

KARS Antenna Tuner Panel

The club has been hosting panel discussions with club member discussing equipment choices. These discussions have been very popular, with much good information for both new and old members. The discussions have covered Handheld Transceivers (HT), power supplies and antenna (antennae?). Unfortunately, much of this information was not saved. My goal is to document these panels, and save them on our KB5TX.ORG website so that others may benefit. This month we discussed Antenna Tuners.

KARS December 2020 Panel discussion – Antenna Tuners hosted by **Ben Koerner (K5AYR)**

Al Walters (K5NOF) - Al runs two manual tuners. An MFJ and a Palstar AT-2K. Once he's established the settings for is commonly used frequencies, it's a simple matter to dial them back up again. Al can run high power, so he uses larger tuners than most of us. Tuners that can handle legal limit are more expensive than tuners that can handle up to 100w. Al reminds us that tuners don't really tune the antenna; they just add capacitance and inductance so that the radio is happy. Regardless of tuner, your antenna should be in good shape. Large manual tuners can handle the larger SWR mismatch than automatic tuners.

Jim Nelson (W6TIR) – Jim runs a Palstar HF-Auto automatic tuner. It's good to the legal limit. Jim sets his frequency, and the tuner does the rest. It uses stepper motors for fast and quiet operation. The display shows forward power, reflected power, SWR and other information. It's a sweet unit; but be prepared to pay almost as much as some radios! It's not inexpensive; but Jim says he do it again in a heartbeat!

Robert ("Corky") Sarvis (WB5CIT) – Corky runs a pair of LDG LDG AT-100 Pro II automatic tuners. Corky also runs a Flex radio with remote operations. The automatic tuner allows for remote operation. As the frequency is changed, the LDG responds and sets the best SWR it can achieve. Corky does not run high power, so he can use the less expensive models of the LDG line. He's very pleased with the LDG units.

Don Udel (K15AIU) – Don runs an LDG AT-200 Pro II tuner. It's an automatic tuner. Don runs a lot of digital modes, and had to move up to a 200w unit to have enough power handling for digital modes. The tuner sounds like marbles in a coffee can while tuning up, but that's only for new frequencies (4000 memories) and it only lasts for a maximum of 6 seconds as the relays click in and out. It's noisier than the steppers in Jim automatic Palstar (but much, much less expensive!). Before the LDG, Don ran the internal Yaesu tuner. It did a good job, but is more of a trimmer tuner. Like most internal tuners it maxes out trying at 3:1 SWR. The LDG like most other automatics will handle 10:1 SWR. He's used the tuner to get acceptable SWR on 6M using an 80M-10M end fed antenna.