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# Club News and Views

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## Editorial

Martyn Phillips, G3RFX

I didn't go to the Friedrichshafen Hamfest, but if you did, I hope you enjoyed it. Our friends in Germany are certainly well known for their *Gastfreundlichkeit*. Yes, that's a big word, innit – and almost as difficult to pronounce as the name 'Friedrichshafen' itself, at least for us lot. Or did you eventually give up and simply refer to it as 'Fred's Harbour'?

Talking of which, the other way round I recently came across a delightful map of the London Underground with the station names all translated into German. Surely a great help for tourists from DL trying to find their way round the capital? Somewhat predictably Waterloo is *Wasserklo* – and Tottenham Court Road, that's *Totenschinkenhofstraße*, both of which sound hilariously funny in German. Well, something like that anyway.

But I digress. In this issue of the *Digest* we feature a report on TO7C, an expedition to Royale Island, part of French Guiana, although from the prefix you'd never know which DXCC entity it was...

... as Roger, G3SXW, points out in his article 'Selecting Callsigns'. 'Best Western' again. And yes, Roger, before we start criticising other countries' callsign allocations it is indeed high time we put our own house in order and did something about the often confusing UK 'GB' special event station prefix, which gives no indication of the exact DXCC entity involved either.

But at least we know that '9G' has to be Ghana. Here it's Don, G3XTT, working overtime again and telling us all about his 'Eight Days in Ghana' and 9G5FD. I'm sure

that Don will be more than happy to 'field' any questions about this one – or indeed in connection with his regular 'DX an' all that' column, this time on page 11. Very popular, that. As Editor I even get a sneak preview.

By the way, what do you think about the *Digest*? Are we providing you with the sort of articles and items you like to read? I'd welcome any feedback on this one, as long as it's constructive. After all, if you don't tell me what you think, how on earth am I supposed to know?

Maybe you can tell me at our AGM and Summer Social, this year at the QTH of our hard-working Secretary and legendary rig reviewer Peter, G3SIX, near Alton in Hants. A horticultural paradise too, by all accounts. Not that I'd ever count myself amongst the green-fingered brigade, although on a good day I can just about manage to distinguish a daffodil from a tulip. But at least that's a start.

For some reason or other I'm far better with amateur radio callsign prefixes, although I often get confused with those in the Gulf area. I can normally remember that A9 is Bahrain, but as for Qatar, Oman and the UAE: I can never remember which prefix is which. In fact for me an 'A4' is first and foremost a 'Mallard' class steam locomotive.

But enough of my problems. Have fun reading the *Digest*.

73 Martyn, G3RFX

[www.btinternet.com/~g3rfx](http://www.btinternet.com/~g3rfx)

## Chairman's Chat

**John Butcher, G3LAS**

Why is it that DX stations working by numbers always fade out when they get to the 2's? As I write this I've been waiting for the Rockall expedition to grind through the numbers. They were S9 right through the 'outside Europe' sequence - until they got to 2's in the EU series and then the path collapsed like a burst bubble! Oh well, perhaps next time.

It turned out that, having managed to secure a foothold on the rock, they managed only a couple of hundred QSOs before having to depart again on the advice of their boat skipper who foresaw the approach of bad weather. Of course, bad weather is the norm in the Rockall area, so no-one should have been very surprised that the operation was curtailed. I imagine the most frustrated people of all were those who undertook that expensive and potentially dangerous expedition, only to have it cut short so summarily. In the circumstances it was disappointing, but not perhaps surprising, that there were still some who could be heard complaining bitterly about the 'bad' organisation of the operation – presumably because they were not among the lucky few to make a QSO. Personally, I hope they fail to make it next time as well.

The President and I had the usual good time at the recent Elvaston Rally. Over 30 CDXC members signed in on the stand and overall the event seemed to be the usual great success. This must be by far the biggest event of its kind in the UK and the organisers should be congratulated on keeping up the effort from year to year. Remember that the core group is only a sub-group of the Nunsfield House Club Committee, so their workload is quite heavy. It's nice to know that most of them are also CDXC members – thanks, guys!

I hate to sound an advance warning of pending bad news, but you will have noticed that the Club subscription has not been raised in recent years. We have managed to balance the books pretty well to date, but if we are going to maintain our level of support for future DXpeditions and also keep up the excellent standard of the Digest, it is inevitable that there will have to be a modest increase before long. Our worthy Treasurer, Nigel, foresees that it may have to rise next year, ie from July 2006, so this is just a long range warning for members to start filling the jam jars with the spare change so that it will not come as a surprise. Of course, any proposal will need endorsement by an EGM in due course.

Talking of 'GMs', we are rapidly approaching this year's AGM and Summer Social on 23 July. It looks like being a good turnout again this year at our Secretary's QTH in Alton, Hants. No doubt it will be a fun day out for all the family, so if you haven't told Peter that you will be there, please do so asap, so that we can ensure an adequate supply of buns and hot dogs.

This is also the time of year for the award of the CDXC Local Heroes award which recognises the efforts of those resident operators round the world who make great efforts to fly the flag from the rarer DX entities, giving us all the many contacts required to fill those award slots. This year your Committee has decided to offer the prize to Tony Ceccoli, T77C [*See page 6. Ed.*]. I'm sure most of you will have a few of Tony's QSLs in the file. San Marino may not exactly be remote in geographical terms, but there are not many operators around to give out all the band-mode contacts on the HF bands.

That's all for now. I can't put off cutting the grass any longer, which in a temperature of 33° C is a shame. I wonder if I should chop down the tower to make room for a swimming pool ... perhaps not this year.



73 es gud DX John, G3LAS

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## **President's Patter**

**Neville Cheadle, G3NUG**

I realise I have not sent out my usual reminder about the AGM and Summer Social, so may I encourage as many members as possible to join us on Saturday, 23 July.

The AGM is the only formal business meeting of the year for members and it provides an opportunity for you to put forward your views about the strategy and operations of CDXC. As many of you will know, all Committee members stand down at the AGM and a new Committee is elected. We are seeking new blood, so if any member would like to join the Committee would he or she please contact Secretary Peter, G3SJX, as soon as possible.

Both the AGM and the Summer Social will be held at Peter's QTH in Medstead, Alton, Hants. Directions are enclosed with this Digest. The AGM starts at 12 noon sharp and usually finishes by 1.00 pm. Our Summer Social follows the AGM. This is one of our main social events of the year and it has always proved to be very popular.

The arrangements will be similar to previous years whereby members and their families bring their own drinks (beer and wine – no

spirits please!). Iceboxes are welcome. The Committee proposes to make a small charge of £7.50 per adult to cover the cost of the food and soft drinks. There will be no charge for children under 16. There will of course be no charge for those members who will only be attending the AGM. Please bring some chairs!

Could I ask those members who are planning to attend the Social and who have not already contacted Peter to do so by e-mail as soon as possible so that we know the numbers to cater for. Please let Treasurer Nigel, G3TXF, have your contribution when you collect your name badges.

We welcome raffle prizes from members. The trade seems to be having a tough time at the moment, so prizes are scarce. All donations are welcome - particularly a bottle or two!

Let's have a great turnout on 23 July.

Our marketing initiatives have continued apace. Chairman John and I attended the Elvaston Rally. It was a bit chilly this year, but the turnout was good and around 35

CDXC members came to see us. We recruited a few new members as well.

Many of you will have seen the initiative launched by Martin Lynch and supported by Icom, Kenwood and Yaesu. Any UK non-CDXC member buying a Yaesu HF radio from ML & S in July will receive one year's free subscription to CDXC. The programme will run for six months, with the three manufacturers supporting different months. We really welcome this initiative and are grateful to Martin, G4HKS, and the manufacturers for their support. The newcomers joining CDXC are expected to meet our 100 countries criteria within one year. It will be great to have them in the fold.

The last mailout proved to be very successful; in the year we attracted 73 new members, with 24 resignations and 24 lapses - a net gain of 25, so bringing our membership at the end of

May 2005 to 686. So our growth continues with 700+ being the target for 2005/6. We have to recruit 40 to 50 members each year just to stand still, so much effort will be needed to achieve a net gain of 20 or 30.

We plan two major mailouts this year. We are again targeting the UK DXCC non-members and we also have a substantial list of active spotters on the DX Cluster, so there's plenty to work at.

See you at the AGM and Summer Social on 23 July.



73 Neville, G3NUG

## **CDXC Local Hero 2005**

### **Tony Ceccoli, T77C**

Tony says:

"I accept your CDXC Local Hero Award for 2005.

From 1972 to April 1983 as M1C - and now as T77C - I have made about half a million (500,000) QSOs. That's a lot of activity. I worked DXCC #1 Honor Roll mixed all countries worked - first one in San Marino. I also have DXCC Honor Roll SSB and CW (I need only P5 on CW), 5BDXCC, 5BWAZ, 5BWAS 160m DXCC and others.

I have sent out over 200,000 QSL cards, only asking for the return postage costs - because nobody is working for the outgoing QSL bureau in my country.

I think I have made a good effort for the DX world and I am very glad to receive your prize.

Many thanks indeed. 73 es DX Tony T77C"

## New Members

CDXC offers a warm welcome to the following new members:

<b>Call</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
2EØNJW	Nigel Wears	Morley
G3VCQ	Colin Wilson	Sheffield
MØDSR	Nick Passam	Blythe Bridge

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## Life Membership subscription option

Thank you to the three members who provided feedback about the Life Membership subscription option [May 2005 CDXC *Digest*, p. 9], which was discussed again at the last Committee meeting. It was decided not to rush any specific proposal through this year, but to leave it open for further discussion and to consider it again at a later time. If anyone has further views on the subject, please either talk to any of the Committee or send an e-mail to Dave Gould, G3UEG. Contact details on Page 2 of the *Digest*.

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## 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>

## CDXC Accounts 2004-2005

	£	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2004-2005</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>
Subscriptions	10,011	9,984	7,437	6,719	6,181
Dinner Ticket Sales	1,094	1,118	1,248	1,470	598
Advertising	708	808	100	675	253
Raffles	463	688	443	401	380
Donations received	340	586	1,981	618	218
Bank Interest	135	19	18	22	19
Misc Sales	91	191	172	267	363
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>12,842</b>	<b>13,393</b>	<b>11,399</b>	<b>10,172</b>	<b>8,012</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Newsletter	7,360	6,762	6,428	5,270	4,928
DX-pedition Funding	2,431	2,600	1,961	2,000	2,800
Dinner	1,036	1,275	1,274	1,375	789
Marketing	402	1,518	534	927	0
Trophies and Badges	263	346	182	149	214
Expenses / Website	334	765	535	1,015	522
Committee Expenses	139	84	118	160	358
RSGB/Licence	58	15	15	55	15
Insurance	0	0	0	105	105
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>12,022</b>	<b>13,365</b>	<b>11,047</b>	<b>11,056</b>	<b>9,731</b>
Excess of income over expenditure	820	29	352	-884	-1,719
<b>BANK ACCOUNT STATEMENTS</b>					
<b>Current Account b/f</b>	<b>-565</b>	<b>2,013</b>	<b>1,694</b>	<b>1,772</b>	<b>2,669</b>
Income	12,707	13,374	11,166	9,483	8,011
Uncleared cheques	0	650	0	-700	700
Transfer from Deposit	0	0	0	5,580	1,385
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,142</b>	<b>16,038</b>	<b>12,860</b>	<b>16,135</b>	<b>12,765</b>
Less expenditure	12,034	13,025	10,847	13,575	8,978
Transfer to Deposit A/C	1,885	2,902	0	900	2,000
Pre-payments Adjustments	-1,064	676	0	-34	15
<b>Current Account c/f</b>	<b>-712</b>	<b>-565</b>	<b>2,013</b>	<b>1,694</b>	<b>1,772</b>
<b>Deposit Account b/f</b>	<b>4,614</b>	<b>1,693</b>	<b>1,675</b>	<b>3,836</b>	<b>2,817</b>
Transfer from Current A/C	1,885	2,902	0	-2,183	1,000
Interest earned	135	19	18	22	19
<b>Deposit Account c/f</b>	<b>6,634</b>	<b>4,614</b>	<b>1,693</b>	<b>1,675</b>	<b>3,836</b>
<b>BALANCE SHEET - ASSETS</b>					
Current Account	-712	-565	2,013	1,694	1,073
Deposit Account	6,634	4,614	1,693	1,675	3,836
Digest Float	500	500	500	500	500
Cash	0	0	34	34	0
US Dollar and Euro Cash	0	318	15	0	0
Accruals and Pre-payments	-1,167	-433	0	0	0
<b>Total Assets/Reserves</b>	<b>5,255</b>	<b>4,434</b>	<b>4,255</b>	<b>3,903</b>	<b>5,409</b>

<b>DXPEDITION FUNDING</b>							
<b>Operation</b>	<b>Location</b>			<b>Main Group</b>	<b>£</b>		
CY9SS	Sable			VE's + W's	100		
PY0/s	St Peter & St Paul Rocks			PS7JN	100		
FR/G	Glorioso			F's	300		
VU4	Andamans			VU's	200		
5T0CW	Mauritania			G's	200		
6O0CW	Somalia			I's	200		
3Y0X	Peter 1st (delayed)			W's etc	400		
KH7K	Kure (delayed)			W's etc	300		
TX9	Chesterfield			DL's	200		
ZK1CG	Cook Island [Local Hero]			--	200		
IREF	-various-			W's etc	230		
<b>Total for Year 2003-04</b>					<b>2,430</b>		
<b>CDXC MEMBERSHIP</b>							
During the year, CDXC membership increased from 661 to 686.							
<b>FINANCIAL PERIOD</b>							
This financial statement covers the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005							
				Nigel Cawthorne, G3TXF, Treasurer CDXC			
<b>AUDITOR STATEMENT</b>							
In my opinion this Financial Statement is consistent with the accounts of CDXC for the financial year ended 31 March 2005							
				Martin Atherton, G3ZAY, Elected Auditor CDXC			

## LF Challenge 2005 Results

1.	G4WFQ	Dave Hulatt	168	Penallt Trophy
2.	G3SJJ	Chris Burbanks	161	Tindle Cup
3.	WK3N	James 'Scotty' Scott	151	
4.	GW3JXN	John Tindle	143	
5.	MMØEAX	Dave Thomson	117	
6.	F5VHN	Robert Thain	92	
7.	G3XTT	Don Field	79	

**Band Winners:** 160m, G3XTT; 80m: MMØEAX; 40m: G4WFQ

MMØEAX & F5VHN will receive certificates for having worked more than half the total score of the winning station, G4WFQ.

G3RTE

# **CDXC AGM and Summer Social**

**Saturday, 23 July 2005, at 1200**

**Venue: G3SJX, The Willows, Paice Lane, Medstead, Alton, Hants GU34 5PR**

(see the May 2005 *Digest* for directions)

## **Agenda**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the 2004 AGM
3. Chairman's Report
4. Secretary's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Election of new Committee
7. Election of Auditor
8. Any Other Business

Committee nominations and AOB items must be given to the Secretary prior to the start of the AGM.

Our Summer Social follows the AGM in the garden and all members and families are most welcome to what is always a very enjoyable occasion. Come and meet your fellow members and wander in the extensive landscaped garden – something of interest for everyone. As usual, we will be providing food and a barbeque. Soft drinks will be included, but please bring your own wine and beer. We will also be holding our famous raffle and prizes have been donated by some of the leading amateur radio suppliers in the UK. Donations of prizes from members attending are also most welcome. Please bring a folding chair if you can, as only a limited number of seats are available.

A charge of £7.50 per adult will be made to cover the cost of the food. There will be no charge for children under 16 and, of course, there is no charge for members who will only be attending the AGM. Please let our Secretary, Peter, G3SJX, know as soon as possible if you will be attending so that we can plan the catering requirements. Full details are included separately with this issue of the *Digest*.

Peter, G3SJX

# DX an' all that

Don Field, G3XTT    don@g3xtt.com

As I write this the sun has finally started shining, which is just as well. At least you can sit in the garden with a G & T, rather than sit listening to nothing very much on the bands! Not entirely true, of course, but the downturn in band conditions in the past year or two seems to have led to a downturn in expeditions, both major and minor, resulting in a double-whammy. Inevitable, but frustrating. I've been having more fun recently on 6m, but perhaps I shouldn't be saying that here!

There have, of course, been some significant expeditions and it is worth a moment to reflect on CY9SS (still QRV as I write this) where Krassy, K1LZ, sustained substantial injuries while the station was being set up. He was strapped to the top of a 48' tower when one of the guy ropes broke and the tower, along with Krassy, came crashing down. A sorry tale, and we wish Krassy a speedy recovery.

## Feedback

Firstly, some comments from Steve, G4EDG, on the item last time about DXpedition logging accuracy.

*Hi Don,*

*It would seem that many recent DXpeditions slavishly over use 'super check partial' to the point where the operator is obviously just stabbing his way through a list of possible callsigns that his PC suggests from the fragment he has managed to copy and type in. This results in a log with errors which are never just one 'dit' or one key position out, but a log with very likely, but wrong calls recorded. It would seem the operator is often more concerned with keeping his precious 'rate' up than actually putting a correctly copied call in the log.*

*I know experienced DXpeditioners will have their own list of possible calls in their heads, but most of these calls will be subconsciously linked with other relevant information, such as expected signal strength, CW style, band being used, skill of calling pattern, speed of response etc. This helps identify the call, but the whole call must still be copied before it goes in the log. A skill which does actually help, but it is not picked up overnight!*

*So on to QSLing time with regard to the above. What chance does G4EDG stand of getting a QSL when, for example, G4EOF has gone in the log, even though I know it was my QSO, and due to QRM or laziness the 'that'll do' approach is applied to the logging.*

*This slack attitude creeps in at the QSLing stage too. A good friend of mine (who I know is too honest to use the card...) received a QSL confirmation of a 160m QSO with 3B9C, which was news to him.*

*It would seem that a QSL request for just one QSO with this DXpedition will result in 'confirmations' for all appearances of that particular callsign in the log. Combined with the super check partial syndrome above, this results in a lot of false QSLs in circulation, some of which may be in less than honest hands!*

*So two simple rules for the DXpeditioner:*

- Log what you hear, not what a PC tells to you, and spend time getting it right.*
- Only QSL the QSOs requested, and only then if the details are correct.*

*Let's get rid of CAG (computer aided guessing)!*

*73 Steve, G4EDG*

Some wise words from Steve, although I'm not sure the problem is as great as he suggests. I suspect that where errors do creep into DXpedition logs, they have more to do with operator fatigue than over-reliance on SCP, but I may well be wrong. As for the point on QSLing, it's a fair one, although many DXpeditions take the view that, rather than handle several requests for odd QSOs, they will confirm all QSOs following the first request. If the recipient feels that certain QSOs didn't take place, it's up to his own honesty not to claim those for awards, etc. That's certainly one benefit of the LoTW (Logbook of the World) approach, though. LoTW only allows a confirmation where there is a clear match between the two logs.

### LoTW and 5BDXCC

Talking about LoTW, Fred, G4BWP, has kindly alerted me to the fact that John, G3LZQ, is one of the first to have more than 100 entities matched on each of the five main bands via LoTW. Indeed John is probably the first 'ordinary' amateur to achieve this; the first such 'LoTW 5BDXCC' was by KC1XX, which is a major multi-multi contest station. John's band totals, as of 24 April, were:

160m	66
80m	105
40m	128
20m	108
15m	116
10m	110

These are from 5,639 matches in LoTW from 60K submitted QSOs. This got me wondering, as I have 107K QSOs on LoTW and 6,500 matches, but I have no idea how to get that report off the system, so I remain in ignorance!

### CQ iDX Award

Moving on to another controversial area, I see that CQ magazine, as part of its raft of new

awards designed to encourage band activity, has introduced an iDX Award, for 'DX' contacts with 25 or 100 entities made over such systems as Echolink and IRLP, ie where one party to the 'QSO' is actually connected to the Internet rather than to a radio! Personally, I don't get it. I actually believe VoIP (Voice over Internet) systems have their place in the hobby (many wouldn't agree), but I don't see the logic of issuing awards - any more than for repeater contacts (you didn't 'work' the DX station, you 'worked' the repeater). Another sign of the slippery slope? Steve, G4JVG, suggests that a more appropriate way to encourage neophyte DXers would be a 'DX Lite' award for, say, 25 entities confirmed, which might appeal to introductory level licencees such as the M3 gang.

### Pile-up Thoughts

While working the pile-ups from Ghana recently as 9G5FD [*See page 22. Ed.*], I found myself making notes of topics to cover in this column and elsewhere, usually when one or more callers did something that sent my blood pressure up!

Actually it's interesting that, although there were times outside the CQ WPX contest that I could work co-channel, for much of the time I needed to go 'split'. Not because I couldn't pick out callers, but because when I did respond to one, he didn't come back to me. This was presumably because he couldn't hear me through others continuing to call. Yet in the WPX contest it was easy to work co-channel throughout, even though the pile-up was quite deep at times.

The question is: (1) is this because the pile-up outside the contest really is that much more ferocious? or (2) is it because contesters understand the need for short calls and then stand by, while many DXers lack this basic discipline?

It's certainly true that the pile-ups outside the contest were pretty fierce at times, even though there was other DX around (mostly, like myself, folk who had travelled for the contest, but were doing a bit of outside-the-contest operating). And this even though Ghana isn't especially rare. Also, 9G5SP (DL7DF) had operated from the same QTH just a few weeks earlier (our host Tom, 9G5OO, is primarily a phone operator, which is why Sigi and I devoted ourselves to CW).

Contesters and DXpeditioners require one particular skill in common, which is to be able to pick a callsign out of a pile-up, ideally first time, every time (not realistic in practice, of course!). In contrast, many DXers seem quite incapable of working out a call even when they are listening to just one (DX) station – they either read it off the DX Cluster or continually send 'CALL?' on top of the DX station's frequency (usually just seconds after he has identified). It is no coincidence that some of the best DXpeditions in recent years have made heavy use of experienced contest operators. But I'm straying into contest column territory here, so I'll move on.

One aspect I feel moved to comment on (and phone operators should translate this into their particular context) is the nature of the exchange with the DX station. Often it would go something like this:

9G5FD: R 9G5FD (I sign off the previous QSO)  
 G3XTT: G3XTT G3XTT G3XTT (overdoing it!)  
 9G5FD: G3XTT 599  
 G3XTT: 9G5FD DE G3XTT TNX OM 599 599 73 BK (most of this is content-free and is just taking up time that could be used for giving someone else a QSO!)  
 9G5FD: R 9G5FD  
 G3XTT: 9G5FD 73 DE G3XTT (thereby QRMing other callers)

All that is really required, unless there is the need to correct a callsign or add specific information (and I was always happy to hear a personal greeting, for example from a fellow CDXC member) is:

9G5FD: R 9G5FD  
 G3XTT: G3XTT  
 9G5FD: G3XTT 599  
 G3XTT: R 599  
 9G5FD: R 9G5FD

There are some who would argue that even the '599' is redundant, but I suspect this is far too embedded to change.

One more frustration, and I'll stop. Those who would call me on, say, 15m and ask "Are you QRV on 12m?", to which I was tempted to answer "No, I'm QRV here – you know that, as you are in the process of working me!". The chances are, actually, that if I was on 15m it was probably because I had just come from 12m, either because the pile-up had expired or there was no propagation. And callers did expect me (and no doubt other DX ops.) to be able to say exactly when I would be on specific bands. Maybe a dedicated DXpedition can do that. I certainly had no intention of committing myself in that way, as I had social obligations to my hosts and other things I wanted to do. And such questions just take up valuable air-time. Most of those who made such requests were in Europe, probably on Cluster, and would easily find me if and when I did come up on a specific band.

I was more sympathetic to those who were trying to work me over tough paths, the best example being John, VK4OQ (ex-G3HCT), who needed 9G for a new one (it's a tough path over the South Pole) and sent me e-mails. And John didn't demand to know when I would be on. What he did do was tell me the times and bands when he was hearing me, and asked that I listen out for him if I happened to be on again at those times. As a result, we

worked on two bands – the 30m opening was only 5 minutes long, so he tells me, but we made it, which was very satisfying to both of us.

comments, criticisms and suggestions will be gratefully received.

73 Don, G3XTT

### Sign-off

That will have to be it for another column, but I hope to see many of you in person at the summer BBQ. As always your feedback,



### WRTC 2006

The next WRTC will be held in Brazil in July 2006. Besides the teams, judges, referees etc, there is much to enjoy for spectators. Many from UK went to Finland last time and had a ball. WRTC is an extremely expensive undertaking. To help with fund-raising they are running a raffle. There are two prizes, one drawn in May 2005 and one in May 2006. Each is an all-expenses paid trip to Florianopolis, Brazil, to attend the Games - including flights with Varig, accommodation and free entrance to all events. This is valued at over £1,000 each. See below for ways to buy your raffle tickets. I hope that UK contesters will support this worthy cause by buying raffle-tickets and/or by making donations. 73 de Roger, G3SXW.

**Tickets:** GBP £5 each. Send to Roger Western, G3SXW, 7 Field Close, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 2QD, England. Only multiples of £5. Include your callsign. **PayPal:** cash transfer to [k1zm@aol.com](mailto:k1zm@aol.com). Indicate your callsign and mark 'Raffle'. These should be in multiples of USD \$10. **Donations:** if you wish to make a cash donation towards the WRTC fund-raising effort please pay by the same routes, but mark your message 'Donation'.

### Asia Pacific DX Convention

Dear Fellow DXers and Contesters,

You are cordially invited to the Asia Pacific DX Convention, which will take place on 18-20 November 2005 as the first Asian international DX event. In addition to the presentations of recent DXpeditions, technical sessions, displays, etc. that you find at most large DX conventions, this convention offers something special, such as a tour of the Icom factory, a technical session led by the Icom IC-7800 design team, a tour of the electronics district, and more. For the non-hams accompanying you, activities to enjoy Japanese culture, such as a tea ceremony and flower arranging, are being prepared. See our website for more details at <http://www.ja3.net/apdxc>. We look forward to welcoming you at the APDXC in Osaka, Japan. APDXC Committee / JA3USA.

# ***Out and About***

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## **The TO7C Story**

**'With 73 from the TO7C Crew (F6KOP)'**

The TO7C story began in Lomé (Togo) airport lounge while the 5V7C team was waiting for their return flight to Paris. We were willing to quickly set up a new 'light' DXpedition to an island, part of the IOTA programme. The new location had to be close to the equator due to the poor propagation conditions expected in 2005 and be relatively rare. The Salut Islands (SA-020) looked like a good compromise.

The Salut Islands archipelago, located 14 kms from the coast of French Guiana, was named by the survivors of the disastrous Kourou expedition in 1764. It is made up of the islands of Royale (the largest, our destination), St Joseph - and the small Devil's Island.

Nine months ahead of our departure we began working on the operation and decided to set up a first meeting after the summer holidays at Bruno/F5AGB's house.

By 10 October all the main details had been firmed up. The team already knew each other pretty well from previous operations: TM5S, TM5Y, TM5N, TM7R, 5V7C. etc. The group of 10 operators consisted of: F4AJQ, F5CW, F5AGB, F5TVG, F5VHQ, F6AML, YL F6EGG, F8BJI, F9IE and OE3GCU. Unfortunately F5JSD and F8BUI could not join us this time... too bad!

A few days after this initial meeting we received the callsign we had requested: TO7C. Dany/F5CW had an unexpected commitment and was replaced by Matthieu/F5PED. We continued to work out the details. The website was online with the help of Pascal/F5JSD. We contacted our sponsors and had ongoing

exchanges with Andre/FY5HE, who helped us a lot with local logistics. We also contacted the Kourou club station, FY5KE, and Didier/FY5FY kindly loaned us his power amplifier for the low bands. We booked the Salut Islands resort as well as plane and boat tickets. We were ready for departure!

A friend from the Clipperton DX Club, F5AHO, who stayed on the island some time ago, sent us photos of the resort and these really helped us to plan the antenna layout ahead of our arrival.

D-Day finally arrived and the pathfinder team made up of OE3GCU, F9IE, F8BJI, F5VHQ and F5TVG left on 6 March. The other crew members were due to join them on the island on 10 March with the remainder of the equipment.

As usual, we only took light transceivers: IC-706MKIIG, FT-100D, TS-50, FT-897 and TS-480. The antennas were a little bigger: a V80E vertical and K9AY loop for the low bands, 2 x R7000 and MA5V verticals, a 4-element wire log yagi for 40m and an 11-element wire LPDA for 10-40m both made by F5VHQ. In addition to this we used a 6m HB9CV as well as a sloper on 30m. Five laptop PCs were loaned to us by OE3GCU's radio club and F5AGB installed a wireless LAN allowing us to take advantage of the great networking features of F5MZN's logging software, WinTest. The use of band filters was very helpful and allowed us to run up to six stations simultaneously without any major issues. Finally, a bunch of tools, connectors and nearly 500m of coax cable completed our

luggage along with a few T-shirts, socks and anti-mosquito lotion.

### **Sunday, 6 March 2005**

*Paris Orly airport:* Happy birthday Jean-Paul, F8BJI! Most of us met Günther, OE3GCU, for the first time. After a last coffee, luggage check-in and customs clearance went without a hitch. French Guiana was only 8 hours away.

*Cayenne airport:* The pathfinder team received an unforgettable welcome from FY5HE and local hams. After a great dinner with them, a quick drive to the FY5KE club station to pick up the power amplifier and a short sleep in the 'Gros Bec' hotel in Kourou, they were ready to get the boat for Royale Island.

### **Monday, 7 March**

The team received another great welcome from Angele, the lady managing the Salut Islands resort. She allowed us to set up our stations and antenna farm as we wished. We also quickly met up with the Agouti rats and lice - as well as some sizeable mosquitoes. We started scratching our legs quite a lot! The antenna set-up was a major undertaking in 35° C and 95% humidity. We drank water all day long and our stock of bottles quickly decreased.

Nevertheless, the first contacts were logged at 1916z. The digimodes were going well, 40m SSB was well open to Europe and the 30m sloper allowed us a few contacts.

### **Tuesday, 8 March**

By sunrise 1,000 QSOs were in the log.

F5VHQ and OE3GCU lost their voices - not due to the pile-up, but more likely due to the contrast between the air conditioning in the plane and the local temperature. Three days

ago the temperature in France was only 1° C, but it was now over 30° C. The team phoned Frank/F4AJQ, who was part of the second team, telling him not to forget tablets for a sore throat.

Operation began on 10, 12 and 17m and a long night of pile-ups began in CW, RTTY and PSK.

### **Wednesday, 9 March**

At 0500 the alarm clock rang near Paris. It was now time for the second team to set off. F6EGG had arrived by train from the south of France the day before. F4TTR and F4BUX drove the whole group to the airport. After a quick coffee and some more luggage check-ins and custom clearance, the team was on the plane. Travelling with a Titanex V80E weighing more than 20kg is not always easy.

Eight and a half hours later the group arrived in French Guiana. F4AJQ, F5AGB, F5PED, F6AML and F6EGG were welcomed by FY5HE and his wife Marie-Jo - also FY5FR, FYØEK. Even Daielle & Elli, some friends from Paris who had relocated to Guiana five years ago, were there. The team then headed to Kourou, where they stayed the night just like the pathfinders. Before boarding they bought dozens of bottles of water as the water on Royale is not drinkable. After a quick meeting with FY1FL, everybody went to bed. The friends on the island had already logged 3,100 QSOs that evening.

### **Thursday, 10 March**

After breakfast and a short walk around the old city of Kourou, Jacques/FY1FL and the owner of the 'Gros Bec' hotel used their 4 x 4 to take our equipment to the harbour. An hour later the second group was on Royale island. It looked like heaven to us, but it was impossible to forget all the convicts who had died in the prison that used to be there.

Franck/F5TVG and two local policemen were waiting for them. Franck's legs looked amazing with all the mosquito bites. We took all the equipment to the resort using the owner's pick-up truck. Everybody was pleased to be together again as one team. Franck was not the only winner at the mosquito game!

During lunch the whole group had a briefing on the V80E and the K9AY set-up. We also had to install the MA5V. While installing the low-band antennas with F9IE and OE3GCU, Frank/F4AJQ started to feel faint due to the heat. He felt much better after a shower and a short sleep.

Propagation improved on the higher bands, but conditions remained very difficult to Asia and Pacific.

Matthieu, F5PED, finalized the V80E matching system for 160m using some electrical cable, a lot of know-how and a plastic bag on top to protect it. It did not look nice, but it worked really well! F6AML and OE3GCU had problems with the TX/RX antenna switching system, but had to give up at sunset as thousands of mosquitoes arrived. The low-band contacts that night were made using the V80E as a receiving antenna. It was a very long night.

### **Friday, 11 March**

All the technical issues had been sorted. We only had to install the 6m antenna and we would be fully operational. Due to the considerable distance between stations, we had some issues with the wireless LAN, but F5VHQ decided to fix that by finding an optimum location for the access point. The night was tough for F6AML and F5PED on 80 and 160m due to the atmospheric noise, but nevertheless they managed to log 470 contacts on these bands. We had now notched up 4,130 QSOs - and it was time for breakfast.

F5VHQ and OE3GCU started to feel better, so our SSB run rate was about to improve. F8BJI and F5TVG kept running the digimodes stations in RTTY, PSK31/63. Everything went well, with some good pile-ups. F9IE and F5AGB enjoyed working CW, while Frank/F4AJQ focussed on 12 and 17m SSB.

Conditions were good to the USA and Europe, but still terrible to Asia - despite many efforts to contact this part of the world.

F6EGG went for a walk on the island and came back a whole load of great pictures.

The beacon on 6m was up and running, but the band was completely dead.

With the help of the K9AY antenna, during the night some 600 additional QSOs were logged on 80 and 160m.

We gradually started getting used to the mosquitoes, the sunburn and the heat. F6EGG noticed that the level of water was going down too quickly, so the team contacted FY5HE, who was due to visit us on the Sunday, to bring us some more.

### **Saturday, 12 March**

By 0800z, 8,115 QSOs were in the log.

Everything was fine. F4AJQ and F5TVG went on a visit to the former prison and found some poles which allowed us to raise the R7000 antennas 4m higher, thus improving their performance. At the same time we enjoyed the first openings to JA, VK and ZL. F5VHQ and OE3GCU had fully regained their voices - and the SSB rate was now amazing, despite deep QSB on 10, 12 and 15m. F8BJI continued to provide many a new one on the digimodes. The CW pile-ups were also huge and F5AGB and F9IE logged many contacts.

Everybody got used to the tropical propagation and to the rhythm of the DXpedition, keeping focused all the time on

our aim of at least 20,000 QSOs. For F6AML and F5PED the conditions on the low bands were good, despite the high level of static noise. The 6m beacon was still transmitting, but nobody replied.

### **Sunday, 13 March**

By sunrise we had 11,707 QSOs in the log. We were happy to contact many friends in France, who kept motivating us. As every day, John/F5VHQ phoned Pascal/F5JSD, our pilot station, who gave us feedback - and very helpful real-time propagation simulations prepared with the help of Dany, F5CW. Pascal updated our website daily.

Conditions to Europe remained difficult on the higher bands, but eventually we had some good openings to Japan on 17 and 30m.

It was now time to welcome our friends FY5HE and FY5FU and their wives, who had landed with the morning shuttle. We spent a great day with them, celebrating and discussing future radio projects. It was a bit more difficult to let them go. As you know, it takes five minutes for a ham radio operator to say 'Hallo' and three hours to say 'Goodbye'!

Before sunset we turned the 40m wire beam to Japan - and the results were worth the effort. We had a huge demand for 80m CW and logged an additional 600 contacts on that band during the night.

### **Monday, 14 March**

Following the daily phone call to F5JSD, as usual F5VHQ prepared our daily operating plan. We now focused on 10 and 20m CW as well as the WARC bands. We spent a lot of time turning the 11-element wire LPDA to Japan and moving the K9AY to a new location with a better take-off to Europe and North America.

The low-band plans had been published on the Internet and the new antenna location showed

a significant improvement. We now had 15,923 QSOs in the log. A good opening on 15m even allowed Jean-Paul, F8BJI, to run SSTV - and he made 40 contacts in that mode, even forgetting to have lunch! That afternoon he heard many a "Thanks for the new one". Openings to the Far East and the Pacific remained very short, but nevertheless we had made 198 JA, 22 VK and 23 ZL contacts to date.

The 'magic band' was still totally dead, but we still kept trying various different beam headings.

### **Tuesday, 15 March**

Our target was 20,000 QSOs. We had now reached 19,329 contacts, so why not up our target to 25,000 QSOs? The whole team was still very motivated, despite a small storm that had damaged the 11-element LPDA as well as several other antennas. A large part of the team was needed to fix this - while still keeping operations going on 15 and 20m CW and also 12 and 17m SSB. Our run rate was good, with a big improvement on the higher bands. 10m was open all day and F5TVG even made a few FM contacts on that band.

During the evening a good opening to Japan on 17m enabled us to make it 410 JA contacts so far. During the night we did some RTTY on 80m and Bernard, F9IE, stayed focused on 30m - while fighting with the mosquitoes. Six meters was still closed.

### **Wednesday, 16 March**

By 0900z we had 21,987 QSOs in the log, but we were all very keen to reach 25,000.

This was the day prior to our departure and F5VHQ kept optimizing the wireless LAN. Conditions were good and we still had five stations running simultaneously.

During this time some of the team went to visit the prison where thousands of convicts

had been jailed such as the famous Seznec, Captain Dreyfus and Henri Charriere. The latter had also been known as ‘Butterfly’ (‘Papillon’) due to his many attempts to escape from the island.

As this was to be our last night on the island, F6AML and F5PED decided to give 160m SSB a try. In the afternoon we also had one contact on 50 MHz, but unfortunately this was not DX. It was our friend FY1FL in Kourou, 15 km away from us!

During the afternoon we began packing up some of the equipment – and working out where best to pack the bottles of rum we had decided to bring back. On that last evening we decided to go QRT for a few hours in order to celebrate our DXpedition. After dinner we were all surprised to suddenly see a big cake and two bottles of champagne appear. Happy Birthday Jacky, F6EGG!

During the night conditions on Top Band were pretty tough. SSB contacts were difficult and only a few European stations managed to break through the North American signals in this mode.

### **Thursday, 17 March**

The last day finally arrived. Would we reach our new target of 25,000 QSOs?

The whole team was very busy starting the job of packing up the antennas, while at the same time keeping three stations on the air. Everybody was exhausted due to lack of sleep and the heat. At 0800 local time the temperature was already over 30° C. Gradually the number of our active stations on the air began to decrease. It was time to take some pictures of the group and ask Angele, the resort manager, to use her pick-up truck to take the equipment back to the small harbour. Our new friends from the local police visited us to say goodbye and told us that they had really enjoyed our presence and our hobby.

After lunch we started talking to Günther, OE3GCU, and Jean-Paul, F8BJI, about finally bringing their SSB and RTTY pile-ups to an end, seeing as we only had a few minutes left to pack up their stations and run to the boat. As soon as they had finally gone QRT, John, F5VHQ, began checking the logs.

We loaded all the equipment onto the boat and headed back to Kourou, where John was pleased to announce that we had made 25,247 contacts with 126 DXCC entities. We were all very happy about this. FY1FL and the owner of the ‘Gros Bec’ hotel were waiting for us in Kourou and, once we had collected our rental cars, we ran to the showers. During the evening we decided to go for dinner in the centre of Kourou and got lost. Fortunately FY1FL helped us out once more! Over dinner we debriefed the team and confirmed the expedition’s overall very positive result.

### **Friday, 18 March**

We all woke up early, seeing as this was our recreational day. We had bought tickets to visit the Kourou space centre. It is hard to describe what you feel when you enter the Ariane 5 rocket control room - and particularly when you visit the launch pads. We felt really small.

At the end of this three-hour guided tour we made a last visit to FY1FL, who works in the space centre. We then met up with FY5HE and FY5FU and their wives, who brought us the souvenirs we asked them to buy for us. We then headed for the restaurant, where we met FY5FR and FY/F5PPO.

Franck and John noticed a small island a few miles away from the restaurant, but Thierry confirmed that it was impossible to activate this one because access is strictly forbidden. Landing there was too dangerous.

We then headed for the airport, where we had some problems during check-in due to our excess luggage. At customs we also had to

explain what all this aluminium and electronic equipment was for.

It was time to say a final goodbye to our hosts. We will certainly never forget them.

The flight back to France was really tough and we could hardly sleep. Prior to landing, the fog in Paris was so dense that the pilot came close to diverting the flight to another airport, but fortunately he found a narrow window - and we were all happy not to have spend yet more hours stuck on a coach transfer. We had a hard time getting off the plane, with only 5° C outside, but our friends were there to support us:

F5JSD, F5CW, F5ABI, F5IWO, F8BTP, F8CTY, F8BUI and Micheline (YL F9IE).

Günther, OE3GCU, ran quickly to catch a connecting flight to Vienna from another airport 60 km away. After a breakfast all together at the airport, we could now get back home.

This operation shows it is possible for a team of motivated operators to mount a serious DXpedition on only a limited budget, while at the same time have plenty of scope for fun.

We would like to thank our sponsors:

F6KOP, Clipperton DX Club, REF-Union, REF 77, UFT, UKSMG, Nanchatte DX Akoukai, ADL325, GES Paris, GES Savigny, DXSR, Radio 33, Win-Test, The City of Provins, The 'Gros Bec' Hotel, The Salut Islands Resort and Net Immeuble.

We would also like to thank the following individuals for their various, but essential, contributions and assistance:

F4BUX, F4TTR, F5JSD, F5AHO, F5JFU, F5NQL, F5IWO, F5LEN, F5CW, F8BBL, F8BTP, FY5FU, FY5FY, FY5KE, FY5HH, FY1FL, FY0EK, FY5FR, OH3XR, SP6NVK, the TO4E team, Jean-Pierre, Daielle, Elie,

Marie-Jo, Laurence and all those who supported us on the air.

Finally, special thanks to Andre, FY5HE. Without him the logistics of this expedition would have been much more difficult.

We already have several projects for next year and are starting to work on them, so stay tuned!

Thank you

The TO7C Team

<http://to7c.free.fr>

We dedicate this DXpedition to Noah.

*[With many thanks to Steve Telenius-Lowe, G4JVG. Ed.]*

 HFC2005

**RSGB HF & IOTA  
Convention 2005**

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October**

at the

**Gatwick Worth Hotel**

Crabbet Park, Turners Hill Road,  
Crawley, West Sussex RH10 4ST

See [www.rsgb-hfc.org.uk](http://www.rsgb-hfc.org.uk)

Enquiries to [hfc@rsgb.org.uk](mailto:hfc@rsgb.org.uk)

## Selecting Callsigns

**Roger Western, G3SXW**

*g3sxw@compuserve.com*

Cook Islands have recently been allocated the ITU callsign block E5A-E5Z. In ham radio (DXCC) terms this covers two 'countries'. Until now calling stations have always been confused as to whether a ZK1 is South or North Cooks. So finally we have the opportunity to establish distinct callsigns for each of these two entities.

This could be done in a number of ways by specifying prefixes, for example E51-E55 for South Cooks and E56-E50 for North Cooks. Or if the licensing authority forces the second digit for ham radio licences, eg E51, then the first letter of the suffix could be S or N to indicate South or North. In practice, I would bet that the licensing officer would be only too happy to accommodate the wishes of radio hams into the callsign allocation system if he were approached. It's no skin off his nose. So it would simply need someone to talk to him, explain the reasons for the request and work out a system. It could be a 15-minute meeting. This sort of flexibility exists, particularly in small countries. In large countries we are used to having to deal with faceless bureaucrats who are 'in charge' and are not approachable, but this is not the case in smaller countries.

By coincidence, when news of this new E5 block was first published, our friend Rick, AI5P, was on a DXpedition to South Cooks. I immediately e-mailed him to suggest that he pay the licensing officer a visit and recommend distinct callsigns for the two areas. He was reading e-mails whilst on holiday there and replied the very next day to say that he had met the licensing officer, who told him that this was all news to him. The New Zealand authorities were yet to inform him of this development, so our request was premature. I hope that Rick managed,

nonetheless, to explain the point and perhaps someone else locally can follow this up later, at an appropriate juncture.

The main point is that CALLSIGNS MUST INDICATE DXCC ENTITY. This would save so much confusion on the bands. This is already so in the vast majority of cases. But there are a few situations where this is not the case. For example, VK9. When applying for a VK9 licence to operate on Cocos-Keeling Island the licensing authority will issue any callsign suffix that you request, so long as the prefix is VK9. We have, for DXCC purposes, 'Y' for Cocos-Keeling, 'X' for Christmas Island, 'L' for Lord Howe Island etc. But these are entirely within the ham world. The licensing authority considers all these places to be 'offshore islands'.

So you could operate, perfectly legally, as VK9YAA from Christmas or from Lord Howe. But you'd be pretty unpopular if you did, because you are sending out entirely the wrong message to your DXing colleagues around the world. There was a case a while ago when a group of XYLs operated from Lord Howe signing VK9YL. Wherever such vagueness exists within the licensing system, I feel sure that the local licensing authority would be glad to accommodate our requests to differentiate entities. We would just need to ask. And if they issue a licence with a typing error, just ask them to change it. In my experience of travelling to these smaller countries, the individual civil servants bend over backwards to be helpful.

However, there is one instance where we firstly need to put our own house in order. Special event stations throughout UK use 'GB' as the prefix. Much confusion is caused when

these stations are not in England. It seems bizarre to me that someone operating in a rarer entity (eg GD, GJ, GU or even GI) would not want to make it immediately clear to callers that they are rarer than a boring G. Let's reserve GB for England - there are already distinct prefixes for club calls in each of the other six entities which could be used - or separate, new ones could be created for special event stations. Again, it only needs for the ham radio operators themselves to take the initiative with the authorities and I bet they would happily oblige.

If we do put our own house in order this would then set an example to others, for example the French. Their new TO and TX prefixes are a nightmare for DXers. Each of these two prefixes could apply to half a dozen countries, and they are all rare. I strongly recommend that French DXers devise a simple list of prefixes (TO1, TO2, TX1, TX2 etc.) for each of their overseas territories and recommend it to the government. It might take some paper shuffling over a period of some weeks, but I bet this would be an easy thing to progress to conclusion.

In the meantime I suggest a programme of civil disobedience: each one of us should ask 'QTH?' at every QSO with a TO or TX station. They might get so fed up with this time-wasting that they may WANT to improve their own system. Yes, I know that there are good DX bulletins, DX Clusters etc. and that you can usually find out the location of a specific station there, but in my view this is just not good enough. We are communicators and should not have to rely on a telephone line to establish a station's QTH.

Besides, not everyone has a computer. Some time ago I worked TO7C and asked him 'QTH?'. He did not answer. So I left the receiver running on his frequency. About twenty minutes later he gave an information message with QSL route etc., but QRM covered up the QTH bit (Bang fist on desk!). Some twenty minutes later he went QRT. It only took me ten minutes to find it on the Internet, but all this just seems wrong to me, having to rely on the Internet as an essential tool instead of handling this situation within our own hobby. Just a thought.

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## **Eight Days in Ghana, 9G5FD**

**Don Field, G3XTT**

*don@g3xtt.com*

I wasn't originally going to write this one up as it was a fairly low-key operation, but when Martyn said he was a little low on material for this issue I thought I'd do my bit to help. So more ramblings from G3XTT, I'm afraid.

This one came about almost by chance. I noticed that Sigi, DL7DF, veteran of many fine DXpeditions (see [www.dl7df.com](http://www.dl7df.com) as well as frequent CDXC *Digest* articles) was due to operate from Ghana as 9G5SP. From personal experience I was aware that Ghanaian licences

are tough to get hold of unless you are already in the country and can chase them through the bureaucracy, which is why I had never applied for my own licence, despite four visits to the country since 1999. So I dropped Sigi an e-mail, asking him for his secret! It turned out that Thomas, DL7BO, who has been on many of those expeditions with Sigi, was in Ghana for a year or so, with Siemens, managing a major broadband roll-out project. Thomas very kindly offered to help me with a licence, which was an offer I couldn't really refuse, as

I anticipated further visits to Ghana in the coming years, for example en route to Voodoo contest operations (I have transited Ghana in the past to both XT and 5U).

It didn't take much longer to decide that the WPX CW contest might be a good basis for getting the licence organised. It gave us a target to work to, I had discovered that I could get a discount air fare with some of my Air Miles, and Thomas very kindly offered me free accommodation and the use of his station. It doesn't get much better! The amateur radio fraternity really is something special. It's not as if I had ever met Thomas, simply that we had this common interest in DX and contesting.

Preparation was minimal, for the reasons I have given. All I needed to take was my keyer (Thomas is primarily an SSB operator, and has already made over 20,000 contacts under his 9G500 call) and some radio magazines (he does feel a little cut off down there). I scanned and e-mailed all the documentation to Thomas about two months before my trip, which he felt would be enough time to get the licence issued (it requires authorisation by the Director General of the National Communications Administration, after which it is issued by the staff member responsible for licensing). In the event it was touch and go – the DG gave his authorisation very quickly, but the bureaucracy grinds exceedingly slow in that part of the world when it comes to actually issuing the documentation!

Incidentally, the charge was a \$25 issue fee, plus \$10 annual fee (payable yearly, with the DG's authority valid for 5 years). While this sounds quite modest, it is way over the top for most Ghanaians – a two-tier fee structure for locals and foreigners would be much more appropriate, but sadly it's unlikely to happen.

The trip out was via Amsterdam on KLM - and fine except for some delays on both legs. Thomas met me at Accra and we went directly

to his home (which is also his work QTH, a large colonial house with extensive grounds close to the British High Commission). Thomas has installed two towers, a triband X-7 Yagi and, on a catenary between the towers, wire beams for 12, 17 and 40m towards Europe. 30m is catered for by a delta loop with the top at around 60' or so, while there is a dipole for 80m and an inverted-L for 160m. The station consists of an IC-735 and a 1KW amplifier by UY5ZZ, who makes a wide range of modestly-priced amplifiers, very popular in Eastern Europe (see [www.qsl.net/uy5zz](http://www.qsl.net/uy5zz)). There are some excellent photos of Thomas's station on [www.qrz.com](http://www.qrz.com) (see 9G500).

I arrived on the Wednesday evening before the contest and first order of the day on the Thursday was to go with one of Thomas's colleagues to NCA to collect the licence, which still hadn't appeared. Lo and behold, the gentlemen responsible wasn't on site and unavailable via his mobile phone, and hadn't left the licence with reception as he had promised to do earlier in the week. Welcome to Africa! That was a day's operating lost, but in the end just that one day, during which I was able to catch up with some old friends and generally get myself organised.

I started operations on the Friday, but QRN levels were very high, after a night of violent thunderstorms. This was worrying but, fortunately, the QRN level gradually fell off for the remainder of my stay. I had checked on Sigi's operating statistics and noticed that he had made a great effort on the LF bands in particular. I didn't want to dilute demand on the main bands before the contest, so elected to focus on 12, 17 and 30m. Also, because Thomas was doing such a good job on SSB and RTTY, I decided to stick to CW. It quickly became apparent that the highest bands, which are usually very reliable from West Africa, weren't in great shape, but 17, 20 and 30m were all wide open for long periods from late afternoon pretty much through to some time after dawn.

The contest was tough going. I have done pretty well in WPX CW from home on several occasions now, with a strategy of working the low bands throughout the hours of darkness, given that they score double points. From 9G, despite Thomas's wire Yagi on 40m, I really couldn't generate and hold a pile-up, and I focused instead on going for high rate on the HF bands.

There were distractions, too, like an excellent barbecue on the Saturday evening. As single-ops are allowed only 36 hours operation, I elected to take some of my off-time, but ended up missing one of the few really good Stateside openings; Sunday was much poorer. The final outcome was just over 2,600 QSOs and a claimed score just above 6M – decent, but nowhere near what D4B PZ5XX and other well-located stations will have achieved.

But I did enjoy operating after the contest, again mainly on the WARC bands, with some hectic pile-ups and the opportunity to work many old friends. For example, it was good to work Dave/G3YMC's QRP signal on three bands and John, VK4OQ, on two bands (see my 'DX an' all that' column). It was also nice to have lunch with Ralph, 9G1RQ, an old friend who helped the Voodoo Contest Group enormously during the years they were focused on TY, 5V and 9G.

Sadly, though, Ralph's news on amateur radio in Ghana was not good. There are very few local amateurs nowadays, most activity being by ex-pats, and the club (9GØARS, the national IARU society, in fact) is almost defunct - with the Accra Technical Training College, where it is based, wanting the space back again for other purposes. It was also good fun to go out with Thomas and his colleagues to various local pubs and clubs. As you can imagine with Thomas being of German origin, the sustenance was generally of the liquid variety!

The final QSO statistics, should they be of interest, are:

Band	QSOs	DXCC
80	3	3
40	241	47
30	969	55
20	856	65
17	1452	68
15	1842	82
12	587	46
10	175	42

Total 6125 117

1-band QSOs	3075
2-band QSOs	774
3-band QSOs	251
4-band QSOs	75
5-band QSOs	9
6-band QSOs	4

Logging was by way of the exemplary Starlog, linked with Winkey for CW generation from either paddle or keyboard (totally seamless).

QSL cards are printed and should be in the mail by the time this appears. I am happy to answer bureau cards or e-mail requests (with QSO details) to [don@g3xtt.com](mailto:don@g3xtt.com). My thanks to Sigi, DL7DF, for putting me in touch with Thomas, and to Thomas himself. By the way Thomas's first call was, if I recall correctly, Y25OO, and he is also licensed as 4L7O and 4KØBO, where he is currently building a permanent home and station for himself, his Azerbaijani XYL and their young children (see also [www.qsl.net/dl7bo](http://www.qsl.net/dl7bo)).

Thanks too to his colleagues in Ghana for putting up with a visiting English amateur invading their work and living space. A very pleasant experience due entirely to being part of this worldwide community to which we, as radio amateurs, all belong.

# Low Band DXing (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)

John Devoldere, ON4UN

A short review by Dave Gould, G3UEG

The first edition of this book was published in 1988 and there have been two further editions at roughly five-year intervals since then, so is this new 4<sup>th</sup> edition worth buying? I could not wait to get my hands on a copy and have not been disappointed, as there is always something new to be learnt about the 'low bands'.

The book has updated chapters on equipment, propagation and many other topics, but is predominantly about antennas. The first of the major re-writes in this edition is in the chapter on receiving antennas, there is more on Beverages and in particular phased Beverages, but the major new subject area is about phased verticals for receiving - and some objective measures by which these antennas can be compared. It is worth noting that for receiving, where efficiency is not important, these verticals can be kept short (typically 25' to 35') by loading and do NOT have to be a quarter wavelength tall, although they still do need extensive radial systems. The second major re-write is on phased verticals for transmitting, where new methods have been developed to phase the arrays by amounts other than the common plus/minus 90 or 180°.

Some of the material does have a significant mathematical content, but new with this edition is a CD-ROM included within the package, which contains software and spreadsheets to do a lot of the calculations for you.

John has not only used his own vast experience to take the book forward, but has

also incorporated the expertise of many others who are pre-eminent in their subject and have developed new techniques or built ground-breaking (and in some cases back-breaking!) antennas.

I thoroughly enjoy reading about new techniques that push the boundaries. I am never going to erect a 9-element array in a 40 acre field with 18 miles of radials, but I like to understand the principles behind them. For those of us with more modest resources there is also a chapter on antennas for limited space.

I use the book in two ways, first as a wonderful reference source, for not only technical information but also the tables of data about the antennas the top DXers are using. Secondly, I just dip into it for encouragement and inspiration by just having a general read on a particular subject. It says something positive about our hobby that these people readily share their new-found knowledge with us - and John brings it all together. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in 160m, 80m or 40m, even if they have the three previous editions, as indeed I do.

**CDXC**  
CHILTERN DX CLUB  
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# IOTA News

Roger Balister, G3KMA

## Update of data in IOTA Directory – 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition

### New IOTA reference number issued

AF-097 7X Mediterranean Sea  
Coast Centre group (Algeria)

### Operations which have provided acceptable validation material

AF-097 7V2SI Sandja Island (May 2005)  
OC-013 ZK1COW Rarotonga Island, South Cook Islands (November/December 2004)  
OC-027 FO/F6COW Hiva Oa Island, Marquesas Islands (December 2004)  
OC-200 KH8SI Swains Island (March 2005)

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.

### Operations from which validation material is awaited as at 20 June 2005

S79QK AF-033 or -024? Island?  
(April/May 2005)

Note: Checkpoints are not authorised to credit QSL cards for an operation where validation is required.

Roger Balister, G3KMA  
RSGB IOTA Manager

1 May 2005

Email: [IOTA.HQ@rsgb.org.uk](mailto:IOTA.HQ@rsgb.org.uk)

<http://www.g3kma.dsl.pipex.com>

Visit the website for the latest IOTA information.

## IOTA Honour Roll

### 2005 Annual Listing – CDXC members

Rank (World)	Rank (England)	Callsign	Total			
				88	6 G3NUG	949
				90	7 G4BWP	948
				93	8 G3OCA	944
21	1	G3GIQ	1022	101	GJ3LFJ	937
27	2	G3ZAY	1014	110	9 G3RUV	928
34		ON4XL	1009	110	ON4IZ	928
53		OZ4RT	984	116	HB9RG	920
66	4	G3ALI	973	125	11 G3XTT	912
71		VK9NS	964	150	EI7CC	876
81	5	G4SOZ	955	151	15 G3OAG	875

152				907	78	G3HQH	309
181	16	G0LRJ	874	907	79	G3XLF	309
186		GI0TJJ	848	913		DL2VFR	308
195	17	G3HTA	842	926		GW0ANA	305
208		GW3ARS	835	934	80	G0UKX	304
211		5B4AFB	826	934	81	G2ART	304
218	18	G3SJX	824	940	82	G0PCF	303
233		WB2YQH	818	940	84	G3GZJ	303
234	21	G3PMR	803	964	86	G0WSP	296
241	22	G3ZBA	802	965	87	G4VBI	295
256	23	G3UAS	800	985	89	G3CWW	278
286	25	G3LAS	779	994	90	G0THF	271
306		KI6T	754	1013		GW0SLM	261
312	27	G0RCI	745	1018	92	G4FVK	258
339	28	G0MSM	737	1023	93	G3ECS	257
343	31	G4VXT	718	1025	95	G0FUV	255
351	32	G3RTE	715	1042	97	G4POF	244
414		NN2C	709	1071	98	G0PSE	234
466	36	G4XRX	652	1080	100	G0VYR	232
489	38	G3SWH	608	1088	102	G4DJC	228
493	39	G3KYF	597	1088	103	G5MY	228
511		GW0IWD	592	1090		MM0BQI	227
514	41	G3TXF	575	1120	105	G3KDE	215
571	43	G3KWK	571	1126	106	M0AXP	212
577	46	G3EZZ	522	1188	114	G0MTN	199
609	47	G3LUW	520	1195		GM4CHX	195
635		WA3GNW	507	1207	117	M0KCM	186
648		MM0ABJ	491	1212	118	G4TGK	184
657	48	G4KGT	480	1226		MW0CBC	176
665		GW3NXR	471	1251	121	G3OHC	161
677	51	G0GKY	462	1258	122	G2HDR	157
685	53	M0ADG	452	1258	123	G8FF	157
688	54	G0FYX	446	1264	124	G0HXN	155
720	55	G3LHJ	443	1274	126	G0YYY	151
731	56	G3GMY	418	1276	127	G4ZME	150
731	57	G0VLK	412	1298		5B4AGX	140
777	58	G4KFT	412	1298		EI4BZ	140
782	59	G4OBK	381	1301	128	G0CGV	139
782	60	G3SBP	373	1320		GW4MVA	132
786	61	G3VKW	373	1322	130	G0DRM	131
817	62	G3LPS	371	1325	132	G0ZMC	130
818	65	G0WMW	353	1349	135	G3GHS	123
826	66	G3IZM	352	1361	137	G3WPT	120
835	69	G3VDL	346	1424	143	M0CSD	114
836	70	G0MUR	340	1443	145	M0BLF	111
842	71	G3EKJ	339	1486	148	G0TDV	106
845		GW4TSG	335	1498		W6SJ	105
864	72	G3TLG	334	1517		RD3AF	101
887	73	G3VQO	324	1525	151	M3ZYZ	100
890	75	G4VMX	316				
	77	G3DEF	315				

## The RTTY Column

Phil Cooper, GUØSUP *pcooper@guernsey.net*

Getting back into contesting has been hard for me after the broken arm, and it has not been helped by the poor conditions, especially when you have dragged yourself out of bed at some ungodly hour!

Having missed several major contests at the beginning of the year, the idea of contesting seemed to have dulled a little. I also found myself having to catch up on some household chores, and as the Australian RTTY contest (ANARTS) loomed up, I was seriously wondering whether to just 'dabble', or not to bother at all.

I was rather tired on the Friday evening before the contest and, as a single op, you are only allowed 30 hours operating. I decided to go to bed as usual, and whenever I got up, I would start to play. I got to the shack just after 0700 UTC, complete with mug of coffee, and started by checking 40m. This was totally dead, so I started at the other end and checked 10m, just for fun. Surprise, surprise, there was life on 10m! OK, it was only EUs, but it was life! Sadly I only managed a few contacts, but I then tried 15m and managed to work Rich, 9M2CNC, (ex-9M2/G4ZFE) to start with, and then worked JA, and more EUs.

I decided to have a go at CQing, and this produced a nice constant stream of callers, which kept me busy for a couple of hours. Trying 20m shortly afterwards also gave a good response to my QRL?? and I didn't have to call CQ that often. When you get such a response, it certainly helps to fuel the desire, and I found myself totally engrossed until it came to shopping time!

After that, and some lunch, I had some more very productive runs, and carried on till early

evening, when 20m was starting to fade, and the lower bands had not yet opened enough.

I did try a bit later on, but 80m was dead, 40m was noisy, and 20m was rather quieter than I had hoped, so I called it a day.

During the afternoon, I was working Gs on 20m with S9+ signals, and also into the Far East, which was odd. It also didn't seem to matter where my mini-beam was pointed either, as everyone seemed to have huge signals.

On Sunday morning I managed to get out of bed at around 0445 UTC and started on 40m, working a couple of Ws, and then mostly EUs, but there were plenty of mults. After a short while I went to 20m and enjoyed another pile-up. This time I had callers from W6/W7, plus ZS, all the while pointing due east.

Conditions seemed very odd, so I decided to check out 10m, and there was Steve, ZC4LI, with an end-stopping signal. After working him I moved down the band and called CQ. Just one CQ call was all it took and I had a pile-up that lasted for over 90 minutes. All were EU, except the last caller, NP4BM.

Some time around 0830, the bands seemed to suffer, and 10m was dead, 15m was very noisy, and 20m was hard work. I gather there was some sort of solar activity, and it was then hard to find new calls to work until mid-afternoon, when the bands perked up again.

Looking back at the log, I managed to work G, GM, GW and EI on 10m, 15m and 20m, and all had very good signals. There were also some oddities that I still can't quite explain! At one point I saw GMØVIT on 15m, again

with a huge signal, yet he wasn't hearing me at all, and he was working stations I couldn't hear. MWØCRI was loud when I worked him, and yet GW4SKA was being worked not far away, and was inaudible to me.

ANARTS is a contest where you get points for distance, so it didn't help me to work the UK and EU, but it was so much fun to see the bands so open. Sadly, I never did work VK or ZL this time, and I was a little annoyed to miss out on KH6, but that was partly my fault, as I hadn't quite got the prefix right! I could see part of the call, but it was weak, and I didn't bother too much. A bit later I could see a GM station calling KH6HF and then working him. I tried, but he had faded to nothing here. Ah well!

The number of continents worked are also multipliers, up to a maximum of 6, and I did manage to work YB, so that gave me my 6<sup>th</sup> continent. It was a complete surprise to be able to work so many Gs as well, especially on the higher bands. I worked 18 different Gs, including a 2M, plus EI. I heard from one DX station that he was amazed to have worked 44 G stations and wondered what had prompted so many to enter the contest! Whatever it was, it was certainly fun, and I hope you all enjoyed some of the openings.

I ended up with 563 contacts in the log, for just short of 3 million points, which is my best-ever entry in this contest, and has to have been one of the most enjoyable contests in a while. If you are one of those who entered, then please do submit your log to Colin Davies, VK2CTD.

How easy this will be will depend on what logging software you used. If you used Writelog, then it is simple, as all you need to do is to download the Cabrillo fix from the Writelog site. I am not sure whether N1MM will cope with a Cabrillo output, and I gather

that the Cabrillo output from MixW does not conform to the correct layout.

If you used MMTTY, or another program that cannot handle a Cabrillo output, make sure you read the rules and supply exactly what is required.

You have until 1 September to submit your log, so please do so, either by email, or by post. E-mail logs to [ctdavies@bigpond.com](mailto:ctdavies@bigpond.com).

The next contest that is good fun is the SARTG contest over the weekend of 20 – 21 August. The contest is split into three segments of 8 hours each, the first starting at 0000 till 0800 on the Saturday, then 1600 – 2400, and finally from 0800 till 1600 on the Sunday. All times are in UTC. If you find you do really well on one band, you can also submit a log for that band as well as your main log. Check out

[www.sartg.com/contest/wvrules.htm](http://www.sartg.com/contest/wvrules.htm)

for the full info.

At the time of writing I am starting to get ready to go to Friedrichshafen again this year. This time, I am flying out on the Thursday, which will give me an extra day. Last year, I had just the one day at the exhibition halls, and this was far too little to see everything. I am sure I will see many of you there, and maybe share a pint or two as well.

That's it for another edition, so good DX, and have fun!

Phil GUØSUP

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# Contest

Lee Volante, GØMTN

This will be a Contest Column with a difference! This time I'm writing some of the column 'live' from National Field Day, where I'm with the Lichfield team, G3NKC/P. I'm literally sitting in a field with my laptop, hoping the contest atmosphere will inspire me for the column. So we have all of the good elements of a traditional field day.... putting up antennas, operating with a team, catching up with old friends, and recounting all of the stories, some no doubt apocryphal, from field days in the past.

Of course it's not like this all of the time, and I'm sure many of you who have tried 'open-air operation' yourselves will be aware of a few not-so-welcome elements too. NFD in the UK is usually blessed with at least some rain, although I believe apart from in the South and South West most groups had a relatively easy time with the weather this year. There is nothing quite like the feeling of trying to coil up wet coaxial cable!

Some groups often report details of unlucky generator or radio failures when they send in their logs. Occasionally even visits to the antenna farm by large animals, or even the local constabulary occur. But if it was plain sailing every year it wouldn't be so much fun, would it?

A welcome surprise for my group was an unexpected visit from George, 5B4AGC, who had been spending a little time back in the UK.

Whilst it was great to catch up with news from Cyprus, we laughed that a lot of groups would now be missing out on some 3-point QSOs this weekend.

Most regular NFD entrants will be able to predict if they're likely to be placed nearer the top - or middle - of the results table in their respective section. A lot of the fun can be had in comparing scores during the event with your direct counterparts. Although the RSGB scoring system has extra points for portable stations, and contacts on 1.8 and 28 MHz, if everything else is 'assumed to be equal', the serial numbers still give a good indication of the final score. So there was often some baited breath in the Lichfield caravan when the Manx Kippers or Bristol teams were heard sending a serial number.

Whilst it will be easier in some parts of the UK than others, NFD usually means that G portable stations can work each other on most or all of the six contest bands. Often there's evidence of a change in the lead, purely in QSO total terms, or times when you can catch up with your rivals when contacts are made over the course of the 24 hours. For comparably equipped stations, the hourly rates are often similar, and many stations stay tantalisingly within reach of their nearest competitors. Perhaps one team caught a 28 MHz opening that you missed, or suffered a problem with their generator that kept them off the air for a while. It's always frustrating to see your team start to trail, despite going all out to catch a competitor who was in reach whilst you were in the hot seat.

The list of teams registering this year was greater than the list of teams in the results for 2004, and also some new teams were noted, so that's an encouraging sign. It was also noted recently that the number of 21/28 MHz contest entrants has been increasing in the last couple of years, despite the appalling conditions experienced for several of the contests.

There's probably no single factor that's causing this, but it's good to see!

Our RSGB National Field Day contest coincides with the IARU Region 1 Field Day, which actually just equates to a lot of other European countries' own Field Day contests. Several countries with a strong contesting presence don't have their own domestic field day though. DARC do allow entries from all-comers, even including a section for fixed stations. Roger, G3SXW, suggested that it would not be much of a leap to expand and promote this idea with some help from the IARU, with an overall listing for ALL Field Day entrants. Then we could have a true competition across Europe and beyond in Region 1, and perhaps make that elusive 200 QSO target on 1.8 MHz easier to reach.

Once again this year I noted a string of Asiatic Russian stations with similar callsigns (RA9AWx/P). I've not managed to track down (or translate!) yet from the Internet if this was a 'contest within a contest', but I can remember a few similar ideas being tried in the last few years during NFD, and also the SCC's European HF Championship in August. Certainly they seemed to be omnipresent, and also presented a challenge for everyone else not to miss-log their callsigns.

On the subject of similar callsigns, it was frustrating to be adamantly told "QSO B4 QRZ" a couple of times this year when calling in domestic contests. I had a sneaking suspicion the other station had actually worked Gerry, GØRTN, who has become more active in contests this year. If the other station is insistent it's not a dupe, perhaps it would be safer to work him again.

In the cases above, assuming for a moment it wasn't me at fault (!), the other stations effectively lost two QSOs – one for busting GØRTN's call, and also losing the chance of a QSO with me.

## **WPX CW**

This has been the biggest international HF contest over the last couple of months. I reviewed my own log from last year, when trying to come up with a better operating strategy for 2005. For WPX there are three factors that need to be considered. They are the overall number of QSOs, the number (or ratio) of DX QSOs, and the number of multipliers. Despite my best efforts to improve on last year, I still struggled on all counts, but perhaps when the sunspot numbers start to improve we'll all start to find it easier.

The first night produced some exceptional conditions on 14 MHz, with Europe managing to run the USA for hours, and even finding some stations on 21 MHz. At the end of the contest the low bands had a lot of static through storms in mainland Europe.

28 MHz also had some good Sporadic-E openings, and the bigger stations in West Europe were also able to make QSOs to the USA. It was pleasing to see that the G6PZ team have claimed the highest score in Europe for the Multi-Single category, and a number of other UK stations were active for most of the contest. The G6PZ group have a website now, which can be found at <http://g6pz.eqth.info/>.

## **CQ-Contest Hall of Fame**

At this year's Dayton Hamvention CQ magazine announced the induction of Jeff Briggs, K1ZM/VY2ZM, and Rusty Epps, W6OAT, into their CQ-Contest Hall of Fame. Jeff, of course, is a winner and record holder in many major contests, and is an expert in 160m operating and propagation. I had the pleasure of a few conversations with Rusty at WRTC 2002 in Finland. Rusty helped to create the World Radiosport Team Championship, first held in 1990 in Seattle, and also the North American Sprint contest.

## Contest Safety

My own radio club has been discussing the issue of safety recently, with regard to the use and maintenance of our mobile tower. Whilst the majority of our concerns were to do with special event stations and the like, where there is a lot of public access, we would still need to consider the safety of our own team members at a portable site setting up a temporary station for a contest event.

I know of some UK contest teams who have made their operating sites 'dry' and ban alcohol on site. Another group reported that they always wear hard hats and other personal protection equipment. There may have been some bad experiences that have triggered the decisions for these groups. Most single operators and contest groups operating portable don't go to this level. I'm sure that almost all contest groups use enough common sense to ensure that their site is reasonably safe. However, because this is just a hobby for us, most of us don't have the required level of training, professionally certified equipment inspections, correct signage, warnings for antennas, or strictly correct use of electricity and generators that we would be required to have if it were a 'professional' event. The time and money required to achieve all of this may also be unfeasible for a hobby. So I was wondering that if there was a serious injury to a member of the public or a member of your own contest group, could the group or an individual involved be held accountable, even if 'reasonable' precautions had been made and the group has public liability insurance?

It is sad to occasionally read in the amateur radio press, or on the CQ-Contest reflector, stories of where amateurs have been killed falling from towers. Working in the telecommunications industry, I'm aware of more fatalities from tower falls, even where specific safety procedures should be followed. Fortunately, injuries to people following amateur antenna or tower failures are rare.

The subject is relevant to amateur radio as a whole of course, but it's the contesting fraternity that most often erect portable stations, and normally the sorts of stations with the most or biggest antennas, on the highest supports.

I'm sure many of us are aware of a tightening of legislation in many areas of everyday life concerning public safety. Perhaps this will encroach more on amateur activities in the near future? If anyone does have any experience in this area please get in touch.

Postscript: I'd written all of the above before hearing about Krassy, K1LZ, who was an operator on the very recent CY9SS expedition. Krassy, K1LZ, was on a 48' tower, strapped to the top, when one of the guy ropes broke. The tower and he fell to the ground with the tower landing on his left leg/hip breaking the femur into 4 pieces. Fortunately, the tower fell toward the island and not the sea, causing him to land in a soft area of grass. Krassy has no internal injuries, and surgery on his leg has gone well and at the time of writing was due to be discharged from hospital soon.

I'm not suggesting at all that the installation was unsafe, but it does highlight that even with the precautions of guy ropes and safety harnesses, accidents do happen in our hobby.

## QRL ?!

The subject of asking if the frequency is in use in CW contests was brought up separately on two Internet reflectors after the CQ WPX CW contest. This is not a new subject, of course, but with more operators now starting to make use of SO2R (2<sup>nd</sup> radio) or just SO2V (2<sup>nd</sup> VFO) to make contacts, some less than ideal examples of frequency checking are heard.

Some people purely listen for a while, and if the frequency is quiet just start calling. Most of the time this works without a problem, and also has the result that the station is announcing his callsign, and intention that he

wants a contest QSO straight away. However, if the frequency really was in use, the original user of the frequency has to wait a for 'TEST xx1xxx xx1xxx TEST' call to complete before sending 'QRL' in response, or trying to complete a QSO that was already in progress. Sending '?' once or a couple of times seems to be most favoured, and would not upset a QSO if there really was one in progress on the same frequency. Finally, the rest of the pack, myself included, still favours "QRL?"

A cause for disagreement is how quickly you would need to respond to someone else who starts to use a frequency, before you would be classed as being too late, and have to give up and find somewhere else to call. If the new station has already sent a couple of QRL? calls, or a couple of CQ calls, then you're probably too late. If the original station has been busy on a second VFO or radio, perhaps he's not been fully aware of what's been happening on the run frequency when he returns to it. Also, I've heard instances where a frequency was claimed because there wasn't a response to an initial single '?'. It's not great contesting practice, but normally who's loudest or the most stubborn seems to win then. And all of this is before considering changing propagation, changing yagi directions etc.

Along the same lines, I've been studying an interesting propagation phenomenon that occurs only during contests recently. It occurs when other stations can appear and call CQ on my frequency, seemingly not hearing my own CQ calls at all. But if I then called the other station for a QSO, they heard me and worked me straight away. It would seem that just after the end of someone else's CQ call, and only if you send a call sign, there is up to a 6 dB path improvement, and your call sign can be copied. If you send QRL! instead, the signal increase does not happen. I would imagine that the improvement is proportional to the rarity of your prefix as well, which is a truly amazing propagation characteristic. I will be

continuing my research... I'm sure many of you have also experienced this from time to time!

## WRTC update

Those of you keeping an eye on the WRTC 2006 website, or the mailing list, will know that OMs PY5EG and the WRTC 2006 team have been busy answering questions from potential competitors. The team selection criteria have now been announced, which in the main is based on previous contest scores from the last three or four years. This is a good attempt to have the selection based on real results, but concerns have been raised about how fair it is to directly compare the performance from a contester in Arizona with another on the East Coast of the USA, for example. As ever, it's difficult to find a truly level playing field to compare performance – ironically the best example is probably the WRTC competition itself. There will be no specific 'UK team' this time, but UK applicants can submit scores to vie for one of the 15 team slots allocated for Europe.

It's also interesting to see that the WRTC stations will be equipped with 4-element HF yagis, and even a 2-element 40m yagi. Also new for this event will be the multi-single teams, and also the decision to propose a number of teams specifically for young contesters aged 22 or under. There is also some discussion about amplifiers for the multi-single teams, so the WRTC stations should be loud in Europe!

Before the deadline for the next *Digest*, the IARU HF World Championship will have been and gone, as will the IOTA contest. I'll also be going to Friedrichshafen for the first time, which is bound to be good for finding news and stories. As usual, any of your own contributions about the above events, or anything else, will be welcome.

73 Lee, GØMTN

# Twenty Years of Contesting – from 2005 to 2025

Dr Beldar L1AR (aka H. Ward Silver, NØAX)

Originally presented at the Dayton Hamvention Contest Dinner 2005

Reproduced with kind permission of the ARRL

Close your eyes and imagine that you are transported to the Contest Dinner in 2025 as the evening's speaker unfolds his notes and begins his speech...

The early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century have proven to be turbulent, but fertile, for radiosport contesting. Now one of the world's premier sporting activities, by what path did contesting ascend? The history of the sport is a rich one, but looking back, we can see that it was about twenty years ago that the Golden Age of contesting began. Tonight, we shall take a look back through the Contest Calendar of the past twenty years, identifying some of the high points of our favorite activity. Do you remember which are real and which fantasy?

Let's set the controls of the way-back machine to...

## 2005

- Following K7JA and K6CTW's stunning smackdown of the SMS champs on NBC's Tonight Show, Sony announced that pile-up simulator PED would be included with the new XBOX game platform and the hams at Nokia added an iambic keying interface to the latest generation of mobile phones.
- California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger announces that "QRP is for girlie men" and declares 2006 will be the year of the California Kilowatt.

- Paris Hilton declares radiosport contesting to be "totally hot." Rap star CW Diddy goes platinum with "Loud is Good!" Parents forbid their children to get a ham license, ham radio is cool again and the demand for radios immediately takes off.
- Later that year, N6TR breaks 450 QSOs in the September CW Sprint, but then gets a brain cramp and has to spend two days recovering in a hyperbaric chamber.
- The CW prosign **OJ** (- - - . - - -) is created to represent a backslash in Web URLs.

## 2006

- WRTC2006, held in Brasil, is conducted in a verticals-on-the-beach style, but the contest is disrupted when Gator, N5RZ, removes his shirt, causing the entire beach to go topless, including the visiting all-girl Samba orchestra and dance troupe. No one seems to mind, although QSO rates drop dramatically.
- N5TJ & K1TO achieve a 4-peat as champions despite RA3AUU and RV1AW changing their calls to RA3TJ and RV1TO.
- W8JI wins the 160-meter CQ WW with a new Top Band Sterba curtain strung between Georgia mountaintops.
- After the collapse of the BPL industry, students at Beijing University discover that by removing a diode, the salvaged sending units make great 20-meter

QRP transmitters. Using inexpensive short wave receivers and sound-card signal processing software, BA BD and BG call signs outnumber JA's for the first time in CQ WW. However, none are heard east of Colorado.

- As thousands of SMS-trained CW operators flood the air waves, the ARRL creates several new operating abbreviations, such as...
  - ARL 200 for "I am like so not!"
  - QMH? for "Are you hot?"
  - QMT for "Totally!"
  - QMD for "Duh!"

## 2007

- Bill Gates and Microsoft take up contesting, buying Alpha, Elecraft and SteppIR. Within months, prototypes of a hand-held, kilowatt PDA known as "Pocket Rocket" are heard on 75-meters as testers ask, "Can you hear me now?"
- The first real-time on-line contest crashes after the master server suffers a denial-of-service attack from the Pig Farmers Hacker Alliance.
- K9DX counters W8JI's Sterba Curtain by leasing the HF rights on the northern Illinois power grid and driving it as a phased array.
- Keanu Reeves plays the part of Romeo Stepanenko UB5RR with Robin Williams as Bill Kenamer K5FUV in the hit Shakespearean farce, "Where Art Thou, Romeo?"

## 2008

- Congress passes the Spectral Purity Act, authored by Sen. Dick Norton N6AA. the fraud trial of BPL executives begins immediately following the completion of the Enron sentencing hearings

- FCC Chairman Riley Hollingsworth relaxes Part 97 rules to allow corporate-run contests. Kimberly-Clark immediately assumes sponsorship of the ARRL 160-Meter Contest, renaming it the Depends Classic and introduces a new model of Depends named "The Chairmaster." The ad campaign slogan is "Hold Your Frequency Instead of Your Water!"
- K1JT releases software for the Pocket Rocket that can listen to a pileup and extract all call signs simultaneously. Jim Neiger N6TJ announces that it "Cuts the Mustard!" and applies for the WRTC Senior Division using the software as his teammate.
- The merger of the largest spotting networks, combined with nearly ubiquitous broadband use of real-time, on-line contesting servers, allows all stations to be spotted everywhere at all times, rendering spotting effectively useless.
- NCAA Division I rival Big Ten and Atlantic Coast Conference schools slug it out during Field Day to the highest category 18A scores ever. College recruiters begin to appear at high-school radio club meetings looking for operators.

## 2009

- Disintegration of the Central Asian and Caucasus states results in the creation of 42 new kingdoms in six months. Ukraine displaces EA8 as the optimum DX contest location and UB5 stations take the top three spots in CQ WW Phone with stunning 75-meter multiplier totals. OH2BH is seen in the Rome airport booking flights to the Orient and haggling over excess baggage charges.
- The "Lake Erie" virus infects all Morse-enabled mobile phones,

permanently changing their keying mode to Vibroplex.

- Given the widespread and undetectable use of remote stations connected via the Internet, CQ WW creates a category for them. The initial competition is won by an entry consisting of the entire World-Wide Young Contesters membership who adapt SETI@home distributed computing software to link stations located in sixty-four countries around the world.
- A new 160-meter single-op record is set by K1ZM using K1JT software that synthesizes signals so that they are generated or received exactly on the grey line.

## 2010

- The theme of WRTC2010, held in Ft. Worth, Texas, is a Radio Rodeo. New events include the Pig Farmer Roping competition, a chili cook-off, and all contestants are required to ring a chuck-wagon triangle after every multiplier.
- The team of N5TJ & K1TO face stiff competition from the team of Argentinian radio gauchos, but prevail for the fifth time as K1TO cleverly selects I2UIY as his "lifeline" during the 72-oz Steak eating event.
- Spread spectrum contests make their appearance, but nobody notices, since all they do is raise the noise floor a little bit.
- Nike jumps into the contest sponsorship arena by purchasing the CQ publishing empire, changing WW motto to "Just Work It." The contest adds the radio triathlon category where QSOs must be made from a kayak, a bicycle and a hang glider.
- To deal with intentional QRM during contests, jammers and frequency stealers, the FCC opens the first radio

penal institution near the existing maximum-security facility in Leavenworth, KS.

## 2011

- Solar cycle 24 peaks this year and releases a mega-flare during the IARU HF Championship, pushing the auroral curtain south to latitude 46 north. This wipes out all HF bands except for stations in Scandinavia, the upper US West Coast, VE7, KL7 and the UAØ icebreaker fueling station in Pevek who sweep the top spots.
- In the aftermath of the flare, persistent ionization levels are so high that the words "rate" and "1296 MHz" are used in the same sentence on several of the VHF+ contesting reflectors.
- WA3FET designs a new, super-gain antenna with a front-to-back ratio so high that when installed at WP3R the first transmission snaps the forward guys and knocks the tower over backwards, crushing the new shack constructed entirely of wooden Sweepstakes plaques.

## 2012

- Retired admiral Scott Redd KØDQ is elected President and during his inaugural address announces plans to mandate a **minimum** height of 75' for all amateur towers and require that each subdivision be home to at least one all-band, full-power amateur station. His impeachment is completed by the end of February.
- The FCC finally grants ragchewers contest-free zones, but simultaneously creates contest-only zones and cites several dozen ragchewers and net control operators for incursion violations.
- SETI claims that it has detected hostile signals from an extra-terrestrial

civilization, but they turn out to be the long-delayed echoes of high-order intermodulation products from the first three hours of the 2011 Sweepstakes.

- MacAuley Culkin stars in the holiday hit video about a single-op bachelor, "Phone Alone."
- Florida approves the first ham-only cemetery. It's located on Silent Key.

## 2013

- The Amateur Radio Direction Finding World Championship attracts 25,000 competitors and 100,000 spectators. ESPN devotes a full week of coverage to the event, bumping the PGA tour to the midnight time slot.
- NA Sprint is added to the Olympics as a demonstration sport after being renamed "Synchronized QRMing."
- Robot operators are finally allowed as assistants in the single-op categories. N6TR and K1EA collaborate on HAL-2001 software, but the prototype locks them out of the shack.
- Real-time WPX results are delivered one hour after the contest, resulting in a flood of complaints about the delay.
- Sponsored by Speedo, the first NCJ Swimsuit issue hits the newsstands. It is also the **last** NCJ Swimsuit issue.

## 2014

- WRTC is held in Hong Kong on 73 different floors of the Post, Telephone, and Telegraph headquarters building. N5TJ and K1TO refuse to go, but are kidnapped by the Chinese intelligence service and win again.
- MIT's Artificial Intelligence lab adopts Phone Sweepstakes as a test and development environment for artificial speech processing. They apparently could find no more challenging environment.

- A team of Unlimited Rovers finally reaches the theoretical limit of band-mode-grid point accumulation but nobody seems to notice.
- Amateur radio makes the news when during a VHF+ contest, the K8GP Grid Pirates deploy surplus lasers from inertial fusion reactor facilities and accidentally "terminate" a hot-air balloon regatta.
- Joe Walsh WB6ACU forms "E.F. Johnson and the Navigators" and has a smash hit with "Gimme Your Full Call, Baby!"

## 2015

- The headquarters station category of the IARU HF is won by the reconstituted Grand Duchy of Fenwick club that declared all stations within its borders to be HQ stations.
- The ARRL joined with the AARP in creating the Assisted-Living category with Single Op - 1 Nap and Single Op - 2 Nap classes.
- VHF+ contests adopt the three-dimensional Maidenhead Grid Cube identifiers for the new Sky-Rover Category, but grid corner orbiting is prohibited.
- A small meteorite crashes into the Atlantic and the resulting resurvey of state borders finally shows K3LR to officially be an 8.
- The rapidly retreating Antarctic glaciers reveal the continent to actually be made up of 16 isolated island entities, which are all immediately claimed by countries ranging from Norway to Jamaica. OH2BH is seen in Tierra Del Fuego just before CQ WW trying to charter an icebreaker.

## 2016

- The first Interplanetary contest begins with multipliers consisting of the 24

medium-earth-orbit Unlimited Parcel Service transfer stations, both of Virgin Spaceway's geosynchronous resorts, the moon city of Brightside, all three of Asa-Brown-Boveri's asteroid mines, the Indian colonies established at the fourth and fifth Langrangian points, and the Russo-Israeli mission to Jupiter. The exchange is serial number and relative Doppler shift.

- K1JT releases software that extracts synchronous, coded signals from up to 234 dB below ambient noise, making possible the first single-weekend WAZ on the new VLF band of 73 kHz. Each QSO takes 20 minutes.
- The integration of Europe is completed as the borders are dissolved between the enclave of the International Knights Who Say Ni and the Kingdom of Dan Marino. This reduces the number of European multipliers to one, decimating DX contest scores from the eastern half of North America.

## 2017

- More corporate sponsors discover ham radio contesting as the Topband Distance Challenge becomes the Stew Perrier and Jack Daniels creates W.C. Field Day. CW Sweepstakes is sponsored by A-1 Sauce.
- Climate change results in a permanent and violent cyclone over the New England states, centered on Newtown, CT. Black Hole stations sweep the Single-Op All Band and Single-Band top spots for the first time ever. East Coast stations lobby vigorously for country quotas during contests.
- Morse code is conclusively shown to have positive effects on long-term brain health by stimulating neurons in rhythmic patterns.
- The first interplanetary contest is still under way as responses form contacts

with the Jupiter mission are still being received and decoded at the Arecibo radio telescope.

## 2018

- WRTC moves to Japan and is sponsored by the radio conglomerate YaeKenCom. The competitions are held on a specially created man-made island in Tokyo Bay in the shape of CQ Kitty, the event's mascot and current teen craze.
- A Chinese team using hand keys finally dethrones N5TJ and K1TO as N5TJ learns about warm saki and K1TO is disqualified in the sumo wrestling competition for accidentally soiling his loincloth.
- A team of graduate students from W9YT run away with the VLF and LF single-band categories using notes from Nikola Tesla's research to design an antenna that shunt-excites the resonant cavity between the D-layer and the earth's surface.
- Logs are finally received from the interplanetary contest multiplier stations, although the Jupiter mission's log is submitted as a black obelisk in a format no one can translate. The second interplanetary contest misses its launch window and is delayed for one sidereal year.

## 2019

- Starbucks was implicated in a low-band contest stimulant doping scandal. Triple Ginseng French Roast is added to the International Radiosport Federation's list of banned substances, which also include inner-ear growth hormone, any form of "contest chili", and Beano.
- By being covered completely at high tide, the last of the remaining non-volcanic Caribbean islands was

declared submerged by the World Geographical Society. This leaves only Cuban Mountaintop Chain, Monserrat, and the Island of Windward in Zone 8.

- The Four Corners Off-Road Emissions Society's Battle Rover won the first running of the Baja 500 ElectroRove-In with an average speed of 47 QSOs per mile over the rugged desert course. The Battle Rover was built on a surplus self-propelled missile launch platform outfitted with Force 12's all-band "Fly's Eye" phased array antenna systems driven by fourth-generation Pocket Rockets.
- SteppIR introduces an inflatable discone. Development is sponsored by Viagra.

## 2020

- ARRL declares 2020 to be the Year of Contesting Hindsight and creates special entry categories for the long-disused modes of SSB, wideband FM, and RTTY.
- The number of entries in major contests has grown beyond the limit of individual log checkers to process. The ARRL and Nike-CQ jointly petition the government for emergency computing assistance and a contract is negotiated with IBM for the design of construction of a new contest server - Deep Q.
- The methods used by log checkers to determine unique, not-in-log, and busted QSOs are declared a national secret and the algorithm is sealed under court order.
- A United Nations inquiry is opened into why plaques from the interplanetary contest have still not been received.

## 2021

- The United Mexicanian States grants sovereign status to all native aboriginal tribes, creating the 127th ARRL section of VZØ, Baffin Island. KE3Q/VZØ wins all three modes of sweepstakes.
- Radiosport finally becomes an official Olympics sport operating under the rules for Ice Dancing. The first competition is marred by scandal as the French judge is discovered feeding busted call signs to the Australian team.
- The floating island cities of the South China Sea are accepted into the IOTA program but not for DXCC since the antennas are not land-based. One city is blown onto Scarborough Reef during the ARRL DX contest, creating an uproar for several hours until high tide lifts it off again. No one is able to ascertain whether the city would be considered scaffolding and the late Wayne Mills N7NG left no instructions in his will in this regard.
- The TV show "The Call is Right!" is the highest rated game show on Monday nights.

## 2022

- WRTC returns to its birthplace in New Seattle, Washington, funded by the sale of founder K7SS' world's largest collection of Hawaiian shirts. Although the old Seattle was inundated by the Great Earthquake in 2018, several of the old sites are reused and the winners operate from the rotating restaurant of the Space Needle, now surrounded completely by salt water.
- In first, a local team of Orca whales enters and sweeps all of the digital competitions, speaking directly into hydrophones. This has big implications for the IARU HF Championship, since aquatic mammals can now activate the so-called "water zones." Instead of

plaques, the Orcas ask for a nice salmon or two.

- The winning entry for CQ WW this year was submitted by the Sons of the VooDudes contest team operating from an aerostat platform at the focus of the equatorial anomaly - the correct height to have chordal hop propagation on all bands.

## 2023

- Alien ships appear in the skies during the frenetic transmissions of North American Sprint's code contest. They immediately leave at high speed after hearing the phone portion of the contest.
- The hot topic among contest administrators is how long raw contest signals are allowed to remain in memory for analysis by processing software. Consensus is reached that 1 nanosecond should be enough for even the slowest computers.
- Room-temperature superconducting aluminum is used to create the first all-band tabletop phased array.
- Fred Laun K3ZO finally purchases a CW filter.

## 2024

- A cache of vacuum tubes is discovered in the W1AW basement and a "hollow-state" transmitter makes its first appearance on the amateur bands in 15 years. It immediately receives a "chirp" report.
- YaeKenCom delivers a radio capable of sending CW without key clicks, although no one can remember what a "key" is.
- In the face of growing contest spectrum demand, all other communications services are relocated

to the microwave bands and all frequencies below 1 GHz reallocated to amateurs.

- All contests merge into a single giga-contest that runs continuously on all bands and modes. Winners are tracked on the GoogleHoo portal and covered by Las Vegas-based Worldwide Casino. Recent top scorers include:
  - a schizophrenic with 26 different personalities, half of which have chronic insomnia
  - robot operators running CTRateMaster Platinum version 6.7
  - a two-dolphin team named #\$\$%^&\*()\_!! from the Amazon river delta
  - and 14-year-old named Manu Franklin Chang, C71.2.TJTO from the 2nd Langrangian colony

That brings us to the current day, **2025**. In order to fully appreciate our good fortune, we must acknowledge the contributions of those testers at the millenium that built the foundation of contesting.

A toast! Although their radios were primitive and their scores unimaginably puny, they opened the door to modern contesting - found on the bands at all times and followed by sentient beings around the world and from Venus to the Gas Giants. May we have the fortitude as they did to keep our butts in the chair and our signals in the air! Radiosport forever!

*Revised May 24, 2005*

*[With thanks to G3SXW for pointing this one out to me. Ed.]*

## Letters and E-mails to the Editor

**from 2EØZYZ**

Dear Martyn,

I just thought I'd drop you a line for the first time and thank you for another great edition of the *CDXC Digest*. It really is essential bedtime reading!

Also, I have now changed my call sign from M3ZYZ to 2EØZYZ. I passed the Intermediate exam about 12 months ago, but only applied for the call last week. The reason: I wanted to see how many IOTAs I could get using an 'enforced' 10W. I managed 235 (worked) and 205 (confirmed) up to the beginning of May. I haven't got many EUs left to work - only the rare ones - and the DX side is very difficult now with conditions as they are, so I decided to upgrade to 50W!

I also immensely enjoyed the 'CDXC IOTA 2004 Challenge'. That was brilliant, but very stressful as the final date loomed. It was a great idea and I'm looking forward to the next.

I will be sad to see Steve, G4JVG, leaving the mainland. I'd like to wish him and his family all the best for the future and hope that we see regular reports of his activities abroad.

Vy 73 from a committed CDXC member,

Charles R. Wilmott. M3ZYZ / 2EØZYZ

**from G3VCQ**

Dear Martyn,

I joined CDXC at the recent rally at Elvaston Castle and thought you might like to hear about our activities. For the first time I, along

with members of the Sheffield Amateur Radio Club (SARC), have decided to enter the IOTA contest this year, so we are off on our travels in July to Scotland and the Isle of Arran. We will be active on all bands, CW and SSB, from the 29 – 31 July inclusive. Our contest callsign will be that of the SARC, MM3M. We intend operating all over the island prior to and during the contest, are registered on QRZ.com – and members of the team will be active using their own callsigns.

A few of members of the team to listen out for are: G3VCQ, M3VCQ, MØGAV, M1ERS, 2EØTWS, GØJJR (with 2 x M3s?), GØOUD, M3HNZ, M3IZT, M3FMG and GØSGB - all working GM/portable or /mobile, of course. Waters & Stanton are our sponsors for this 2005 IOTA DXpedition to Arran. Sheffield City Council are also supporting our cause.

You may also be interested in our local DX Net in Sheffield which operates most evenings on 14.208 MHz at 2100 GMT. A number of local people join in this net and we have great fun working the DX (conditions allowing!). The DX net has a website which is [www.sheffield-live.co.uk](http://www.sheffield-live.co.uk).

Keep up the good work with the *Digest* and the GB2RS News! I look forward to hearing you on air.

73 Colin, G3VCQ / ex-ZB2IP

**from ZS6ME**

The *CDXC Digest* is terrific and my only source of any DX information. Please pass on my best wishes to all CDXC members via the *Digest*.

Eric Meyer, ZS6ME ex-VQ2WM

## Not the GB2RS News

The main news headlines:

- Band congestion charges to be introduced
- Crack-downs at Ofcard, Ofdot and Ofdash
- FSDXA announce their next expedition

Congestion charges are to be introduced to combat overcrowding on the amateur bands at peak periods, for example 20m at the weekend. The basic charge will be 50p per hour. Contest enthusiasts will be the hardest hit, with an entry in any one 80m Club Championship incurring a congestion charge of 75p. Full participation in a 48-hour contest will, of course, incur a charge of £24. However, with each such payment you will gain extra Nectar Card points.

Ofcard, the QSL card practices regulator, is to launch a crack-down on UK QSL managers who base their activities on debatable rates of exchange for the US Dollar, in some cases US\$ 2.15 to the Pound or more. A spokesperson for Ofcard said that some of them even maintain that the US Dollar, now at 1.77 to the Pound and worth 56p, is not enough to cover the return postage for a QSL card - in the UK, currently 47p to anywhere in the world.

In a similar move, Ofdot and Ofdash, the CW practices watchdogs, are to crack down on DXpedition operators who regularly claim QSO rates in excess of 200 QSOs per hour. That's a QSO every 18 seconds or less. A spokesperson for Ofdot described such claims as unrealistic and exaggerated. His colleague at Ofdash was not available for comment, seeing as he had to dash off elsewhere.

HF DX News:

The Five Star DXers Association have announced their next expedition. Next year they'll be going to Middle-earth. The callsign:

ME1C. The 20-strong international team will be based at the Five Star Hobbiton Hilton, which is being built specially to accommodate them, the traditional Hobbit hotels having been deemed far too small and only Two Star at most. Nor do any of them have a fully licensed bar. Further details can be found on the Web at [www.shelob.com](http://www.shelob.com).

Contest News:

Kicking off at 1200 UTC next Saturday: the Kelloggs 24-hour RCN (Reversed Cereal Numbers) Contest. Before the contest, work out how many contacts you think you're likely to make. If you think it'll be 1,500, then give '1500' as your first cereal number, followed by '1499' for the next station, etc. The station who comes closest to '001' in his/her final QSO of the contest is the winner. NB: you must keep calling for the entire duration of the contest. No breaks allowed. [*What, not even for a bowl of Cornflakes? Ed.*]

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### Solution to Digest Prize Crossword 10

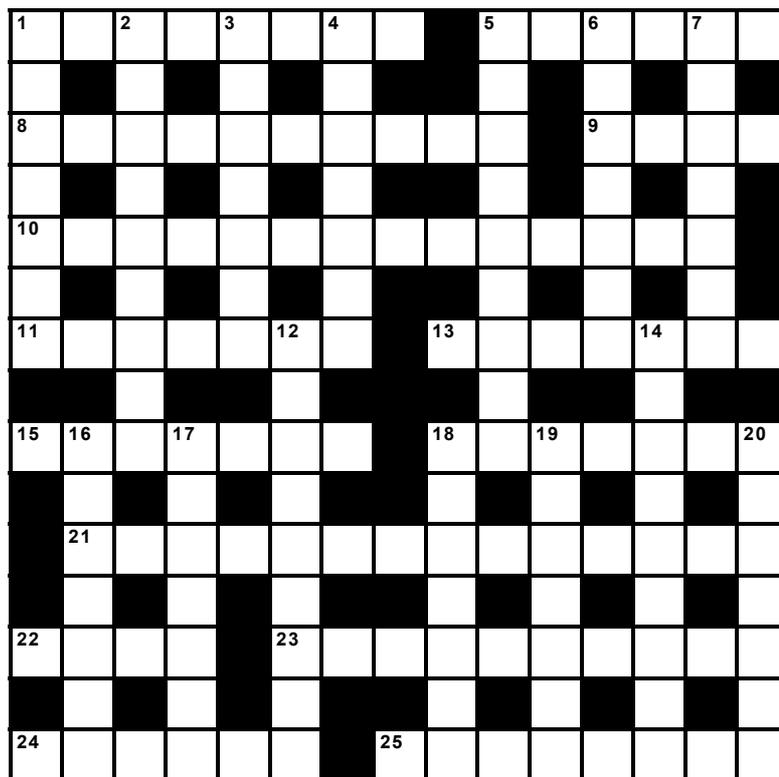
A	L	T	E	R	N	A	T	I	V	E	S						
N		H		E		R		G		A		O	M				
T	A	R	T	S		C	O	N	T	R	A	L	T	O			
E		O		T		H		A		L		D	S				
N	E	W	S	A	G	E	N	T		Y	E	T	I	S			
N				R		R		I				I		A			
A	D	A	P	T	S		S	U	B	S	U	M	E	D			
				N		E		T		S		P		E			
G	U	A	R	D	I	A	N		Z	A	G	R	E	B			
R		G				B		F		G				A			
E	G	R	E	T		B	E	E	T	H	O	V	E	N			
E		A		O		Y		N		E		E		D			
D	O	M	I	N	I	C	A	N		T	A	R	K	A			
Y		S		G		A		E		T		D		G			
						H	A	U	T	E	C	U	I	S	I	N	E

## Digest Prize Crossword 11 *by RFX*

Do you have any favourite cryptic crossword clues? Three which immediately spring to mind here, all from *The Times*, are ‘Fancied growin’ old in one girl’s arms (9)’, but that’s probably because I was madly in love with a girl called Mary at the time. There again, ‘As Spooner might have described Arnhem landing? (9)’ and ‘Lisper’s erroneous description of Titanic – it’s out of the question (11)’. But then as you’ve probably noticed, I always did like these phonetic clues.

Anyway, solutions at the bottom of page 46, if you’re stuck.

The winner of Prize Crossword 10, May 2005, and that brand-new tenner: Robert Taylor, G4KTI, Stanway, Colchester, Essex.



### ACROSS

- 1 Stoical architect changing sides (8)
- 5 Take up residence in N. Yorkshire town (6)
- 8 Widespread track a beggar duo played (5-5)
- 9 Unfortunately it's a girl, we hear (4)
- 10 Excellent landlords – they're found in MA and NY, but not many (7,7)
- 11 One more unnamed cricketer? (7)
- 13 Greek dish causing endless body trouble (7)
- 15 See supervisors moving diagonally on board (7)
- 18 Supplement about Italian leader cited as evidence (7)
- 21 Be fully acquainted with a subject like some French travelling salesmen? (4,4,6)
- 22 Ceremonial attire making a comeback in York (4)
- 23 Where landlords stand in prison (6,4)
- 24 Old country cat with no tail (6)
- 25 After Maine, river in the mountains follows a winding course (8)

### DOWN

- 1 Novel woman (7)
- 2 Stingers deployed in Cos prison riot (9)
- 3 Fly KLM, maybe, and share the expenses equally (2,5)
- 4 Facilitator more competent to support opponents (7)
- 5 Ran around cold gallery? Enjoyed sport perhaps (9)
- 6 Cockney thief's one for the pot! (3,4)
- 7 Kinky ladies and I worked together (7)
- 12 Plant giving you a high around the third of February (9)
- 14 US City providing the ideal craft fixture? (9)
- 16 Ship's captain, no leader, a few find annoying (7)
- 17 Breasts commonly attributed to sirens (7)
- 18 An American epic somehow seen as a favourable omen (7)
- 19 As a tourist visited paradise, we hear, a place in ZL (7)
- 20 Stops little sibling getting into money troubles (not billions)? (7)

Deadline for entries: 20 August

# DX and Events Calendar

Compiled by G3XTT

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

Period	Call
till 20/07	TT8PK: Chad by F4EGS
till 30/07	IO8JR: special station
till 31/07	8N5SAIT: special event station (Japan)
till August	TT8M and TT8AMO: Chad by PA5M and HB9AMO
till October	SVØXAN/5: Lipsi Island (EU-001) by IK2WZD
till November	HFØPOL: Henryk Arctowski Base (SP-01; AN-010)
till November	JW: Bear Island (EU-027) by LA2TOA
till 31/12	4N35CW: special event station
till 31/12	9A1ØKC: special event station
till 31/12	EIØ5CCC: special event call
till 31/12	HA2ØØCVM: special event call
till 31/12	HA8ØIARU: special event station
till 31/12	IR7LH/P: Italian lighthouses by IK7JWX
till 31/12	IU7SCT: special station
till 31/12	LZ8IARU: special event station
till 31/12	OE5Ø: special event prefix (Austria)
till 31/12	OO: special prefix (Belgium)
till 31/12	ZS75PTA: special call
till February	ZS1ØØRI: special station
till March	R1ANT: Mirny base (UA-07), Antarctica by RW1AI
till April	R1ANN and RU3HD/ANT: Novolazarevskaya (UA-08, AN-016)
till March 2007	T68G: Afghanistan by LA5IIA
18/06-28/08	SMØDTK/1: Gotland Island (EU-020)
20/06-20/07	R75Ø: special prefix (Kaliningrad)
21/06-21/07	4X17x, 4Z17x, 4X17MG, 4Z17MG: special stations (Israel)
01/07-28/07	GB4ON: special call
01/07-31/12	SU8BHI: Egypt by HA3JB
01/07-31/07	VB3M: special call by VA3YDX
01/07-23/07	VE9GLF and VE9MY: Canadian islands
08/07-18/07	3DAØKDJ, 3DAØCF, 3DAØJR: Swaziland
08/07-23/07	PA2ØØØN: special event call
11/07-17/07	LA/IZ2DPX/P: Norway
15/07-18/07	JA1KJW/8, JJ1JGI/8, JK1EBA/8, 7N4AGB/8: Rebun I. (AS-147)
17/07-24/07	HBØ/ON6UQ and HBØ/ON7TQ: Liechtenstein

18/07-21/07 JA1KJW/8, JJ1JGI/8, JK1EBA/8, 7N4AGB/8: Rishiri (AS-147)  
 21/07-23/07 TM7CI: Cordouan Island (EU-159)  
 23/07-04/08 CU4/CT3FN: Graciosa Island (EU-175) by HB9CRV  
 24/07-01/08 SV8/HA8KW/P and J48KW: Zakynthos Island (EU-052)  
 25/07-10/08 DH6GD/P: Fehmarn Island (EU-128)  
 25/07-01/08 M3CVN, GØVJG, G4BUO, G7GLW, 2EØATY, GØFDZ, M8C: EU-011

26/07-31/07 3V8SM: Djerba Island (AF-083) EA8s  
 26/07-03/08 CYØAA: Sable Island (NA-063) by W8GEX, K8LEE, W9IXX  
 27/07-03/08 9K2F: Faylakah Island (AS-118)  
 27/07-29/07 CU4T: Graciosa Island (EU-175)  
 27/07-31/07 ES2U: Rammu Island (EU-149)

28/07-31/07 DLØKWH/P: Usedom Island (EU-129)  
 28/07-04/08 OZ8MW/P: Anholt Isl (EU-088) by OZ2TF, OZ7KDJ, OZ9V  
 28/07-31/07 W5RTA and K5M: Mustang Island (NA-092)  
 29/07-07/08 FP/K9OT and FP/KB9LIE: Miquelon Island (NA-032)  
 29/07-31/07 G2XV/P: Scilly Isles (EU-011) by M1KTA

29/07-31/07 MMØQ: Summer Isles (EU-092) by MMØBQI  
 29/07-05/08 MMØTFU/P: Isle of Arran (EU-123)  
 29/07-31/07 MM3M: Isle of Arran (EU-123)  
 29/07-31/07 OZ/DFØTX: Romo Island (EU-125)  
 29/07-05/08 TMØEME: Brehat Island (EU-074) by ONs

30/07-31/07 C6APR & C6ARV: Crooked Isl (NA-113) by W2GJ & AA4V  
 30/07-31/07 CT: Bugio Island (EU-040)  
 30/07-31/07 CU4M: Graciosa Island (EU-175)  
 30/07-31/07 GB5MOB: Isle of Man (EU-116)  
 30/07-31/07 KL7/N7YX: Pribilof Islands (NA-028)

30/07-31/07 MMØECG: Shetland Mainland (EU-012) by MMs and DLs  
 30/07-31/07 G6UW/TF: Westman Islands (EU-071)  
 30/07-31/07 TM4Z: Ouessant Island (EU-065)  
 31/07-05/08 VE2QRA: Anticosti Island (NA-077)  
 01/08-03/08 CU4T: Graciosa Island (EU-175)

01/08-28/08 GB4VJD, GB6VIJ, GB6VJD: special calls  
 01/08-14/08 PYØF/EA2RC & PYØF/CT1BWW: Fernando de Noronha (SA-003)  
 02/08-05/08 OX/EA3EKS: Greenland  
 05/08-07/08 50th Pacific Northwest DX Convention  
 06/08-13/08 TF/EA3EKS: Iceland

12/08-14/08 J48RH/P: Spetses Island (EU-075) by IK8VRH  
 14/08-20/08 9A/IK1ACX: Pag Island (EU-170)  
 16/08-20/08 DJ8OG/P: Spiekeroog Island (EU-047)  
 16/08-18/08 J48RH/P: Dokos Island (EU-075) by IK8VRH  
 20/08-27/08 DJ8OG/P: Baltrum Island (EU-047)

20/08-21/08	EF8OAL and EF8NAL: lighthouses (EA8)
20/08-21/08	GBØSH: Strumble Head Lighthouse
20/08-22/08	J48RH/P: Kythira or Elafonisos (EU-113) by IK8VRH
20/08-22/08	SX8L: Antikythira (EU-113) & Lighthouse
20/08-21/08	UU4JO/P: Ilinskiy Lighthouse* by UU4JO
20/08-23/08	VK6DHI: Dirk Hartog Island (OC-206) by VKs
20/08-21/08	International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend
24/08-26/08	J43RH/P: Sapienza or Schiza (EU-158) by IK8VRH
16/09-18/09	AH6HY/W3: Smith Island (NA-140)
19/09-21/09	AH6HY/W4: Tangier Island (NA-083)
24/09-08/10	K7C: Kure Atoll (OC-020)
24/09-25/09	XXI Italian HF-DX Convention

### Reward Offered

A reward of 500 microfarads is offered for information leading to the arrest of Hop-a-long Capacity. This unrectified criminal escaped from a Weston primary cell where he had been clamped in ions ago awaiting the gauss chamber.

He is charged with the induction of an 18 turn coil named Milli Henry who was found choked and robbed of valuable joules. He is armed with a carbon rod and is a potential killer. Capacity is also charged with driving a DC motor over a Wheatstone bridge and refusing to let the band-pass.

If encountered, he may offer series resistance. The electromotive force spent the night searching for him in a magnetic field, where he had gone to earth. They had no success and believed he had returned ohm via a short circuit.

He was last seen riding a kilocycle with his friend Eddy Current who was playing a harmonic.

Copyright Anonymous.

### Solutions to 'favourite clues':

IMAGINARY, TOUCHDOWN, UNTHINKABLE

## CDXC Goods

The following CDXC goods are available from the Secretary.

### PAPERWEIGHT

This is a square marble effect paperweight, fitted on the front face with an enamel CDXC logo. As this item is heavy it is not available mail order, but can be purchased at the various functions, e.g. RSGB HF Convention, CDXC AGM, etc.

### KEY FOB

This is an imitation black leather fob fitted with an enamel CDXC logo.

### RUBBER STAMP

This is a rubber hand-stamp with the CDXC logo. Use for all your amateur radio correspondence.

### REPLACEMENT MEMBERSHIP BADGE

Replacement membership badges can be provided on request in the event of loss or change of call sign. As the engraving of badges is normally undertaken in batches, delivery may extend to a number of weeks.

### PRICING

Paperweight:	£2.50	not available mail order
Key Fob:	£1.50	including post/packing to UK (see note)
Rubber Stamp:	£6.00	including post/packing to UK
Replacement Badge:	£2.50	including post/packing to UK

### PAYMENT

Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to CDXC and drawn on a UK bank. No foreign cheques please.

Send your payment to:

Peter Hart, G3SJX, The Willows, Paice Lane, Medstead, Alton, Hants GU34 5PR

## 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 2005 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.**

## How to fill in the CDXC Standing Order Request Form

1. The form should be addressed to your own Bank and branch.
2. Write your CALLSIGN after 'reference'. This is very important as it is the way your subscription is identified in the CDXC bank statements.
3. Delete one of the amounts (£15.00 is the 2004-05 subscription for UK members; the subscription is £20.00 for those living abroad.)
4. The form has been pre-filled with "today and on 1st July annually thereafter".
5. Enter your account details after 'Name of account to be debited' and your account number.
6. Complete the lower part of the form with your name, address, date and don't forget to sign it.
7. THE COMPLETED FORM SHOULD BE SENT DIRECTLY TO THE BANK BRANCH WHICH LOOKS AFTER YOUR ACCOUNT.
8. It helps the CDXC Treasurer if you also tell him that you intend to pay by Standing Order in future.
9. Check your bank statements after the first payment should have been made to ensure that your bank is executing the order correctly.

Thank you for helping CDXC by paying your subscription by Standing Order!

### On-Line Banking

If you use **On-Line Banking** then you can make a transfer directly to:

Sort-Code : 60-60-02  
Account : 44532385  
Account Name : CDXC  
Reference : [your callsign]  
Bank : NatWest - Kingston-upon-Thames Branch





