

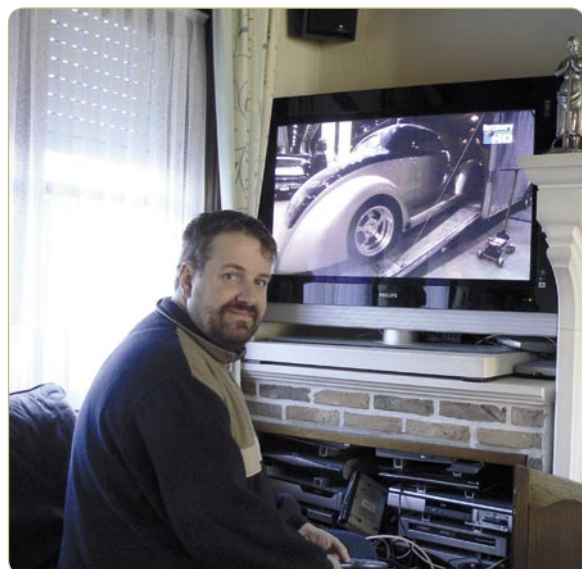
# Belgian Satellite Hoppers

**A bunch of Belgian satellite DXers** have found a wonderful name for their club: Belgian Satellite Hoppers. This association was founded in 1999 and since then its membership base has increased to almost 100 very active persons.

One of the most enthusiastic among them is Aimé Holvoet, who started his career in 1991 with a 1.2 m dish. In 1994 he added an antenna with a 3.1 m diameter and in 1998 he installed the object of all his pride: a professional 4m pole was anchored in his garden with a concrete block of three cubic meters and a 3,7 m KTI mesh antenna complete with a



Aimé has a receiver for every purpose: for the C-band he uses an Echostar LT8700 (analog reception), and for the digital channels there is a ClarkTech and a Nokia 9500. He can receive satellites between 75° East and 58° West. We did the maths: it's 52 satellites altogether.



Dirk Van Honacker in front of his Philips flat TV. "Currently the best HDTV channels are offered by Sky in Great Britain."



Aimé's antenna is so huge you can hardly fit the LNB head (above) and Aimés head (below) on one picture. On the left side in the background you can see another 1.8 m rotating dish for the Ku-band.



Dirk Van Honacker in a forest of dishes. Only eight of his 24 antennas can be seen on this shot.

# Belgian Satellite Hoppers vzw mmv "Stedelijke Culturele Raad"

stellen voor:

**Beurs: "Vlaanderen Digitaal"**

**Waar: In het stedelijk Cultureel Centrum "t'Spoor"  
Eilandstraat 6 - 8530 Harelbeke - Belgium**

**Wanneer: Vrijdag 18 Mei 2007 van 19u tot 22u  
Zaterdag 19 Mei 2007 van 14u tot 21u  
Zondag 20 Mei 2007 van 10u tot 16u30**

**Wie: TV-Vlaanderen, Astra, talrijke satelliethandelaren en kabel-  
maatschappij. Promotie van digitale ontvangst voor ver-  
schillende manieren van ontvangst.**

**Voor meer informatie: [www.beursvlaanderen-digitaal.be](http://www.beursvlaanderen-digitaal.be)**

**Visit Satellite Exhibition in Eilandstr. 6, 8530 Harelbeke, Belgium  
Fri 18 May 2007 from 7pm till 10pm  
Sat 19 May 2007 from 2pm till 9pm  
Sun 20 May 2007 from 10am till 4:30pm**

professional motor was then installed in top of it all. "I paid some 5,000 EUR for this construction," sighs Aimé and is still impressed by the courage he brought up at the time to invest this amount of money just for a hobby. "But I use this equipment every single day. I check the frequency charts on the Internet every day and look for myself if I can find any new signals or channels. Whenever I detect something the BSH member are the first I contact via e-mail or telephone."

In the last couple of years Aimé has become quite an expert when it comes to climbing up his pole. "It was only this January that a big storm has dislocated the motor and I had to get up there to readjust it," he tells with much excitement.

The club members meet every other month to share their satellite experiences. These days HDTV is in the centre of attention and the Belgian hoppers debate about which receiver is the safest bet to buy. Mind you, though, not all the club members share the same enthusiasm and equipment as Aimé, with most of them being happy with an 80 cm multifeed dish.

Dirk Van Honacker is the president of the BSH club, and he's long past an age at which a couple of antennas were fair enough. No less than 24 dishes are spread all over his garden, and in the meantime Dirk has begun to make satellite reception his profession. What started out in 1995 as a hobby has turned into a business and Dirk is now the owner of a shop called Harelsat in the small town of Harelbeke near Gent.

His company mainly sells reception packages for the newly established Flemish satel-

lite provider TV-Vlaanderen, which make up some 70% of his total sales. The remaining percentage comes from multifeed antennas and no-name products. He even supplies large quantities to Belgian discount stores which in turn offer them as specially discounted satellite packages.

The BSH club has also organised some fairs

in the past, with the most recent one drawing more than 10 exhibitors – including satellite and cable operators – and 500 visitors in 2006. Another fair is scheduled for May 2007, this time offering enough space for 20 exhibitors. All this shows that Belgium may be a small market, but is very active in the satellite scene.



The small Harelsat shop – open Tuesday to Saturday from 9 am to 7 pm and offering complete satellite packages.