



73 Reviews the Transcom SBT-3 Transceiver

The newest entry in the sideband transceiver market is a tiny little unit put out by Transcom Electronics in California. This is the smallest and lightest transceiver ever made, weighing in at 11½ lbs and being 4½" high, 11½" wide, and 9" deep. The clever design of this unit uses transistors in all but the final stage (8042's) which is instant heating. Thus on receive the whole transceiver only draws a half ampere. On transmit it draws 12-15 amps for 160 watts PEP input.

The Transcom is particularly designed for mobile operation. It covers the 20-40-80 meter phone bands only, and with generous bandspread . . . calibration every 5 kc. Most of the controls are knurled knobs which take up little panel space and can be operated by one finger.

The dc power supply is surprisingly small, weighing under 3½ lbs. This certainly could be fitted into the most crowded engine compartments or up under the dash.

In use barefoot with a three element twenty meter beam the rig brought in good S-9 reports from all over the States and plaudits from Europe and South America. Signal reports were universally complimentary and the receiver seemed to really pull them through with no difficulty. Drift was not noticeable.

In a short test period in late September we called a short CQ, got called by K4IKR in Alabama, who happened to be reading the

two page ad for the Transcom in the latest 73 at the time of the contact. 30 over 9 was the report. Not bad for 100 watts PEP output. Next I called HB9ADD and got an S-9. Then DL4UV in Karlsruhe called me to tell me I was 10 over there and then OZ4AZ reported it 5-8 up in Copenhagen. G3OGB had a nice report from London to my CQDX, followed by an S-9 from DJ8EG up near Kassel. And that's the way it went.

Transcom has designed a nice unit and I suspect that we will be seeing a lot more transceivers using this principle of transistorization with instant heating final tubes. It certainly is most efficient for mobile operation.

. . . W2NSD

