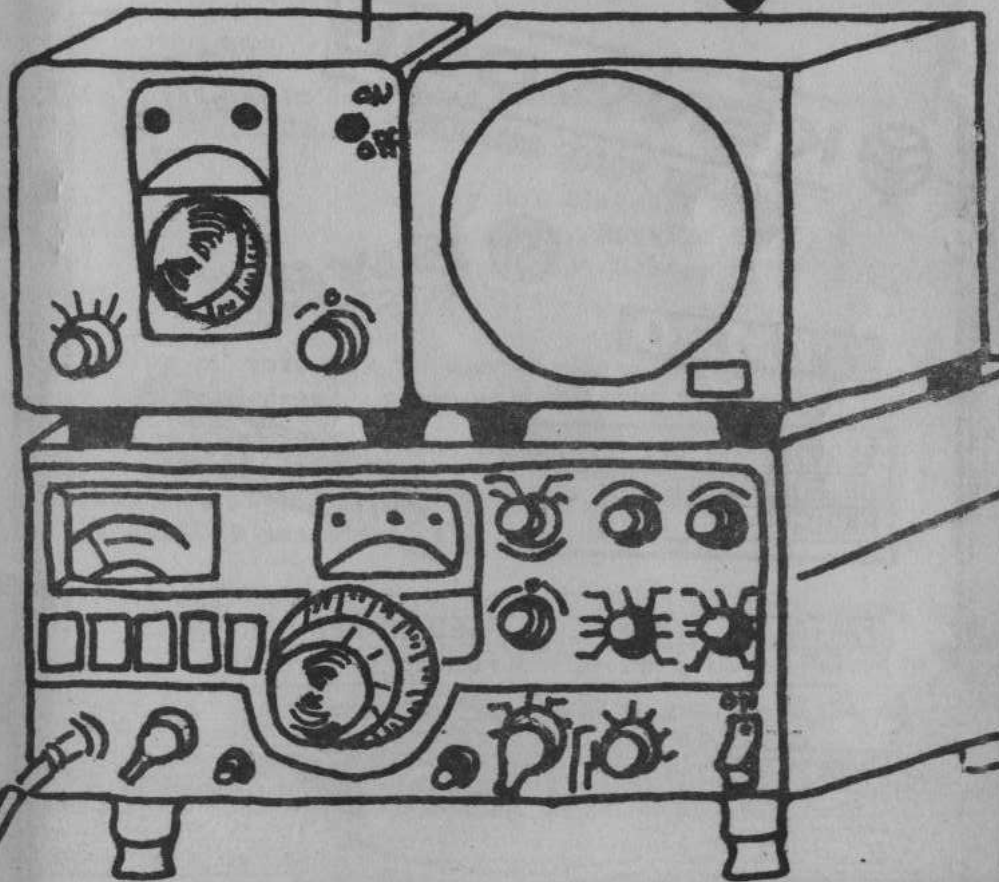


THE MODULATOR



Steve Ferguson
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MODULATOR

MEETING SCHEDULE: General Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month. Business meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month.

MEETING SITE: The Ames Methodist Church, 9 W. Walker Avenue, Pikesville, Maryland.

OFFICERS:

President	Rol Anders K3RA
1ST VP	Robert Glaser N3IC
2ND VP	Vernon Chapin K3VC
Secretary	Rol Slatkoff W3RUN
Treasurer	L. Emory Bennett N3EB

THE MODULATOR:

This publication is issued monthly by the Baltimore Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

EDITOR: Rol Slatkoff W3RUN
ASSISTANT: Chas. Reville K3FT
MAILING: Robert Glaser N3IC
REPEATER REPORTER: ???

Articles of interest to Amateurs are welcome. Ham ads are inserted free. Address MODULATOR PO Box 163 Randallstown, Md. 21133.

Submit all items by the first of the month for the next month's issue.

Address all BARC mail to BARC PO Box 1864 Baltimore, Md. Main Post Office 21203.

LISTEN TO AMATEUR BULLETINS at 7:30 a.m. by K3RA on 07/67. Repeat broadcast at 6:00 p.m. on 3/4/94.

DIAL "HAM TALK" for a message about BARC.

MORSE CODE PRACTICE Monday at 9:00 p.m. via N3IC 3/4/94.

VACATION ISSUE

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JULY / August 1978

Balloon-Mobile

by Robert Glaser, N3IC

The scene: Jack Biggs' house. Those present: the Biggs' and the Chapins. Walking in the door, I immediately knew that something strange was in the air. This was verified when I spotted Vern smiling (a rare occurrence when playing cards). Vern wants me to wake up the next day, Saturday morning, at 6:00 AM, drive him to Patterson Park, where he is to ascend in a hot air balloon with his HT-220, and then proceed to the News-American offices and be the downlink for communications. It seems that the next day was to be the Great Balloon Race, a major event in the Preakness Festival. A News-American reporter was going to accompany one of the contestants, and he desired radio communications. After much shouting, I agree.

Time: next morning. Scene: Patterson Park. Situation: rain. We wait for the officials to decide whether to postpone the race or not. WA3TUN wakes up and joins us. The officials were not going to make a hasty decision, particularly as many local vendors were selling wares. They call it off, and Vern and I go to Ernie's. The race is postponed to the following week. Vern agrees that next time I get a shot at the ride. Carl will be my man-on-the-ground. Several times the next week the ascension is planned and postponed due to rain. The race is cancelled for the Preakness Festival, and rescheduled to some time in June.

The day arrives, and Carl is not available, so the original crew is reversed. The skies threaten rain once again. This time, the race goes on anyway. Dick Irwin, the reporter, and myself assist Gary Lewis, our pilot, filling the balloon. This consists of our attempting to keep the suspension cables out of the propane jet while Gary does what has to be done. The monster rises, Lewis tells us to jump in, and we

are off the ground in a matter of seconds. The original race, to go across the Bay, has been changed to a hare and hounds race. The Sunpapers/WMAR balloon went off and landed, and the object for the rest of us was to land as close to it as possible. Gary assures us before lift-off that we will win.

We rapidly rise and proceed northward across East Baltimore. The sensation is unique; when the burner is off, there is no sound. The balloon does not rock or shake like an airplane or a radio tower, and I have the feeling that I am an off-world bystander inspecting the Earth. I give Vern the details of our voyage for relay to the City editor. We are aloft only 20 minutes - all of the plans I had to work simplex BalloonMobile are deflated.

We land near Clifton Park, a mere two miles from our point of departure, in the middle of a heavy downpour of rain. If we were not drenched before, we are now. Trying to stuff a 70 foot, 200 pound balloon saturated to 600 pounds, into its carrying sack is no easy task. We are totally soaked. Every card in my wallet, including my BARC membership card, is wet. We return to Patterson Park and manage to empty two bottles of champagne, for indeed we had won as our crafty pilot had predicted. After a visit to the headquarters at the World Trade Center I make my way up to Ernie's. It is not yet noon and the most exciting portion of the day is over for me.

Any casualties? My Motorola HT-220 still operates fine. However, my Touch Tone (R) keypad is shorted out from the water. After drying out, the pad remains lifeless and useless. Next time, remind me to borrow someone else's walkie rather than use my own.
