

Only five 'real' FM radio stations to entertain SLO listeners

I always know when Cal Poly is on a break. I punch the button for CPR on my car radio and hear a faint hiss.

Later always comes a reward: after a couple weeks I'll punch that button again, and KCPR is back.

The station is on the air for a new school year, so I figure now's a good time as any to upset people on this topic:

Central Coast FM radio.

Perhaps picking good stations is more desperate a matter for me: I only have three FM buttons on my car radio, and no one station is worth listening to full time.

As I see it, due to considerations

like signal strength, there are only five real stations to choose — the Top Forty stations KZOZ and KSLY; Cal Poly's KCPR; Santa Barbara's KKOO, formerly KTMS; and KXFM, Santa Maria.

I don't want to hear about the ones I left out. Yes, I've listened to them: that's why they're not on this list.

KZOZ and KSLY are worth a listen just because of the caliber of music that has hit the charts in the last 18 months.

Mixed in with the usual Duran/Madonna/Wham pap have been some of the finest music available. Tom Petty, John Fogarty, Springs-

teen, Dire Straits, Prince and Sting have all charted highly — the best lineup I can ever remember seeing on the charts since the Beatles. Even Elvis Costello, Lone Justice and REM have been heard on Top Forty stations.

Mark Brown SLO Rock



KXFM: a little looser selection of Top 40 material. It doesn't ignore the first 30 years of rock-and-roll — and that's its saving grace.

KCPR's schizophrenic programming can go from inspired to insipid in the time it takes to change the

channel. Still, nowhere else on the Central Coast are you going to hear The Nails, The Minutemen, Beat Farmers or Husker Du — commercial-free, yet. Despite the campus station's obsession with playing the seven-minute version of The Doors' "Light My Fire," KCPR is a must.

But by far the best station is KKOO — also known as 2KO.

What a great blend! It pulls the cream of the current stuff and mixes it in with such an intelligently picked selection of older music that their sets are flawless.

It doesn't go for the cliched oldies; instead of Neil Young's "Heart

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of Gold" you'll hear "Powderfinger" from Rust Never Sleeps. Instead of the tired "Alison" single from Costello, it'll be "Charm School." Then 2KO will tie it all together with an eclectic mix of artists whom you hear only rarely on other stations — Alison Moyet, REM, Lou Reed, Graham Parker, U2, and so on.

The station's signal sometimes plays hard-to-get. But if you're anywhere south of the Grade, KKOO is the station.
