

Who Needs SSB?

— using your FT-101 on 10m AM

Low-power "channelized" 10 meter activity is certainly on the increase. Most of it consists of recrystallized (recycled?) CB rigs operating between 28.8 to 29.4 MHz. So far, the majority of these stations are using the AM mode.

FT-101 owners may want to try a little of this, too, as an interesting diversion. Turn the MODE switch to AM, and adjust the CARRIER control for 150 mA plate current. Also, adjust the MIC GAIN to the level

where your voice barely kicks the plate current upward. That's what the owner's manual says.

But, wait a minute. Unless your FT-101 is equipped with an AM filter ("CB version"), you may run into an interesting nuisance. Assuming that your CLARIFIER is at the OFF or ZERO position, if you zero-beat the AM carrier in either the TUNE or CW mode and then switch back to AM, the AM station's audio will be severely distorted due to the SSB filter's narrow

passband.

Or, if you instead leave your FT-101 in the AM mode and tune for a peak S-meter reading, you will actually see two peaks close together. That is probably caused by filter passband ripple. Which peak do you tune for? Actually, either peak will work. However, one of the peaks will center your signal better into the other station's (ex-CB rig) somewhat broad i-f passband. It can be confusing to try to remember which peak is which.

A Better Way

Instead, tune for a zero-beat on the CW or TUNE modes, with the CLARIFIER set at ZERO or OFF. Now switch back to AM, turn on the CLARIFIER, and set the CLARIFIER to minus one kHz. This is the first mark to the right of the CLARIFIER's zero-center mark. Setting up the CLARIFIER like this for AM is easier with the "B" or "E" models because of the separate ON-OFF switch. After you do it this way a couple of times, you will see how it eliminates any mental guesswork.

Many CBers and their lobbyists are hungrily looking at "vast, seemingly empty" ten meters. Maybe they should listen a little more—above 28.8 MHz when the skip is in. That's where some of the action is!

I'll gladly answer inquiries accompanied by an SASE. ■

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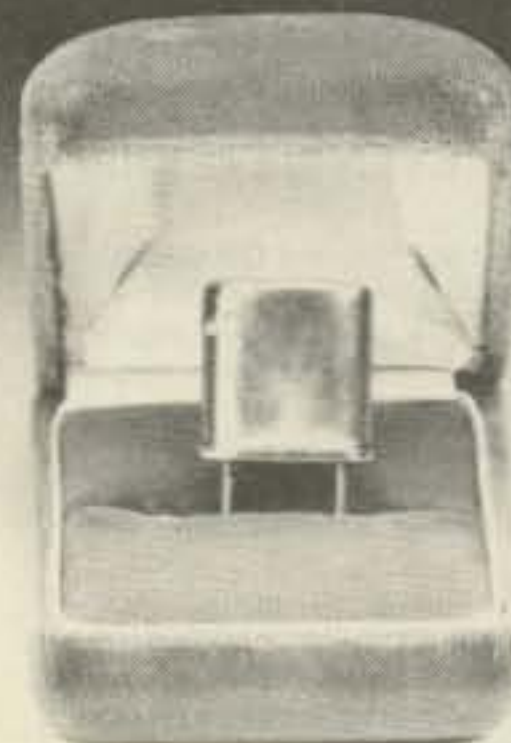
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