

A LOOK AT ALLIED'S Portable FM Receivers

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In July 1969, Allied Radio introduced two hand-held transistorized FM receivers. Although these units were designed for monitoring of low- and high-band commercial FM stations, the coverage of the receivers include the 10, 6, and 2 meter amateur bands. The A-2586 receiver covers 27-50 MHz (actual coverage without re-tuning is 26.5 to 52.5 MHz) and the A-2587 receiver covers 146-175 MHz (actual coverage is 145.5 to 178 MHz).

Initial setup of the low-band A-2586 consisted of putting four penlight batteries (included!!) into the unit. A quick tune across the spectrum showed considerable activity on the CB frequencies, local police frequencies, and the low end of 6 meters. The audio output of the receiver was sufficient, but a little reserve might be desirable in noisy locations.

The receiver had no squelch circuit, but the background noise was very low. Only when a station was transmitting would the audio level increase. This gave the receiver the appearance of having squelch without the actual circuitry. An earpiece, included with the receiver, allows private listening.

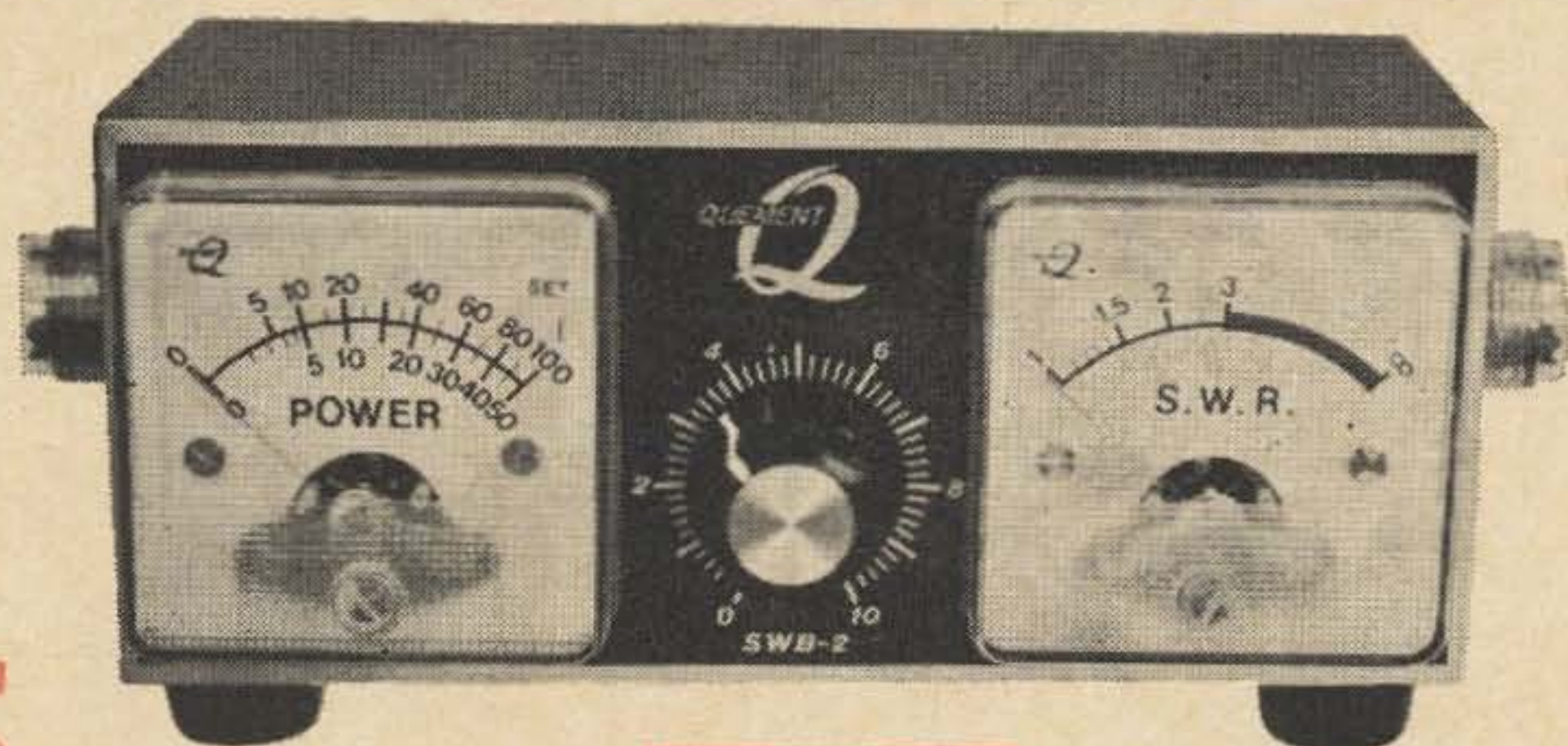
The receiver is quite stable and is fairly selective. Two local police departments have frequencies separated only by 40 kHz. When tuned to one frequency, only slight splatter from the other was heard. Since Allied makes no claim as to the sensitivity of the receiver, a quick check was made with a calibrated attenuator. The receiver had a sensitivity of 1.5 μ V for 20 dB of quieting. Although this is not extreme sensitivity, it is certainly adequate for use in areas where a repeater is operating.

The only deficiency found was the attached antenna, which proved too short for maximum sensitivity. A 6 ft length of wire plugged into the external antenna jack im-

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proved the receiver performance considerably. It may be possible to base-load the existing antenna to improve performance; otherwise, the low-band receiver works fine. If complete coverage of the 6 meter band is desired, the receiver may be slightly retuned with only a small loss of 27 MHz coverage.

The high-band receiver arrived after the tests on the low-band receiver were complete. Upon arrival, the receiver was activated by placing the batteries into the proper holder. The Fort Worth 146.94 MHz repeater was immediately heard with a full-quieting signal. (This repeater is approximately 35 miles from my residence!) Tuning up the band provided many other signals, including taxi, mobile telephone, RCC, paging services, etc. The high-band receiver, incidentally, does not suffer from a too-short antenna. The attached whip can be set for a quarter wavelength for optimum performance. The A-2587 high-band receiver had considerably more audio output than the low-band version. Thus, the receiver did not act as if it had a built-in squelch circuit. However, the background noise is not ob-

jectionable. Since the receiver seemed fairly sensitive, checks were run on it to compare. The sensitivity ranged from $3.0 \mu\text{V}$ for 20 dB of quieting at the low end to $5.5 \mu\text{V}$ at the high end. (The usable, or threshold, sensitivity is actually much better than the "quieting" sensitivity, and is a more meaningful standard when no squelch is employed.)

Both receivers performed excellently with outside antennas. Because of their small size and low cost (\$17.95) the receivers give the amateur portable coverage of the 6 and 2 meter FM frequencies as well as the 11 meter CB and 10 meter amateur frequencies. The construction is excellent. The serious FM'er may want to crystal control the receiver for signal-channel operation. There is sufficient room inside the case for an oscillator circuit.

If the receiver is to be used at a fixed location, it is desirable to obtain the ac adapter (\$3.95) which simply plugs into each receiver.

All in all, the Allied A-2586 and A-2587 are well worth the small investment.

...K9STH ■