

AMATEUR NOTES

Hopes for the Fisk Trophy

Tasmanian Exodus — Itinerant Key-Punchers — Improvements on 40 Metres

THIS week has brought us a whole series of surprises. The first of these was a telephone message from VK7CH, saying that he was over here for good and that his station, that has been known on the air for years all over the world, will be heard no more. He was only in the city for a couple of days before he received a notification that he had been transferred to Shepparton, and he had to leave straight away. Up there he is in the good hands of both VK3DR and VK3DW, so the chances are that, before long, he will be on the air again under a VK3 call sign.

Poor old Tasmania has never had the strength of numbers in transmitters that any of the other States have had, but has made up in quality what was lacking in quantity. Now, however, the Seventh District is faring worse than ever. The passing of 7DX was Australia's loss as well as Tasmania's, but when 7JK came over we gained for a time, and now he is in Queensland operating under the call of VK4JX. Next VK7CD arrived here and is known as VK3CS, and now Snowy is over and another prominent VK7 is shortly coming here for good as well. We should be able to hold the Fisk Trophy with these active amateurs added to our ranks.

A Promise for the Future

After very ordinary conditions existing on the 40 metre band practically all the summer, there was a sudden clearing last Saturday and good DX signals came through from all over the place. Indeed, it seemed as though we were back in 1928. Let us hope these conditions hold until after October, so that we can have the advantage of them for our first attempt at a world-wide contest organised in Australia. Even if they only last until the end of June they will help very materially in making the next series of Fisk Trophy contests entertaining.

We learn that VK3ML, who, for the last couple of years has been one of our most active officers in the W.I.A., and who is also the O.C. of the R.A.A.F. wireless Reserve, is leaving at short notice for New Zealand. He is on a business trip for his firm and will be away for nearly four months. It is hoped that he will be able to return in time for the Centenary contest. His ZL QRA is not known yet, but he is sure to be on the air from some of the stations over there, and it will be interesting to get his ideas as to the real merits of that "ham paradise."

When the conditions were at their best we heard a splendid C.C. R9 signal calling DX and signing VK2YT. This is a new call-sign, but signals were too cleanly cut and confident for us to make the mistake of thinking they came from a new station. We soon learned that it was our old friend VK2WO, who had

By MAX HOWDEN, VK3BQ

been robbed of his old call. He had just had a new batch of cards printed, too.

VK2HU came on the air calling VK3KR, and before long we heard the cheery voice of VK3OR at the mike. 3OR has been away for nearly two months on a trip through the islands up north, and he was visiting some of the Sydney stations as he passed through. He worked with 3KR for a couple of hours, and then started "rag-chewing" with 2HU. It was nearly sunrise when they turned in.

A few days later VK3OR landed in Melbourne, but could only spend a couple of days here before he had to go back to the farm. They are hoping to hold an amateur convention at Kerang over the King's Birthday week-end, and are expecting a number of visitors from Melbourne as well as those from the surrounding districts.

An 80-Metre Outfit

VK2HU has been putting out some very good 'phone on the eighty metre band at times when few other stations were working there, and this helped to make contacts with him even more enjoyable, as there was practically no QRM. His outfit is rather novel, and according to rumor, rather "haywire." It consists of

a 59 in a tri-tet oscillator feeding an F443 as power amplifier. He modulates this with two 250's in push-pull that are fed by a three stage speech amplifier with a 245 in the output stage. His power is about 25 watts, and he is modulating very deeply. His aerial is not the usual half wave forty metre zepp, but a half wave eighty metre one that he finds even better on the lower frequency when used against a sixty foot counterpoise instead of with the usual feeders.

Some tests were carried out at VK3BQ on different parts of the band, and these showed that for modulation the actual length of the aerial is very critical. A change of only fifty kilocycles on either side made a difference of two points in the strength of the transmission.

VK3KR changed a few weeks ago his old frequency of 3550 KC to his reserve frequency of 3990 KC for his Sunday morning 'phone QSO's, and was at once reported much improved at both VK3DW and VK3PY. The conditions down here have not been good enough for any definite comparison, but his signals seem to be weaker, if anything.

Another surprise we had this week was to hear VK3WG calling DX. His signals were very strong and clean, but he did not come on until the peak period had long past.

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