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Peter, US1REO, and Victor, US1RCH, have sent me information about the Ukrainian QRP Club Outdoor Day held on 6/7 August this year. This was the second such event. The operators (UR5RDX, UR5RJU, US1RCH, US1REO and US5RCW), of the club radio station UR4RWR/P, set up their camp on the bank of the picturesque Desna River in the Chernihiv region. A mast was erected to which was fixed a 4-element Yagi for 144 and 430MHz, as well as a long wire and delta loop for 14MHz. The club members declared the day a great success in spite of a thunderstorm and heavy rain.

The group made use of a NorCal-20 transceiver from a kit donated by the Northern California QRP Club and the G QRP Club. Some of these transceiver kits are still available. If you know of radio amateurs or, better still, a radio club in a poor part of the world that needs equipment, please contact me at the address above.

THE 'UNICHIP' GOES PORTABLE IN THE USA

The 'Unichip' is a single IC transceiver for 80m described in *SPRAT*, the journal of the G QRP Club, by the late Mike King, G3MY. It uses the five transistors in the CA3086 transistor array (one for a crystal oscillator, one as a transmit pre-amp, and three for receiver audio amplifier stages). Recently, a version was built by Hans Summers, GOUPL, and documented on his website www.hanssummers.com/radio/unichip/index.htm

Hans did not have any success with the original VN66 PA, so built his own using an IRF510 and got 2W RF output. Hans first tested the transceiver at Box Hill in Surrey and had two contacts on 80m, with G4LAM and G3CWW. The receiver is direct-conversion and has no CW filter, no unwanted sideband suppression and not even a volume control, but Hans reported that it sounds really beautiful; there is no trace of broadcast breakthrough and the lack of facilities is hardly noticeable.

Hans decided to take the Unichip with him on a business trip to the eastern United States. He describes the trip in his own words: "I put the as-yet uncased Unichip in my main (not cabin) baggage in a small cardboard box also containing a screwdriver and wire cutters which I view as my essential toolkit. I also packed my homebrew ATU and 10m of speaker cable (to be split to make 20 metres) and left a note on top saying "homemade ham radio transceiver - contains no batteries". I had no security problems.

"On Tuesday evening I tied one end of the antenna around a small bottle of mineral water I found in the fridge in my room, and threw it at the tree outside my window on the upstairs floor of the two-storey building. I taped eight D-cell batteries from my office in the front page of the *New York Times* to make my 12V battery pack. I put out several CQ calls, but had no replies. I knew the ATU wasn't tuning well, but

tried anyway. I was using a wire taped to the radiator as my earth.

"On Wednesday evening, I took a PC power cord from my office and cut off the PC-end plug, to access the earth wire and use it as my earth connection. I also 'borrowed' a network cable from my office and dismantled it into four lengths of wire which I added to my antenna, increasing the length to about 32m, though not particularly high up; perhaps 5m at the highest point. I investigated the ATU and found that the tuning capacitor has developed a faulty connection. By some hard squeezing I was able to make it connect and tune the antenna system very close to 1:1.

"I proceeded to have three hours of back-to-back ragchews and followed with another 2.5 hours on Thursday evening. Over the two evenings, with my 2W QRP signal on 3558kHz, I worked WIGUE, K1ARO, W3MNE, W1CFI, N2EY, AF4K, K4JYS, AE5X/2, and W2LJ. Brian, AF4K, in Florida reported 339 at his distance of about 1500 miles! Not bad for 2W and such a basic setup. My friend Arv, K7HKL, reported via e-mail hearing my signals weakly in Idaho right over the other side of the USA!

"I should mention that if any of you are worried about the PC power cord, network cable and 8-pack of D-cell batteries that were provided by my employers, don't worry! They profited greatly from the fact that I was so excited by all the radio activities that on all three evenings I forgot to order any food! My expenses claim will therefore be that much smaller!

"As I write this, I have just seen the sun setting over the Manhattan skyline as we drove past, and then passed a great big New York Times building where from the looks of it, the newspaper is printed and distributed. I thank them for their newspaper; I didn't read a single word of it, but the front page certainly came in very useful! I'll be back and will definitely bring a homebrew radio with me. Those who have never tried operating away from home, try it! It's great fun. A big thank-you to all the friendly gen-

tleman I enjoyed meeting on 80m CW during my stay in America and who made me feel so welcome on their airwaves."

THE 22ND YEovil QRP CONVENTION

The annual Yeovil QRP Convention for 2006 is to be held on Sunday 9 April at the Digby Hall, in Sherborne, Dorset. The event is open from 10am to 5pm. The Yeovil convention has built up a reputation for interesting speakers and a fascinating collection of stalls selling components, kits and surplus items.

The convention speakers and their subjects for 2006 are:

- 10.45am 'Quantifying Grey-Line Propagation', by Rob, G3MYM
- 12am 'Chippenham DARC Mini DXpedition to Lundy', by Ian, GOGRI
- 1pm lunch break & draw
- 1.30pm an additional lecture, TBA.

For more information, contact George Davis on 01935 425 669, or e-mail george@mudford.fstnet.co.uk.

THE G QRP CLUB WINTER SPORTS

The G QRP Club Winter Sports is one of the most popular QRP operating events. Each year between Boxing Day (26 December) and New Year's Day (1 January) the club invites any operators to join in a QRP 'QSO Party' using 5W of RF output or less. The operating takes place on and around the International QRP Calling Frequencies. These are: CW - 1843, 3560, 7030, 10,106, 14,060, 21,060 and 28,060kHz; SSB - 3690, 7090, 14,285, 21,285, 28,360kHz.

The Winter Sports is not a contest, although it is usual for each operators to exchange his G QRP Club membership number if relevant. Those taking part are invited to submit logs and comments to the G QRP Club Communications Manager, Peter Barville, G3XJS, 26 Hever Gardens, Bickley, Bromley, Kent BR1 2HU (g3xjs@gqrp.co.uk). The G4DQP Trophy is awarded to the station making the best overall contribution, which may not be the station with the most contacts or working the most DX. So turn down the power and have a try at this popular event. ♦



Operating on the Ukrainian QRP Day with Peter, US1REO, Victor, US1RCH, and QRP dog, Max.

QRP