

The International Morse Preservation Society



Straight Key Week 2010

Hello and welcome to the results for SKW 2010.

What a marvelous week of activity! As some will know GX0IPX #1 and GX3ZQS #2 was on air for two days during the event. Yet again, very pleased to work members/non members who called in for a brief chat.

It's very heartening to hear so much activity from members.

A mention and thanks must go to John, M0CDL who yet again allowed me to take over his facilities to air the club calls. Thanks too, go to Stan K4UK who activated the FISTS NA club call K0W0CW on a number of days and I see many worked him on quite a few occasions. Sadly I wasn't able to make the trip across the pond; the wind must have been in the wrong direction Stan, (Hi)

Let's take a look at some of the reports and comments received.

From Jeremy G0AZR

I'd forgotten to mention to the treasurer about the writ being served Jerry. (Hi)

Dear Rob,

Attached log for SKW.

What a great week.

I don't think I have had as much fun since Granny fell down the well.

It has been so enjoyable to meet people day by day and also new friends...because that is what they have become.

Luckily I have been on leave so as long as I balanced domestic bliss with the radio all was well. (Do I send the divorce papers to FISTS solicitors??)

Lots of contacts.....a bit of frustration when I heard KN0WCW working Peter, G4LHI on 20 but I couldn't make him hear me.....only 5 watts and a dipole....be liking throwing snowballs at the Yeti.

Take care....and my usual thanks in advance for doing all the work on the logs and organization. You have my support....and I know you will wear it always.

73...take care. Jeremy G0AZR

Always a pleasure to hear from you Jerry. Very pleased to hear that you've enjoyed the event. As you've quite rightly said, society members are not just that, we all become friends!

"Radio amateurs are not strangers, just friends who have never met"

(Support fits a treat, many thanks)

And from Martin, IK2RMZ

Hi Robert,

This is my SKW log. The weather was unfavorable I had extremely high QRN levels which disallowed the use of 80m and which limited the 40m use to the lunch break sessions. It is very sad that so few FISTS stations could be found. But it was a delight to see how Stan supported us. Erkki was easy to get on 20m. England was off skip on 20m quite often.

73. Martin.

Hello Martin. Stan did do a sterling job with KN0WCW, many worked him on multiple days.

from Piet, PA3AFF

Hi Rob,

Here is my entry for the SKW 2010. Normally I work with my elbug (twin paddles) or sometimes with my Vibroplex bug, but it is always fun to return to the basics with the hand-key. I used the hand-key I started with for training for my HF license. It was a cheap - brand-less - Japanese one, but still functions OK!

I could only be QRV the last 3 days and worked both G3ZJJ and G3HAL on all these 3 days. I did miss G4LHI, but my very last QSO was with Peter! I also missed the Fists club-station(s).

My info: Piet/Schaft/445. Stn: TS130V, pwr 15W, ant. 80m: end-fed Zepp, 40m: dipole
73 PA3AFF

Always a pleasure to hear from you, and receive your log(s) Piet. Glad you managed to hook up with G4LHI, Peter wasn't expecting to be QRV during SKW, but found time and was quite active.

A warm welcome to Ernie, GI0GDF #552 who chose SKW for his first FISTS Event

Hi Rob,

Please find attached my feeble attempt at SKW 2010.

(No attempt, however small is feeble Ernie. Ed.)

I had hoped to do the full week but other things got in the way; i.e. work etc. This is the first time I have entered any of the FISTS events and I must admit I enjoyed it very much. I started on day 4 and only used search and pounce instead of calling CQ SKW. I have been QRT for quite a while due to work commitments etc, but now am QRV and in full swing with the hobby. I am 60 years old now and getting ready for retirement when the hobby will get all of my attention. I operate CW 100% (except for the odd local natter on 2 metres)

I had 24 contacts and every-one of them was a pleasure. By the end of SKW I was starting to enjoy using the straight key again and will use it more often from now on.

Regards and 73 to all. de Ernie GI0GDF FISTS 552

PS. G0VQW Sandy has me interested in the COOTIE hi...just spent a pleasant afternoon watching his You Tube videos. Steven Spielberg eat your heart out (Hi)

A warm welcome Ernie, glad to hear you've enjoyed your first FISTS Event. I know all members will be looking forward to you being QRV once again, and hope we can hook up in the future.

And from Stan; who was operating the KN0WCW FISTS NA Club call and his own call K4UK.

Rob

Here are my logs for KN0WCW and K4UK during the Straight Key Week. Wish I had requested permission to use KN0WCW on Sunday because as you can see from the log I operated only on Days 2 – 7

Lots of fun giving folks 5 point QSO's during the week. Great fun using the home made key that Hector, NP4FW sent me. It uses a door hinge. Think I send a picture of it last year.

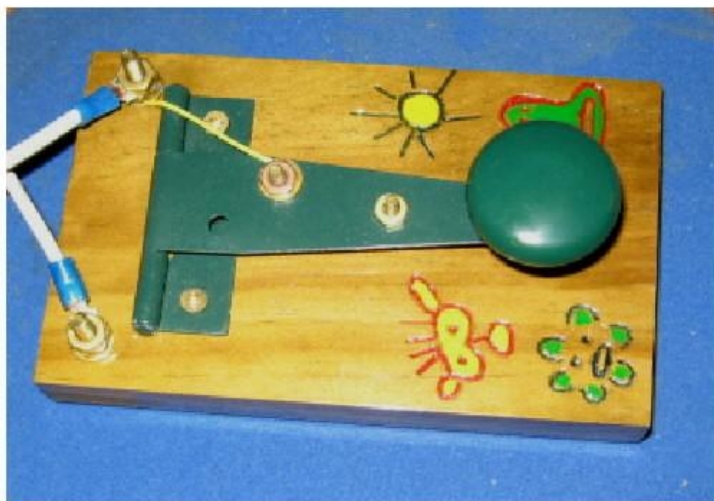
I'll make QSL's with a picture of the key on it to send to all members I contacted.

73, Stan - K4UK

Pleasure to hear from you and receive the FISTS NA Club log.

I know many were very pleased to get you in the log on multiple occasions, I was calling you with the FISTS EU Call, but sadly nothing heard by you, maybe next time. Hectors' door hinge key is still doing a sterling job Stan. So I guess the door is going to stay broken for a while yet Hi.

For those who haven't seen Stan's key, made by Hector NP4FW; here is what it looks like.



And from Ray G3ASG

MØBPT de G3ASG

Attached is my log for the Straight Key Week 2010.

Propagation conditions at the very best were only "fair" during the whole week. Even so, a few DX QSOs were made.

80m was the main source of Fists contacts, with only ONE contact on 40m! Where were all our continental EU members?

Some EU stations were worked on 20m together with the few DX stations.

No Fists stations were heard on 15m or 10m.

The very high noise level made the use of filters down to 50Hz bandwidth necessary to even HEAR some of the weak ones.

Equipment used:

KEY: Straight "up and downer" made from a kit.

TX/RX: ICOM 756PRO2. Power: 100W.

Antennas:

(1) 80m dipole 25 feet up. Used on 80m.

(2) Multi-band (6m to 80m) vertical. Used for 40m and 20m.

Overall, an interesting week!

73, Ray, G3ASG

Good to hear from you once again Ray, glad you found the activity interesting. Pleased to have worked with you with the HQ Calls.

And from G4LHI.

Hello Rob, what a great success the 2010 SK Week was, there certainly seemed to be much more activity than in previous years & I was lucky to take part more than I had dare hope, Jean was sleeping most of the time bless her.

Well where do I start? Such a hive of activity, perhaps with the two new members I met for the first time, Andy, G0IBN, 14008 & Bert, F6HKA, 14557. QSL cards via the Fists bureau in due course, very many thanks & hope you both worked a nice few Fists guys during the week.

Then of course the regular stalwarts of our activities, both old & new friends, thank you all very much for the many QSO's, & nice to catch up with a dear friend not heard for ages, Eric, G3VRU, great to have a short!! chat Eric, will have to check with Rob if we qualify for double points for our one hour chat hi!.

Then of course, last but not least, the kind members that brought the National Club Calls for an airing, many thanks Rob for GX0IPX & GX3ZQS & Stan out there in VA with KN0WCW, who I was lucky to work 4 times, my very last QSO was Stan enjoying a picnic in Bedford , VA. I understand Mark did make an appearance with a Club call, but very sorry not to have worked you mark, better luck next time, or even on the Ladder which you did do a few times in the past hi!!

Using Kenwood TS570 & 100 watts

Ant, G2DYM Trapped dipole in Vee, centre 25ft

Keys, Swedish Key & Navy/NATO key

If I have missed any one please forgive me, but thank you all for a very enjoyable & fair event. I did mention the Ladder on Sunday during the SK Week, I think three came on that do not usually come on the Ladder, but it appears we exhausted a few during the week hi!!

That's all for now folks, many thanks again & keep bashing the brass, see you all in the next event?

73 de Peter G4LHI # 2219

Hello Peter, as ever many thanks for your concise round up and report of the SKW from your perspective. So much activity heard, I do feel that SKW; indeed all the events are going from strength to strength as the years go by.

And from Derrick, G3LHJ who comments,

Hi Rob,

It was great fun in the Straight Key Week, a bit of a slow start, but picked up half way through & until the end. I did try several CQ's on 20/40M but no replies, but according to Peter G3JFS who I saw at our Torbay Rally yesterday, I missed out on a few W's in the late evenings. Have not done such a long spell on a straight key for years, it was certainly hard going, someone said during the week "Just think we used to do all our contest working on the ole straight keys back in the 60's Hi, and there were not any PC's or "Clusters" to help just paper & pencils Hi.

Hope you get a good number of logs.

73, and take care. Derrick G3LHJ.

Good to hear from you Derrick, very pleased that you had good fun during the event. Quite a few mention to me how much they found it to be hard going at the start of the event, but how pleased they are to have picked up the "Up and downer" once again, and as you comment almost a trip down memory lane.

From Alan, G3XZX.

Hello Rob,

Please find attached my log for FISTS Straight Key Week 2010.

Owing to other commitments, I was off the air for three of the seven days. I operated from the main station in Exmouth on days 3, 4 and 5 using a Schurr straight key, and 90 W to a 56 m end fed wire. On day 7, I operated /A from Caddington, Bedfordshire, using an Air Ministry Type D key, and 20 W to a 40 m end fed wire. I was pleased to find there was a fair amount of activity.

73, Alan, G3XZX, FISTS #13293

Hello Alan, good to hear from you and pleased you found some time to get on air and enjoy the event. Another interesting thing about SKW is that you are able to find out what keys members are using and have dusted off for the event.

Rob. G4MLW writes

Hi Rob

My pitiful SKW log attached! Still, good fun though.....73, Rob.

Hi Rob, good to hook up with you during the week, as I never tire of commenting; "No log entry is ever pitiful" Sending a log shows support for the society and the event. I'm pleased that you've taken the time to mail it to me and support the event.

And from Graham, G3ZOD

Hi Rob. It was great to hear so much FISTS CW activity on 80m, particularly during the evenings. I'm happy to say that I managed more QSOs and a higher score than I did last year.

I was disappointed though that, on two separate days, I heard CQ FISTS / SKW on 3.560 MHz (the 80m QRP centre of activity frequency). I don't think the "neighbours" are going to be very happy about this and it does our reputation no good at all. I'm sure this is just some unfamiliarity with the 80m band plan, so I'll point out that for non-QRP QSOs, it's preferable to use 3.558 and lower frequencies rather than QSY higher.

On a happier note, I was very pleased to have a lengthy QSO (over an hour) with Rog GW3UEP, who, although a non-member, was enjoying himself participating in SKW. It's good to know that we are friendly and welcoming enough for non-members to feel comfortable in joining in.



Hi-Mound HK-704 used at G3ZOD during SKW. Bought for very little off eBay, it's neither beautiful nor has the best feel, but it gets the job done.

I have to admit that I rarely use a straight key now and the first few days had to concentrate really hard in sending nicely spaced characters, but towards the end of the week had settled in (and my arm stopped aching, HI!).

With the antenna and power limitations, I'm pretty sure I'm the weakest signal on 80m! So thanks to all those who did manage to pick me up out of the noise. It seems that judging from requests for repeats, folk are very kind and have a tendency to send rather optimistic RST reports to me so as not to hurt my feelings! In fact I have come up with a more concise replacement for the existing RST system!!

559: I got your callsign but lost the rest in the QRM and QRN.

589: I'd like to give you 599 because you gave me 599, but the best I can stretch it to is 589.

599: My S-meter is not calibrated correctly.

HI HI.

I noticed that the "sent" vs. "received" signal strengths on 80m seemed unusually far apart even for me during SKW. It wasn't until afterwards that I realised that I'd left the receiver pre-amp switched on, artificially boosting S-meter readings by 2 S-points. (While I know not everyone holds with using S-meter readings, I find it helps me to send "impartial" rather than "polite" reports. With the DSP set to a 100Hz or 50Hz bandwidth, a signal that sounds 599 to the ear can actually be quite weak relative to the noise level once the bandwidth is set wider.)

Finally, a special thank you to Rob M0BPT for activating GX0IPX and GX3ZQS (new one for my log!), and to Stan K4UK for activating KN0WCW (the FISTS USA HQ callsign) on 20m during SKW. I was astonished and very pleased that on the two days I tried to contact Stan, I succeeded right away. Along with some other stations, it seems Stan "hears real well". I'm in no doubt that a large part of this is skill - equipment can only take you so far.

73 de Graham G3ZOD FISTS #8385

Good to hear from you and hook up with you once again Gra. Regarding your comments on "S" Meter readings, I make no apologies for not looking at the meter, just go with what my ears tell me. Indeed I've had rather brusque replies when giving a 339 or 449 Report!

And from Graham, 2E0JYK.

Hi Rob

Hope you are well? I tried the straight key week activity to see how I would get on and as you can see I did reasonably well for a first timer. I thoroughly enjoyed taking part, and enjoyed the contacts even though they were only local ones; hope it is not too long before I can transmit on the HF bands and then I may get a few more contacts.

73. Graham 2E0JYK.

Hello Graham, very pleased to hear that you enjoyed the event, members will always look forward to having a chat with you.

John, 2E0JCY comments;

Hi Robert,

Please find my SKW 2010 log attached.

Having missed this event last year it was good to get involved this time round. I missed out on the club stations, but did meet quite a few members for the first time, including Sandy G0VQW; the only station I worked on all seven days.

Thanks for all your efforts and looking forward to the next one.

John 2E0JCY #13253

Hello John, good to hear from you once again, pleased you managed to get on and enjoy the event, and always good to hear that you met up with some new members during the week. Thanks for your kind words; the 2011 activity calendar is being prepared at the moment; hope you'll find time to get on board next year.

Phil, M6PHL writes;

Hello Rob,

Please find attached my log for the 2010 SKW.

I must say I had great fun working all members especially with the limited amount of time available to me during the working week, the highlight working Stan KN0WCW on a couple of occasions, great to know that the States can be worked on just 10 watts and a Dipole Hi!!.

It is a shame that I didn't hear any M3 or M6 prefix holders, are there any active on CW out there? it would be good to work fellow Fists Foundation licence holders. Many thanks to all those who gave me points and I look forward to taking part in next year's SK and EYA weeks.

All the best

73 Phil M6PHL Fists14543

Hi Phil, good to hear that you've enjoyed the activity, I have noticed that M3 and M6 prefixes found their way into other members logs; so they are active Phil, looks like you're not around when they're on! Hi...

And from Tony, G3ZRJ.

Hi Rob,

Sorry for the delay, PCs aren't my favourite things!

Not sure if I should have got extra points for FISTS 10000 in W land, here's the output from G3ZOD's program, God bless him.

Rig was Elecraft K2 at 5W into Inverted Vee dipole, key was side-swiper used left-handed. apologies to all for the less than "square" Morse this year.

Thanks for all your hard work

73 Tony G3ZRJ FISTS 7727

Hi Tony. Your CW was fine with me! Dear Stan was a popular "target" for members with KN0WCW; I'd noticed quite a few "W's" on air during the week.

Erkki, OH7QR comments;

Hello Robert,

I enclose my SKW-log. I enjoyed the week very much and I was pleased to meet so many members. I made more points than last year thanks to the good activity. Many thanks to all for the QSO's and I hope to meet you on the Ladder.

Robert, you do great work within FISTS. Many thanks to you for all the trouble you've taken. It is always a pleasure to read the Brasspounder.

73 Erkki OH7QR, 8318

Good to hear from you once again Erkki, I had made it one of my tasks to hook up with you with one of the club calls, it was a pleasure to meet you again on 20m. Pleased to hear that you've enjoyed the activity, thanks for your kind words and support, as I mention, it's a team effort and something we all enjoy doing.

Peter, G3JFS comments;

Hello Rob,

Here is my brief report:

I did not have a lot of time for operating and got off to a slow start but picked up a bit later in the week. In all I had about 65 contacts, 53 of which were with FISTS members. I had several rag chews of 15-30 minutes with some of our well known members but was disappointed not to hear or work any of our less experienced members. Such a pity as SKW is an ideal opportunity for them to make contact with members who are prepared to show patience and consideration to stations trying to gain confidence on air.

I managed to work KN0WCW, operated by Stan K4UK, several times on 20m. Some evenings it was hard going but we made it in spite of the erratic conditions. I also heard Stan one evening on 40m but he was too weak with too much noise and QRM to make a contact

I was pleasantly surprised to receive a '5-DAY CONTACT AWARD' certificate from Stan for working KN0WCW on Days 3,4,5,6, and 7. Nice touch Stan - many thanks.

As always an enjoyable relaxed style of contesting and I hope you get a lot of logs.

73 Peter G3JFS

Always a pleasure to hear from you Peter.

Stan was exceedingly popular with KN0WCW during the week. M6PHL observes that in his case, M3 and M6 prefix holders were conspicuous by their absence; looking through the entries received, I did notice that many newer members were active during the week. I will concur with Peter's comment that activities such as SKW; and EYAW for that matter, are agreeable opportunities for members who are new to CW, or lack the confidence to go on air! Our members are there to help you overcome the concerns you might have!

I have taken these comments from the FISTS NG.

"I did take part in SK Week but didn't submit a log because 'Not enough QSOs to make it worthwhile'. (I would have claimed about 30 points)

However, what did make it worthwhile for me was a QSO I had on Day 3 on 3.558, with Mike G8FDR (a non member), who answered my CQ call. During the short QSO he told me that this was his FIRST EVER CW contact since he was first licensed 30 Odd years ago!

After the contact I found his address and sent him an email congratulating him on 'getting the hard part over' (first CW contact), and hoping that now he had started he would continue to use the mode. He replied that he had not been aware of the SK Week event, but had been attracted to the frequency because of the high level of CW activity and at a speed and quality that he felt confident to try for a first contact with. I suggested that he might consider the benefits of joining the club, and hope we will see more of him soon!

This one of sixteen or so QSOs that I had during the week seemed to make it all worthwhile for me !!

73 Fred MØICW - FISTS # 9870"

" I only claimed 40 points, but then I wasn't "in it to win it" (just as well really!).

The thing is that anyone glancing at the results might think that FISTS is poorly supported. So, as I see it, the more log submissions, the better.

Also, if you have most of the logs, then cross-checking the claimed scores is much easier. However, given the ethos of FISTS, I would like to think that all scores would be simply be taken on faith - with perhaps a cursory sample check of the winner.

73, Rob G4LMW"

"Hi All,

I agree totally with every word you say !

I sent my log in even though I only had about 48 points. It was the first log I have ever sent to FISTS.

Other clubs beg members to send in logs for cross checking etc but more importantly to let others see that MORSE is not DEAD and that their club is well represented and alive!

Also, other members can see in the results that old absent friends are still around!

I have a great love for CW and have great respect for CW ops and my 48 feeble points mean 24 new friends made in 4 of the 7 SKW days. I intend to do my bit to keep CW alive and well. So, thanks FISTS for a very enjoyable week! Thanks to all who gave me my 48 points!

73. Ernie GI0GDF: FISTS 552"

In summing up the weeks event;

The comments on the News Group and from G3JFS sum up what our society is about! SKW meant G8FDR felt comfortable enough to take his first ever CW QSO on air. This one event made SKW worthwhile; less experienced members and non members who read these comments should feel heartened and call in.

G3JFS mentions "SKW is an ideal opportunity for them to make contact with members who are prepared to show patience and consideration to stations trying to gain confidence on air" G3ZOD mentions "I was very pleased to have a lengthy QSO (over an hour) with Roger, GW3UEP, who, although a non-member, was enjoying himself participating in SKW. It's good to know that we are friendly and welcoming enough for non-members to feel comfortable in joining in" Let's hope the events that I have planned for 2011 will encourage more to join in; no matter how experienced you are! The words of GI0GDF, in his post on the NG sums up everything what we're about!

I've enjoyed reading the comments that came with your logs and reports, I know readers will too! G3LHJ's comments suggesting it was a trip down memory lane for him and others!

G0AZR, who commented "It has been so enjoyable to meet people day by day and also new friends...because that is what they have become"

Year by year, events within the society are becoming more popular and enjoyed by the membership; and non members too! Without your support, this great facet of our hobby could have/would have become extinct; pleased to receive the support from you all. Let's hope that the 2011 activities will be received with even more enthusiasm!

A special mention must go to Erkki OH7QR, #8318 who hooked up with **THREE** of the FISTS international club calls! Namely:

GX3ZQS (Op M0BPT) FISTS EU#2;

KN0WCW (Op K4UK) FISTS NA#10000;

and impressingly JL3YMV (Op JO3HPM) FISTS EA#15000!

Well done Erkki!

Here's the moment you've all been waiting for!

Let's look at the results table.

SKW	2010
CALL	SCORE
G4LHI	297
G3ASG	247
G0VQW	244
KN0WCW	215
G3ZRJ	145
G3JFS	134
2E0JCY	125
G0AZR	124
OH7QR	121
M6PHL	113
G3HAL	105
K4UK	84
G0MRH	80
G3ZOD	78
G3XZX	65
G3LHJ	62
IK2RMZ	57
GI0GDF	48
PA3AFF	47
2E0JYK	43
G4LMW	40
M5FRA	6
GX0IPX	26
GX3ZQS	30

Congratulations to G4LHI, G3ASG, and G0VQW for taking the top three slots;
Certificates to all three.

Thanks again for your support of the event, no matter how small your log may be; send it to me for inclusion. It shows your support for the event and the society; and that CW is still alive and well supported!

Till next time;

Keep well;

Keep pounding brass!

73.

MOBPT

