

Contents

Club News and Views

Editorial	3
Chairman's Chat	4
New Members	5
CDXC Newsletter Issue 2 (1983)	6
DX an' all that, <i>Don Field G3XTT</i>	10
Borneo Bulletin, <i>Steve Telenius-Lowe 9M6DXX</i>	13

Out and About

FSDXA St Brandon DXpedition – Bulletin No. 2	15
Introduction to RSGB Paper on Deliberate QRM, <i>John Butcher G3LAS</i>	16
RSGB Paper on Deliberate QRM, <i>John Gould G3WKL</i>	17
XF4DL – 2006 DXpedition to Revilla Gigedo, <i>Jürgen Sturhahn DL8LE</i>	20
The Annual VooDude Outing, <i>Roger Western G3SXW:</i>	23
One-day DXpeditioning, <i>Roger Western G3SXW</i>	27
2006 – a good, but not a vintage year for QSOs, <i>Nigel Cawthorne G3TXF</i>	28

Regular Features and more

IOTA News, <i>Roger Balister G3KMA</i>	29
The RTTY Column, <i>Phil Cooper GUØSUP</i>	30
Contest, <i>Lee Volante GØMTN</i>	32
E-mails to the Editor	35
<i>Not</i> the GB2RS News	36
Digest Prize Crossword	37
DX and Events Calendar	38

CDXC Committee 2006-2007

President	Neville Cheadle G3NUG Lower Withers Barns Middleton on the Hill, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 0HY	(01568) 750560 g3nug@btinternet.com
Chairman	John Butcher G3LAS Westlands, Westland Green, Little Hadham, Herts SG11 2AJ	(01279) 842515 chair@cdxc.org.uk
Secretary	Peter Hart G3SJX The Willows, Paice Lane Medstead, Alton, Hants GU34 5PR	(01420) 562914 sec@cdxc.org.uk
Treasurer	Nigel Cawthorne G3TXF Falcons, St.George's Avenue, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0BS	(01932) 851414 nigel@G3TXF.com
Digest Editor	Martyn Phillips G3RFX 17 Richmond Hill, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1BA	(0117) 973 6419 ed@cdxc.org.uk
Other members	Jim Kellaway G3RTE 55 Ladbroke Drive, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 1QW	(01707) 657309 jkellaway@btinternet.com
	Mark Marsden G4AXX 38 Lambert Cross, Saffron Walden Essex CB10 2DP	g4axx@ntlworld.com

Contest Manager	Lee Volante GØMTN Warnbrook, 25 Baccabox Lane, Hollywood, Birmingham B47 5DD	(01564) 822958 contests@cdxc.org.uk
Awards Manager	Jim Kellaway G3RTE (see above)	
Webmaster	John Butcher G3LAS	web@cdxc.org.uk
CDXC Yahoo! Group Moderator	Mark Marsden G4AXX (see above)	
Digest Picture Editor	Mike Allisette GU4EON	gu4eon@gmail.com

CDXC Reflector: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CDXC/>

Club News and Views

Editorial

Martyn Phillips, G3RFX

What did you get for Christmas? Amongst other things I got a very stylish gold fountain pen, so I'll be signing all my e-mails with that in future. Another spot-on present was *The Handbook of the International Phonetic Association*. Well, whatever turns you on. Not to mention a superb DVD of Sir Simon Rattle conducting the Berlin Philharmonic in a performance of Mahler's 5th Symphony. A very gifted lad is Simon. I'm sure he'll go a long way.

Either way, I hope you had an eminently enjoyable festive season. We certainly did. Mind you, one small deviation from tradition had to do with the Christmas crackers. These days a lot of the jokes you find inside are depressingly PC and unfunny, so I decided that the only solution was to write the jokes myself. I wish I could give you a few examples (they went down very well with the family...), but I couldn't possibly include any of them in a PC publication such as the *Digest*.

At which point the mini-skirted maidens in the CDXC Penthouse Suite have just reminded me that this Editorial is supposed to be about amateur radio, so here goes.

As Chairman John says in his Chairman's Chat: a big thanks to the sponsors of the *Digest* colour pages, which we aim to make a permanent feature. Our sponsor for this issue is Neville, G3NUG. Especially after the rapturous response to the colour pictures in our 25th anniversary issue [*Digest*, November 2006], there was no way we could have gone back to boring old black and white anyway.

Continuing with our 25th anniversary theme, on page 6 you'll find a reprint of CDXC Newsletter Issue 2, which appeared on 14 October 1983. It's interesting to note that at the time Albania was still No. 1 on the Most Wanted list. I can't remember whether the first operations which did eventually appear from ZA around 1994 were subjected to the same deliberate and senseless QRM which often plagues DXpeditions these days. I somehow doubt it.

Talking of which, on page 16 we have an important paper on this very subject by John Gould, G3WKL, the RSGB's HF Manager. This paper will be discussed at February's IARU Region 1 Conference in Vienna. It's more than good to know that the issue of 'Deliberate QRM' is now on the official agenda. Meanwhile one can only hope (nay, pray...) that this will also result in practical measures being adopted all round with a view to doing something about it.

On page 27 our roving reporter Roger, G3SXW, tells us all about 'One-day DXpeditions', more particularly a recent trip of his to 9H-land, Malta, in the company of Nigel, G3TXF. Before that Roger talks about the 'Annual VooDudes Outing', in this case TZ5A. And personally I can't help feeling a wee bit envious of some of these trips of his. How does he find the time to fit it all in? I mentioned this to him in an e-mail the other day and received the instant reply, 'Retire!'. Yes, rest assured, Roger: as soon as I'm in a position to do so I will indeed be lighting the blue touch paper and retiring immediately!

73 Martyn, G3RFX

Chairman's Chat

John Butcher, G3LAS

As I write this a week before Christmas, the big event of recent weeks has undoubtedly been the activation of the Lakshadweep Islands after many years of silence. The run-up to this month's operation has been notable because of the apparent rivalry between two groups, the Indian team currently signing VU7LD and the international team who are due to use VU7RG in January.

Not surprisingly the CDXC reflector has been buzzing with comments good and bad about the 'LD operation. I must say that I have been surprised at the number of people who have had trouble working, or even hearing them. This could be down to propagation, even across the relatively small area of the UK, but I suspect it has more to do with people not being able to be on the bands at the right times. I haven't really tried too hard, but I have made CW and SSB contacts on 40, 20, 17 and 15m without a great deal of difficulty and I have heard them at good strength on 12m on two or three occasions. Sadly I have no aerials for 80 and 160m at the moment.

Before the 'little pistols' start assuming I have a huge advantage in terms of aerials etc., let me say that I only have a three-element beam on these bands and it has been down at about 30 ft throughout the period. Granted, this is much better than a dipole or some other wire aerial, but the signals have been more than adequate and the pile-ups far from uncrackable.

What also surprises me, and is rather disappointing, is the number of people who have been somewhat uncomplimentary about the VU7LD operating. Given that many (most?) of them have little DXpedition experience - many of the callsigns are completely unfamiliar to me - I think they have done a remarkably good

job. Often they have achieved QSO rates on SSB and CW that I would be more than satisfied with. I even saw a comment on the reflector that such an experienced team should not have attempted to mount an expedition to such a rare location. Given the huge task they faced in gaining permission to operate from VU7 in the first place, I find this arrogant in the extreme. Hopefully most CDXC members are a little more sympathetic.

Speaking of the CDXC reflector in general, this has really been an outstanding success. There has been a great variety of topics aired, most of which have stirred up widespread interest and some healthy controversy. It is also good to see that many members have posted queries and received rapid help and advice from others. This is without doubt what CDXC is about. Keep it up, guys! For anyone who has not yet signed up to the reflector, you will find the URL at the bottom of page 2 of this *Digest*. On a couple of minor points of detail: it would help if everyone included their callsign with a signature, rather than just a name - and please try to ensure that the title of the e-mail reflects the content.

The more observant of our members will have noticed that the 25th anniversary issue of the *Digest* in November featured glorious colour on the centre picture pages. We have had several complimentary comments about this, most of which suggested that we continue this improvement. The cost of doing so would be £100 per issue and the Committee has decided that, for the time being, we can afford the extra. Nevertheless, it will be money which is taken from the general 'pot', so we are very grateful that already three Committee members (G3NUG, G3TXF and G4AXX) have each offered to sponsor one of the forthcoming issues. Any similar offers from the better-

heeled of the membership would also be gratefully received and acknowledged.

Of course, full colour pages deserve correspondingly good and interesting pictures. If any member has a suitable one to offer, please contact either the Editor, Martyn, G3RFX, or the Picture Editor, Mike, GU4EON. General interest to CDXC members is the only criterion, apart from reasonable quality and legal considerations.

Our numbers have fallen a little recently, largely due to non-renewal by some of those who received membership via last year's Martin Lynch initiative. We need to get back at least to the 700 mark, so we now plan a major initiative. Some 1,200 UK stations (out of 2,200 worked) did not QSL their 3B9C contacts so, with the agreement of the FSDXA team, we will be sending 3B9C cards directly to all those who have addresses in the callbook, together with our usual membership pack. There are many newcomers to HF amongst this group, so we hope to attract some more young blood to the club as well as those whose past interest has been mainly in VHF. We plan three mail shots (around 400 each) in the first six

months of 2007. Any CDXC members who have not received cards should also receive them with a *Digest* in due course.

Thanks to Mike, G3SED, and Alex Newberry, his designer at Nevada, we now also have a CDXC Certificate of Recognition. These will be printed and distributed early in the New Year. The certificates will be given to those who have made substantial contributions or donations to the club and to various award winners.

Finally, another reminder about next year's Annual Dinner. I'm sure that most of you have already noted the date and venue: Saturday, 31 March 2007, at the Waterloo Hotel, Crowthorne, Berks. Full details are included in this issue of the *Digest* and will be on the website, so let's try for a record attendance this time. I think the figure to beat is about 55, so that shouldn't be too difficult. Mark it in the diaries and send the booking forms back to Peter, G3SJX. I may even buy a pint for the first person to book – other than Committee members!

73 es gud DX John, G3LAS

New Members

CDXC offers a warm welcome to the following new members:

Call	Name	Location
G3RDC	Allan Wood	Hereford
G4MKP	Terry Burbidge	Solihull

Apologies to John Stevens, MØEAV, for printing his callsign incorrectly in the November 2006 *Digest*.

C H I L T E R N D X C L U B

CCC DD X X CCC
C D D X X C
N E W S L E T T E R
C D D X X C
CCC DD X X CCC

Issue 2

14th October, 1983

Editor: G4DYO

I AM GLAD to report an overwhelming response to issue 1 – Ruth has told me she will be sending me some SAEs!! So far about 10 members have indicated interest in the newsletter so I will continue – at least until the existing SAEs are exhausted..... !

VIDEO PRESENTATION Henry has about 14 “ayes” so if you have not yet decided please do so soonest as there are other non-CDXC members anxious to fill empty slots. We hope to have a few well known callsigns present.

CONGRATULATIONS to those who have worked HK0TU. The HK boys are doing an excellent job and very strong signals have been heard on 10, 15, 20 and 40 phone and cw. The pile-ups are indicative of the rarity value but the few members needing that precious contact should have their hopes fulfilled during the next few days. With this one in the bag several CDXC members are edging very close to Honor Roll and if the expected operations take place over the next few months at least three more CDXC members will be eligible to join that exclusive club. (See note below).

QSL info: HK3DDD, Edilberto Rojas M, Apto.25827, BOGATA, Columbia.

FROM THE DX BULLETINS

XU CAMBODIA Just in case any of you have been locked away in a dark cave for the last couple of weeks, the XU1SS and XU1KC operations have been accepted by ARRL and cards maybe submitted for DXCC credit. QSL via JA1HQQ. Although the panic is now over the following may be of interest. QRZDX recently received a copy of the XU1SS “RADIO STATION CERTIFICATE” for operation from “Ampil KPNLF Village in Democratic Kampuchea”. The licensee is “Hing Kunthon, Son Soubert” and the licence, which is valid from 31 July, 1983 until 1 August, 1984, is signed by Son Sann, President of Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. “Son Soubert” may be Son Sann’s son!. KPNLF, under Son Sann, represents only that portion of Democratic Kampuchea which lies along the border with Thailand. One wonders how ARRL can readily accept this and yet refuse the XZ/1Z operations??

1S SPRATLY Again! Almost unbelievably, John, KE6PU/DU1, is talking about an operation from the islands in “3 or 4 months”. DU1JZ may accompany him. Don Search was heard to say recently that “the 1S1CK cards are not yet being accepted for credit” and that “ARRL are waiting for additional information from Chito”. Recent discussion and voting by the DXAC concerned DXCC status of the Islands and NOT the validity of 1S1CK. The vote was in favour of retaining DXCC status but it was not unanimous and ARRL HQ is known to favour deletion.

ZA ALBANIA Rumours continue to fly about but we all know that the proposed operation by DL7FT and DJ0UJ is off - for the time being at least. However, OH2BH, Martii Laine reports that on 10 August an Albanian delegation - headed by their Sports Federation Director - received a complete Amateur Station with all the

associated documents to be taken to Albania. The equipment, including a TS130S, will be placed in an educational institute in Tirana. Further training for Albanian operators is scheduled. A recent poll indicated that Albania is the World's No.1 needed country.

KG4 GUANTANAMO BAY is particularly QRV for EU on 80m cw from about 0300z around 3.507mhz. The KG4 net meets on Sundays at 2000 on 21.420mhz to assist those chasing the worked all GTMO award (six KG4 confirmations required).

XF4AA and XF00Q recently heard are certainly pirates. They gave W2OY as the QSL manager and he has been a SK for years. Incidentally, W2OY was well known for his CQ calls on 40m in the '60s.... "No lids, no kids, no space cadets, Extra class operators only....".

JARVIS ISLAND Operation by George Adkins, AD1S, & Co still looking good for early November. Jarvis Island is some 1200 miles SSW of Hawaii but the fact that Jarvis is separated from Palmyra by part of Kiribati is not likely to convince the DXCC desk that it should count separately. Best work it and then worry later.

PACIFIC DXpedition by DK6XR is OFF. We all recall the excellent job they did last year from the Pacific including an operation from Rotuma Island which they hoped would count for DXCC, Unfortunately it was not allowed.

FR0FLO Is reported to be working through a backlog of "several thousand" QSL cards. This answers a few questions.....

1P1 PELICAN ISLAND which is in Galveston Bay near Galveston, Texas counts for nothing (!) but will be activated 14-16 October.

KL7IRT will be QRV on 40/80m during the CQ WW phone contest.

A51 BHUTAN In a recent letter to DXNS Pradhan, A51PN reported that the A51 stations are now QRT and it is not possible for foreign amateurs to obtain licences. A similar statement was made by the Bhutan Government in a recent letter to Ian, G4LJF, when he applied for a permit to operate.

HONOR ROLL A lot of CDXC members have this in mind and TDXB has suggested that as there is little actual reward for achieving HR - apart from a small badge and mention in QST - that something more substantial should be available for those reaching the dizzy heights of 306 on the current list. ARRL has toyed with the idea of a special sticker but how about a full DXCC type certificate attesting to one's HR status? Perhaps a few letters to Newington might stir things up?

GRAY LINE The following info is for those with an LF bent! The times are approximate sunset & sunrise times for London.

15 Oct. SR 0626z = SR in 5T, EL, TZ, ZD7.
= SS in UA0, JA, KH9, KX6, T30, FK, ZL2/3.
SS 1706z = SS in 7X, 5U, 5N, TR.
= SR in KL7, 5W, KH1, ZL/K

22 Oct. SR 0638z = SR in 5T, 6W, 9L, EL.
= SS in UA0, JA, KC6E, FK8, ZL2/3
SS 1652z = SS in 3V, 5U, 5N, TZ, TN, ZS3, ZS1.
= SR in KL7, KH1, T31, KH8, A35.

Thanks to DXNS, LIDXB, QRZDX, DX-NL, TDXB

25th Anniversary CDXC Annual Dinner 2007

The CDXC Annual Dinner will be held this year at 7.30pm on Saturday, 31 March, at the Waterloo Hotel, Duke's Ride, Crowthorne, Bracknell, Berks RG45 6DW. This is the same venue as last year, but under different management. The Dinner will be followed by a talk on 'DXing then and now' by Don Field, G3XTT. Don will look back over the last 25 years at how DXing has changed, the major expeditions and personalities involved and how techniques have evolved. We would like to encourage as many members as possible to come along together with partners and friends to what promises to be an excellent evening.

Menu

Caesar Salad with Smoked Chicken and Parmesan Cheese

Roast Beef served with a Peppercorn Sauce

Apple and Cinnamon Tart with a Vanilla Cream Sauce

Coffee or Tea and Chocolate Mints

Vegetarian and other dietary menus available on request.

The cost of the Dinner and evening's entertainment is £29 per ticket and you will find a booking form enclosed with this *Digest* which should be returned to Peter Hart, G3SJX.

For those of you who will be travelling some distance, you may wish to stay overnight. Room rates at the hotel are £31 for a single or £62 for a double room and include a Full English Breakfast. Make room bookings directly with the Waterloo Hotel on (0870) 609 6111, quoting 'CDXC Dinner'.

Directions to the Waterloo Hotel, Crowthorne:

From the M4: At Junction 10 follow the signs to Bracknell via the A329. Then follow the signs to Sandhurst (A3095). Take a right turn at the roundabout for Crowthorne (B3348). At the mini-roundabout, continue straight ahead. The hotel is situated on the left-hand side after the traffic lights.

From the M3: At Junction 4 take the A331 towards Camberley. Follow the signs to Sandhurst and Crowthorne (A3095). Take a left turn at the roundabout for Crowthorne (B3348). At the mini-roundabout, continue straight ahead. The hotel is situated on the left-hand side after the traffic lights.

The CDXC LF Challenge 2007

Aim: The aim of the competition is to work as many DXCC entities during the month of March 2007. Each DXCC entity is counted ONCE only.

When: 0001 UTC, 1 March 2007, to 2359 UTC, 31 March 2007.

Bands: Only the 1.8, 3.5 and 7 MHz bands maybe used.

Modes: No restrictions.

Logs: Send a list either by e-mail or post. The list must contain the headings in this order, please:

DXCC entity, Call, Date, Time and Mode.

Entries which are NOT submitted in this format will be disqualified.

QSL cards are not required, but in the event of a dispute the CDXC Committee may request a photocopy or print-out of the applicant's log.

Logs to be sent to jkellaway@btinternet.com or by post to Jim Kellaway, 55 Ladbrooke Drive, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 1QW. Logs to be received not later than the 30 April 2007.

Please note. Do NOT send to any other e-mail address I have had in the past as it will not arrive here.

Awards – Multi-band.

Penallt Trophy – Awarded to the first-placed station. This trophy is returnable, but a small engraved plaque will also be presented to mark this achievement .

Tindle Cup – Awarded to the second-placed station. This trophy is returnable, but a small engraved plaque will also be presented to mark this achievement.

The station in third place will receive a small engraved plaque to mark this achievement .

Awards – Single band.

The leading station on each band (1.8, 3.5 and 7 MHz) will also receive a small engraved plaque which will be retained by the winner.

Entrants who work more than half the score of the Penallt Trophy winner's will receive a certificate.

DX an' all that

Don Field, G3XTT *don@g3xtt.com*

The main excitement of late has been the VU7LD activity, which has been frustrating at times but which has generated UK QSOs on at least seven bands, 160 through 12m (30m wasn't allowed, but the good news is that the January VU7RG team have obtained 30m permission and will make a big effort on that band). Signals on the higher bands have been notable for rapid QSB at times. I seem to have missed the 160m opening when every G and his dog made it into the log. I also noted that one UK DXer is in the 80m CW log no less than five times – naughty, naughty!

The 5A7A activity was also notable in producing a QSO total well in excess of 100,000, so 5A7A now join the exalted '100k+ club'. Of course, there are still only two expeditions belonging to the '150k+ club' but I forget which ones those were!

5A7A was helped by being within one hop of Europe, with huge signals here in the UK on all bands. Overall, the consensus seems to be that this sunspot minimum hasn't produced the sort of excellent 160m conditions that we saw in the 1995 and 1996 autumn DX seasons. But this has to be balanced against the awesome scores run up by G3TXF, GM3POI, MD6V and GU4YOX (and GIØKOW?), all operating single-band 160m in the CQ WW CW contest. Multipliers worked included VK, ZL, ZS, 8Q, HC8, TZ and much else that is worth having on that band.

High band conditions have been variable. It was feasible to work well over 100 countries on 10m in both legs of CQ WW, but the ARRL 10m contest in early December was, by all accounts, a real struggle, at least from these latitudes.

Maybe by this time next year we will be starting to see some sunspots once again!

Which rig?

One of the recent threads on the CDXC reflector has been on the choice of rigs, debating the merits of the FT-2000 versus the IC-756 Pro III, for example. I have covered this to some extent in an earlier column but, it has to be said, with conditions as they are at the moment, the money would definitely be better spent on a bigger Yagi or an 80m 4-square! When the signals are rolling in at high level, you may actually start to worry about whether your receiver can handle them. For most of us this is rarely a problem. Usually it only becomes an issue at a multi-multi contest station, or on a busy band with a high gain antenna such as a large monobander.

I do recall being reasonably happy with my FT-101ZD many years ago until I took it along to G4LJF's station for a WPX SSB contest. On 40m, with Ian's 3-element KLM linear-loaded 40m Yagi, the ZD fell over big time, whereas Ian's TS-930, probably one of the best radios of all time, didn't bat an electronic eyelid. If you have something bigger than three elements on 40m, you might really need an IC-7800 or equivalent. If not, you probably don't and a second-hand MP or IC-756 ProII would give perfectly adequate performance.

That said, there's obviously a level of convenience in having 160m through 9cm in one box (if only!), a 19-inch video display showing band occupancy while allowing you to watch the X-Factor, and a rig that's so heavy you can give up on the annual gym membership and just practice lifting the

thing on and off the operating table a few times each day.

News

These items came off the Internet (mainly from the Daily DX – required reading for all serious DXers), but members may not have seen them all.

At a meeting recently in the Hague an agreement was made which would give autonomous status to both Curacao (PJ2) and St Maarten (PJ7). It has also been agreed that the islands of Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba would receive special status within the Netherlands. The status of all of the Dutch Caribbean islands has been 'a point of controversy with the mother country for years'. The new administration is expected to take effect on 1 July, 2007. At this time it is probably too early to know exactly what changes, if any, will take place on the DXCC Entity list.

Tom Meier, K7ZZ, talked to a spokesperson from the Public Affairs office at Hickam Air Force Base in reference to the status of Wake Island (KH9). The island was plastered by typhoon Ioke back in August. Hickam AFB is responsible for the operational detachment on Wake. The official position of the Air Force is that Wake Island is 'Closed until further notice'. Tom says, "The damage caused by the storm is more extensive than first feared. The whole infrastructure of the island (potable water, electrical power, sewage treatment, and the like) has been destroyed." The Air Force is now studying the situation as to whether to rebuild everything or hand over the entire island to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be turned into a nature sanctuary. So it would appear we may not see any KH9 activity on the amateur radio bands for the near future.

For those of you who are not sure about working DX via the long path: Norm Styer, AI2C, has a webpage that should help give you a better idea of how it works. Check out

Norm's complete explanation at http://www.k4lrg.org/Training/Tech_Notes/Long_Path/Long_Path.html.

The large collection of QSL cards (3600+) on Les Nouvelle DX's website has been updated. Eight different galleries include cards for each of the 58 deleted DXCC entities (650+ QSLs), the ten Most Wanted DXCC Entities (120+ QSLs), obsolete prefixes (1300+ QSLs), Antarctic bases (500+ QSLs) & TAAF (Terres Australes and Antarctiques Françaises, 200+ QSLs), pre-1945 countries (200+ QSLs) and French Departments, USA before 1945. Several cards are still needed and your participation is encouraged - please visit <http://LesNouvellesDX.free.fr> and send your comments to LesNouvellesDX@free.fr

5-Band WAZ

Laurie G3UML posted this on the CDXC reflector:

"Just surfing the web and came across the latest CQ Magazine listing of the 705 people who have the 200 level Five Band DXCC, up to mid-2006. Considering that number one was ON4UN on 30-6-79, 705 over 27 years isn't that many. And the Gs? As far as I can deduce, just 21 G callsigns appear in the listing:

31 G3MCS 10-2-82; 122 G3TJW 14-6-86; 133 G3GIQ 10-1-87; 165 G4BWP 11-2-88; 185 G4GIR 7-6-88; 188 G4LJF 5-8-88; 199 GW4OFQ 8-12-88; 227 G4GED 20-5-89; 228 G3XTT 31-5-89; 253 G3UML 2-12-89; 266 G4IUF 21-3-90; 356 G4BUE 23-4-93; 388 G3MXJ 21-5-94; 410 G3LNS 28-3-95; 421 G3NLY 16-6-95; 487 GM3WIL 7-3-99; 559 GM3YTS 30-4-01; 577 G3IFB 13-10-01; 589 G3LZQ 8-3-02; 596 G3LQP 30-3-02; 657 GØJHC 1-6-04.

Some interesting things can be deduced from this listing. The incredible four-year gap between G3MCS getting the award, and then the late G3TJW. Only one GØ, GØJHC in the list. A small cluster in the

late 80s, another in the mid-90s, another in the early 00s. I consider this achievement the greatest in DXing and would hate to be doing it nowadays. Even when conditions are good, the competition is now horrendous. Several of my Zone slots were a single, never-repeated contact - 1, 27 and 31 on 80m for instance. 31 on 10m must again be three years away yet. I have also always claimed the first all-SSB 5B WAZ-200 - CQ at the time confirmed this to me unofficially. Presumably several have done it since.”

73 Laurie, G3UML

Finally, I owe an apology to CDXC member Tom, MØCSD, whose callsign I omitted last time from the DXCC Challenge listings. Tom is currently showing with a score of 1224. Well done.

That’s it for now. I trust that Santa sorted out the feeder problems and oiled the rotator while flying over on Christmas Day because

2007 should bring a few nice operations. Let’s just hope we have the propagation to do them justice.

My thanks to all who have contributed or commented on this column during 2006. I’m thinking it’s probably about time someone else took over the reins, as I have a real problem in avoiding repetition from my *RadCom* column. Any volunteers?

73 Don, G3XTT



Chiltern DX Club - Aims and Objectives

To promote HF operating, to encourage excellence, particularly in DX-ing and contest operating, through mutual assistance and by encouraging support of DX-peditions, the issue of achievement awards, or by whatever other means is deemed to be appropriate.

Membership Full details are available from the Secretary.

Subscription £15.00 for UK members, £20.00 for overseas members (US\$30 or 30 Euros). New members joining between 1 January and 30 June pay 50% of the annual subscription. Subscriptions are due on 1 July of each year, and should be sent to the Treasurer.

Digest Published six times per year. Articles for publication should be sent to the Editor by the published deadline. Please note that views expressed in the Digest are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Committee.

Website <http://www.cdxc.org.uk>

Borneo Bulletin

Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX

teleniuslowe@gmail.com

It's mid-December, the shops have been playing Christmas music for a month, and the sun is beating down outside. At 8.00am it is already 28 degrees and it will rise to 32 or 33 later in the day. I turn on the rig, but once again I am disappointed by the activity. There's a solitary BG (Chinese station) on 20m and a couple of JAs on 15m. 40m has already faded out and is completely 'dead'. I can't hear anything on 17 or 12m (admittedly, I don't have a resonant antenna for 12). 10m is full of pops and whistles, FM-y carriers swishing about and Chinese-speaking AM and FM 'pirates', so the band is obviously open to *somewhere*, but I can't hear a single amateur signal. I try a couple of CQ calls on 28.495 MHz, but they go unanswered.

While conditions from the UK are also poor during the sunspot minimum, I can never recall the bands being as dead as they are here. The reasons for this, of course, are clear: firstly, I am a long way from the major amateur population centres – even my 'local' JAs are around 4,000 km away – and secondly the very high level of absorption close to the equator effectively closes down all the bands up to 24 or 28 MHz during the day, except for local communications.

5A7A

That's not to say that the bands have been totally uninteresting during the last couple of months. After the surprise ZL8R operation in October, I was looking forward to the German 5A7A Libya DXpedition. Knowing the team's pedigree I was therefore disappointed when, three days before the scheduled end of the operation, I had yet to hear them. I had heard the pile-up *calling* them, but could not hear a whisper from 5A7A themselves. Whenever I listened

for them, they were working either EU or NA only, so even if I could hear them it would have been a distinct 'challenge', let us say, to break through the pile-up. This illustrates nicely my point about being a *long* way from the amateur population centres: you would have thought that it would be almost impossible to have made (by that stage) nearly 100,000 QSOs and not be heard everywhere in the world but, believe me, it can happen!

The next day, though, there was a German voice calling CQ on 21.295 MHz at S8. Sure enough, it was 5A7A and remarkably no-one was calling him. How could this be? He was listening co-channel and after one call he was in my log. Five minutes later he had only made one more QSO and the CQs were sounding more and more despondent, so I put him on the DX Cluster and called again to ask him not to give up as he was by now a genuine 59 in South-East Asia. Normally when calling a DX station I have to fight through the JA 'wall', but obviously on this occasion there was no propagation from 5A to JA, even though the Libyan station was so strong here.

9M6EVA works the DX!

A couple of weeks earlier my wife Eva had taken out a Malaysian licence and was now 9M6EVA, but she had not yet made any QSOs. Feeling sorry for the DXpeditioning German who, 30 minutes after our contact, was still calling CQ and getting but a trickle of callers, I called Eva in to the shack and asked if she wanted to make her first contact. Game for a laugh, she did, and 5A became the first QSO in the 9M6EVA logbook.

Five days later and VU7LD had started up from the Laccadives. VU7 is only about 5,000km from here and it's a good path, so the station was soon in my log on a couple of bands. Eva might just have caught the bug, because she was keen to work VU7LD too and has so far made three QSOs with them – so her first four QSOs were with two of the rarest DXCC entities on the planet. That's the way to start off a new logbook!

Laccadives: a bit lacking?

There has been a lot of criticism on the CDXC reflector and elsewhere on the Internet about VU7LD, but I have spent many hours listening to the operators and have generally been quite favourably impressed. Certainly the first tranche of operators were very easy to work here, despite incredible pile-ups, and they were usually working stations at a rate of around three per minute, which ain't at all bad.

Of course, they were a lot more difficult to work from the UK, but that can mainly be explained by propagation favouring other parts of Europe over the UK. It would appear that many G stations got through a couple of weeks into the operation when - in my opinion - the operators on duty were by no means as efficient as the first team had been, but by which time propagation to the UK had improved. I did hear one or two instances of questionable operating techniques by a few of the operators who joined the expedition later, with at least two of them asking the pile-up to call with just the last two letters of the callsign. At least one seemed unsure about how split operation should take place. But in general I feel that this team is doing a much better job than many are giving them credit for.

XU7 DXpedition

Eva and I are visiting Cambodia at the end of January to see the temples of Angkor Wat. After she returns to Malaysia, I plan to meet up with John, 9M6XRO, and Pete, SM5GMZ, in Phnom Penh and operate from

Cambodia between about 1 and 9 February. I have held the callsign XU7DXX for almost a year, but have not yet used it, while Pete has been active as XU7ADI on several occasions. John will have to get his XU7 callsign on arrival in Phnom Penh. Although by no means as rare as it once was, Pete reports that he is always able to generate a big pile-up when operating from XU.

We will be active on all bands from 160 to 10m, CW, SSB and RTTY: John and Pete will both operate mainly CW with some RTTY and SSB, while I will operate mainly SSB with some RTTY. We have not yet decided if we will use our individual callsigns or if we will just use one call for the DXpedition (we will therefore announce the QSL information later). I look forward to working as many CDXC members as possible from XU – please give a shout if you hear us on, even if you have worked Cambodia on that band-mode slot before.

Montserrat

Phil, G3SWH, and Jim, G3RTE, will be active from the island of Montserrat between 21 – 28 February 2007. The 2003 'Most Wanted' survey by 425 DX News shows Montserrat at #185. The callsign will be announced later. Activity will mainly be on CW, possibly with some RTTY and PSK31 on all bands 160-10m. Propagation permitting, every day we plan to have two stations on the air for as many hours as possible. Our main objective is to work as many European, North American and ROTW stations on as many bands as possible. QSL via G3SWH, either direct with SAE and adequate return postage, via e-mail for a bureau reply - or simply via the bureau. E-mail: phil@g3swh.demon.co.uk.

FSDXA St Brandon DXpedition – Bulletin No. 2



The Five Star DXers Association (FSDXA) expedition to St. Brandon (3B7) is still on course for September 2007. The plan is to be QRV from Friday, 7 September, to Monday, 24 September, ensuring two full weeks and three weekends of activity. This Press Release is by way of an interim progress report, in response to a number of enquiries we have received.

The team is aware that a Polish expedition to Agalega has been announced for April 2007, but considers that demand for this rare one is such that an FSDXA-scale operation is fully justified. For example, our D68C operation netted in excess of 160,000 contacts, despite a Spanish operation the previous month which handed out almost 30,000 D6 contacts. Similarly, our 3B9C operation netted over 150,000 contacts, despite Robert, 3B9FR, a resident of Rodrigues, being reasonably QRV over several years. 3B6/7 is much higher in the Wanted Lists than either of these entities.

An advance team of two will visit Mauritius early in the New Year to finalise many of the arrangements, and we will have more information following that visit. This visit was postponed from October due to illness, but all plans are now back on track and we are confident that we will be able to mount a successful large-scale (12 stations, 3 weekends, 100,000+ QSOs) operation from St Brandon in September 2007.

3B7C will have Joint Leaders by way of Neville Cheadle, G3NUG, and Don Beattie, G3BJ. We have received a number of enquiries about joining the expedition. As detailed in our previous announcement, we

do have a full team in place. However, we will maintain a file of those who have expressed interest in case vacancies occur.

An early note about QSL arrangements: Neville, G3NUG, will be the lead QSL manager and will coordinate the QSL manager team using the very successful StarLog programme.

Send direct QSLs to:

Neville Cheadle, G3NUG
Lower Withers Barns
Middleton on the Hill
Leominster
Herefordshire
HR6 0HY

Bureau cards to the RSGB bureau marked 'G3NUG'. There will be a facility for e-mail requests via the website.

Last but by no means least, we welcome Martin Lynch & Sons and Nevada Communications, both major UK dealers, as sponsors. We also welcome the Northern Illinois DX Association as our first club sponsor.

As a reminder, our website will be accessible via both www.3b7c.com and www.fsdxa.com/3b7c where information will be posted as it becomes available.

Don Field G3XTT, NK1G

FSDXA Publicity Officer

g3xtt@lineone.net 6 December 2006

RSGB Paper on Deliberate QRM

John Butcher, G3LAS

I'm sure that every CDXC member is not only aware of the problem of deliberate QRM on DX frequencies, but also has more than once expressed an opinion about it in public. Quite often the remedies proposed are very painful and, in most cases, illegal.

While I have great sympathy with such views, I suspect that a more subtle approach is needed if there is ever to be any effective international action to combat this abuse of our bands.

Probably the most common comment, apart from the more blunt suggestions, is, "Why don't they do something about it?". Well, you will be pleased to hear that 'they' are trying to do something.

The following text is a reprint of a paper prepared for the IARU Region 1 Conference in February. It was written by John Gould, G3WKL, on behalf of the RSGB and is not only trying to draw attention to the problem, but also trying to persuade the IARU member societies to do something about it.

I am sure that CDXC members will have varied views on this paper. Some may think it could be stronger, others may doubt its chances of success. Whatever your view, remember that John is trying to catch the attention of a number of national societies, many of which may not share the UK view of the way our bands should be monitored and 'policed', if that is not too emotive a word. The IARU is not known for such cooperative positive action, so it will be a case of moving carefully at first to get something moving.

You will see that the paper suggests various ways in which the deliberate QRM problem might be addressed. Some of these involve

stepping up the process of information and education. CDXC members should be in an ideal position to help in this by making sure that their own practices are above reproach and by helping to prepare material for the use and information of others.

To quote John's recent email to me, "It would be really great if, say, CDXC would take some leadership, by doing some of the things that are suggested - video clips of good DX operating - both ends - perhaps a blog for the January VU7 operation. Perhaps input from someone with a modest station. Perhaps a podcast could be made, talking about the propagation for 3B7C, setting realistic expectations of when UK may be able to work the DXpedition. We can do this whether or not Region 1 supports the recommendations at the conference".

Some of you may want to discuss the topic through the CDXC reflector forum. If so, please note also that John has set up a site specifically for comments on the paper, so please make an effort to post any helpful opinions also on

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/ukc4discussion/>

Please read, note and contribute!

John, G3LAS

CDXC
CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

International Amateur Radio Union Region 1

Europe, Middle East, Africa and Northern Asia

Founded 1950

Committee C4 (HF Matters) Interim Meeting 24-25 February 2007 InterCity Hotel, Vienna

Deliberate QRM

RSGB

John Gould, G3WKL, RSGB HF Manager

g3wkl@btinternet.com

The occurrence of deliberate QRM, particularly on the transmit frequency of DXpeditions, has increased to the point where the future of some aspects of the hobby is under threat. The occurrence is not thought to be restricted to one or a few countries, so consideration and action needs to be taken at an international level.

Discussion

To identify effective solutions the reasons that drive people to cause deliberate QRM needs to be identified. These are thought to include:

- General decline in the standards of social behaviour coupled with the visible outcome of deliberate QRM;
- In-experience and/or poorly trained operators becoming frustrated;
- Ease of transmitting on a DXpedition transmit frequency using DX Cluster information and transceiver control software together with the availability of high-powered amplifiers and high-gain aerials.

It may be over-simplistic to suggest that a general decline in social behaviour crosses over to our hobby. However, the decline in home construction, or modification of

commercial or military equipment, and the mentoring that many amateurs experienced 25 years ago may have led to a reduction in the mutual respect between fellow amateurs. This will be difficult to reverse, but the reinforcement of shared values in the Radio Amateurs Code (Chapter 7.1 of Version 6 of the IARU Region 1 HF Manager's Handbook) and development of fellowships through social interaction in clubs and special interest groups should be encouraged. This approach may also help to instil appropriate respect, especially for those who have stations that are capable of transmitting high ERPs.

National societies have already made good efforts to provide material aimed at sharing knowledge of operating techniques for mastering pile-up operation, contesting and for setting appropriate expectations as to whether and when a particular DXpedition or contest station might be workable. This expectation management is perhaps more important now that the DX Cluster gives the impression that a specific DX or contest station is workable. The frustration may be worse when, because of the skip, the operator senses the impossibility of him or her getting through on account of being able to hear all those amateurs who are also trying to make the contact within the pile-up.

One cannot really over-communicate in terms of training and education. Not only should national societies continue to encourage our more experienced operators to share their knowledge through books, articles in magazines and webpages, but they should also consider a wider use of Internet technologies to enhance learning.

For example experienced operators could disseminate through a blog their experience and techniques whilst high-profile operations are ongoing. This would need to be done in a non-adversarial and carefully managed way, otherwise the outcome might be counter-productive. Having downloadable videos, with a commentary, would provide a learning experience that would be quite different from the written word.

In essence, the concept is to expand the content that is available and provide it through a wider variety of learning methods, so that amateurs relatively inexperienced with the HF band characteristics have a more realistic expectation of whether contact with a specific DXpedition or contest station is possible.

DXpeditions already pay considerable attention to their stations, the operating skill of their operators, and of the techniques for managing pile-ups. Experience has shown that a combination of low ERP and poor operating tends to mean that the DXpedition operator may fail to manage the pile-up, which in turn can lead to deliberate QRM. National societies can only play a collective role in supporting publication of best practice for designing and operating DXpedition stations.

Again, the range of facilities for doing this has broadened – books, magazine articles and Internet multimedia. This is an important aspect of the hobby – with recent demographic and social changes more people and travelling to more parts of the globe than was the case in previous sunspot cycles. We need to take advantage of this change and ensure that we are able to step

up our abilities to control pile-ups and also pass on that knowledge and experience to operators new to experiencing operating from DX locations.

The RSGB is not aware of the extent to which the culprits causing deliberate QRM are known or indeed the size of the problem. However, where there are known offenders we must assert what peer pressure we can bring to bear in the first instance. Whilst the RSGB has been concerned about the problem for sometime (reference the RSGB HF Band Abuse information paper for the 2002 Conference), it is more convinced than ever that apart from addressing the more obvious forms of abuse through better training, mentoring etc., it is necessary to make an example of those who are found to be deliberately causing interference. To do this we will need to set up a group that could be tasked with monitoring deliberate QRM. Such a group need not be that large, but sufficient in number and geographically dispersed such that the offender's location could be approximated to a country. It would then fall upon the national society to confirm that deliberate interference is coming from a station within their country and work to identify the exact location and to take further action.

The enormous success of the DX Cluster network, its access through the Internet and the integration of its data with logging programs that control the transceiver may be a contributory factor by making it easy to jam DXpedition transmit frequencies. It would be unpopular to ask the Cluster system designers and sysops to change the functionality of the system, but some are suggesting that DXpedition spots ought to be made more general so that the precise frequency isn't published.

Others consider that some form of authenticated log-on would deny access to the precise spot frequency to those likely to cause deliberate QRM. Whilst it appears an attractive solution to seek to restrict the Cluster functionality in some way to remove

possible undesirable usage by a few, it is unrealistic to think that this is going to happen.

Recommendation

That Conference takes a firm stance against deliberate QRM and that national societies will actively seek to address it through

- Putting peer pressure to bear on known offenders and ultimately seek prosecution through monitoring, and by giving publicity to such prosecutions.

- Setting up a small group to undertake coordinated monitoring.
- Publicising best-practice guidelines on operating practice to both DX hunters, DX stations and testers, etc, using a wider range of media by supplementing books, articles and webpages with blogs, Internet video clips, etc.
- Encouraging and supporting clubs and activities that fosters mentoring of newcomers to the hobby.

John Gould, G3WKL

ZoneProp

Zone to Zone propagation information is now available from Radio Sport Canada at

www.radiosport.ca/zoneprop/

ZoneProp uses a widely accepted propagation engine to determine the band on which a contestant in one CQ DX zone is likely to be able to contact a contestant in another CQ DX zone, taking into account the current geomagnetic activity.

ZoneProp produces a 40-Zone by 40-Zone matrix that is updated hourly at approximately 20 minutes past the hour. The intersection between a row and column gives the band on which a contestant in the Zone represented by the row is mostly likely able to contact an contestant in the Zone represented by the column. The Zone numbers in the left-hand column are clickable. Once clicked the information for that Zone is displayed in isolation above a map of CQ DX Zones. The pages are refreshed every 10 minutes in order to capture hourly updates of the matrix. For technical details see

www.radiosport.ca/zoneprop/manual.php

ZoneProp is designed for high speed Internet access using IE 6/7 or a recent release of FireFox. It has not been tested in other browsers or on slow speed (eg dial-up) Internet access.

Sylvan Katz, VE5ZX

Saskatoon

XF4DL – 2006 DXpedition to Socorro Island, Revilla Gigedo Group

Jürgen Sturhahn, DL8LE

juergen@sturhahn.biz

XF4 belongs to one of the most wanted DXCC entities. Recent DXpeditions to Revilla Gigedo were unable to satisfy the existing demands, especially in Europe. So naturally we asked ourselves whether there might be a chance to get the necessary permission to operate from XF4. This was in early 2005, and after some discussion we decided to start this enterprise.

The first information we received from Ramon, XE1KK, about the difficulties of getting the permission of COFETEL, the Mexican licensing authorities, was disillusioning: no licences for foreigners to operate from one of the Mexican islands or to take part in a contest - except for groups with more than 50% Mexican team members (50:50 clause).

There were also other limitations, especially from other Mexican authorities, which turned out to be difficult to overcome. However, with the considerable support of Ramon, XE1KK, and Marianne Kentzler, General Manager of VOGT electronic de México, both working closely together with Rafael, XE1GRR - who had sent numerous faxes and e-mails and made countless phone calls – all the necessary permits were granted and we were able to plan for a DXpedition date in October-November 2006. These permits were

- COFETEL license to operate as XF4DL from Socorro Island and as XF4K from Clarion Island.
- Landing permission from the Mexican Navy.
- The approval of the Mexican Navy to transport all the equipment on one of their ships

and to stay in one of their buildings on Socorro Island as well as to set up a second operating site.

- Permission from SEMARNAT, the Mexican equivalent of the US Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Permission from the Secretaria de Gobernacion, a government authority belonging to the Mexican Ministry of the Interior.

Ramon also helped to set up the team by establishing the initial contact between DL8LE and XE2K, who was able to interest a few more Mexican operators, in particular XE1AY, XE1GRR and XE1UN, who were the main people working on the organisation and planning of the DXpedition in Mexico, supported by XE1KK. Marianne, on the other hand, also organised all the logistics, in particular the import, export and transport of several tons of equipment. We cannot thank her enough for her support.

The duration of the DXpedition was determined by the Navy transportation schedule. Together with the uncertainties over the likely weather conditions, the team members would need to be available for a minimum of 3½ to 4 weeks. After several changes the team was as follows:

DF7TH, DJ5IW, DK2WV, DL1YFF, DL3DXX, DL8LE, XE1AY, XE1FRF, XE1FXF, XE1FXM, XE1FXZ, XE1GRR, XE1MMB, XE1UN, XE2K.

The team pilots were DL5NAM and XE1YJS and the QSL managers DL9NDS and N6AWD.

The DXpedition was scheduled for a time near the minimum of the present sunspot cycle. So in order to compensate a bit for the difficult propagation we planned to use two operation sites. One was the Mexican Navy camp on Socorro Island, the other the former radar site near the airstrip, a location more than 300m above the Pacific Ocean and with a clear view between 0° and 180°.

We also planned to use digital modes such as PSK31 and PSK63 - with programs like WinWarbler by AA6YQ or Multipsk by F6CTE which allow multi-channel decoding. These would provide a better opportunity, especially for the 'little pistols', to have a contact with XF4DL. The necessary interfaces were provided by microHam.

As the location of the Navy camp would not allow any low angle radiation towards Europe or North America, it was essential that we had good antennas as well as reliable power amplifiers. In this respect we had excellent support from Alpha Radio Products, who provided an Alpha 99 and an Alpha 8100 as well as a 6m amplifier. During the operation it turned out that even with the low-power line voltage of 110V we had a solid and very reliable output of more than 1 KW – even under the heavy duty cycle of two weeks' continuous usage under pile-up conditions.

We ended up with more than five tons of equipment and supplies (including 1,800 litres of petrol, 3 generators, several hundred litres of drinking water, aluminium tubes for multi-element monobanders from 6 to 40m and more than 70m of tower sections or aluminium towers). All this needed to be transported, more or less by hand, across three other Navy ships to the 'Vallarta', the ship the Mexican Navy had provided for the trip between Manzanillo and Revilla Gigedo, then from the 'Vallarta' down to the smaller boats which did the final landing on the island. This exercise was also an excellent example of how well a multi-national team was able to cooperate

very efficiently, even though they had only come together for the first time in Manzanillo.

The first station was set up at the Navy camp on Socorro Island, and the first QSO in the log was on 18 October at 2327 UTC with W6TP on 20m SSB. The pile-up was as huge as we had expected and the QSO rates were running at between 120 and 160 QSOs per hour.

Setting up the second operating site at the former radar station turned out to be quite difficult. The transport of the equipment was time-consuming due to the very poor 'road' conditions between the camp and the site. Also, the existing small hut was extensively damaged, with some nice animals living inside – and a constant strong wind carrying red volcano dust through the open windows. Not exactly the best sort of environment for sensitive electronic equipment.

Despite the unpleasant conditions a first station was finally set up after 24 hours or more of hard work, especially by some of the Mexican team members, who were very innovative in finding a way round all these problems. However, after all the antennas had been set up – together with all the generators, stations, sleeping tents and cooking facilities - the weather started to deteriorate even further and Hurricane Paul began his approach of Socorro Island. So the Commanding Officer had to ask the team to completely dismantle the second operating site as soon as possible and to evacuate the camp for safety reasons.

The hurricane also forced the team in the camp to give their equipment additional protection. Unfortunately we were unable to dismantle the three-element 20m beam, the Titanex V80 and the Butternut HF9V in the short time we had left before the storm hit the island. After the hurricane the elements of the 20m beam had a nice V-shape, but the verticals didn't show any problems, despite a very serious bending of the upper sections

which were not guyed. By the way, even in the middle of the hurricane when we were unable to move outside the building to use a satellite phone, we could communicate with the outside world via e-mail using PACTOR III and winlink. It is worth mentioning that the SCS PTC II provided a reliable communication link to a PACTOR gateway in southern California, and there was a high three-digit number of e-mails transferred between the team and recipients all over the world.

As the probability of another tropical storm developing into another hurricane was quite high, we were now only given permission to operate from the camp. However, the Commanding Officer assigned us a building about 400m away from the first operating site so that we could set up another station. The propagation from that site to EU and NA was extremely poor because the

antennas were merely beaming towards the surrounding hills. Nevertheless, it was possible to have some nice contacts with EU and NA on 30m from that site as well. At the second operating site we had also installed the antennas for satellite communication and for 6m EME. Due to power line problems, though we were eventually unable to work 6m EME.

At the end of the operation XE1GRR, XE2K and DL8LE went to Clarion Island, NA-115, which is about 400 km west of Socorro, and operated there for some hours under the call XF4K. The last QSO in the XF4DL log was with WO7Y on 5 November at 1234 UTC on 40m CW.

Looking at the statistics below, we consider the DXpedition to have been quite successful, even though we were unable to meet all our targets.

	SSB	CW	RTTY	FM	SSTV	PSK31	PSK63	band total
160m	584	2457	0	0	0	0	0	3041
80m	2512	4132	0	0	0	0	0	6644
40m	3275	4939	293	0	0	0	0	8507
30m	0	5173	324	0	0	282	63	5842
20m	9124	4193	1193	0	34	423	68	15035
17m	3363	3548	1557	0	0	138	61	8667
15m	5438	2540	0	0	0	59	0	8037
12m	1001	801	0	0	0	0	0	1802
10m	913	123	0	0	0	0	0	1036
2m	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
70cm	0	0	0	18	0	0	0	18
Total	26213	27906	3367	18	34	902	192	58632

We see that we have a good ratio between CW and SSB, but already during the operation it became very clear that PSK was not as popular as RTTY and our target to promote PSK63, because of its far better characteristics compared to RTTY, was not achieved. There were mainly some JAs and UAs working in PSK63, and it was a real pleasure to see how the QSO rate increased compared to previous RTTY QSOs, but we

stopped using this mode after calling CQ without any response. It seems that people will not try to use this mode as long as RTTY is still offered by a DXpedition.

The QSOs by Continent are as follows:

Asia	22.4%
Europe	16.6%
North America	56.4%

South America	2.6%
Africa	0.5%
Oceania	1.5%
Antarctica	0.0% (1 qso)

As it is obvious that the majority of QSOs were with NA, we were not satisfied with the number of QSOs with Europe. The main reasons are the difficult propagation path through the auroral zones, especially the path to stations in north and eastern Europe, but here too we see the impact of the fact

that we were unable to use the former radar site as planned. However, all in all the team is proud of the total number of QSOs achieved in a sunspot minimum and under quite tough environmental conditions.

We would like to thank all our sponsors, companies as well as organisations and individuals. Without their help and support the DXpedition would have been impossible.

The Annual VooDude Outing

Roger Western, G3SXW

g3sxw@btinternet.com

The VooDoo Contest Group makes its annual outing to West Africa to operate the CQ WW CW contest each November. See Lee's 'Contest' column for a few words about the contest operation itself.

This group has operated the CW contest in nine West African countries on 16 occasions. We have seen more than a sunspot cycle, doing multi-multi. This November it was our second year in Mali, signing TZ5A. We are a well-oiled machine these days. Everyone knows their job. So it is the exceptions to the rules which are more interesting to describe. Still, it is a great chance to make the dull, dank, cold British winter a little shorter, by taking two weeks on the equator in late November.

This year we had not only our old adversary, HC8N, to contend with but also a very large group of Germans at 5A7A. They would have a huge advantage over TZ5A as our first hop is always on the Sahara desert. Sure enough, it seems that we came third in category this time. They both claim 46 million points, against our 40 million. Never mind: no-one could have had more fun than we did.

Some Down Sides

One down side is the difficulty of getting visas before travelling. You may have spotted our little anecdote in the last edition of the *CDXC Digest*, but that was for 3X, Guinea. It also bears mentioning that to get our TZ/Mali visas we have to send all our documents to Paris. What a pain. But with the tremendous help of Robert, F5VHN, we always manage to get them in time. Another pre-trip preparation is to remember to start taking the malaria tablets. There are mosquitoes in Bamako, so it's a wise precaution. In fact Robbie and I had more trouble with them this year than usual. Vicious little critters who seem impervious to insect spray and to roll-on repellent. I've not experienced this before. We were bitten often and were kept awake by the buzzing. They just laughed off two different cans of spray.

Comparatively speaking, having to fly Air France and to transit through Charles de Gaulle airport is also a down side. That really is a dreadful airport, unless you happen to catch it at a quiet moment. Those interminable sick-making bus rides between

terminals seem to take for ever, only then to be confronted with massive queues for yet another X-ray screening machine. Then on board it has to be said that the outstanding reputation that Air France used to have for its food has reversed itself: this time the food was possibly the worst of any airline. And being a nationalised airline their attitude sucks! Oh dear, the woes of travelling to West Africa!

This year the pollution in Bamako was much less than last year, when it was really quite a down side. The city is in a valley (River Niger) like many cities, but this year there was some wind, so the brown haze of pollution from thousands of smoke-belching vehicles and mopeds and from the desert dust was quite tolerable. We could even see across the city, for photography. The heat, generally, is not a down side: we are used to it and actually enjoy the sensation of overheating (with plenty of Factor 40 for protection). Half of the team this year, four out of eight, live in Arizona, so they are well used to hot, dry, desert air.

Another down side from last year was absent this time: the hotel was almost empty, exactly what DXpeditioners like! However, one really serious disadvantage this time was that for the first time ever we had lost some of our gear. It is always stored locally and is simply collected each November. This time we were missing about six rice sacks of coax, rotor cable and coaxial receiving stubs. Fortunately one of the team was flying 3-4 days later than the rest of us, so John/G4IRN was able to raid the ML & S stock and bring out 400m of Mini-8. We couldn't find 6-core cable in Bamako and only short pieces of 7-core for the rotor controllers. We needed 6-core, so we bought double the required length of 3-core mains cable and made do with that. It's a mystery what happened to those sacks.

Up Sides

These down sides are always marginal, just challenges to be met. There are always far

more up sides, especially the fun that we have together as a group. This year we were only eight and this seemed easier to gel than the ten of last year. Group dynamics.

A major advantage this time was that we had learned from our mistakes of last year, particularly with placement of antennas. That's the way it goes: we do far better the second time, but then if we stayed for a third year we would get bored, unchallenged. So it is time to move on and face new circumstances. This time the empty hotel meant that we had much better service in the restaurant. The turkey Thanksgiving dinner, like last year, was most enjoyable.

We are more adept at handling affairs the second time in a new country, like shopping and money changing. The second time around you do feel like an old hand, knowing where to go, how hard to bargain and so forth. A skill is to realise that you should never pay more than 2,500 CFA (£2.50) for a taxi ride in the city, no matter how far it is. Those who pick you up at or near the hotel (and see your white face) think they can charge much more. Hey, what's new: it's the same in cities the world over. Once you know the going rate, you can avoid being cheated.

Of course, the contest itself was a big up side this year, scoring over 40 million points, within a whisker of our all-time best score. Also, the extra-curricular activities were fun: we used to have a rule that we would not go on the air at all before the contest in case it depleted our score when DXers had already worked us. In more recent years we have decided that this makes no difference at all, and after all we are there to enjoy ourselves, so we ran pile-ups like crazy for several days before the contest, adding some 10,000 QSOs to the log.

Another addition to our armamentarium this time was 2m EME. Gulp! Yes, AA7A brought a whole set-up, 24-element beam with clever attachments to direct it at the

moon in two planes with strings, plus an amplifier. I was honoured to be in their shack when a QSO was made. Interesting to see those little white marks on the screen, but to hear no signals at all. Well, the VooDudes are indeed branching out. It's only two to three years ago that someone brought a microphone, then we did 6m too. It is no longer sacrilege; we are much more laid back these days.

A major reason why we are so much more relaxed is that these days we stay longer. Many years ago we did the whole trip in six days, including crossing borders with all the gear, setting up, doing the contest, tearing down. This has gradually crept up to a full two weeks. I guess we are all getting older, which means we have the time and money to be able to invest in these trips. It certainly means that we have quality time together, instead of rushing around and getting exhausted.

Recycling

Err, what's recycling got to do with anything? Well, one of the things that these rather longer visits permit is a little sightseeing. Like last year, when we spent a day visiting villages and had a life-changing experience at a school. This time we just took a half-day tour around Bamako. It started with a trip up the far side of the valley to look down across the city and a visit to the National Museum, a beautifully laid-out place full of interesting stuff.

The next item on the itinerary was 'The Recycling Centre'. We all looked quizzically at each other, but went with the flow. This tour company knows its stuff. There must be a reason why they want to take us there. So yet again we re-learned the lesson about expectation management. If you don't expect much, then you are rewarded with more than you would otherwise be. If you don't expect much, but are provided with a major life experience, then you are gobsmacked.

What we saw is impossible to describe fully, to communicate the sensations of our visit. A large area, covering maybe 8-10 acres, set on a hillside, just outside town where they recycle stuff. Mostly they were taking delivery of discarded oil drums and using the metal to make stuff. What was astonishing was the scope of the activity, hundreds of workers, all labouring under cramped, makeshift tarpaulins and doing all the work by hand, with hammers. The noise and the smells were indescribable. The output was every sort of metal item that you could imagine, from kettles and cooking pots to ornaments and ploughshares.

Then we came across the soap factory, and the cotton recycling. Mind you, I don't think there was much in the way of Health & Safety, or union rules, and I hate to think what the place must be like in the rainy season. But, my goodness, they were working hard. As we walked around we were largely ignored, so we were not uncomfortable at being voyeurs. But then we noticed that as we approached, some of the men were putting their backs even more into their battering. Almost as if they were proud to show us their skills. It was all deafening. We took dozens of digital photos, but none of them portray what it was really like.

Head off to Conakry

This being our second visit to Mali, it is time to move on. Take a look at your trusty world atlas. We had already 'done' Ghana, 9G, and Burkina Faso, XT2, to the south and east. The Ivory Coast, TU, is still not safe after their civil war and anyway, we had 'done' it a few years ago, albeit only for ARRL CW. To the north is the Sahara and Algeria, 7X. No thank you. To the south-west are Liberia, EL, and Sierra Leone, 9L, both still fragile after their wars like the Ivory Coast and not yet safe. Maybe in a few years' time. This leaves Guinea, 3X, and Mauritania, 5T. The border with Guinea is only 50 miles from Bamako and this country could become a stepping-off point

for future years, to 5T, 9L, J5 etc. So we decided to head in that direction.

First, of course, there's a lot of Internet searching. I e-mailed everyone who I could find who had held a 3X call in recent years. None of the e-mails bounced, but only three replied. Whatever. I was in touch with the two Russians who are currently very active (3XM6JR and 3XD2Z), but they are located way up country. Then I got to know Karel, ON4QY/3XY2A, in Conakry and he was very helpful. We also uncovered about a dozen hotels in Conakry.

So on the Tuesday after the contest Fred, G4BWP, Vince, K5VT, and myself boarded a Toyota Land Cruiser 4WD for the long drive to Conakry. We needed to a) try out the route and the border crossing, b) find a suitable hotel QTH and c) apply for licences. Any sundry intelligence picked up along the way would be extremely useful. This was to be a two-day journey with an overnight stay, being too far to make it in one day. A total of about 700 miles. We were on the road at 6am, just before sunrise, both mornings. But the hotel chosen for our transit stay was only about one-third of the distance. We made it by lunchtime, but the next day was 13 hard hours. The border crossing was no problem, a half-hour of formalities.

The road was perfect the first day, down to Kankan. The second day we endured potholes every few hundred yards, slowing us to walking pace. This stretch of bad road was about four hours. We reached the outskirts of Conakry just at sunset. We had been stopped for the ubiquitous police road blocks only about five times on the whole journey and they were just a few moments to check papers. But the customs and immigration post upon entering Conakry cost us twenty minutes to get through. The 'charge' was to be about £2, but we bargained it down to 50 pence. Then we struggled to find our hotel in the dark and an hour to fight through major roadworks. The

cold beer on entering the Camayenne Hotel was really most welcome.

We had chosen this hotel to stay in as it seemed the most likely to suit our operation next year. That's what then transpired. We visited a dozen other hotels, but none were suitable. The Camayenne, on the other hand, has a 60 ft high flat roof, 300 x 30 ft. And - now this is very exciting for us - the Atlantic Ocean literally laps the walls of the hotel at high tide, all the way from south through west, to north-east. Magic! After several years of sub-Saharan sand this would be a treat. The humidity is very bearable when we know that we will have such a great take-off.

So it is looking good for next year. Fingers crossed. The country is stable for the moment, but there are dire predictions about what may happen when the aged dictator dies. And the economy is a shambles. The largest bank note is 5,000 Guinea France, about fifty pence. A slap-up Chinese meal costs about £3.

And Three X-Ray just has such an exotic feel to it, no? This will be a lot of fun!

73 de Roger/G3SXW

Torbay Amateur Radio Society

60th Anniversary

We are delighted to welcome visitors to our Open Day on 24 February to celebrate TARS 1947-2007. With special event station GB6OTR, demonstrations of the many aspects of our hobby, training advice and information, RSGB books, selected traders and refreshments it promises to be a day not to be missed.

Mark, G7LJN, TARS Hon. Secretary

sec@tars.org.uk

www.tars.org.uk

One-day DXpeditions

Roger Western, G3SXW

g3sxw@btinternet.com

The age of virtually free air travel has led to a new form of DXpeditioning: the 'One-day DXpedition'. This comes courtesy of Ryanair's widely available tickets at one penny each way - you just pay the airport taxes, about £25 for a return journey to anywhere in Europe. Just drive to Stansted or Luton, park and fly. Their schedules cover several mildly rare (DXCC-wise) locations. If you hunt for different routes and dates you are virtually sure to come up with a trip that grabs your fancy: how about 9H, CN, EA8, ISØ and if you are prepared to drive a little at the other end then you might try LX, HBØ, OHØ or ZB2.

Rarity is determined by how long the pile-up lasts. In all these cases the pile-up will continue for at least an hour or two, enough to have some fun. When it dies away you can try ragchewing or sightseeing! Ian, G3WVG, and I visited Eye-Ess Zero for a day and this was then followed by a day trip to Malta by Nigel, G3TXF, and myself signing 9H3TF and 9H3SX respectively. Unfortunately there is only one flight a day, so we had to stay overnight in a hotel, so this trip to Malta was not purely a 'one-day DXpedition'. Then again, you could decide to stay for a few days and make a holiday of it more like a normal tourist - if you really have to!

9H3SX and 9H3TF

We did this trip just with hand luggage. My 10 kilos worth consisted of the station (Elecraft K2/100, PSU, keyer, headphones) and Nigel's bag contained a dipole with about 60 ft of skinny coax. We logged on paper to save the extra kilos of a laptop. We flew from Luton, arriving in the evening, just in time for a late supper at the Preluna Hotel, in Sliema. This hotel had been

recommended by John, G4IRN, who had done BERU from there last year. It sticks out into the sea with clear saltwater take-off from NW through N to South and is 13 storeys high.

After breakfast we were on the sun deck stringing out a 20m dipole at about 140 ft. 9H3SX then proceeded to make 160 CW QSOs on 14.023 MHz with 100W output. After a leisurely lunch 9H3TF extended the dipole and made 280 QSOs on 30m. This included a few JAs and long-path W7 at sunset, testimony to the excellent location of the Preluna Hotel.

We then went back to the airport for a pizza, flew back to Luton and drove home. What a giggle!

Touristing

Malta is a surprisingly neat and well-tailored location. The streets that we saw were manicured and the old buildings beautifully lit at night. Of course, anywhere beside the sea has an extra charm. The Maltese language is strange: it doesn't sound like anything recognisable but does include some Arabic words - not surprising, as they are so close to the Libyan coast. This is the most southerly part of Europe.

A civilised, well-developed tourist industry offers Italian-style driving mixed in with a colourful history. But then for a DXpeditioner all these things are irrelevant. A full log book is all that counts!

Expect us to show up from some other locations in the near future, if only for a day or so. This new form of DXpeditioning will hardly set the DXCC world on fire. But it is certainly a LOT of fun! Try it!

2006 – a good, but not a vintage year for QSOs

Nigel Cawthorne, G3TXF

nigel@G3TXF.com

Yes, 2006 has been quite a good year for QSOs. G3TXF keeps a running tally of QSOs made with home and overseas callsigns. During the past year HF contest activity (including the numerous 80m CCs) has helped to generate some 14,700 QSOs for G3TXF at home. In addition 12,000 QSOs were made on several overseas trips, with FH (5,000) and FP (3,740) being the best two. A day-trip to ZB2 netted another 2,220. Flying visits to Shetland and Malta, as well as a brief stint at the 4O3T Montenegro operation, accounted for the remainder.

Even so, 2006 (with 26,700 QSOs in total) was not a vintage year for QSO numbers. The sunspot-packed year of 2000 still holds that record with 37,500 QSOs.

A useful milestone was passed during 2006 as G3TXF's overall QSO total grew to 427,000. Just over half (53% or 225,800) of these QSOs have been made from the home QTH. However, during 2006 the total number of QSOs made on overseas trips passed through the '200,000' level to finish at 201,200.

The year 2007 will also have to be a reasonably good year, if G3TXF's overall QSO total is to be pushed past '450,000' during the next twelve months.

OK, Roger, so where's that flight timetable?

LoTW

Another great place for tracking interesting (but somewhat larger!) QSO numbers is LoTW. By dint of some careful clock-watching, G3TXF was able to upload the 100-millionth QSO record onto LoTW in May 2006. Since then LoTW has already added another 16 million QSOs, ending the

year with 116 million entries. As it happens, G3TXF's 'fluke' 100-millionth LoTW record was for a QSO with John, G4IRN, while he and G3SXW were QRV in Gibraltar.

It is good to see that many more DXpeditions are uploading their logs onto LoTW immediately, or soon after, the end of the operation. There's also a great surge of new QSOs to be found on LoTW after any major contest. Many contesters enjoy typing their logs into LoTW, much to the benefit of everyone.

A new QSL shoebox

A major project at G3TXF during recent months has been the construction of the ultimate 'QSL shoebox'. A purpose-designed 'studio' has been built at the bottom of the garden purely to store in a rational and secure way the numerous QSLs collected over the years.

The 'QSL Office' currently contains 14 filing cabinets and mountains of QSLs, which need to be correctly sorted and filed. Hopefully by the end of next year I will be able to report on exactly how many cards there are in the store. At the moment I have no real idea, other than to say that there are an awful lot of them.

The first drawer is currently being worked on. That is for the cards for the 3V8NC operation made by G3SXW and G3TXF way back in July 1969. Yes, there is indeed quite a bit of QSL sorting that needs to be done during the coming year. Hopefully there'll also be time to get a few more QSOs in the log.

73 Nigel, G3TXF

IOTA News

Roger Balister, G3KMA

Annual Update

Yes, it's here again. The last date for mailing applications or updates to checkpoints for inclusion in the 2007 Honour Roll and other performance tables is 1 February 2007. If postmarked after that date, they will be processed in the normal way, but the scores will be held over to the following appearance. Listing in the tables is restricted to those members who have updated their scores at least once in the previous five years. In the case of the 2007 tables this means since the 2002 annual listings. If you wish to remain listed, check to see that you qualify and, if not, make a submission on or before 1 February 2007. The tables will appear on the RSGB IOTA website in the early summer.

Updates from February onwards

After the Annual Update we will transfer the IOTA database on to new software which provides for online application. From that point on it will not be possible for checkpoints to import the text files generated by the old IOTAMEM software, so please do NOT send these in after the end of January. In fact it is best to hold updating until May at the earliest, when we plan for guidance to be available on how to submit online. And, please, in case the thought crosses your mind, do not submit on paper in an attempt to circumvent use of IOTAMEM! Word is around that the administration charges for submitting on paper will be significantly increased early in 2007.

Update of data in IOTA Directory: new IOTA reference numbers issued

None during November/December 2006.

Operations which have provided acceptable validation material

AF-027	TX6A	Mayotte Island (October 2006)
NA-004	KL7HBK/P	Endeavor (Endicott) Island (October 2006)
NA-197	K7A	Fox Island (August 2006)
OC-115	P29NI	Kiriwina Island, Trobriand Islands (October 2006)
OC-153	P29VCX	Daru Island (October 2006)
OC-187	VK4CSP/P	Lizard Island (October 2006)

Note: This list includes operations where validation material was volunteered, ie not specifically required for credit to be given. In all cases, cards now submitted will be accepted by Checkpoints if they meet normal standards. This means that the island name should be printed on the card.

Roger Balister, G3KMA, RSGB IOTA Manager

20 December 2006
E-mail: IOTA.HQ@rsgb.org.uk
www.g3kma.dsl.pipex.com

The RTTY Column

Phil Cooper, GUØSUP *pcooper@guernsey.net*

Ah, the vagaries of propagation! There has been some good DX about whilst I am writing this, but sadly, the gods of propagation aren't playing ball. At times the A index has been higher than the SFI, and with a K of 6, the TV seems a better prospect. But that is life, and we have to go with the flow. I have been trying to work the VU7 gang, but they are sparing with their RTTY, and only seem to be on when propagation is way down - or if there is an opening to EU, they call CQ NA or CQ JA.

Still, the New Year brings the prospect of yet another DXpedition to VU7, and this time, it will include some FB RTTY ops, so I am more hopeful of getting them in the log then.

The OK DX RTTY contest was the last of the year, and conditions were poor from here, especially to the USA, with only a few W/VE stations logged on 20m, and nothing on 15 or even 40m. Participation in this contest is a little poor, which is probably due to it being so close to the holiday season. I guess many people are out frantically buying last-minute Christmas presents and the like, and cannot spend the time in the shack.

I try to work round this, and take some time off before and after the contest, and get those jobs out of the way outside contest time. Having said that, there are plenty of ops about, and it is a fun contest.

Having now completed the OK contest, I see I have increased my contest QSO count in 2006 over previous years. This is pleasing, and also a little surprising, given the often poor conditions for contests throughout 2006.

Not being a 'big-gun' means you have to set your own targets, and these can be whatever

you choose. My choice is to increase my QSO totals over the year and to try to beat my previous scores. One of my aims for 2007 (it was an aim in 2006, too, but I failed!) is to make 1000 QSOs in a contest. For those of you with decent antennas this may be an easy thing, but with limited antennas it is much more of a challenge, especially in the lower part of the cycle.

In general, I guess I will have to choose a contest such as CQ WW, or WAEDC, or possibly WPX. I'd favour CQ WW, as it is still reasonably warm then, which means staying up past my bedtime isn't too much of a struggle, but WAEDC is still possible.

This year, it was my aim for CQ WW, but conditions didn't quite match my expectations and I fell short by just over 200.

By the time you are reading this, the 2007 contest season will be under way. As soon as dates are confirmed they will be listed on the www.rttycontesting.com website.

The BARTG RTTY Sprint contest runs from 1200 UTC on Saturday, 27 January, until 1200 UTC on Sunday, 28 January. Careful reading of the rules is required, as there are band-change limits, plus continental multipliers, so you need to think about a strategy. I have often heard stations moaning about the lack of African stations for that final continent, but don't forget about CT3, EA8 etc., which are usually around. Go to www.bartg.demon.co.uk for the full rules.

Another good contest to try for some new ones is WPX in February. As the name suggests, prefixes are mults, and this is a great fun contest. Reading the rules is an important part of the contest, especially regarding the mults. Also take note of what

points are awarded per contact, as some contests give you higher points for the lower bands, and this may mean spending more time at the radio during the darker hours.

If you check the various contest summary sites, you will often see some stations with a high number of QSOs, but way down the list in terms of score. Calling CQ is great and it is fun to have nice runs going, but you also need to work the mults, or it will all be in vain.

I now have my MQ26 mini-beam up in the air, and it does give me a lot of improvement over the MQ1, not least because it covers 17m and 12m. I have also tuned it to work right at the RTTY segments of the bands, and therefore it also works reasonably well down into the CW portion. Comparing signals on 17m on the MQ26, half-size G5RV and the inverted V has been an interesting task. EU signals seem to be about the same on all three antennas, give or take an S-point, but the real advantage comes in more distant signals, especially where I have nulls on the G5RV. Most of West Africa and the Caribbean are all but unworkable on the wire antennas, but on the MQ26, they are up around S7 – S9.

Overall, given the size of the MQ26, its height, and not forgetting the cost, it is an impressive bit of kit.

I'd quite like to increase the height of it, but without major works this is not possible. It's currently up at around 5m, which is just about the height of the gable end of the house, but if I go higher I would need a more solid support, as it would then be right in the way of the prevailing winds.

During the installation of the MQ26, I accidentally discovered that my Bluetooth dongle in the shack causes a lot of noise, particularly at 17m and above. Since then, I

unplug it when trying to use the higher bands. If you have such a dongle in your shack, try disconnecting it and see if it makes any difference!

Here is the RTTY contest calendar for 2007, showing the more major contests. Please note that the dates are 'probable' and may vary, but this should give you a good idea of what takes place when.

I have omitted a few contests, as dates are a little vague, so do check

www.rttycontesting.com.

ARRL RTTY Roundup	Jan 6-7
BARTG Sprint	Jan 27-28
XE RTTY (FMRE)	Feb 3-4
CQ WW WPX	Feb 10-11
Open UK RTTY Championship	Mar 3-4
BARTG Spring HF	Mar 17-18
EA-WW (Spain)	Apr 7-8
SP (Poland)	Apr 21-22
VOLTA (Italy)	May 12-13
ANARTS (Australian)	Jun 9-10
DL-DX RTTY	Jul 7-8
SARTG DX	Aug 18-19
SCC RTTY (Slovenia)	Aug 25-26
Russian WW	Sep 2
CQ WW DX	Sep 29-30
Makrothen	Oct 13-14
JARTS (Japan)	Oct 20-21
WAEDC (QTC)	Nov 10-11
OK RTTY	Dec 15

I will take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year, and may you work all the DX you want!

73 and good diddling!

Phil GUØSUP

Contest

Lee Volante, GØMTN

Welcome to the first Contest Column of 2007. I'm very pleased to have received two reports of multi-multi section operations in last year's CQ WW DX CW contest from Roger, G3SXW (at TZ5A), and Mark, MØDXR (at K3LR.) Although on different continents, and certainly with a very different view outside of their respective shack windows, both reports convey the fun and excitement of multi-operator contesting in the biggest event of the year.

Whilst Roger and the VooDudes, and Mark and others in the K3LR team, had travelled thousands of miles, my own pre-contest trip from the bedroom to the shack was not quite so adventurous. Even so, waking up for the midnight start after about one hour of not-quite-sleep was difficult enough. For a while I did question why I was putting myself through this ordeal again, but the mass of activity and pile-ups soon brought me out of my slumber. An additional concern to most UK entrants in CQ WW was the high winds, which had caused some antenna casualties in the day or two before the contest. Some stations (myself included) erred on the side of caution concerning how high to deploy antennas on the Friday night. Others took a chance and by and large escaped unscathed, and maybe got a head start on their competition by doing so.

It was very refreshing to read the CQ WW SSB report from Ian, G4FSU, in the last *Digest*. Very funny too, Ian – well done! It's typical, I'm sure, of the majority of amateurs whose contesting activities have to be secondary to family and other commitments. When looking up and down the results listings for the mid-placed stations, perhaps we don't often appreciate the trouble it takes just to get on the air for a few hours. Collecting some new band-countries, or even just finding you can radiate an effective signal on the low bands

from a tiny garden (as happened to a friend this year in CQ WW SSB), can bring as much pleasure as racking up multi-million point scores. Just like the rest of the hobby, it's great that contesting can be many things to many people.

TZ5A in CQ WW CW 2006 [G3SXW]

As you may know, the VooDoo Contest Group operates the CW contest from West Africa every year, multi-multi. We usually stay in a country for two years then move on. This was our second year in Mali. The group this year was AA7A, G3SXW, G4BWP, G4IRN, GM3YTS, K5VT, KC7V, KY7M, with the usual seven 1 KW stations. Again this year we used all Elecraft K2s, which performed flawlessly, and old Alpha amplifiers.

We think we know propagation from down there pretty well, but we were in for a few surprises this year. Conditions were far better than the numbers suggested. Our usual 3,000 QSOs on 10m was flattened to less than 600 last year, so we expected no better this time. In fact we finished up with 2,100. Fifteen was in good shape, but only in daylight hours: again most unusual for us on the equator because it usually stays open half the night. The LF bands were remarkably good, especially 80m, where we turned in a vastly improved score. Even Top Band was unpredictable: we usually make 70% of the contacts on the Sunday evening. This time both 160 and 80m were great on the first night and much poorer on the Sunday evening. Our mults were also well up. We had never before made 5B DXCC, and the 34 zones on 80m were fantastic.

On the antenna front things were largely the same as last year. The three Force 12 mono-banders for 20, 15 and 10m just play beautifully every year. On top of the large

hotel roof they are at about 70 ft. This year we added 10 ft of tower to the 40-2CD and this seemed to make a big difference. Last year it was at only 20 ft above the roof and the SWR varied according to where it was pointing, a sure sign that some RF was being absorbed by the building. We had also moved it closer to the west-facing corner of the hotel, so in that hemisphere the antenna was seeing about 80 ft. But the really big surprise was 80m. We moved the 50 ft vertical right up on to the top of the roof, the base at about 70 ft. It looked magnificent, way up in the clear. But the propagation experts like K9LA and NM7M say that on the equator you also need a horizontal antenna. We slung a dipole at about 60 ft and much to our surprise this outperformed the vertical throughout the weekend, in all directions. The Titanex seemed to do fine on TX on 160m, but we need to expand the horizontal dipole experiment to this band next year.

For receive, we learned our lesson from last year when the Beverage got trampled to death by goats. We went to the trouble of rolling it at sunrise and laying it out again at sunset, just lying on the sandy ground. This meant we could actually hear signals on 160 and 80 the whole weekend! Our mult antenna, just to complete the picture, is a C3 tribander at about 70 ft. There was also the addition for the first time of a 24-element 2m beam (dual-polarisation) for pointing at the moon. Again, this is a separate story, but AA7A/KC7V were thrilled with their 85 QSOs.

All of our stuff is in storage in Bamako for another year and we hope to move to Guinea, 3X, next year. G4BWP, K5VT and myself made the road journey to Conakry, staying for three days, during which time we found the best hotel QTH and arranged the licence. This is a story in itself! See you next year!

73 de Roger/G3SXW.

Competitive Buzz at K3LR [MØDXR]

Whilst attending the Dayton show in the USA this year I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to meet well-known contester Tim, K3LR. As many of you will be aware, Tim is the owner of a large multi-multi contest station located near Pittsburgh, Ohio. The station can be heard on the air during the main contests such as ARRL and CQ WW. Whilst in conversation with Tim about his new 15m stack (7/7/7/7), I popped the question, "So, what does a guy like me have to do to contest from a station like yours?". His response: "You wanna come over for CQ WW CW this year?". My response: "Really?!". The rest is history. I booked a flight to arrive at Pittsburgh on the Friday.

As K3LR is 100% Icom, I agreed to help make a video 'Icom Radio News #5', which will soon be available on the Internet. This video represents the true competitive element of HF Contesting, and what better way to get a feel for it than to be at one of the most successful multi-multi stations in the world! CQ WW CW has always had a very special place in my heart, and it's been a dream to operate from such a station for some time. Most of my contest efforts are here in the UK with the great G6PZ team in Somerset, but this is in the multi-single category – so I always wondered what it would be like to operate in M/M using stacked yagis up to 200 ft in height!

There is much e-mail communication for weeks before the contest. E-mails containing past logs which the operators are asked to analyse carefully to plan on/off times as well as beam headings. Before long it was time for my flight over to K3LR. What I didn't realise when booking my flight is that the contest actually starts at 7pm USA Eastern Time - my flight lands at 5pm! Two hours to get there it is then! A couple of the other operators picked me up at the airport and we zoomed up country for about an hour. By this time it was dark and all I could see were lights. The driver of the

car said, "You see that flashing red light. That's the 20m tower". I just laughed: "You're kidding, right?". No he wasn't. Apparently it's CAA regulations, as there is an airfield nearby and anything over 200 ft must be accompanied by a red beacon!

On arrival I met the other operators and stuffed myself with pizza. There was junk food everywhere for the weekend and a very impressive coffee-making facility (for the tired late hours, no doubt). I descended into the basement down a steep staircase to take first look at the shack. Wow! This is very cool. It's more like a super-high-tech office. As midnight zulu approached, we all got ready... and we were off! Suddenly QSO after QSO appeared in the log - about 12 Qs in the first minute. This was impressive to see. It actually reminded me of the D68C Comoros DXpedition! 15m was rather dead, as one would expect at that time. We made a few QSOs, but the real rate didn't start until the following morning when we began to run Europe. The very first station I heard over the pond was the VooDudes TZ5A in Mali - a big signal! They we're running stations like there's no tomorrow (as always)! It wasn't long before EU came through, and the rate was close to a true 200/hr.

As time went on, and the score grew and grew, the operators became more tired. Each new multiplier (new country or Zone) seemed to mean so much more on the second day. Each station was equipped with a bell for the operators to sound every time a new mult was worked. This would be followed by a big "Yeah, baby!" from each operator - great fun! The atmosphere here was just electric - everyone worked as a team - and passing multipliers to other bands was key. It was important to not only get along with other ops but to understand them. Then suddenly, the contest was over after making an impressive 18.7 million points.

Immediately after the contest Tim rushed to the 80m station to compare scores with our

main competitors KC1XX and W3LPL. This was just amazing - each station ended up with a score of almost exactly 18.7 million. Apparently this is the closest it's ever been. So it's all down to log checking for this one, boys! Fingers crossed! We then cracked open a bottle of bubbly and celebrated this fantastic effort by the K3LR team. If anyone ever gets the opportunity to enter the multi-multi section of CQ WW who hasn't done so before, I would highly recommend it. See you in the contests!

73 Mark, MØDXR

Commonwealth Contest 2007

Preparations are continuing for the special 70th Commonwealth Contest on 10-11 March, thanks to Bob, G3PJT, and the team. As reported in the last *Digest*, this parallel Commonwealth Team contest is attracting attention. Recently the Australian side submitted their list of team members, whilst their cricketing counterparts commenced a convincing victory in the Ashes.

Some other incentives for boosting activity have been announced:

Continuing their long tradition of supporting amateur radio, Yaesu (UK) have agreed to sponsor individual plaques for the winning team in the Commonwealth Team Contest. Each player in the winning side will receive a plaque which can be retained as a memento.

With the intention of stimulating some new interest in the Commonwealth Contest, the VP8GQ Trophy will be presented to the highest-placed non-UK station (who has not won the trophy in the preceding two years) in the 12-hour category, regardless of section, Open or Restricted. This award takes the form of an attractive wood-mounted plaque and will be retained by the winners. This trophy has been made available through the generosity of Peter Hobbs, G3LET. Peter's story of his time in

the Antarctic, as VP8GQ on Signy Island, can be found in 'Reflections in a Rosebowl'.

A special 'Commonwealth Traveller' certificate will be awarded to the highest-scoring entrant who operates from a Commonwealth call area which was not active in the previous year's (2006) event. At the discretion of the RSGB HF Contests Committee, additional 'Commonwealth

Traveller' certificates may be awarded to entrants from especially inaccessible call areas. More details can be found at www.beru.org.uk.

Please keep the reports coming in!

73

Lee, GØMTN

E-mails to the Editor

from G3SXW

Sir,

We cannot allow the Grumpy Old Ham to get away with making flagrantly flawed flea-bitten, flaccid albeit fleeting, anti-CW arguments. Dai needs firstly to understand that the 'O' in GOM (or GOH) also means 'Opinionated', but that Opinions mellow and self-correct over time. Therefore an Older person has Wisdom and his Opinions are far more valuable than those of younger (ie lesser) mortals.

As to the anti-CW tirade, his theory is fundamentally wrong. He claims that SSB needs 5.6 times more bandwidth than CW, so he has clearly never upgraded from his crystal set of the Fifties. I won't go into the population-size argument, but it is a well-known fact that there are 5.6 times more CW operators in the world than those who Quack.

But of overriding importance is the fact that each CW operator is 5.6 times more IMPORTANT than those chaps who gabble meaninglessly into microphones. This is a proven, scientific fact.

If these lesser beings care to encroach into the sub-bands reserved exclusively for

CW, we will permit this, but on only four days per year (CQ WW and CQ WPX). Any such encroachment on the other 361 days will lead to a CDXC hit squad sticking pins in his coax.

73 de Roger, G3SXW (even Grumpier Old Ham).

from MØOXO

In February of each year there is 'Antarctic Week', which I run and which is supported by members of the 'Worldwide Antarctic Program' (WAP). Stations worldwide operate special event calls for that week solely for the purpose of raising awareness about issues on Antarctica etc. During 'Antarctic Week 2007' I will be using the callsign GBØANT, with the unique reference for chasers of 'WAP Zone 72'. The station will run from 19 – 25 February 2007 and I hope to cater for as many HF modes as possible. I am new to CW, so please be patient! For anyone interested in finding out more about 'WAP', please follow the links below:

<http://charlesm0oxo.piczo.com/>
www.ddxc.net/wap/

73 Charles

Not the GB2RS News

This week's headlines:

- Abbreviated numbers in CW
- German QSL card culture criticised
- Not enough youngsters given a chance at VU7LD

In the wake of some confusion in the CQ WW CW contest at the end of November, we start with a reminder of recommended international practice with regard to abbreviated or cut numbers in CW contests. Needless to say, the long versions take up far too much valuable on-air time. Already common practice are: Ø = T, 1 = A, 9 = N.

The others are:

2	U	dit-dit-dah
3	W	dit-dah-dah
4	V	dit-dit-dit-dah
5	S	dit-dit-dit
6	B	dah-dit-dit-dit
7	G	dah-dah-dit
8	D	dah-dit-dit

Please use these abbreviated numbers in signal reports only, not callsigns. Otherwise WILLY, for example, would end up as 'WALLY', 5H1RK as 'SHARK' and I8IOT as 'IDIOT'. It has also been suggested that seeing as everybody's 599 in a CW contest anyway, this 599 could be speeded up by abbreviating it to a single dot, or E (dit). As yet it is unclear how well this would work out in practice.

Radio amateurs in Germany are up in arms about attempts to change what many of them regard as an essential part of their on-air way of life: the practice of casually working a DX station from their local club station under the club callsign (1KW to a 5-element monobander), then firmly expecting a QSL card for their home station as well (a mere 10W to a piece of wet string). Some

observers maintain that this is cheating. Also under scrutiny: Germany's rather rigid QSL card culture, in which a card is regarded as obligatory for every single QSO in the log, band-mode dupes an' all. A powerful reminder to this effect can be seen on a DL QSL card featuring a delightful cartoon of a little boy nearing the end of his current session on the loo and about to reach for the toilet paper. The caption: 'The job isn't finished until the paperwork is done'.

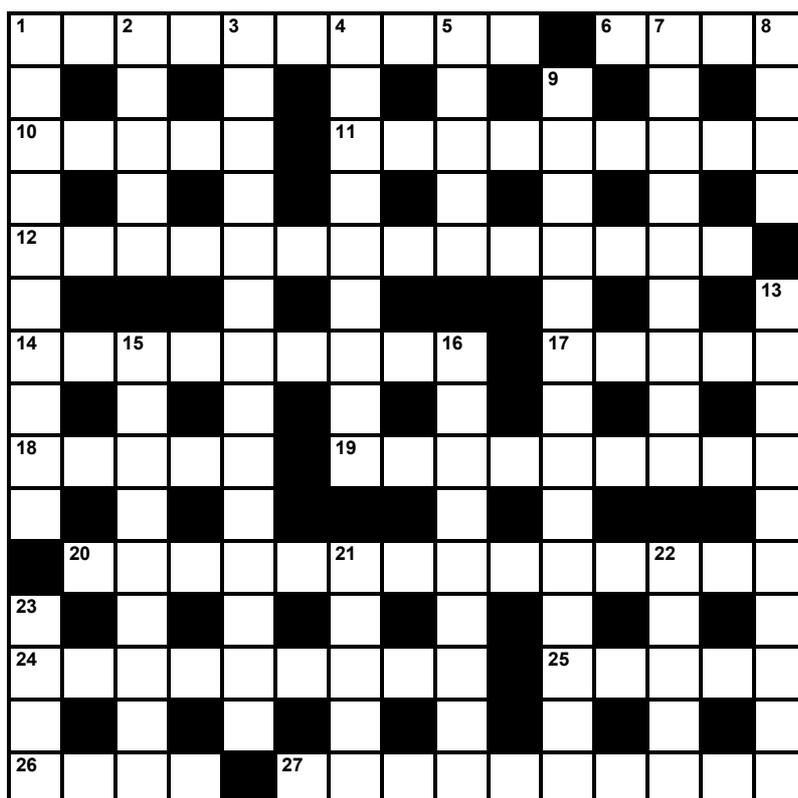
The organisers of the VU7LD Lakshadweep expedition have been criticised for not giving the younger generation enough opportunities to experience pile-up operation first hand. A few local youngsters were indeed invited into the shack and given a microphone or Morse key to experiment with, but allegedly this was not enough. There was also a report of an eager young lad who made it into the shack, only to be told that there was no on-air slot available for him, upon which he burst into tears. This Lakshadweep incident even made the front page of one of the Indian tabloids under the headline 'Shack Lad Weep'.

Solution to Prize Crossword 19



Digest Prize Crossword 20 *by RFX*

The winner of Prize Crossword 19, November 2006, and that brand-new Pavarotti: Bob Whelan, G3PJT, Comberton, Cambridge (via e-mail).



ACROSS

- 1 Remove obligation for tax (6,4)
- 6 Did a monkey impression? (4)
- 10 All love the army in the Central African Republic (5)
- 11 Traders in French sea songs (9)
- 12 A wild guess requiring flash photography? (1,4,2,3,4)
- 14 He might take measures to determine one's suitability (9)
- 17 Fail to mention after five throw up (5)
- 18 Increasing the family in eastern England (5)
- 19 Brother from the Caribbean? (9)
- 20 Relatives end up butchered, resulting in a harsh old sentence (5,9)
- 24 PM for a No. 10 in need of reform (9)
- 25 Oil producer, 54, arrested in Austria (5)
- 26 One bound to use the Internet, we hear (4)
- 27 Community resolution (10)

DOWN

- 1 One in the field given additional insurance (5,5)
- 2 The small problem with fish? (5)
- 3 Naughty girls paint this, making very fine distinctions (9,5)
- 4 Rival to rocker upset by girl a 1950s youth controlled (9)
- 5 Law book suppressed by solicitor, a high-flyer (5)
- 7 Widespread type of view? (9)
- 8 Element of CW not used in EI or 5H (4)
- 9 Bestseller that's surprisingly naïve, odd and hectic (3,2,5,4)
- 13 Don't slouch when Oliver's friend, the German, finds fame at last on court! (5,5)
- 15 Term sending examiner over the edge... (9)
- 16 ... and term BR concocted for the painter (9)
- 21 Nicked boa, perhaps (5)
- 22 Big noise in EU seen turning up in Italian city (5)
- 23 Classic trees (4)

Deadline for entries: 20 February

DX and Events Calendar

Compiled by G3XTT

(thanks to the 425 DX News for most of this)

Period	Call
till February	EM1UC, EM1U: Vernadsky Station (UR-01, AN-006)
till 01/03	LZØA: St Kliment Ohridski Base (LZ-02, AN-010)
till 04/03	8J8WSC: special event station
till 31/03	8J1ANT: special event station (Japan)
till March	VP8DJB: Rothera Station (G-07, AN-001)
till April	V31JP: Belize by K8JP
till June	OX3PG: Greenland (NA-018) by KD4POJ
till 31/08	TU2/F5LDY: Ivory Coast
till September	ZD9BCB: Gough Island (AF-030)
till 01/10	ON6ØAF, ON6ØAP, ON6ØBAF: special calls
till November	8Q7IM: Maldives (AS-013) by IK5ZUI
till 31/01	CF, CG, CH, CI: special prefixes (Canada)
till ??	R1ANF/P: Eco Base (AA OK-01), S. Shetlands (AN-010)
December-February	CE2P: Punta Panul lighthouse by CE3FZL
December-February 2008	DPØGVN: Neumayer Base (DL-03, AN-016)
01/01-30/04	LZ2ØØ7EU: special callsign
01/01-31/12/2007	SX1ØØVAR: special event station (Greece)
03/01-03/02/2007	5U5U: Niger
03/01-09/01/2007	C6ARI: Elbow Cay (NA-219) by DLs
from 04/01/2007	J2ØSA: Djibouti by ON7SAT
from 05/01/2007	V73NS: Kwajalein (OC-028) by WD8CRT
18/01-29/01	5H1Z: Zanzibar Island (AF-032) by F6AML
01/02-15/02/2007	J2ØM and J2ØR: Moucha Island (AF-053) by Is
21/02-28/02/2007	VP2M: Montserrat (NA-103) by G3SWH and G3RTE
February 2007	YWØDX: Aves Island (NA-020)
10/03-19/03/2007	9M4SDX: Spratly Islands (AS-051) by JAs and 9Ms
March 2007	3B6: Agalega (AF-001) + by SP9MRO, SP9PT et al
03/04-16/04/2007	N8S: Swains Island (OC-200)
07/09-24/09/2007	3B7C: St. Brandon Islands (AF-015)

GPS Speed Sentry Software for the Pocket PC

from MØKCM

After many months of dropping hints, the XYL finally caved in and signed the necessary permission slip to obtain a PDA [*Personal Digital Assistant*]. I went for quite a high- spec one while I had the chance and so features such as Wi-Fi and Bluetooth are both available on it. A further £30 purchase from eBay of a Bluetooth GPS receiver and the PDA has also been a SatNav.

I'm an avid portable operator, and will try as often as possible to throw some gear in the car and work from an elevated point, or occasionally go for a drive on an island. Online I have found a small piece of software for the PDA (mine runs Windows Mobile 2003) called GPS Speed Sentry. Its display gives you plenty of information regarding your journey such as speed and direction.

However, it comes into its own with regard to the location information. It can show my exact position either by Longitude-Latitude, Maidenhead Grid Locator – or, in the UK only, Ordnance Survey grid squares, It even displays height above sea level.

The software is shareware, so you can try before you buy, and it can be found in many places online, not least on Trevor Hart's website at www.tchartdev.com. I hasten to add that I have no commercial links with Trevor Hart, or his company, other than that I am a registered user of this piece of software.

However, in a recent e-mail Trevor did offer to look into developing further amateur radio software for use with PDAs. So if anybody has a PDA and has a good idea for some software, then please get in touch either with Trevor via his website, or direct to myself.

Who know's? We may even convert you into this hobby!

73

Ian Sweatman, MØKCM

E-mail: ian@m0kcm.com

CDXC Clothing

We are able to offer a range of high quality CDXC clothing through suppliers Aquarian. All items are available in a choice of colours containing an embroidered CDXC logo and your callsign, also embroidered, with a red 'CDXC' and the remainder of the logo text in gold. Your callsign will be in red.

Please order direct from AQUARIAN. Prices include your callsign (except ties, which do not carry a callsign). Additional lines of text may be added at extra cost. Please note that postage charges listed are to UK addresses. Please contact Aquarian direct for postage charges to other countries.

ITEM		SIZE	PRICE
Sweatshirt	Polycotton raglan sleeve	S, M, L, XL	£21.00
		XXL, 3XL, 4XL	£22.00
Children's sweatshirts	Polycotton raglan sleeve	3, 5, 7, 9, 11 years	£16.00
Rugby shirts FR1	100% cotton	S, M, L	£25.00
		XL, XXL	£26.00
		3XL	£28.00
Rugby shirts FR2	Quartered 100% cotton	S, M, L	£29.00
		XL, XXL	£31.00
Polo shirts	100% cotton	S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL	£19.00
Polo shirts	Polycotton	S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL, 4XL, 5XL	£18.50
Children's polo shirt		3, 5, 7, 9, 11 years	£15.00
T-shirts	Heavyweight 100% cotton	S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL, 4XL	£16.00
V-neck pullover	Lambswool	36" to 50"	£31.00
V-neck pullover	50% wool / 50% acrylic	36" to 48"	£28.50
Crew neck pullover	Lambswool	36" to 50"	£31.00
Fleece jacket		XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL	£28.00
Children's fleece jacket		3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 years	£23.00
Tie			£14.25

Colours available: navy, black, royal, bottle green. Rugby shirts FR2 in navy/sky or navy/grey.

ORDER FORM:

ITEM(S)	QUANTITY	SIZE	COLOUR	PRICE
Additional text @ £3.00 per line				
Sub-Total				
P & P: £1.75 for first^t item, £1.50 additional items to a maximum of £10, £1 children's items, £3.00 fleece jackets				
Callsign				Total
Name/Address				

**AQUARIAN, Quarryhill Cottage, Justinhaugh, by Forfar, Angus, DD8 3TQ
Tel.: (01307) 860 350**

Standing Order Request Form

To: Bank

Branch :

Please pay:

Bank: **NatWest Bank**
Branch: **Kingston-upon-Thames**
Sort Code: **60-60-02**
Account: **44532385**
Account name: **CDXC**

Reference: (Please write your **callsign** here)

The amount of £15.00 (fifteen pounds) / £20.00 (twenty pounds)
(Delete as appropriate)

1. starting with an **initial payment TODAY**
2. followed by an **annual payment on 1 July** thereafter,
starting with 1 July 2007 and until further notice in writing.

Please debit my/our account accordingly.

Name of account to be debited :

Account number :

THIS REPLACES ANY EXISTING STANDING ORDER PAYABLE TO
'CDXC' or 'Chiltern DX Club' (Delete if this is a new Standing Order request)

Name(s) :

BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

Signature :

Signature :

(For accounts where two signatures are required)

Date :

Address :

.....

Postcode :

**After completion of this Standing Order Request Form,
please send the signed form to the bank branch looking after your account.**

