

CB Scene

BY JOCK ELLIOTT, SSB-734

27 MHz COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES



Install This Antenna Anywhere!

The best CB radio in the world isn't worth two cents without an antenna. No kidding—the antenna is the key ingredient in the "radio system." Dr. Rigormortis, who at one time published the *Eleven Meter Times and Journal* (it's now defunct), once said, "If I had \$1,000 to spend on a CB set-up, I'd spend \$990 of it on the antenna."

The good Doctor may have been overstating the case just a trifle, but his point is well taken: It doesn't matter how fancy your CB transceiver is, if you don't have an antenna, you're not going to do any CBing. But if you look around, you'll see a number of places—particularly for mobile CBing—where it's tough to install an

antenna. For example, truck mirror arms, luggage racks, motorcycle frames, boat side rails, and motor home and van sides all present a bit of a challenge, and some of these are tougher than others.

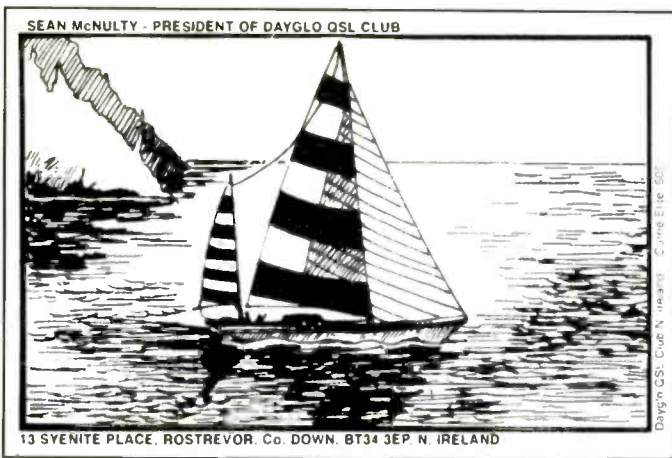
Of course, these antenna mounting problems have been solved in the past, but very often it requires finding a mount from one company, a spring someplace else, the antenna itself from another manufacturer . . . well, you get the picture.

Well, there's good news—if you've been dying to equip your boat or bike or whatever with a CB, the good people at Firestik Antenna Company have come up with a neat solution. The Firestik 40-Channel No Ground Plane Antenna in-

cludes everything you need in one package: one of Firestik's famous bare-hands tunable Fiberglass antennas, a shock-absorbing spring, a stainless steel "universal mount" that looks like it could probably solve most mounting problems, and 17 feet of coax cable. There's even a free microphone hanger included with the kit.

Most mobile CB antennas require some sort of significant reflective ground—like the metal roof of a car—to work properly. The Firestik No Ground Plane antenna does just what the name says, it works independent of any ground. While this antenna was designed with fiberglass recreational vehicles in mind, it will also work in any application that lacks a

Trevor Fletcher sent in these spectacular cards from Sean McNulty in Northern Ireland.



ground, such as boats, bicycles, motor-cycles, ATV's, and go carts. I haven't tried it, but it looks to me like this would make a dandy back-up antenna in case bad weather takes down your base antenna, and it would probably work pretty well clamped to the railing or window sill of an apartment. (Of course, a full-size base antenna is always preferable, if you can put one up.)

The new Firestik kit is available in two, three and four-foot models, and the list price ranges from \$33 to \$38 depending upon the model. The antenna itself is guaranteed for five years, and all the other bits and pieces are guaranteed for a year. For information about where you can buy one of these kits, or for a copy of Firestik's excellent catalog, write to Firestik, 2614 E. Adams St., Phoenix, Arizona, 85034-1409, or call 602-273-7151. Tell 'em you read about it in *Pop'Comm*.

Sommer Introduces DC to Daylight Antenna

Sommer Antenna has come up with an idea that definitely deserves some further attention: a disconical antenna that requires no ground area and covers all the HF ham bands, CB, 6 and 2 meters for transmitting and receiving, plus receiving from 400 kHz to UHF! This antenna, called the DCL280, is 23 feet high, 13 feet in diameter, and will mount on a pole six to 20 feet off the ground.

Constructed of wire and aluminum, the DCL280 needs only a mast and no guy wires for support. Vertically polarized at CB frequencies, it requires no ground radials, handles up to 5 kilowatts transmit power, and needs no tuning above 13 MHz. Sommer claims it can be erected in a backyard or on a flat roof by just one person. For the CBer who's also into hamming, SWLing, or scanning, this could be an all-in-one antenna farm.

The only drawback is the price: a whopping \$490, not including freight. For detailed information, contact Sommer Antennas, P.O. Box 710, Geneva, Florida, 32732 or call 407-349-9114; e-mail: <sommer1@ix.netcom.com>.

The SKYWARN Program

Severe weather can be both fascinating and devastating. The grandeur of nature in action can kill and destroy. To try to help prevent loss of life and injuries resulting from severe weather, the National Weather Service issues severe weather warnings and watches through-



Donald Aspinall's shack is extremely well equipped for emergency monitoring.

out various parts of the country as they are needed. (A terrific, and fascinating source of information, particularly when dangerous weather threatens, is a Weather Radio that receives the broadcasts from the National Weather Service. If you don't have one, I recommend purchasing one immediately).

Even though there have been tremendous advances over the years in spotting dangerous weather—weather radar, Doppler radar, and so forth—human weather spotters are still needed. That's because there are things that radar simply cannot detect, and there are situations—in moun-

tainous terrain, for example—where radar cannot see all that needs to be seen.

That's where SKYWARN comes in. It's the national organization of volunteer weather spotters run by the National Weather Service. SKYWARN's goal is to spot dangerous weather, such as tornadoes, damaging winds, hail, flash and flash flooding, and report them to NWS so that warnings can be issued.

As a CB radio operator, you can be part of SKYWARN too. I've been a member of SKYWARN for several years, and I find it exciting and rewarding. To receive certification as a SKYWARN spotter, you



CB MODIFICATIONS SECRETS BOOK.....\$25.00
206 page book of mods including frequency expansion, roger beep clarifier and more.



RMS A27\$54.00
26 db gain receive booster for 10/11 meter and CB radios.

RMS INTERNATIONAL



RMS MB-30\$55.00
500 watt antenna matchbox.

RMS MB-20\$30.00
100 watt antenna matchbox.

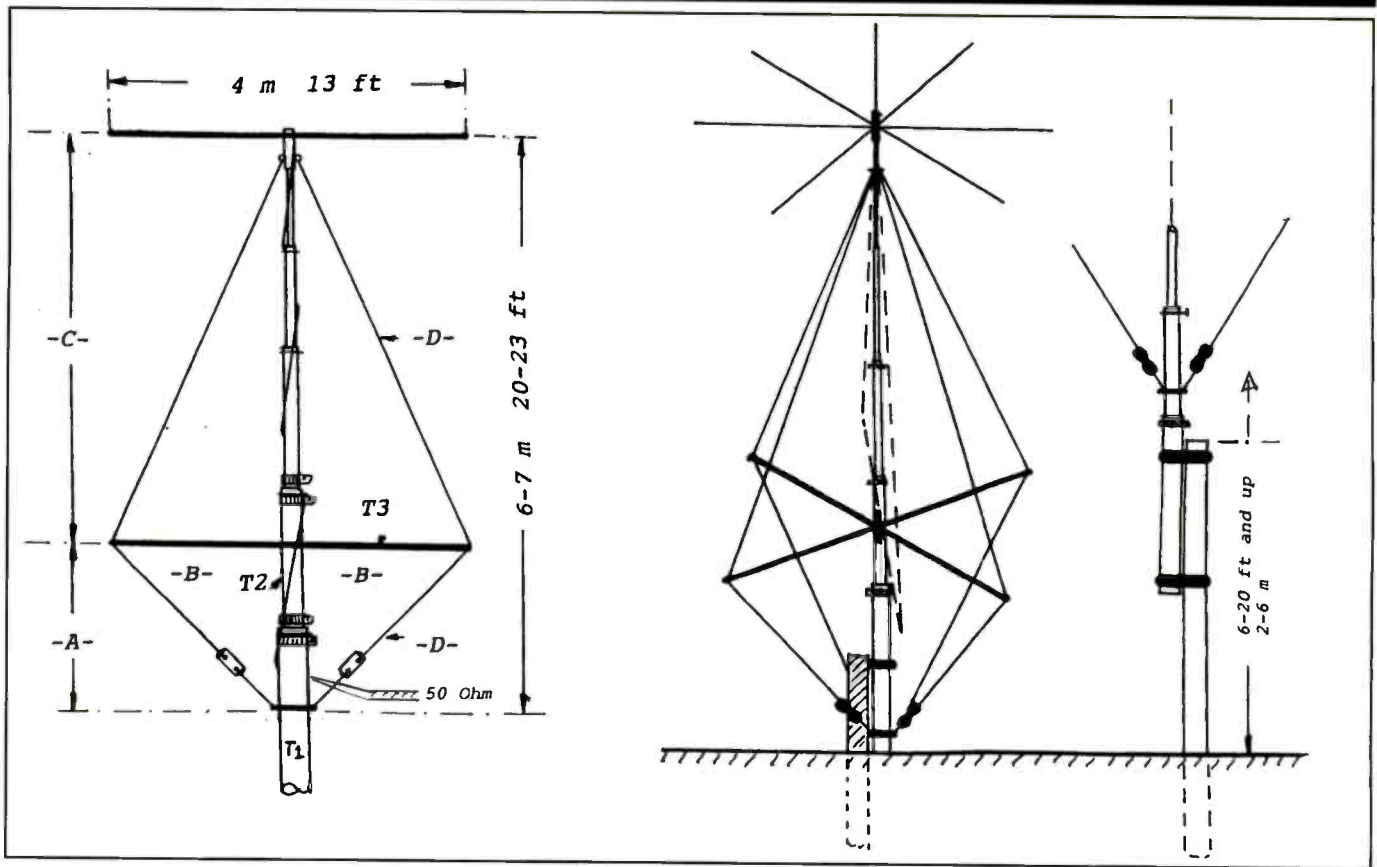
CB RADIO HACKERS GUIDE\$25.00
Peaking, tweaking, mic wiring & other mods for 200 AM and SSB CB's.

ADVANCED SPECIALTIES INC.
114 Essex Street, Lodi, NJ 07644
201-VHF-2067

All prices include all shipping charges except for COD orders.

Hi Performance accessories for CB and amateur radio





The Sommer Antenna DCL280 provides incredible coverage in one antenna, but at a hefty price.

must attend a SKYWARN training session and periodically attend additional training sessions to keep your certification. Most of the SKYWARN training I have attended lasted two to three hours and included some fascinating videotapes of severe weather.

To find out more about SKYWARN, contact your local office of the National Weather Service; or call NWS headquarters at 301-713-0090 and ask how you can become involved in SKYWARN.

The make-up of SKYWARN may vary in different parts of the country. For example, where I live in upstate New York, it was a hams-only organization until I got involved. Now, both hams and CBers participate. Other places, CBers predominate. So don't be shy: all are welcome.

From the Mailbag

Donald Aspinall wrote from Virginia to say that he is the only REACT member between Richmond, and Newport News. He spends upwards of 200 hours per month monitoring emergency response frequencies including CB Channel 9, aircraft emergency frequencies, the marine emergency VHF frequency, and the GMRS emergency frequency.

He goes on to say that he endorses the idea of the Citizens Radio Corps. The CRC is an idea I proposed a few months ago. It's mission would be to monitor the emergency frequencies listed above (as well as 146.52 MHz, a ham simplex frequency), and to identify and seek to remedy sources of interference to those frequencies only (I don't propose to try to clean up all of CB or any other radio service). Aspinall then goes on to ask, "Why don't we all go to REACT and become one big organization?"

The short answer, Donald, is that while many REACT teams do a good job of monitoring and responding to emergency frequencies—and I am very impressed by the dedication of many individuals like you—no one in REACT, to my knowledge, has proposed seeking to act as auxiliary to the FCC in protecting those emergency frequencies and eliminating interference to them. I think it is needed. The FCC is downsizing, cutting its enforcement activities, and recently the marine VHF frequencies were delicensed. It's going to get tougher to get emergency communications through.

The idea for the CRC stems from a personal incident: I was monitoring Channel 9 one day and a call came through. Every

time I tried to find out what type of help the distant breaker needed, splatter from Channel 13 wiped out the signal. I went to Channel 13 and asked, politely, if they could back it down for a while because they were some folks on the road who needed help. The fellow from Channel 13 then told me to go do something that was anatomically impossible!

Of course, I was annoyed, but I also realized that, once you've told someone that their splatter is interfering with emergency communications, any further splatter from them amounts to intentional interference. I think we should have the means to put a stop to it. Clearly, it is a low priority for the FCC. The CRC idea is one approach. If anyone has other suggestions, I'd be glad to hear them. Thanks for the letter, Donald!

A Word of Thanks

It's that time of year when we give thanks for the many blessings in our lives. One of mine is the people who read this column, including the many who write and send QSL cards, letters, and shack photos. I read every piece of mail, and I am deeply grateful. Please, keep them coming to me here at *Pop'Comm*. ■