range calculations, and a cautionary article on inadvertently handling a stolen rig, this issue is above average. Although it hit a bad patch a year or so ago, Ham Radio is well worth reading if you don't already subscribe (via the RSGB).

Rad Com

December Radio Communication gives some more detail of the new HQ move to Potters Bar (see last months HRT for address etc). The RSGB moved to the old Doughty Street premises in 1968, and had hoped that that move would last for the foreseeable future. The rapid increase in licencees and the support required as a result must have been a contributory factor to the new move.

On the article side, RadCom has an interesting contribution on Lighting and EMP protection methods for ham gear. The article doesn't actually mention anything about EMP (ElectroMagnetic Pulse), but then you may feel it not worthwhile to protect against this considering the chances of you being around after the source of the EMP has exploded are minimal. However, it is well worthwhile reading and acting on, rather than waiting for the event to happen and losing a few front ends at the least.

A ZX81 computer program for calculating attenuator resistor values, both T- and Pi-types, together with a good non-mathematical approach to explaining the "third method" of SSB generation, plus one stations work on the assessment of his VHF site completing the line-up. The latter represents an interesting insight into how poor a location can actually be from the radio aspect, when detailed examination of large scale maps is undertaken, and the obstructions plotted.

The mention of ZX81's prompts a mention that we forgot to say that December Practical Wireless contained a pull-out supplement on using the ZX80/81/Spectrum series in amateur radio, with some very worthwhile programs listed.

QUA

Although not strictly a magazine, the quarterly newsletter/-Magazine of the Ipswich Radio Club, covering most of the clubs in the East Anglia area, and called "QUA", is worth a read and runs to around 40 pages. Further info from G4IFF, if required, and it looks as though it will set you back 25p a copy. Supported by dealer advertising, there is an article on copying morse code via a computer (for the PET, but the BASIC used is transportable and only needs a PEEK address changed for others) which is worth a try out, together with a suitable interface. Also part 1 of an introductory piece on ATV, details of MF beacons and Coast Station frequencies, and some intriguing results of a Swedish antenna testing exercise. ●