



Figure 3: PSK31 signals on 14.070 MHz.

your soundcard input. If you read CW you don't need to use your computer, but if you don't, you can capture the lot, identify just one station (usually NZ is by far the strongest) and count from that signal to identify the rest.

So, 20 m was open to North America, Asia and Russia at the same time that the procrastinator on 40 m was telling all and sundry that the band was completely dead. My first bit of advice is to learn about the beacons and use them!

Now for something interesting. If you tune a band and it appears completely dead, try the following spot frequencies, 3580, 7035, 10140, 14070, 18100, 21070, 24920, 28070. There will probably be a funny warbling sound there, that my friend is PSK31, the mode that opens and closes bands.

Now people will tell you that Olivia or Domino or Throb is the better digital mode, and they all have their advantages, but the point about PSK31 is the thousands of hams all over the world using it.

Figure 2 shows twelve PSK31 and one PSK63 signal from European stations on 7035 at daybreak.

Figure 3 shows twelve or so stations on 14070 or around at 17:36 UTC.

To use PSK31 you need an interface between your rig and your sound card. These are available from many sources and generally cost around \$40 for a

kit. To just listen, all you need is a lead from your speaker/phone output jack to your soundcard. The software (many versions) is available free from many websites. Just type PSK31 in your search engine. I use MMVARI 0.42 myself, and DigiPan 2.0 and MixW 2.18 are other popular types.

So what am I suggesting? That you put the microphone away? Well, if you want to work all the DX you want, over 70 countries on both 40 m and 20 m in the last 5 months, with low power and simple antennas, you will have to. DX is always there on narrow band modes, PSK31 and CW. To prove a point, I got up early in the morning before the last club meeting, on March 25, and within an hour I had worked MW3 Wales 7035 PSK, DJ8 Germany 10140 PSK, OH3 Finland 14070 PSK and F4B France 3530 CW. The only one in the club not impressed with that was John VK40Q, who does the same thing each day regularly with 100 W CW! I use 50 W when operating PSK.

Why am I telling you all this? Because I can't keep up with the QSL cards! VK is quite rare DX to the Europeans at the moment and I sometimes find myself at the bottom of a pileup. I need you to do your share.

So extract your key or mouse and give me a helping hand.

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