

The Roundtable



The Electronic Journal of the Society for the Preservation of Amateur Radio

The views and opinions expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of SPAR or the SPAR Board of Directors



Conspiratorial Comments

Editorial by the SPAR Board of Directors.

This issue of the Roundtable contains the results of the 3rd annual Homebrew Key Awards. We hope you all enjoy the ingenuity and handiwork of our fellow hams!

Also, don't forget to prepare for Winter Field Day on January 24-25, 2009. Soon the holidays will be over and WFD will be upon us.

So, without further ado, here are the Homebrew Keys for 2008. May everyone have a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and a great Winter Field Day!



2008 Homebrew Key Awards

Once again during October SPAR sponsored the Third Annual Homebrew Key Contest in order to encourage the building of CW keys. The past two years featured a variety of keys, bugs and paddles showing a variety of ingenuity and craftsmanship.

This year is no different, with a total of 9 keys, bugs, sideswipers and paddles submitted. Congratulations to all of the entrants who took the time to share their handiwork with the rest of us!

So, here are the 2008 Homebrew Key Awards.

Best Straight Key - NT9K Black Gold Straight Key

The award for best straight key this year goes to SKCC member and sprint coordinator Bill, NT9K for his Black Gold Straight Key. Bill writes:

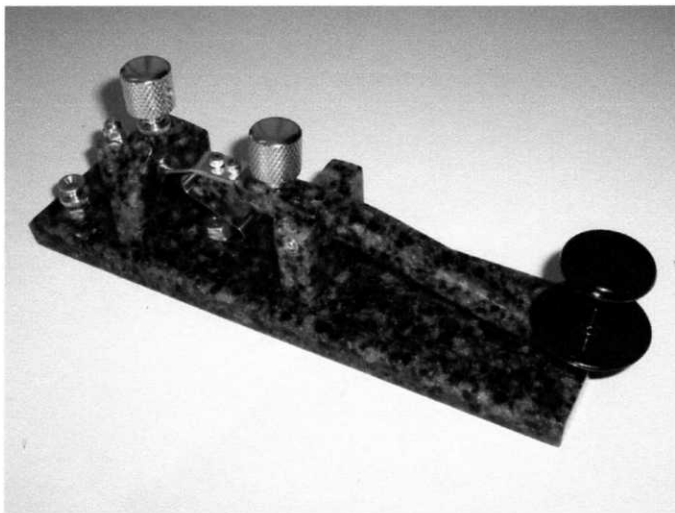
"This is my fifth home brew key. The material is called Avonite Goldmine. This is solid surface kitchen counter top material with black and gold chunks floating in a clear matrix. I did the cuts on a hand mitre box saw. Most of the

In this issue ...

Conspiratorial Comments	Page 1
Homebrew Key Awards	Page 1
SPAR Information	Page 7

hardware came from Ace Hardware. The gold knobs came off a Fender Telecaster guitar. I also bought the high mound knob from Morsex. The bearings came from ebay. Cool little bearings. 1/8 inch ID by 1/4 inch OD. This lets me use an 1/8th inch axle.

I have had the design for this key in my head for a year now. The goal was to produce a long lever key that looks and feels BETTER than an Amplidan without spending a fortune. To do this, I changed the shape of the lever to give it more slope on the incline which dropped the skirt down 1/2 inch lower to the desk. I raised the height and increased the mass of the Z shape conductor to take out any resistance in the lever movements. I also shortened the front contact bar to give it more bounce."



Best Straight Key - NT9K Black Gold

