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## CDXC Committee 2005-2006

Please note the changes of e-mail addresses!

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# Club News and Views

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## Editorial

**Martyn Phillips, G3RFX**

This time I thought you might like to know a bit about how the *Digest* Editorial process works, although admittedly this might be rather boring.

Basically I spend most of my time glued to the PC screen in the Digest Editorial offices here in Bristol (CDXC Penthouse Suite, 35<sup>th</sup> floor) stroking the cat, drinking one Diet Coke after another and eagerly awaiting any material which might reach me in time for the respective deadline, normally via e-mail. Most of our regular contributors are very good about this and get their stuff in on time.

When most of the copy is in (I told you this was going to be rather boring...) I then start working my way through each item and edit it for readability, spelling, punctuation, etc. This applies especially in the case of foreign submissions. Here I sometimes have to translate parts of the text back into the original language, assuming I'm familiar with it, in order to understand what the author's trying to say in the first place.

We're then into the general layouting stage, the one I find most... how shall I put it, challenging. Although I regard myself as fairly computer-literate, there's bound to be something which goes wrong, dammit. For example you end up with page breaks in the wrong place which you can't seem to get rid of. Or the cat (he's getting on a bit...) suddenly decides to leave a little parcel in the corner of the Digest Editorial offices and the place has to be evacuated for a few hours. Or finally, when you thought it was all sorted,

you realise that you've ended up with an 'odd' number of pages for the *Digest* as a whole. This has to be in multiples of 4 - so 52 pages are fine, but 54 pages aren't. At which point the occasional f-word might be spoken.

Otherwise the section of the *Digest* I tend to start work on first is the Prize Crossword, seeing as a certain amount of rather perverse creativity is involved - and it can take time and several more Diet Cokes before a suitably perverse clue springs to mind.

And the sections I normally do last? Well, the Contents page (obviously), as soon as I have a definitive overview of what's going where. Also this Editorial - and my 'Not the GB2RS News' column, often inspired by my most recent on-air experiences at ZB2FX in Gibraltar.

Once everything's in place, the resulting DOC file is converted into a PDF which I then lob over to Neville, G3NUG, atop his hill in Herefordshire. He liaises with the printers in Hertfordshire. The picture pages are now taken care of separately by Mike, GU4EON.

To finish off with, there've been a few changes of e-mail addresses amongst members of the CDXC Committee. This was essential, I'm afraid, due the considerable amount of spam increasingly throttling the CDXC website. I've opted for [ed@cdxc.org.uk](mailto:ed@cdxc.org.uk). Although my name's not Ed, as you know, it's Martyn. Anyway, see page 2 opposite for the latest.

73 Martyn, G3RFX

## Chairman's Chat

John Butcher, G3LAS

I must ask you to excuse me if this month's CC is a bit shorter than usual – although I suppose most of you will think that's not such a bad thing. The reason is simple: my garden is getting a bit (lot) out of hand and I have a huge crowd of radio amateurs scheduled to arrive on 15 July, eager to stroll on the immaculate lawns and admire the riot of blooms in the neatly trimmed borders. If you believe that, you'll believe that P5NUG is currently pounding in here on 160m CW.

Seriously, though: **Saturday, 15 July, is the date of our AGM and Summer Social and we expect you all to be there – I mean here.**

One of the main attractions of the event is always the Raffle and most of our usual supporters have promised prizes. Nevertheless, we could do with a few more, so please root around in that cellar or garage and bring along anything which you think might persuade someone to buy a ticket. Non-radio items such as single malts, re-discovered Rembrandts etc. are also acceptable, because there will be plenty of long-suffering wives, husbands, partners and children around to gobble them up. If you really can't get here on the day, please either send prize donations to me or give them to someone who is coming.

On the operating front, I may well have missed some choice DX in the last few weeks, but my impression is that things are as slack as you might expect in the height of summer of a solar minimum year. I expect you're all burying wire and old bedsteads in your lawns, oiling the tower pulleys and checking the coax, ready for the scintillating autumn season ahead and the years of increasing SFIs to which we are all looking forward.

I must admit that the good old ARRL is doing its best to keep our interest in these lazy, hazy days. I'm sure you will have studied the recent announcement of a new DXCC rule to replace the previously deleted Section II, 1. Political Entities, paragraph (c). Far be it from me to try to interpret rule-makers' gobbledygook, but it concerns what, in the ARRL's opinion, constitutes, for the immediate future, a DXCC entity.

I'm sure everyone has struggled to explain DXCC to friends and relations who usually think we're all potty anyway. The dialogue usually goes something like this:

*"Well, we try to contact different countries, or rather not countries but 'entities', round the world."*

"What's an entity?"

*"I'm glad you asked. An entity is a sort of country, but it hasn't necessarily got a government. In fact, it often hasn't any population."*

"Is 'Mumblania' an entity?"

*"Oh yes, but only when the State Department admits that it exists."*

"OK, then how do you know it's there in the first place?"

*"Ah, well, er... It has to be a certain distance from somewhere else - that is, except for some, like the Sovereign Military Order of Malta."*

"What's that, an army camp near Valletta?"

*“Actually no, it’s a house in Rome.”*

“I see. How come they keep inventing new ones. Do they move around?”

*“They don’t actually invent entities, they just recognise them.”*

“How?”

*“It happens when their radio club is recognised by the ITU.”*

“How can they have a radio club if they don’t have any resident radio amateurs?”

*“Sorry, must go... I think I can hear a rare one on 20m.”*

If you’ve had conversations like this, be assured that help is at hand. All you have to do

is read the ARRL regulations and study the official lists [See ‘DX an’ all that’, page 11, for the website URLs. Ed.]

Let me know when you feel confident and Martyn will get you to write a simple tutorial paper for the *Digest*. I’d do it myself, but I’m still trying to find out why a single mediaeval building in Rome should have the same DXCC status as the whole of China. Would you believe that some people still maintain that IOTA is complicated?

That’s enough rambling for one day. I’m off to put on the chain mail and prune the pyracantha.

CU on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

73 es gud DX John, G3LAS

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## President’s Patter

### Neville Cheadle, G3NUG

This Digest will probably be your last reminder about the CDXC AGM and Summer Social on Saturday, 15 July. Chairman John, G3LAS, has kindly agreed to host the social this year at his delightful country home and Mark Mann will be doing the catering as usual, so we should have an excellent time. Do come if you can and do bring a friend. Please let Secretary Peter, G3SJX, know if you are coming so that we can cater for the right numbers. Peter will also publish the names of those unable to attend the AGM in the Minutes.

The major Raffle prize this year is a new Mosley TA33 Junior + WARC band antenna.

This is a lightweight, four-element antenna suitable for up to 100W of RF and has a reflector, two radiators and a director.

The TA33 is an ideal home antenna if you are tight for space. Alternatively, it is a very good DXpeditioning antenna. In fact, the Colvin’s (remember them?) used a modified version of this antenna for many of their trips. The overall length when packed is about 7ft and I believe the Colvins cut the elements and added sleeves so that the antenna could be packed in a 5ft ski bag.

You need to be at the Summer Social to buy a Raffle ticket, but if you are unable to come,

you can of course ask a friend to buy some tickets for you there. Good luck!

Chairman John and I again manned the CDXC stand at Elvaston this year. The weather was very kind to us, warm and sunny. Many members visited the stand (and quite a few paid their subs too!). Elvaston is a really good day out for the family with much to interest everyone. The entrance fee is now charged per head rather than per car, a sensible development in my view.

Simon, MØCLW, has stood down as Digest photo editor. Thanks for your help for the past year, Simon; Mike, GU4EON, takes over with this issue. Welcome on board, Mike.

Our marketing continues. By the time you receive this Digest we should have mailed another 200+ potential members. We're still working down the 3B9C list of UK stations worked, in addition to those worked by VP2V/G6AY. Our membership is now hovering around the 800 mark, so let's hope the renewals go well. In this connection, please help Treasurer Nigel, G3TXF, by renewing promptly. Using a standing order helps us enormously too.

If all goes to plan, a flyer about the RSGB HF Convention should be included with this Digest. The Convention looks like being another top-notch event, so put the dates of 6-8 October in your diaries. There's the usual discount for early bookings.

Plans are developing well for the next FSDXA DXpedition. We have a target location in mind which is much more difficult and rarer than anything we've tackled in the past. Don, G3BJ, and I hope to do a site survey in September and we may make an announcement at the HF Convention. We want to aim for September 2007 with a team of up to 20 people for a period covering three weekends. However, the logistics are formidable, propagation on 10m and 12m will be poor, but the other bands look OK. We shall put in a great effort on LF.

That's all from me.

Hope to see you at the AGM and Summer Social on 15 July.

73



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## New Members

CDXC offers a warm welcome to the following new members:

<i>Call</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>
GØEFO	Mike Shortland	Guildford
G4DBW	Robert Hammond	Herne Bay
G4RCD	Mark Capstick	Farnborough
G4YHP	Cliff Jobling	Grimsby
K5VT	Vince Thompson	Phoenix AZ

## **CDXC AGM and Summer Social 2006**

The Annual General Meeting of CDXC will be held on Saturday, 15 July, at 1200 hrs at the QTH of John Butcher, G3LAS, Westlands, Westland Green, Little Hadham, Herts SG11 2AJ.

### **Agenda**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the 2005 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 items for AOBs 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. There should be 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 (Star Prize: a TA33 beam). Donations of prizes from members attending are also most welcome. Please also bring a folding chair 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. A return slip is enclosed with this Digest or alternatively send an email.

Peter, G3SJX

**For directions to Westlands, John/G3LAS's QTH, see page 35**

## CDXC Summary Accounts 2005-06

	£	£	£	£	£
	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2001-02</b>
<b>INCOME</b>					
Subscriptions	11,869	10,011	9,984	7,437	6,719
Dinner Ticket Sales	929	1,094	1,118	1,248	1,470
Advertising	855	708	808	100	675
Donations Received	788	340	586	1,981	618
Summer Social	341	463	688	443	401
Bank Interest	207	135	19	18	22
Misc Sales	103	91	191	172	267
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>15,091</b>	<b>12,842</b>	<b>13,393</b>	<b>11,399</b>	<b>10,172</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Newsletter	6,491	6,660	6,762	6,428	5,270
DX-pedition Funding	1,257	2,431	2,600	1,961	2,000
Dinner	928	1,036	1,275	1,274	1,375
Marketing Mailshots	799	1,102	1,518	534	927
Trophies and Badges	478	263	346	182	149
Website and Expenses	389	334	765	535	1,015
Secretarial Expenses	136	139	84	118	265
RSGB/Licence	58	58	15	15	55
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>10,535</b>	<b>12,022</b>	<b>13,365</b>	<b>11,047</b>	<b>11,056</b>
<b>Surplus in year</b>	<b>4,556</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>-884</b>
<b>Capital + Reserves</b>					
O-Bal	6,422	4,867	4,255	3,903	4,787
Surplus in Year	4,556	820	29	352	-884
Reserves	1,713	734	583	0	0
<b>Capital + Reserves</b>	<b>12,691</b>	<b>6,422</b>	<b>4,867</b>	<b>4,255</b>	<b>3,903</b>
<b>Bank Balances at year-end</b>					
Current Account + Cash	701	-212	253	2,562	2,228
Deposit Account	11,990	6,634	4,614	1,693	1,675
<b>Total Bank + Cash</b>	<b>12,691</b>	<b>6,422</b>	<b>4,867</b>	<b>4,255</b>	<b>3,903</b>
<b>Membership</b>					
O-Bal	685	661	598	540	495
New Members Joining	161	73	102	-	-
Members Leaving	49	49	39	-	-
<b>C-Bal</b>	<b>797</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>540</b>

<b>DX-PEDITION FUNDING : 2005-06</b>			
<b>Operation</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>£</b>
5A7A	Libya (Nov 06)	DJ7IK	200
6O0N	Somalia	I2YSB	175
HQ9F	Honduras	OH3JR	100
TY4TW	Benin	GM4FDM	150
VP2V/G6AY	B V I	G3SWH + G3RTE	100
VU4AN/VU3...	Andamans	DF4KQ	150
VU4AN/VU3...	Andamans	DL7DF	150
IREF	Various IOTA operations	IREF HQ	232
<b>Total for Year 2005-06</b>			<b>1,257</b>

#### FINANCIAL PERIOD

This financial statement covers the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

Some prior-year figures have been restated in order to align with the current presentation format.

Nigel Cawthorne, G3TXF, Treasurer CDXC

#### AUDITOR STATEMENT

In my opinion this Summary is a true and fair view of the CDXC accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2006.

Martin Atherton, G3ZAY, Elected Auditor CDXC

## Results of the CDXC LF Challenge 2006

<b>Position</b>	<b>Call</b>	<b>DXCC</b>
1st	GM3POI	175
2nd	WK3N	150
3rd	G3LZQ	96
4th	M0BJL	95
5th	9M6DXX	62
6th	F5VHN	46
7th	G4FVK	42
8th	G4LWB	29
<b>Individual Bands</b>		
160m		
1st	WK3N	90
2nd	GM3POI	81
3rd	G3LZQ	9

80m		
1st	GM3POI	119
2nd	G3LZQ	38
3rd	9M6DXX	20
4th	G4FVK	11
5th	WK3N	6
6th	G4LWB	4
7th	F5VHN	1
40m		
1st	GM3POI	167
2nd	M0BJL	95
3rd	WK3N	54
4th	G3LZQ	49
5th	F5VHN	45
6th	9M6DXX	42
7th	G4FVK	31
8th	G4LWB	25

## DX an' all that

Don Field, G3XTT *don@g3xtt.com*

Not much in the way of major DXpeditions recently, but at least the bands have been lively of late with Sporadic-E activity on 10 and 12m. Amazingly, JA signals were even coming through one morning on 6m, an interesting one for the propagation experts to explain. Of course, there have been all those German World Cup stations to chase and some semi-rare ones like VI9NI and those odd 3X prefixes (3XD, 3XM). IOTA stuff, too. I just caught SU8IOTA for a new one. But Rockall was cancelled, unfortunately, though it does seem odd that they had generated so much publicity before getting the funding in place. As I write this, a brief ZL8CW operation by F2CW/ZL3CW is imminent, which would be a nice one, and the calendar shows plenty of one-man efforts coming up, but no big ones. Well, would you put on a major expedition in the northern hemisphere summer at the bottom of the sunspot cycle? Probably not! Anyway, we do have a 'new one' to look forward to, if only Montenegro. More news later in this column.

### IRCs (thanks to the Daily DX, etc.)

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) announced recently that the new International Reply Coupon (IRC) design has been selected. The new design, known as 'Beijing model No. 2', was submitted by Volodymyr Taran, a Ukrainian graphic artist. Taran's winning submission was inspired by Michelangelo with 'two fingers about to touch, framed in a postage stamp' (probably more information than you needed!). You can see the model at <http://www.dailydx.com/2007irc.jpg>. The new IRC is expected to be available from 1 July. It will be good through 31 December 2009. The current IRC ([http://www.upu.int/irc/en/2002\\_version.html](http://www.upu.int/irc/en/2002_version.html)) is good through 31 December 2006. 1 October 2007 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the IRC

and to mark the occasion UPU members can overprint '1907-2007: 100 years of IRCs!'. The UPU estimates that 2.2 million IRCs are sold worldwide each year (I wonder what proportion of these are bought by radio amateurs!). For more information on IRCs check out the 'How's DX' column in the June 2006 (page 85) and June 1999 (page 83) issues of QST.

### Remote Operation

It seems that G3XTT is behind the times! Some days after sending my last column to Martyn [G3RFX], I found a news item about YI9DXX which, it seems, is set up for remote operation from anywhere in the world. Access is available to those who have helped to set up and finance the station. At the time of writing, ARRL has decided that QSOs with YI9DXX will only count for DXCC when the control operator was actually in Iraq. CQ Magazine, on the other hand, will allow all YI9DXX QSOs to count, irrespective of the location of the control operator, on the basis that the RF signal originates in Iraq. So there you have it!

### Montenegro

At the time of writing, the United Nations Security Council has endorsed membership for the fledgling nation of Montenegro. The General Assembly was expected to take action on Wednesday, 28 June. Assuming that this approval goes ahead (which seems pretty certain), Montenegro's flag would then be raised at a ceremony outside the UN. Shortly afterwards Montenegro would then be added to the DXCC list. DXpedition Montenegro 2006 is expected to begin on 20 July and run through 12 August. Activity will be on all HF bands and modes. A large international team of DXpeditioners and contesters plan to do their best, from at least three locations, to

work all those looking for the new DXCC entity. The existing DXCC entity of Serbia and Montenegro will become simply Serbia and remain on the list as a pre-existing entity.

### **DXCC Rule Change (from ARRL)**

“Upon request of the Programs and Services Committee (PSC), the DXAC has studied the impact of a change to the DXCC Rules. The DXAC, the Awards Committee and the PSC have concurred in this rule change, which became effective on 15 June 2006 at 0001z. New text replaces the previously removed DXCC Rule, Section II, 1. Political Entities, Paragraph c). The new text shall read: c) The Entity contains a permanent population, is administered by a local government, and is located at least 800 km from its parent. To satisfy the ‘permanent population’ and ‘administered by a local government’ criteria of this sub-section, an Entity must be listed on either (a) the US Department of State's list of ‘Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty’ as having a local ‘Administrative Center’, or (b) the United Nations list of ‘Non-Self-Governing Territories.’”

“Rule 1c) is intended to recognize entities that are sufficiently separate from their parent for DXCC purposes but do not qualify under Rule 1a) or 1b). The new rule will cause a change to Point 1 status for certain entities. This in turn will reduce the mileage for a first separation for these entities from 800 km to 350 km.

“The lists referenced in the text of the rule can be viewed at the following Web sites: the DOS list of Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty at [www.state.gov/s/inr/rls/10543.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/inr/rls/10543.htm), and the UN list of Non-Self-Governing Territories at [www.un.org/depts/dpi/decolonization/trust3.htm](http://www.un.org/depts/dpi/decolonization/trust3.htm). QSOs with any new entity resulting from this rule change will count for credit for the new entity only if the QSOs are made on or

after the Start Date for the entity. In no case will QSOs made prior to the date of this notice be considered for credit for any new entity created under this rule. Applications for DXCC award credits resulting from this change will be accepted on or after 1 October 2006.”

I have yet to see any suggestions as to what, if any, territories might become new DXCC entities as a result of this rule change. No doubt all will be revealed in due course, as would-be DXpeditioners pore over their world maps.

### **News from Thailand**

During a recent Radio Amateur Society of Thailand (RAST) meeting HS/E2 Amateur Radio operators were informed that the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) authorized full use of the WARC bands (12, 17 and 30m) to all individual and club stations in Thailand. Thai operators who wish to operate on these bands do need to notify the NTC. Also included was a provision for the 80 and 160m bands, which will allow club stations limited periods at any time and individual stations for contests only. This new provision is good through the end of the year but may eventually be a permanent change. The RAST Executive Committee has been working very hard and diligently with NTC. Also Thai ops may soon be operating with 1KW. For more information on the new bands in Thailand check their Web site at [www.qsl.net/rast](http://www.qsl.net/rast).

### **CQ DX Hall of Fame (official Dayton announcement)**

At the Dayton DX Dinner on Friday, 19 May, two DXers were inducted into the CQ DX Hall of Fame. They were Ralph Fedor, KØIR ([www.dailydx.com/k0ir.jpg](http://www.dailydx.com/k0ir.jpg)), and Don Greenbaum, N1DG ([www.dailydx.com/n1dg.jpg](http://www.dailydx.com/n1dg.jpg)).

Both the Associazione Radioamatori Italiani (ARI), Italy's IARU society, and the OH DX Foundation (OHDXF) nominated Ralph Fedor. The ARI cited 'few individuals' go on DXpeditions with a 'positive mood, neither complaining nor pointing the finger, but appreciating that the world is full of differences whether on a DXpedition or otherwise'. Fedor was first licensed in 1961 and has been a serious DXer and Contester and has been involved in four DXpeditions of the year. His first DXpedition was in 1992 as part of the VP8SSI team on South Sandwich. Afterwards he participated and lead in some of the following operations: VP8CBA - South Georgia, 3YØPI - Peter I Island, XRØY - Easter Island, VKØIR - Heard Island, TOØR - Reunion Island, VP8THU - South Sandwich, VP8GEO - South Georgia and most recently 3YØX - Peter I Island. The OHDXF noted that without Ralph some of these operations would not have happened. Ralph is no doubt a special DXpeditioner as he faced not only putting on the rare ones but also the harsh environment of the Antarctic. His 'efforts for the benefit of Amateur Radio go far beyond DX and Dxpediting'.

Don Greenbaum was nominated to the CQ DX Hall of fame by the Dateline DX Association. Greenbaum was first licensed as WN2DND in 1962 and then upgraded to WB2DND, earning DXCC at the age of 15. During the 1980s he traveled on business through Asia and operated from several spots along the way. He was the software designer of the WB2DND logging program. This was one of the first DOS logging programs, which was used worldwide. During the late 80s and early 90s Don was instrumental in much of the A6 activity from the United Arab Emirates. He has also been involved with the Websites and/or pilot operations for K5K, A52A, VKØIR, 9MØC, ZK1XXP, AL7EL/KH9, BQ9P, ZL9CI and the most recent 3YØX operation.

Congratulations to both KØIR and N1DG.

### **Transceivers for DXing**

With the demise of the FT-1000MP MkV (discontinued, so I understand, mainly because the supply of PA transistors dried up), the choice of high-end radios for DXing and contesting has been significantly reduced. You can, should you choose to do so, spend a fortune on an FTDX-9000 or IC-7800, opt for an IC-756 Pro III or the new Ten-Tec Omni II, or maybe wait for the FT-2000, though apparently the launch of this has been postponed at least until the autumn. Our Chairman upgraded from the IC-756 to the IC-7800 and I know several other members have gone for this fine radio. Very few FTDX-9000s appear to have been bought so far. I suppose it's a big investment for a product which has yet to prove its worth.

Views on the Ten-Tec seem to be mixed; you either love it or hate it, the user interface being very different to most of the Japanese radios. There is no doubting, though, that the performance is of a very high order, probably because the main receiver is amateur bands only, which allows for a lower first IF and, therefore, more effective roofing filters.

Quite a number of members seem to have gone for the excellent Elecraft K2, though usually as a second radio. The performance is surprisingly good, given its modest price, again probably because it is amateur bands only, rather than trying to be all things to all men. I understand that one slight problem is that, because it is an aluminium (aluminum?) case, its stability can be compromised by the magnetic field from a neighbouring linear amplifier – there is a modification now available to overcome this. I gather that Software Defined Radios (SDRs) are coming along in leaps and bounds, and could take performance to new heights, but I leave it to

the technical gurus in our ranks to brief us on such developments. What I have noted, though, is that the DSP in the current generation of radios really does seem to be working – no ringing of CW in a 100 Hz bandwidth, for example. And noise blankers which are apparently much more effective than their predecessors.

I did, though, have an interesting conversation about SDRs recently with John, G3WGV. Apparently he had been accused by some SDR supporters of being a Luddite because he felt that most DXers and contesters would still prefer a traditional user interface rather than a PC-based point-and-click system. I am 100% with John on this one. I would no more want to control my transceiver with a mouse than I would my car. I'll stick with the tuning knob and steering wheel respectively, thank you very much!

My thanks to Paul, G4CCZ, for starting me on the above chain of thought about current radios and their performance and usability. Paul has been fortunate enough to borrow most available models from Martin Lynch and compare them in his shack; something which few of us have the chance to do. I won't tell you which models he now uses for his day-to-day DXing, but I will say that I was taken with the fine specimens of Drake C-line and Collins S-line which he has on display.

I hadn't realised how collectable such equipment is nowadays, but I do recall how envious I was in my early days in the hobby of those who could afford to equip their shacks with what was, at that time, the ultimate in HF gear.

### **W6AM Antennas**

For those interested in Rhombics check out W6AM's antenna farm from a few years back at [www.qsl.net/ne6i/w6am/](http://www.qsl.net/ne6i/w6am/).

### **Silent Key**

Fred Carter, 3D2CC, passed away recently. For many years Fred was the only station QRV from Malolo Lai Lai Island (OC-121) and many CDXC members will have his card as their counter for that one. If anyone needs a QSL you can still go via VE6VK.

Finally, my apologies that I will probably have to miss this year's CDXC AGM and Summer Social as the RSGB have seen fit to schedule a Board (bored?) meeting for that day!

73 Don G3XTT

The above was written before my visit to Friedrichshafen, to meet Martyn's deadline, but he has kindly allowed me a short PS, as there were several items of interest, related to what I had already written.

There were several stalls showing various implementations of the Software Defined Radio concept and the proof of the pudding must be that ON4UN was taking great interest in at least one of them! I noted that add-on boxes are available for some, with the main controls (tuning, volume, etc.) brought out in the traditional way, so I guess the purists haven't won the day yet. But perhaps the greatest draw was the Hilberling PT-8000 transceiver. This is an amateur transceiver made by a German company with a 25-year history of manufacturing military and professional radio equipment. Apparently the MD is a ham, and it was his dream to develop a 'no holds barred' transceiver for the amateur bands, made to full professional standards. The transceiver covers all HF bands, plus 6, 2 and 70cm, has various PA options up to 600W, two complete receivers (no shared circuitry), and a claimed intercept point of +35dBm. It apparently comes with a hand-crafted microphone, too, though we couldn't get them to agree to include a hand-crafted

paddle! The build quality looks to be on a different planet to the majority of amateur equipment, with every module in a shielded box and linked by flying leads with gold-plated connectors so that anything can easily be replaced. The downside is that the entry price appears to be around the 10,000 Euro mark, but apparently the initial production run is already pre-sold to amateurs who heard about this radio on the grapevine. Until full production is under way, it will only be sold in Germany. G3PJT, G3LZQ, G3WKL, G3PSM and I, and the various other Gs at the event, could but stand and salivate!

Last, but by no means least, there was an announcement at the DX Forum that a multinational, but Indian-led team plans to activate the Laccadives (VU7) next January. At least one CDXC member is expected to be in the team. There are still some bureaucratic hurdles to be overcome, but let's hope this one goes ahead, presumably building on the goodwill generated from the various VU4 operations.

G3XTT

## **RSGB HF & IOTA Convention 2006**

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October**

at the

**Gatwick Worth Hotel**

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

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

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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>

## Borneo Bulletin

Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX

teleniuslowe@gmail.com

The big news from here is the organisation of a DXpedition to an IOTA 'new one'. Shortly after I arrived in Sabah last year I noticed that one of our offshore islands, Pulau Sebatik, is in fact divided between Sabah (Malaysia) and Kalimantan (Indonesia). Consulting the *IOTA Directory*, I found that Sebatik was not listed at all – not under Sabah's Coastal Islands (OC-133), nor under Indonesia's Kalimantan's Coastal Islands East group (OC-166). Sebatik is a substantial island (over 450 sq km in size and rising to over 400m ASL) and certainly fulfils the IOTA qualification criteria under Rules E.6.4 and E.6.7. Clearly it cannot count as OC-133 because an operation from the Indonesian half would obviously not qualify. Likewise it cannot be OC-166. At present it must therefore be OC-088, but that is illogical as it is very much larger and further offshore than many of the islands that *do* qualify for OC-133 or OC-166.

Delving deep into the *IOTA Directory*, I discovered Rule E.5.7 which, in short, states that a 'Split sovereignty island' is given its own unique IOTA reference number. Sure enough, all the other islands in the world that I could think of which are split between two or more DXCC entities have their own IOTA references: Great Britain, Ireland, Hispaniola, St Martin, Timor, Borneo itself.

At this stage I wrote to the RSGB IOTA Manager, Roger Balister, G3KMA, and Roger agreed with me that Sebatik ought to count separately, but had simply been overlooked when the various editions of the *IOTA Directory* had been compiled. He said that he was starting work on a new edition of the *Directory*, which was due to be published in time for Friedrichshafen in June 2006, and would include Sebatik as a 'new one' in this

book. Until it was published, Roger asked me to keep the details quiet as he did not want to be inundated with further requests to consider this island or that. Besides, it is his job and certainly not mine to announce the existence of an IOTA 'new one'.

While plans were being made for the DXpedition, the publication of the new *IOTA Directory* was postponed until next year and therefore the Sebatik operation would also need to be postponed until 2007. I put things on hold. However, I later received a surprise message from Roger saying that he had discussed the matter with the IOTA Committee and it had been agreed that IOTA operational matters should not be held up by the delay on the *Directory*, which was entirely out of the Committee's hands. Roger would make an announcement about Sebatik in the 'IOTA' column in the July 2006 *RadCom*. My plans were therefore 'on' once again.

Sebatik is located close to the town of Tawau, at the south-east corner of Sabah, over 550 km from Kota Kinabalu (KK), and a 10-hour drive or a short flight away. I have never been to Tawau, nor even (yet) to the east coast of Sabah. Most locals here in KK have heard of the island, but know nothing about it. Fortunately I contacted James Gatidis, 9M6TW, the President of the Borneo Amateur Radio Club, who works in the plantation and agriculture business and who visits Tawau frequently. During his last business trip to Tawau he went over to Sebatik specifically to carry out a recce and was able to provide some very useful information about the place.

John, 9M6XRO (ex-9M6/G3OOK), agreed immediately to come on the DXpedition and would concentrate on CW while I looked after

the SSB operating. Several members of the Borneo ARC will be coming along and some may also do a little operating. We plan to operate from 14 to 17 July. I decided not to go during the IOTA Contest as I figured our signal might be swamped by all the European contest activity and, besides, OC-088 would be an equally valuable multiplier to the contesters as an altogether new one.

Activity will be on all bands 10 - 80m SSB and CW, although we don't expect there to be much propagation on 10 or 12m. We will concentrate on 15 and 20m whenever those bands are open. On SSB I will try to stay close to 21.260 and 14.260 MHz, generally listening 5 or 5-10 kHz up. We are applying for special event callsign 9M4SEB. We are taking two 400W stations, so there should be one station on SSB and one on CW simultaneously much of the time, provided we can site the antennas sufficiently far apart to prevent mutual interference. Graham, M5AAV, has kindly agreed to be QSL manager for this operation.

We look forward to working as many CDXC members as possible and to giving you all a 'new one'.

### **A bit of fun**

The note from Don, G3XTT, on page 11 of the March 2006 *CDXC Digest*, on 'DXFC' ('DX Feet Club'), whereby you have to step foot in a DXCC entity to score a point, led me to think that perhaps we should have a table, much like Henry/G3GIQ's famous 'all-time all-band worked' table in *RadCom*. To make it a bit more fun, let's also add columns for 'DXCC Operated' (number of entities you have activated) and 'IOTA Operated'. I say this because, thanks to my jobs and a love of travelling and operating from exotic places, I am more likely to score higher in this table than in Henry's! Although I hold four DXCC certificates - from EP2, SM, G and P29 - apart from England I haven't lived anywhere long

enough to have achieved a high score from any of them!

To kick things off, I offer my own score, and that of my wife, Eva, 2E1FHJ, to which I have added the DXFC scores reported by Don in the March issue. Some deliberately vague rules for the new table: in the 'DXFC' column, you do have to have touched the land with your feet, so sitting in a plane while passengers embark and disembark at an intermediate stop does not count, but if you spend time in the airport lounge while the plane is being refuelled that does. Likewise, being on board a ship as it is tied up at the dock does not count, but if you go ashore, even for a few seconds, that does. Silly? Certainly, but no more so than some of the DXCC rules that we so revere!

In both the 'DXCC Operated' and 'IOTA Operated' columns you have to have made at least a handful of QSOs (there is no fixed minimum, be your own judge). For example, I operated from Australia as VK9YG/6 on the way back from Cocos (Keeling) in 1988, but only made, I think, three or four QSOs, so I do not count VK or OC-001. On the other hand, I operated /M from ON, LX and DL on a driving holiday through Europe in 1985 and made probably 40 or 50 QSOs from each, so I *do* count those. QSOs do not have to be made with your own callsign: everyone on the 3B9C DXpedition, for example, could count 3B9 and AF-017.

Deleted entities count, but the country must have existed at the time of your visit or when you operated from there. For example, I have visited what are now Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia, but at the time of my visits all were part of Yugoslavia, so I can only count one point.

I am fortunate in that my various jobs have taken me to some unusual places, including Iran and Papua New Guinea. After reading Don's comments in the March *Digest*, I added

up the countries and islands visited and operated from and found I had a reasonable 'score'. While working in P29, a return trip to the UK took in visits to VK, 9V1, SM, G, VP9, W5/6, KH6, 3D2, A35, 5W, KH8 and ZK2 before going back to 3D2, VK and P2 again, adding eight new countries to my DXFC and four points to both my DXCC Operated and IOTA Operated scores. Other side-trips from P29 included a couple of weeks on air as YJØAVG from Vanuatu (Efaté Island, OC-035) and a visit to the Solomon Islands (although unfortunately no activity from H4).

At one of the RSGB HF Convention DX Dinners several years ago, our table (made up of DXpeditioners and a couple of ex-Merchant Navy men who had been, it seemed, almost everywhere) narrowly won the competition (prize: bottle of red wine) for the table's combined number of DXCC countries visited. I remember G3SWH had a particularly high score!

Here's the first table:

Callsign	'DXFC'	DXCC op.	IOTA op.
G3WVG	129	?	?
G3TXF	120	?	?
9M6DXX	80*	34	31
G3XTT	78	?	?
2E1FHJ	59	1	1

\*Includes one deleted entity: Y2 (East Germany).

E-mail your score to me at

[teleniuslowe@gmail.com](mailto:teleniuslowe@gmail.com)

by 5 August and I'll compile an updated table for the next issue. No prizes, just a bit of fun.

Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX

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## Benin 2006

**Tom Wylie, GM4FDM**

*t.wylie@ntlworld.com*

Benin was my first ever African experience, if you exclude places like Tenerife and Gran Canaria. After discussions with my friend Flo, F5CWU, I decided it would be both possible and viable to carry out an expedition to Benin. Flo has operated from there before and was extremely helpful in giving background information.

I was joined by Ronald, PA3EWP, Andrea, IK1PMR, and Claudia, K2LEO. Our only disadvantage was the fact that none of us speak French.

I trawled the Internet looking for a suitable hotel. The Au Jardine Helvetia is a Swiss owned motel on the beach road about 11km west of Cotonou. However, contacting the hotel proved a little more difficult. The owners, Heiner Schmitt and Moronike, his African wife, are not connected to the telephone network and Heiner only goes to the city twice a week to send and receive e-mail. So, taking into account the language barrier, negotiations proved very difficult, until by chance I discovered that Heiner is also TY1HS. Then everything began to fall into place. It was agreed that we could erect antennas to our liking. The only disadvantage is that the motel is not connected to the electricity grid ('grid' – what's that?) but relies on its own diesel generators. We were told that power was normally turned off between 10am and 5pm and also 10pm until 7am. We had to agree a price per litre for diesel with Heiner for us to run the generators longer each day. However, his wife insisted that we turn off the generators for 2 hours each day and that they would alternate the generators twice per day, which in effect meant a turn-off. This proved to be completely

at random, and usually in the middle of a pile-up. Sometimes the generator would just stop, and we had to wait for somebody to turn it back on. We soon learned that everything happens in 'Africa time'.

We had a Spider beam for 10-20m including the WARC bands, a quarter wave for 30m, the same for 40m and 80m. We had a minimum of 4 radials on each. We also erected a dipole for 17m which was about 40ft up in the palm trees and worked very well. I also erected a dipole for 12m, which doubled for 15m with a couple of extensions. When 12m was open the dipole work great on CW, but was too low and close to the shack.

Antenna erection took longer than expected, mainly due to the high temperatures, mainly over 90° - and in the afternoons and evenings very high humidity. And of course when darkness fell, the mosquitoes came out in force. On Day 3 we managed to cobble together enough wire to make an inverted L for 160m. Whether conditions were very bad or not I don't know, but after calling CQ for an hour and a half on 160m we had made zero QSOs. On Day 4 we spent a considerable time erecting a simple dipole for 160m. Having to go into the bushes of an adjacent forest to suspend one of the legs, I was bitten all over by all kinds of bugs. The red ants were extremely large and ferocious, and took exception to being disturbed. Talk about ants in your pants – I was bitten everywhere, but we got our dipole up. On Night 5 Andrea went on Top Band and his first call snagged VE1ZZ. From then on we never looked back. Some night propagation on 160m was great and on others it was nil. You can see the QSO from our graphs (below).

Living at the Au Jardine Helvetia became very easy. We had paid for bed, breakfast and an evening meal, so really all we had to pay for in addition was lunch and drinks. Our main expense was the hire of a third bungalow for a shack and we had to pay for electricity by the hour. Our bill for the two weeks came to 250 Euros.

Heiner offered us a lift into the city on the Friday morning of the first week, which we gladly accepted; I didn't go in the end as I was suffering from Benin belly. I think the weather was too hot, so I religiously drank 5 litres of water per day. Well, I guess it had to go somewhere. Even after a few days I still found physical activity difficult and extremely tiring, with the others commenting on how well I managed to sleep. I did manage a few visits to the beach when the generator was off after lunchtime, but it was in the heat of the day. I put some of the tiredness down to the anti-malaria drugs we were taking.

The joke of the expedition were the girls at the hotel. Heiner and his wife had two waitresses and several housemaids and cleaners, also a nanny for their children Yemi, who had her 6th birthday while we were there, and her younger brother, Moulero, aged 3. Both children hold dual Swiss / Benin nationality. However, back to the girls. Ronald reckoned they had the memory of a fish – around three seconds – but I think he was being too generous. They had to repeatedly ask what you wanted to eat and drink, seeing as by the time they had walked to the kitchen they had forgotten. None of them could read or write. Meal times were a real adventure. Do you have soup? Of course, would be the reply. Ten minutes later you would receive a plate of pasta. Where is my soup? Soup? We have no soup today as the electricity is off. Then after we had eaten the pasta they would turn up with soup! After a week of arguing we gave up and just took pot luck. Evening times were OK as the hostess, Moronike, was the main cook. Trained in Switzerland, she was a

marvel in the kitchen. One night she cooked me a large fish akin to a small shark. It was delicious. On another night when I enquired about the unusual flavour of a dish, I was told it was goat curry. Hmm, better not to ask next time. Also on the menu was agouti (a delicacy) . Of course I had to ask what it was – a large rat, specially prepared. Not for me!

The local village women did our washing. I think I got most of mine back, but it seemed to disappear for days at a time. On the Tuesday of the second week Ronald and I went to Ouidah, another small town close by. As I hadn't manage to go into Cotonou in the first week, this was a new experience for me. We had the benefit of the hotel driver and car (I use the term loosely) and he took us around the town, first to the Internet café, where we uploaded pictures and logs. The computers were as old as me and only uploaded about 3.5 KB. Yes, some people still only have a 56K modem. It took an hour. We visited the Portuguese fort, now a museum to slavery. After that we visited the 'Voodoo Sacred Forest', then the 'Temple of the Pythons'. Even in Benin they know how to rip the tourist off. Picture with a snake? Seven Euros – thank you sir. Eventually we arrived at the 'Slaves Gate'. This is a symbolic structure to remind us of the last view of Benin the slaves had before being forcibly boarded onto ships for the New World.

Life soon developed into a routine of eating, sleeping and operating. A quick conference at dinner each evening allowed us to decide the strategy for that night and the next morning's work. There was no conflict amongst the group, with everybody mucking in and mutually agreeing band, mode or operator changes. Ronald likes to work the night shift – no arguments there, problem solved. Andrea was our Top Band magician, which left Claudia and myself to work the SSB and RTTY slots. However, looking back at my log, it was just over 50/50 SSB and CW. I

think by the second week my CW had improved somewhat.

On 160m we used a simple dipole with the centre at about 40ft, falling at each end. The rig was an Elecraft K2 and the ACOM 100 was running too. During the trip Andrea made almost 600 QSOs. They were mainly North America (324) and Europe (248), but disappointingly only 10 with Asia and Africa.

On 80m we used an Inverted L with a vertical section of 10m. Sometimes we were barefoot with the K2 and sometimes we used the ACOM, if it was not being used on Top Band. Ronald worked 2,050 QSOs on 80m, with 1,000 - or approx. 50% - with North America. Ronald also managed more than 157 JAs. It was disappointing to note that the NCDXF turned down our request for sponsorship, saying there was no interest in Benin, but the number of Ws, especially on the West Coast, proved them wrong. The West Coast stations were loud and there were many of them. A lot of Americans worked us on five bands.

40m is a difficult band. I don't know why, but everywhere I go it always seems to get the least attention. In the end we made 1,282 QSOs on 40m, but again 50% were with North America - and again over 100 JAs were in the log. Inter-station interference was a factor in our usage of 40m. It was mainly used between 0400 local and daylight, at the expense of 80m.

30m is a great band and after 10pm the Ws and JAs were very loud indeed. We used a vertical quarter wave with five radials and even though all the antennas were grounded in sand, it worked very well. In total we made 1,671 QSOs - with 50% Europe, 20% North America and 30% JAs. Again we used the K2 and ACOM when available, but some of the time we ran barefoot.

As normal the main bands were 20m and 17m. 17m in particular had activity for about 20

hours each day. On 20m the QSO total was 6,256 and on 17m it was 6,100.

On 15m the QSO totals were 2,600, on 12m it was 200 and on 10m 150. 15m was hard work even with the Spider beam. Openings were often intense, but short-lived. 12m was even more so - and the best opening on 10m was on the second last day, when I worked 100 stations in 1 hour.

On RTTY we made a total of 3,200 QSOs, including about 900 in the BARTG RTTY Contest. We really made an effort on RTTY and it's amazing how many people thanked us for a new one. There were a few old favourites in the log, including GM3YTS, G3SJJ, G3XTT and GUØSUP. It was nice to work Phil, as I know he just uses low power and wire antennas.

In the main we were satisfied with our QSO count, just short of 24,000. Our target had been 20,000. Working in the shack during the day was like working in a sauna. The two fans just seemed to circulate the hot air. We drank copious amounts of water and sweated it out, in between making a bolt for the toilet.

I should really make a comment on operating standards. It is often easy to criticise. When we went to the Internet café we downloaded our cluster spots from the DX Summit. I have seen comments made before on major expeditions: 'bad operators', 'poor operator', 'deaf' etc. While it is easy to get frustrated at the time, these comments are not helpful to the expedition operators. However, it was pleasing to note that our spots contained no such comments, and there were even a couple of spots for GM4FDM saying 'good ears' on CW. Maybe my bumbling CW is slowly improving. Almost all of the comments were good and boosted our spirits.

Having said that, on-air operating practice leaves a lot to be desired. Again our thoughts immediately spring to the European zoo, but

at the DX end you realised that a lot of the stations calling come from Italy and Spain in particular and are novice operators who also have difficulty with the language. It pays sometimes to speak clearly and slowly. Patience is said to be a virtue. Yes, it can be trying at the DX end, but you have to learn to apply it. In general American standards are better, but not perfect. I guess it depends on how much they really want the DX station.

For me the most trying are the Japanese. Their manners are impeccable and behaviour beyond reproach, but it can often be a most frustrating experience working a Japanese pile-up. You struggle to make out a few letters of the call, get one dot wrong – and all you get is total silence. Repeat the few letters you received, including the dot error, and still you get silence. They do not respond to anything other than a totally correct call. Thinking you have failed, you send QRZ and the whole pile-up starts again. Aargh!

If I have to criticise anything it would be the predominantly southern European practice of giving only two letters. Sometimes it is the first two letters of the suffix and sometimes the last two. Having to continually backspace is both time-consuming and can lead to getting your fingers in a knot, thus losing time in the pile-ups. You should always use your full call. For the G stations there is the added benefit of telling the DX that it's the UK. I can always hear a G4, a GM or a GI. If you just send Delta Mike, say, you merely blend in with the others in the pile-up. You need to make YOUR signals stand out so that we pick you. Oh, and its not important in the middle of a pile-up that I know your name is Algernon, your QTH is Moreton-in-Marsh and that it's been raining for the last two days. Sending this information is superfluous. It is not the same as a normal QSO and interrupts the concentration and the flow. When I come back with a QRZ – TU QRZ TY4TW - I don't mean to be rude. I just want to service the pile-up of the other 200 stations still calling.

I only noticed deliberate QRM a couple of times during the two weeks. Sometimes it was on my TX frequency, sometimes they tried to follow me onto my RX frequency. I developed the habit of not just moving 100 or 200 Hz after each QSO, but tuning randomly between my listening extremities. With short calls I was able to maintain a decent rate.

Cotonou City is a City of 1 million people. It is very hot, very dirty and extremely polluted. If there are 9 million bicycles in Beijing, there must be 1 million mopeds in Cotonou. They are all two-stroke, running on a high oil mixture. The guys with the yellow shirts are the 'taxis'. When the road is full, they use the pavements. There is no apparent right of way, although in general they do TEND to drive on the right. However, it is not unusual to be overtaken on both sides at the same time, with oncoming traffic on both sides too. Some of the drivers wear face masks because of the high concentration of pollutants, but they are really of little value as they are not fit for the purpose. There are neither driving licences nor is there insurance - and you take your life in your hands when on the roads, whether driving or walking. Life appears to be very cheap.

On our last evening our gracious hosts, Moronike and Heiner, entertained us with a grand dinner fondue. Cubes of beef, pork, goat and lamb were prepared, along with large shrimps, and we chose and cooked our own in a bubbling basin of peanut oil. This was accompanied by a large plate of rice, potatoes, vegetables and chips (!), all washed down with red wine, rum and coke and grappa coffee. I don't know how I ever made the last hour and the final QSO. It was a fitting finale that our last QSO was with Carl Smith, N4AA, the editor of DX Magazine. It was also extremely gratifying when I released the PTT for the last time to hear a large number of comments such as "Good job guys!", "Thanks for a great expedition!". It really made our evening. Why did we have to stop at

midnight? Well, simply because our licence expired at that time.

One memorable event: during the first week we had a large thunderstorm which lasted for more than four hours. The thunder and lightning seemed to roll on for ever. It was like in stereo, with the thunder rolling across the horizon from left to right and sometimes lasting for 30 seconds. Lightning lit the sky.

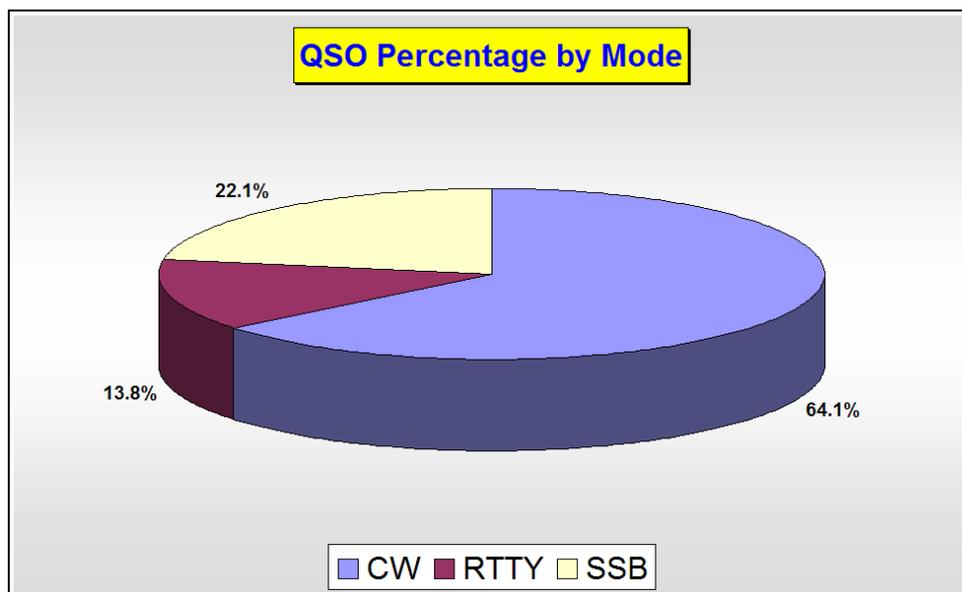
On the Wednesday of the second week we had an eerie experience. Ronald and I were operating in the morning at around 10am. During the pile-up I noticed that it was getting dark, so I asked Ronald to turn on the light. The light was already on. It was very strange. We went outside to see if another thunderstorm was on it way - and were astonished to see an eclipse of the sun. Amazingly, one of the hotel girls produced a pair of those special glasses for observing the eclipse and we were clearly able to see the moon over the sun. It was a total surprise, but we learned that all local fishermen had stayed on shore that day and that the radio and TV stations were warning people to stay indoors. From people in neighbouring Togo we learned

that the whole country had been closed and that they had declared a national holiday.

I would like to thank our sponsors on this trip. These were Spiderbeam, BARTG, GDXF, GMDX, RSGB, EUDXF, CMAR, Mediterraneo DX Club and, of course, the Chiltern DX Club.

### QSO count per band

Band	QSOs
6	0
10	352
12	248
15	2970
17	6666
20	7475
30	1816
40	1652
80	2097
160	583
SAT	0



## Propagation to 3YØX – Predictions versus Reality

Steve Nichols, GØKYA [steve@infotechcomms.co.uk](mailto:steve@infotechcomms.co.uk)

Working the 3YØX DXpedition was always going to be hard for me. Peter I Island, just off Antarctica, lies more than 9,500 miles from the UK via the short path. Long path it is more like 15,000 miles.

Worse still, due to its close proximity to Antarctica, long-path signals from 3YØX pass very close to the Northern and Southern auroral ovals and their attendant potential for absorption. This was going to cause problems if the A and K indices rose substantially.

Working 3YØX consistently needed more than 100W, a half-size G5RV and a suburban garden.

But I was intrigued enough with the team's plan, especially with its fantastic web site ([www.peterone.com](http://www.peterone.com)) and photographs, to spend the best part of a week in February 2006 trying to hear/work it. Given my interest in propagation it was also an opportunity to give a couple of programs a tough test.

The two programs chosen were HamCAP and W6ELProp. Both free to use, HamCAP was the program used on the 3YØX web site to produce the propagation predictions for the whole world. You can get a copy from [www.dxatlas.com/hamcap/](http://www.dxatlas.com/hamcap/) and it really is quite easy to use. It also allows you to tweak the system to reflect the type of antenna used and its height at your QTH. You also have to install the VOACAP engine – basically HamCAP puts an easy-to-use front end on VOACAP and produces very nice maps showing the predictions.

W6ELProp, by Sheldon Shallon, has been around for a few years and can be obtained at [www.qsl.net/w6elprop/](http://www.qsl.net/w6elprop/). Now on version

2.7, it may look a little cranky compared with some of the more recent products, but I have always found it to be quite accurate and very useful.

Operation from 3YØX started on 8 February, although it was a few days before the whole team managed to land on the island. Operations ceased on 19 February. As far as solar conditions go they were quite frankly not very good!

The solar flux was 74 at the start of operations and was never better than 79, finishing at 77 by the 19<sup>th</sup>. About right for this part of the solar cycle, but not exactly conducive to good propagation, especially on the higher bands.

The geomagnetic A index for middle latitudes, as measured at Fredericksburg, started at 1 (good), peaked at 11 (boo-ish) on the 6<sup>th</sup> and was back down to 5 (fair) by the time the station went QRT. Not bad, apart from the crucial time around the middle of the trip.

So what of the predictions?

Well, using HamCAP, this is what I sent to Don Field, G3XTT, just after the beginning of the operations:

3YØX average sunrise is 0941 UTC, sunset is 0250 UTC. Average UK sunrise is 0721 UTC, sunset 1658 UTC.

### **160m/80m**

The predictions for 160m/80m are very poor. There is a greyline path at our end at 0650–0720 UTC, but I wouldn't hold your breath. Long path is a non-starter with two potential polar paths.

### **40m**

Again, not good. The path never really appears, although it gets closest at 0600-0700 UTC. The predictions don't show any real path at all, unless you have a mega antenna. Long path - probably forget it!

### **30m**

Better. I have heard them here at midnight. The path kicks in at 2200 UTC, picking up steadily to peak at 0200-0300 UTC, and then dipping at 0600 UTC. Then a peak at 0700 UTC, even 0730 UTC.

### **20m**

This is interesting as it shows a possible short path opening from 0200 UTC, peaking at 0230 UTC and then closing at 0400 UTC. Then it opens again during daylight but is patchy, before a second peak at 2000 UTC. Long path - you'd have to be very lucky at about 0900 UTC.

### **17m**

This seems optimum - kicking in at 1300 UTC, peaking at 2000 UTC and closing at 2030 UTC.

### **15m**

This is marginal - opening (possibly) at 1600 UTC and closing by 1930 UTC. 12m is even possible with similar times to 15m. I don't really believe it, though.

Now, there are two points to make about these predictions. First, I had not reckoned on the fact that CDXC members have a) better than average stations and b) better than average ears. There was another problem in that HamCAP showed NO potential propagation on 80m/160m at all.

If I had used my brain I would have realised that there was actually a dark (night) path between the UK and 3YØX from around 0254 UTC to 0725 UTC.

Also, I configured HamCAP with a typical station of a dipole and 100W at 55ft. Some of us (not me) can do considerably better than that!

Before committing myself I should have checked with W6ELProp. In reality, a number of UK stations worked 3YØX on 160m/80m/40m, despite my doom and gloom prophecies. They knew better!

Even though HamCAP said no propagation was possible on 80m, W6ELProp (used AFTER the e-mail was sent to Don) showed that the path on 80m WAS potentially viable and should peak between 0400 UTC and 0600 UTC, with a 50-100% chance of working them.

W6ELProp can't handle frequencies below 3 MHz, but did confirm that long-path on the low bands was not going to work.

It also suggested that 30m was possible from midnight to around 0700 UTC and 40m from 0200-0700 UTC.

On the higher bands, 20m would start to open at 1900 UTC and improve throughout the evening and night, starting to fail at around 0400 UTC. 17m was similar, but kicking in slightly earlier and never really reaching better than about a 25-50% possibility and with lower signal strengths. Long-path openings were marginal, but possible, during the daylight hours in the UK.

15m was always going to be weak, but kicking in about 1700 UTC and fading out at 2100 UTC. There was also a weak long-path opening in the mid-to-late afternoon according to W6ELProp.

15m and 10m were always going to be between 0 and 25% probability.

So how did things actually pan out? Based on W6ELprop I concentrated on 40m pre-dawn and heard them consistently. By 15 February I was hearing nothing on HF – a crucial day, as I will explain later.

According to the 3YØX web site they made the following contacts into Europe:

Band	SSB	CW	RTTY	Total
160		486		486
80	1,068	803		1,871
40	1,696	2,466		4,162
30		4,122	371	4,493
20	3,521	3,613	357	7,491
17	1,650	1,468	14	3,132
15	645	950	214	1,809
12	64	109		173
10	41	28		69

Pretty much as predicted by W6ELProp, the bands giving the best chance were 40, 30 and 20m. While a significant number of people also managed to work 3YØX on 15m, I was surprised to see ANY entries for 12 and 10m, although Europe is a big place and I got the distinct impression when listening that propagation favoured the southern part of Europe.

What was also apparent when listening was the ‘spotlight’ effect of the propagation. Sometimes stations in the north of the UK were being given 59/599 reports when 3YØX was totally inaudible in East Anglia. Spain, Portugal and Italy also seemed to be able to work them far more easily than we could. Don Field confirms that GM stations were working them on Top Band when they were totally inaudible in southern UK.

In terms of individual reports from the UK, rather than wade through hundreds I have just picked a few, plus a record of some of the DX spots from the cluster.

There is only one DX Cluster spot on 160m reported by a G station at 0530 UTC on the 17<sup>th</sup> – slap bang in the middle of the night-time period between G and 3YØX, as I would have predicted. But the great and the good in CDXC did manage to work them on Top Band at other times.

Don Field, G3XTT, worked 3YØX at 0709 UTC on 13 February. What is interesting about this contact is that it occurred just a few minutes before sunrise in the UK on a classic greyline path.

As Don says: “I had been listening the previous morning when some of the GM gang got through at this time, but nothing audible here. So when I got up on the 13<sup>th</sup> and immediately heard them with good signals I was quite astonished. They were in the log after a couple of calls, and several other UK stations made it that morning too. Word obviously got round, because by the following day all hell broke loose!”

Don Beattie, G3BJ, worked them on the same day, but earlier at 0527 UTC – during darkness in the UK. This was bang in the middle of the (admittedly short) 3YØX night, which ran from 0241–0949 UTC. In reality the sun was never that far below the horizon at 3YØX, putting them in a twilight zone all night.

As Don put it: “On LF particularly the signals were spectacular – helped, I suspect, at their end by very low-noise reception conditions. I could have worked them any number of days on 80m, and on 160m about 50% of the time. The issue was timing - not very social hours for these bands!”

He also said that they were audible an hour or so past the UK sunrise on 160m and that he worked them on 80m at 0623 UTC on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 0621 on 11<sup>th</sup>.

Interestingly, the 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> were geomagnetically the quietest days of the DXpedition, with the A index at 1-2 for middle latitudes. This is in line with working the best DX on the low bands. It kicked up to 7 on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Don also worked 3YØX on every other HF band bar 12m and 10m (there was one short opening to the UK on 12m).

Darren, GØTSM, in Hampshire managed to work them on 80, 40, 30, 20, 17 and 15m. His reports show that on 80m (and his inverted L) he worked 3YØX three times at 0725 UTC (15<sup>th</sup>), 0712 UTC (17<sup>th</sup>) and 0643 UTC (19<sup>th</sup>). This was at the tail end of the propagation prediction, but in the classic greyline period. The 0725 UTC contact is just after sunrise as well.

On 40m his 132 ft Windom made contact at 0537 UTC (11<sup>th</sup>) and 0549 UTC (14<sup>th</sup>) – right in the middle of the 3YØX (albeit short) night and slap bang where W6ELProp said he should. HamCAP at this point was still showing a very marginal possibility.

His 30m contact on his vertical and elevated radials was at 2232 UTC – both programs suggest that this was possible, although both said it would have been easier in the early hours.

On 20m Darren opted for the early afternoon and his Hexbeam, with 1405 UTC on CW (13<sup>th</sup>) and 1418 UTC on SSB (also the 13<sup>th</sup>). Both HamCAP and W6ELProp suggest there is no propagation at this time – don't worry, the Peter I website confirms both QSOs! It does look like these were long path, with W6ELProp showing a short 75-100% probability on 20m at this time.

On 17m the Hexbeam made contact at 1441 UTC on CW (14<sup>th</sup>) and 1246 UTC on SSB (15<sup>th</sup>). HamCAP says that these are both possible, although W6ELProp suggests they must have been long path.

Darren comments: “They were always loud on 30m, up to 12 hours at a go, but many EUs (including Gs) were complaining that they couldn't hear a thing. 15m was weak, almost ESP; they only came up long enough for me to work them and then they were lost in the noise again (probably due to my low antenna). 17m was weak, with odd peaks to S4-6, but mainly readable when they were on. 20m was just like 15m, really weak, and I caught them on peaks. Sometimes they were louder over the North Pole [long path – GØKYA].”

On the cluster G3MCS first spotted them as worked on 18.073 MHz at 1102 UTC on the 8<sup>th</sup>. I would bet this was long path. At the same time G3ZSS said they were ‘good copy’ in southern England on 17m. By 0402 UTC they were ‘solid’ on 17m, short path, according to G3ZSS, although HamCAP said no way. W6ELProp did show a 1-15% possibility of an opening. GØCGL and G4FGX said they were just readable on beams at the same time, but GW3RIH said they were inaudible.

GØBLB worked them on 14.195 MHz at 0902 UTC, which could have been short or long path at that time.

The following day GØCGL reports good signals on 10.103 MHz at 0902 UTC, which HamCAP predicts as short path, but marginal, but which W6ELProp doesn't really show at all.

GM7NVA reports good signals on 40m at 0300 UTC. HamCAP says it's marginal, W6ELProp says go for it – signals should be about S5-6.

You can play this game all day, but what have we learned?

- The majority of the low-band contacts into the UK appear to be towards the end of the night in the UK, and many occurred in the pre-dawn twilight (greyline) period.
- On 20m there was a wide spread of times – probably due to the mixture of short and long path contacts made.
- On 15m the predictions for the afternoon period in W6ELProp showed they could be worked long and short path.
- 12m and 10m were always going to tough to impossible at this point in the solar cycle, as backed up by the results.

And what of the propagations programs?

- I suggest using more than one prop program to get a better overview of the possibilities.
- HamCAP is a great little program, but it seems to favour the higher bands. It also suggested no long-path openings on 20m at all.
- W6ELProp did factor in long-path openings on 20-15m during the day, although they were always going to be weak.
- I think W6ELProp gave slightly better predictions and a better guide to signal strengths – certainly if you relied on HamCAP you might have missed some of the openings, especially the 40m and 80m paths in the 0200-0600 UTC time frame and the long path openings on the higher bands in the afternoon.
- W6ELProp is great for an overview of all bands at all times. HamCAP is better at showing how one band progresses at hourly intervals.

- HamCAP shows graphically the skip zones and makes sense of why there may be gaps in coverage between one F-layer hop and two.
- Neither program could really predict Top Band openings, although a little common sense suggested that they might be possible between around 0300 UTC to 0730 UTC, ie in the period of total darkness, with perhaps a greyline peak towards UK sunrise.
- You need to tweak all propagation programs to suit your particular set-up, both in terms of the power used, the antenna and your local noise level.
- Take propagation predictions as a guide, not a rule. It is all about probabilities, after all.
- Don't forget greyline periods and also check for long-path openings in your software.

I think they are both great little programs, and I have kept both on my PC. But I tend to favour W6ELProp.

I think I also learned, as if I didn't already know, that there is no substitute for good antennas and good operators (as if we didn't know tha too!). When the signals were weak and watery with me, they were S7-9 on nearby G3LDI's 7 elements at 85ft. His monster rhombic on 80m beats my magnetic loop any day.

As Don Beattie put it: "Just to complete the picture, the equipment here is the full 400W and on 40m-10m a yagi (generally two elements on each band) at 80ft. On 17/12m it is only really a dipole - perhaps a couple of dB gain. On 160/80 I use a 90ft vertical with a K9AY receiving loop (essential for good copy)."

A dB here or there IS important. In the middle of the pile-ups with 3YØX every dB helped –

it isn't just about looking for how you can gain an extra 6dB with a beam.

So did I manage to catch 3YØX? Frankly, no! I live in a hole (at least from a geographical and RF point of view - I am not describing the state of the house or insulting the XYL) and make do with a two-element mini beam for 20-15-10m and wires/magnetic loops for 80m and 40m. At the time of the DXpedition I had taken down the mini-beam to try a Cushcraft MA5V vertical, recently bought from a local ham.

Duh! On reflection, this probably cost me 1-1½ S points on 20m and was not a good time to play with alternative antennas. Also, I had to fly out to Singapore for business on the 16<sup>th</sup>, so missed the last few days of the

operations. Not that I'm bitter – much! The mini beam is now optimised and back up at 30ft, and has been joined by an 85ft end-fed with the far end at 50ft AGL for 80m/40m.

But it did show that propagation planning could make a big difference and can be completely free. If you haven't got a copy of W6ELProp on your computer, I suggest you download it right away.

I look forward to everyone telling me how easy it was to work 3YØX at the next HF Convention. I'll be the one with his fingers in his ears and a frown.

Steve, GØKYA

RSGB Propagation Studies Committee

### **First DXpedition to IOTA OC-295P (Pulau Sebatik)**

Following the RSGB IOTA Committee's recent announcement that Pulau Sebatik (Sebatik Island, 9M6, YB7) would count as a new IOTA group (OC-295P), a DXpedition is to be mounted to activate this island for the first time.

Members of the Borneo Amateur Radio Club including Steve, 9M6DXX (ex-G4JVG, P29DX etc), and John, 9M6XRO (ex-9M6/G3OOK), will be active as 9M4SEB (callsign applied for) from approximately 1100 UTC on 14 July until about 0300 UTC on 17 July 2006.

Activity will be on 10 to 80m, CW and SSB, using up to three stations simultaneously. One station will use a beam antenna and two will use 400W amplifiers.

QSL direct or via the Bureau to M5AAV, Graham Ridgeway, 6 Pilgrim Street, Nelson, Lancs BB9 0JQ, England.

73 Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX

# Andaman Islands Report

Frank Rosenkranz, DL4KQ      *frank@dl4kq.de*

Many thanks once again for the Chiltern DX Club support regarding our VU4 operations.

I returned as the last of all foreign (and Indian) participants from the Andaman Islands on 7 May and would like to give you a short interim report:

- We are still designing the QSL card and hope to get it printed in time for the HAMRADIO [Friedrichshafen] so that we can start issuing cards at around that time.
- Of course the CDXC logo will be included on the QSL card.
- A detailed write-up for the CDXC *Digest* will follow as soon as possible.

## Interim Report

Most of the group members arrived well in advance of our operations without any major customs or baggage transport problems. Only VU3RSB had bad luck; his antenna transported by Air Deccan arrived damaged. We changed our QTH at Port Blair on the second day (the first QTH was not a good site for HF) and finished nearly all the set-up by the evening of 17 April. Unfortunately some members had to re-schedule their trips at the last minute for business reasons, so that some equipment arrived during the operation and some had to leave one day earlier.

Our QTH was the Tent Camp Resort, located on a hill with a good take-off in all directions. But no air conditioning, I'm afraid, with tent temperatures of 45° C around noon. For the first three days the high-band conditions were average and on the low bands we had an extremely high S9+

noise level, making QSOs virtually impossible. Due to the Hamfest programme we could not set up the receiving antennas earlier than 20 April.

After the third day a cyclone approached, bringing heavy rainfall (and cooler temperatures, but extremely high humidity) and strong winds during the night. Each night the verticals came down, the dipoles too, but fortunately the yagis survived. This restricted our low band operations, but the biggest problem now was the increasing number of power cuts caused by the rainfall. During the first three days we had no power cuts, but later on the number increased rapidly. For the last two to three days we had no power for more than 50 % of the time. The camp had no back-up generator and we could not find one.

By the end of our operations we had more than 21K QSOs in the log. Not really all that satisfying, but considering the power cuts during the last three days we were still fairly happy with this total.

There has been some confusion due to announcements of different QSL managers for our group. We all had a clear agreement, but some stood down on the first day of our operations without any information to the group. I won't comment on this, but as a GDXF officer I will bring this to the attention of the relevant people for consideration in connection with future support operations. Meanwhile the QSL problem has been solved and everybody will get their cards, direct or via the Bureau, either via F5CWU or the others.

Interestingly this 'holiday operation', as it was called by some, finished with more than 86K

QSOs, taking all VU4 stations into account (an average of 15 active VU4 stations). Not a bad total bearing in mind the conditions and that it was not an 'organized' DXpedition.

The NIAR Hamfest was quite interesting and generated a lot of publicity and awareness within the respective Indian government ministries. Most likely due to the high number of late cancellations by interested international radio amateurs, but also due to some rather disappointing actions and foreign presentations too, the expected VU7 announcement was not been made by one of the government officials. But the door is not closed and the relevant negotiations will start on 31 May 31.

### Resident VU4 stations

Since September 2005 valid VU4 licenses have been granted to two resident YIs, Ms. Molly (VU3VPX) and Ms. Lizzy (VU3VPY), who are both lecturers of the Dr B.R. Ambedkar Government Polytechnic at Port Blair. Although a VU3 prefix has been granted, both are valid VU4 licences. I have checked both licence documents. They were planning to set up a club station at the Polytechnic and train the students for the licence exams, but had no funds to purchase the required equipment..

As the only foreign member of the NIAR VU4 Organizing Committee (NIAR members + high-ranking officials of all the relevant Indian government ministries) I know about the foreign promises which have been made to support them. Unfortunately nothing has happened and I have seen their sad faces, which have been noticed by the officials too.

On the spot N6TQS decided to donate some coax cable to them and his Force12 Sigma5 antenna - and I presented them with my own station (Elecraft K2/100, ATU, PSU, Heil headset). This equipment was set up by me on 4 may. In connection with this I did send

urgent requests for assistance from Port Blair to a number of foundations, asking them to support us, because we were not prepared for such expenses. Unfortunately we only had very limited e-mail access - and it seems that for a time CDXC and NCDXF did not receive our requests. They do not have the funds down there, nor any other opportunities of getting any equipment, antennas, books etc.

I am still collecting some of the items required, which will be transported to India soon - either by a friend of mine or by myself. I am trying to arrange logistical support for the college on a mid-term basis so that they can finally go ahead on their own after a period of support and advice. Without support the risk of failure will be very high for them and this would be very bad after the long absence of valid VU4 licences. But perhaps you [CDXC] might still consider supporting the college? Any help would be very welcome!

That's all for the moment. The detailed report will be written and forwarded to CDXC soon.

Vy 73

Frank, DL4KQ

*[Thanks, Frank. If that's the 'short interim' report, I can't wait to see the 'detailed' one! Ed.]*

**We regret to record the passing of the following CDXC members:**

G3ABS	Walter Heath	01/10/05
G3HBR	Brian Hummerstone	02/06
G3MDL	Peter Cunningham	09/02/06
G3TJW	John Bright	/05
MW5DOS	Roland Hall	02/03/06

# The RZP Trilogy

Peter Chadwick, G3RZP [peter.chadwick@ieee.org](mailto:peter.chadwick@ieee.org)

## Dayton 2006

Dayton seemed very quiet this year. Admittedly, I didn't bother going looking for a new rig or a new antenna, although I did stop to look at the 30/40m extensions for the SteppIr – and decided against. Mainly because I don't think they would give me much advantage over what I currently have. The flea market was definitely much quieter, and I didn't see any Command transmitters! There was a rather nice TCS transmitter, although somewhat expensive, I thought, at \$450. An HRO5T dating from about 1945 was on sale, complete with all coils (although not all the coils were the ones for that particular HRO), wooden coil box, speaker and original power supply – for which \$1200 was demanded!

Much more reasonable were the prices for such items as PL259s and 22 SWG Ersin multicore tin lead solder (\$8 for a 1lb reel) – which is not so easy to come by in the UK now, so I did do some stocking up. The other things I was looking for were ARRL Handbooks in the 1945 – 1970 range, which for some reason, I collect. I found a 1960 one at a reasonable price, while a very tatty 1958 was far too expensive at \$20 – worth about \$5 at the most.

Moving inside, I stopped by the Icom stand to see Ann, WA1S. I met Ann a good few years ago, and not having had my K7C card, I'd asked her about it via e-mail. She very kindly arranged for my card to be mailed to her, and she gave it to me at Dayton so I could put in my DXCC claim with it. Who says ham spirit is dead? (Tnx agn Ann) So the No. 1 spot on the DXCC Honor Roll merely (!) awaits a KP1 QSO - and card, of course. Some stands were very busy. Every time I passed by the

International Radio stand, George, W2VJN, was deep in customers, so I merely had a chance to wave and say Hi. ARRL were busy as well and had a nice area for resting one's feet. The line for DXCC card checking seemed to go from 'pile-up' to 'band dead' conditions for no real reason. I got my cards in for some more bits of 5BDXCC, and of course, K7C for the all-time new country.

Back at the Crowne Plaza some things had changed. The famous (infamous?) hospitality suite in Room 1201 (Society of Mid Western Contesters, plus K9NW, K9PG and KA9FOX) moved this year to larger accommodation in Room 425, as the usual group in there didn't want it this year. But there was still the traditional visit to Hooter's in Centreville on Thursday, the Spaghetti Warehouse on Friday and the Thai place on Saturday. Interestingly, for a Thai restaurant in the US, they had Bellhaven bitter from Scotland! No WE9V again this year – Chad had a bad motorcycle accident last year and didn't think he could manage the walking involved at Dayton.

The Kansas City DX club were in room 525 as usual, and the Saturday night was, as tradition has it, the night of the DX pile-up contest. Fred, K3ZO, was in Thailand, so some of the competition was reduced, not that I did too well – as usual.

The weather was excellent except for the Wednesday and Thursday before the show, when there were major thunderstorms. From hard experience I never try flying to Dayton in the late afternoon these days – the weather in the Mid-West at this time of year often has thunderstorms in the afternoon, totally

disrupting the flights into and out of Chicago. I flew to Chicago on the Wednesday, spent the evening in a hotel watching the lightning (!) and flew to Dayton first thing on Thursday. American Airlines have severely cut back on their flights to Dayton, so I had a departure at 0825. I got to the airport at 0735, which in theory should have been OK. Because of the problems of the previous night, the place was heaving with humanity and it was only because of my BA Gold card allowing me to use First Class check-in desks and fast-track security lanes that I made it.

My advice to anyone planning a Dayton visit via Chicago is to allow a lot more time for check-in than is advised, especially if you don't know the airport. So I got to Dayton at about 1100 and checked in at the hotel: the first person I saw while checking in was G3SXW. Then the thunderstorm started, and, I was told, out at the Hara Arena, there was actually hail. I saw G3SJJ and G3SVL at breakfast the next day – the last time I had seen 'SVL was when we were in the same ONC class at Chelmsford Tech in 1965!

I had to leave on Sunday morning for California for a week in the office there, but I was told that it was very quiet. All in all, another enjoyable Dayton. I met a lot of old friends, bought a few odd things, sank a few beers, just as usual.

### **Out-of-date e-mail addresses**

Do we have your up-to-date email address? If you have changed it in the past few months, please be sure to notify Treasurer Nigel at [nigel@G3TXF.com](mailto:nigel@G3TXF.com). At present over 10% of our e-mails are being rejected.

### **Radio-equipped holiday home to let in Paphos, Cyprus**

I have a 3-bedroomed (sleeps 6) town house for rent in Paphos, Cyprus. Why not bring the family for a holiday and at the same time experience the pile-ups from a DX location? As this is the first season I will be letting the property, I am offering it for the next 12 months only for prices well below the market price. You can get more info and view photos from:

[www.homeforexchange.com/property\\_detail\\_view.php?propId=2680](http://www.homeforexchange.com/property_detail_view.php?propId=2680)

This is a home exchange website, so don't be confused by that! For details of the special pricing or for info on the radio aspects, please email me at [alan@shacklog.co.uk](mailto:alan@shacklog.co.uk).

Alan Jubb, 5B4AHJ



### **Digest and CDXC website ads**

Please note, as you can see above, that ads can be placed both on the CDXC website and in the *Digest*. Contact Chairman John, G3LAS, in the case of the former and *Digest* Editor G3RFX in the case of the latter.

## Those B\*%\$£^ RCDs!

Peter Chadwick, G3RZP

The RCD, or Residual Current Device, is one of the modern safety items in an electrical installation. If you have any rewiring done, or a house extension, it may well happen that the contractor will follow the rules and change things. Gone are the old fuses: instead, you have miniature circuit breakers. When a light bulb blows, these often trip, and put much of the rest of the house in darkness, so someone up some steps in another room is plunged into darkness, with obvious dangers. However, the 'MCB' is considered to be an advance in safety.

The RCD, on the other hand, is a device that monitors the current in both live and neutral, and trips the circuit if the unbalance exceeds a certain amount – usually 30mA. Such an unbalance can appear because of a person being in contact with live and earth, although I wouldn't want to try relying on the RCD with 30mA going through me. It is not necessarily an unmixed blessing, because you only need a few pieces of equipment connected to the mains for the mains filters to make the RCD trip. A couple of computers with their monitors and printers, a washing machine, tumble drier, freezer and refrigerator, and the electric cooker can soon add up to enough unbalanced load because of their mains filters (needed to meet the EMC Directive) to trip the RCD. But another problem is the sensitivity to RF, especially on the LF bands.

At G3RZP the main RCD is a 100mA unit, because for some reason that I don't fully understand, the DC injection braking of the lathe motor leads to an unbalance in the mains supply to the single- to three-phase inverter. With a dipole at 60ft over the bungalow, it trips at about 250W on 80m. The central heating boiler is in an outside room and is fed

from a 30mA RCD. This trips at around 300W on both 80 and 160m into the vertical, which is 50ft away! Incidentally, I had one MCB which, for some reason, would trip with 50W into the vertical on 160m when sitting on the bench 50ft away with only a 12-inch pigtail of wire connected!

I've tried contacting MK Electric about this, and received a deafening silence in reply. The electrician doesn't know what to do. The RSGB EMC committee have no ideas about it. ARRL tell me that there are RF-proofed 'GFI' (Ground Fault Interrupter – the US name for an RCD) devices available in the US, but I haven't found one over here. I can't even find out if there is an RF immunity requirement standard for RCDs: I suspect not, but it is arguable that the lack of immunity means that despite being CE marked, they don't meet the essential requirements of the EMC Directive. But getting any action on that basis is, to say the least, unlikely.

So far, then, I don't have an answer to the problem within the context of the Wiring Regulations. As a member of the IEEE, I make rude comments about my IET (used to be IEE!) brethren as 'electricians'. In view of these problems, even more so! If any CDXC member does know where to find RF-proof RCDs, I'd like to know. One supposes that people living close to a medium wave broadcast transmitter could have a problem, so there would be an albeit small, demand for such devices.

For the rest of you, beware, and if there is any electrical work done in your house, run a check on what happens when transmitting, especially if you have a linear on 80 and/or 160m.

## So how does your signal sound?

Peter Chadwick, G3RZP

In these days of transceivers, complete with all the bells and whistles, how do you know if something is mildly wrong with the signal? Obviously, if you're on SSB and the signal is distorted and splattering, you're likely to be told so, possibly in some fairly abrupt terms! But what about a more subtle fault? An example of this occurred a few years ago with people telling me that in a contest, I'd send 'RQ CQ CQ TEST' etc. 'The linear relay is slow, OM' I was told, which was pretty good, since it was the same when I didn't use the linear. In the end it turned out to be the CW transmit crystal getting a bit lazy - and increasing the current and thus the gain in the FET in the oscillator fixed it. Now, if you have a report of chirp, or FM on SSB, or whatever, how do you find out if the report is right - and, if you are not just an appliance operator but fix your own rig, what's wrong?

In the 'good old days' of separate receivers and transmitters, it was usual to arrange matters such that the station receiver had its gain wound well back on transmit so that you could monitor your signal. A number of receivers had to be modified to do this, since in commercial practice CW operation on the same frequency wasn't that common, and other methods were used to provide sidetone. In some of the post WW2 ARRL handbooks there was a design for a completely screened, battery operated TRF receiver to act as a keying and signal monitor: when you had two or three crystals in the TX it wasn't too much of a problem to retune the monitor when you changed channel.

Obviously, one approach is a completely separate receiver or transceiver, and if you are a contester going in for SO2R (Single Operator, 2 Radios) contesting, you can remove the antenna from the second receiver,

wind back the RF gain and hope you don't overload it. If you don't have another receiver readily to hand, there is another answer. Again, back in the 'good old days', in order to make sure that you transmitted inside the band, it was necessary to have a frequency meter of some kind. The most usual was the BC221, made in their thousands for the US Army during WW2 (a copy was still being made in the USSR as late as the mid 1960s.). There were other ex- military wavemeters - the British Army Class D, the RAF W1191A and the US Navy LM series, the last of which were rather better built than the BC221. Most amateurs had a BC221 - or to be precise, said on their licence application that they had one! In the event of a GPO inspection, it had been 'lent', unless prior warning had been given: in that case one was borrowed from somebody who had one!

With the advent of modern gear, these wavemeters disappeared into lofts, got scrapped, or just got thrown away, as their absolute frequency accuracy is generally far worse than that of a modern rig with digital readout. They consist of a crystal oscillator and calibrated VFO, the calibration of which can be set against the crystal. They also have what is effectively a direct conversion receiver of low sensitivity, which is ideal for monitoring just what your transmitted signal sounds like. The BC221 has the slight problem that the audio response is tailored to have a large degree of bass boost, but that can be allowed for. In theory, by feeding the output into the sound card of the computer rather than headphones, it should even be possible to check the data modes.

BC221s can be picked up for around £30, even today. Ones without the calibration book can come even cheaper - and as for this

application, you're not that interested in the absolute frequency calibration, they will do nicely. You might have to build a power supply for it, and if so, a worthwhile touch is to use a 6V regulator IC for the heater supply.

Of course, like putting a spectrum analyser on a rig, you could find out things that you'd rather not know. Especially about key clicks, for which most modern transceivers vary between 'bad' and 'absolutely awful, unfit for

human consumption'. This isn't a new phenomena: the FT-102 of the early 1980s was in the 'unfit for human consumption' class. But as a cheap method of doing first-line faultfinding, the old WW2 heterodyne wavemeters still have a useful place today.

And no, I'm not looking to sell any of my three BC221s!

73 de Peter G3RZP

## **CDXC AGM & Summer Social, 15 July**

### **Directions to Westlands, John/G3LAS's QTH**

**From M11 (South):** Exit at A120 West (just before Stansted Airport exit). Follow A120 towards Hertford for about 5 miles. In village of Little Hadham turn left at traffic lights at bottom of hill. After about 1 mile, turn right into Chapel Lane (just past Nag's Head on right). Follow road up hill into Westland Green. Turn left at grass triangle with little post box (see map above). Pass 6 houses on left, last one is called Woodside. Turn left at grass triangle into No Through Road. Westlands is the first house on the left, about 200 yards.

**From M11 (North):** Exit at A120 West (Stansted Airport exit). Follow A120 towards Hertford for about 5 miles. In village of Little Hadham turn left at traffic lights at bottom of hill. After about 1 mile, turn right into Chapel Lane (just past Nag's Head on right). Follow road up hill into Westland Green. Turn left at grass triangle with little post box on left (see map above). Pass 6 houses on left, last one is called Woodside. Turn left at grass triangle into No Through Road. Westlands is the first house on the left, about 200 yards.

**From A10:** Follow A120 East (about 6 miles North of Ware). Go through village of Standon and up to top of hill. Turn right towards Broken Green and Wellpond Green. Ignoring farm road on left and similar on right, turn left at T-junction towards Little Hadham. After about 1 mile, including a Z-bend, turn right at grass triangle with little post box on right (see map above). Pass 6 houses on left, last one is called Woodside. Turn left at grass triangle into No Through Road. Westlands is the first house on the left, about 200 yards.

# IOTA News

Roger Balister, G3KMA

## Unactivated IOTA groups numbered

Provisional reference numbers have been issued to almost all currently unnumbered IOTA groups with qualifying islands. The advantage of this is that in future DXpeditioners to a previously unactivated group will know the new reference number before setting off. Offsetting this is the slight disadvantage that, as new numbers will not be issued and confirmed in sequence, tracking them will be a little more difficult. However the IOTA websites will have the information. The procedures for validation of operations from the rarest IOTA groups and groups where special permission is required will continue. For details see the listing under 'New IOTA Reference Numbers' on the website below.

Why the change? It will help DXpeditioners who will now be able to give the new number on air as soon as they start the operation. It will also simplify things considerably for IOTA management. Almost all remaining unnumbered groups are hard to activate, either for 'political' reasons - licensing difficulties or nature conservation restrictions - or the practical hurdles of access and cost. Few can be put on the air at little or no notice, so the chances of someone unfamiliar with IOTA requirements on validation firing up from a new island group without any prior contact with IOTA HQ or without warning are not as high now as once they were when procedures were less well known.

## New IOTA group

The IOTA Committee is committed to reviewing the island list every five years. The last such occasion was scheduled for 2005, but in the event the Committee decided against a

review then. It needed to complete work implementing decisions taken following the major overhaul of the island list in the year 2000.

With the next review not now scheduled until 2010, the IOTA Committee has decided not to wait until then to correct an anomaly. Sebatik Island in Borneo is a 'split sovereignty island', one half owned by Indonesia (Kalimantan) and the other by East Malaysia (Sabah). Under paragraph E.5.7 of the Programme Rules such islands each count for a separate IOTA group. We are rectifying this omission now and adding Sebatik Island as a new group in the Oceania list (OC-295P).

## Operations which have provided acceptable validation material

AS-046	9M2/HA5TAA	Tioman Island
(March 2006)		
AS-160	BG1DRJ/4	Furong Island
(May 2006)		
EU-106	GW3KHZ/P	St Tudwal's
		Island West, St Tudwal's Islands (May 2006)
OC-008	P29VMS	New Britain,
		Bismarck Archipelago (March 2006)
OC-069	P29VMS	Lihir Island, Lihir
		Islands (March 2006)
OC-101	P29VMS	Feni Island, Feni
		Islands (March 2006)
OC-102	P29VMS	Boang Island,
		Tanga Islands (March 2006)
OC-135	P29VMS	Buka Island
(March 2006)		
OC-161	YE6N	Nias Island (April
2006)		
OC-270	YE6P	Simeulue Island
(May 2006)		

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

Roger Balister, G3KMA  
RSGB IOTA Manager

20 June 2006

Email: [IOTA.HQ@rsgb.org.uk](mailto:IOTA.HQ@rsgb.org.uk)  
[www.g3kma.dsl.pipex.com](http://www.g3kma.dsl.pipex.com)

### New QRP Discussion List

There is a new e-mail discussion list for QRP in Europe: the EUQRP List (but not just limited to Europe...). Anyone wishing to join should send a blank e-mail message to

[euqrp-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:euqrp-subscribe@yahogroups.com)

Everyone is welcome!

73 Tom, DL1DSK, and Pete, G8ICI

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## The RTTY Column

**Phil Cooper, GUØSUP** *pcooper@guernsey.net*

In the last issue I said I was looking forward to working the VU4s on RTTY and was thinking that I would have a good chance, what with so many RTTY ops being there.

I did try, and tried hard, but in the end my tally was ONE contact, and that was on PSK rather than RTTY. I was very pleased to work Jan, DJ8NK, who was operating as VU4AN/VU3NZB. And this was on their last day of operation!

This was especially pleasing for me, as Jan was a visitor to Guernsey in January of this year, and came to our club one evening.

I also tried to work a couple on CW, one on 30m, and one on 20m, but just could not break the pile-ups.

So far this year the RTTY contests seem to have suffered from poor propagation, with the

result that scores have been well down on previous years.

ANARTS was one such contest, where last year I made 5XX contacts for over 2.5 million points. This year, I made 413 contacts for 1.5 million points. The biggest problem was the lack of propagation to W/VE, where call areas are additional mults.

I think I made about 8 contacts with Ws, most of which were W3/W4, and only worked one VE. I also had to work hard to log a South American station for the 6<sup>th</sup> continent.

Having said that, there was some good propagation to the East, with JAs audible on 20m for most of the day and night, and some nice DX in that direction too. I even managed to work FK8HN on 20m for a new band-slot, which pleased me.

There were also plenty of G, F, ON and PA stations on 20m and many had really loud signals.

Last time I wondered how the 80m CCs would fare with the earlier start time, but having done a few in daylight, it certainly doesn't seem to have affected things that much. There is a good amount of activity and one has to wonder if the specified band plan is actually enough to cope with this level of interest. I really do feel that the RSGB has to consider this for next year, or people will start to drop out. If you have a good 80m set-up, and you live in a the central part of the UK, you might well be able to get and keep a run frequency, but those of us further out will have even more problems than we are having now.

The homepage of MMTTY has once again moved. The new site is now being hosted by Ken, VE5KC, and can be found at

<http://mmhamsoft.amateur-radio.ca/>

All the usual info is here, such as links to Mako's other software. You will find DSPFil, MMVARI, MMSSTV and so on.

By now you can't have failed to notice the number of DQ2006 and DR2006 stations celebrating the Football World Cup. These stations started up on 1 May, and will continue until 31 July. Sadly, not all have been on RTTY so far, but my current tally at the time of writing this is 15 DQs and 10 DRs. Go to

[www.amateurradio2006.de/int/index.html](http://www.amateurradio2006.de/int/index.html)

to find out more about these stations. There are 26 DQ stations, representing 'districts', and 12 DR stations representing the 12 stadiums hosting the games.

There are 3 possible awards to aim for: Gold, Silver and Bronze. For the Bronze you will need to work 4 DR, 6 DQ, plus 25 different DL stations. For the Silver you will need to

work 10 DR, 20 DQ, plus 100 different DL stations - and for the Gold award you will need to work 12 DR, 24 DQ, plus 200 different DL stations. Please note that you can only claim each station once. Different bands or modes do not count. This is probably why you will hear so many non-DL stations calling CQ Germany! Each award costs 5 Euros for EU stations, and the award manager is Otto Cecetka, Zugspitzstr. 17, D-85435 Erding, Germany.

Right now I am looking forward to my trip to Friedrichshafen and meeting everyone there, especially at the RTTY Dinner on the Friday evening. Sadly, the RTTY Forum that was to have taken place on the Friday afternoon has been cancelled. I am not sure why as yet. It may be that the reservation wasn't correct and that now the rooms have been allocated elsewhere. Maybe the DRCG will be able to organise something for next year!

That's about it for this time, so good DX, and enjoy the RTTY! See you in the contests.

## RTTY Contest Calendar

SARTG	Aug 19-20 <a href="http://www.sartg.com/">www.sartg.com/</a>
SCC (Slovenia)	Aug 26-27 <a href="http://lea.hamradio.si/~scc/rtty.html">http://lea.hamradio.si/~scc/rtty.html</a>
Russian	Sep 2 See below
CIS DX	Sep 9-10 <a href="http://www.cisdx.srars.org/">www.cisdx.srars.org/</a>
CQWW	Sep 23-24 See below
Makrothen	Oct 14-15 See below
JARTS	Oct 21-22 <a href="http://www.edsoftz.com/JARTS/">www.edsoftz.com/JARTS/</a>
WAEDC	Nov 11-12 <a href="http://www.waedc.de/">www.waedc.de/</a>
OK RTTY	Dec 16 <a href="http://www.crk.cz/">www.crk.cz/</a>

Russian: As yet, there don't seem to be any rules listed in English for 2006, but there are rules in English at [www.rtty-contest-scene.com/russian\\_2004.htm](http://www.rtty-contest-scene.com/russian_2004.htm), although they are for 2004, as the URL suggests. There was very low activity last year, which may indicate that the contest is in decline.

The rules for the CQWW RTTY contest are on the CQ website:

[www.cq-amateur-radio.com/RTTY%20Rules%20200653106.pdf](http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com/RTTY%20Rules%20200653106.pdf)

The rules for the Makrothen contest are on this page:

[http://home.arcor.de/waldemar.kebsch/The\\_Makrothen\\_Contest/The\\_Makrothen\\_Contest.html](http://home.arcor.de/waldemar.kebsch/The_Makrothen_Contest/The_Makrothen_Contest.html)

73 de Phil, GUØSUP

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## Contest

Lee Volante, GØMTN

### Morse Runner

Following my recent mentions of contest training software like Rufz, I was pleased to receive a note from Darren, GØTSM, telling me about 'Morse Runner'. I have played with Morse Runner myself, and did have to check through old copies of the *Digest* before realising I'd forgotten to give it a mention until now.

Darren says, "In case you haven't tried this program, it's like plugging your headphones into an HF radio. Lids, QRM, QSB, QRN, flutter - you get some idea of what GSXW / G3TXF hear during one of their trips. I think that before this the biggest pile-up I had was two Italians calling me on 40m!"

It's certainly an accurate simulation of what you might find on the bands during a major contest. If you normally use a keyboard for most or all of your contest CW transmissions, and are happy with F1, Insert, + keystrokes for CQ, Exchange and Thank you messages, or the Enter Sends Message formats used in other contest software, you will feel at home. CQ

calls will result in stations replying to you, and serial numbers are exchanged just like normal. A real 'pile-up' is possible, and you can choose to change filtering and RIT to separate the calls if you need to. The competitive element comes from using the program for an hour-long session and seeing how many accurate contacts you can have. The high score table on the Internet has some very impressive scores.

Imagine what might be available in a couple of years time with the next generation of software – realistic variable propagation across the bands, variable antenna directions, and the ability (and necessity) of moving multipliers between bands. Operating strategy as well as CW copying ability could then be tested. SSB and other modes may be more difficult to simulate than CW, but we should remember that the Voice version of the PED trainer is now 10 years old. If ever the bands sound quiet during sunspot minima years, maybe some operators are enjoying some simulated contesting with higher rates on their PC instead.

Finally, I see on the Rufz TopList high scores page that Goran, YT7AW, has achieved a momentary receiving speed of 218 words per minute = 1,000 characters per minute. I obviously need to practice...

Morse Runner is written by Alex, VE3NEA, and is available at

[www.dxatlas.com/MorseRunner/](http://www.dxatlas.com/MorseRunner/)

### **Where are the Contest Results?**

If I want to know the rules for a particular contest, it's normally very easy to find and use any of the major contest calendars and rules websites like SM3CER's and WA7BNM's. From these sites, or by using a search engine like Google, the official website for a contest can be found, which list the rules for the next year. It's always worthwhile checking the official rules, and not a copy of these rules you may find from another website. These copies sometimes refer to a previous year, and occasionally there will be changes that are vital to understand. As an extreme example of a change, I remember a few years ago the cancellation of a certain contest which must have still been published on the Internet or in print somewhere around the world, and had to try my best to find the people calling CQ TEST and persuade them that there was no contest for them to enter.

In most cases, the results for a particular contest will also be published online, along with the rules and other information. When a contest organiser has finished adjudicating a contest, the results may be uploaded to the Internet immediately, or they may wait for publication in a magazine first. Some organisers will also use the e-mail addresses that were used by the entrants to submit the logs in the first place as another way to alert competitors. However, I know that Don, G3XTT, from his experiences with the IOTA contest, found that a high proportion of entrants seemed to have changed their e-mail

address in the months between submitting the logs and the results being ready, so this may not be as effective a method as you might think. Nevertheless, notably the EU Sprint gang are quite successful with direct e-mailing of contest announcements, results and UBNs.

I was impressed by a RTTY contesting website, [www.rtty-contest-scene.com](http://www.rtty-contest-scene.com), which has on its front page a list of all of the major RTTY and data contests, and direct links to the results. Newly discovered published results are also highlighted. This is a great way to quickly check when results are ready for a variety of events in one place, without needing to check all of the individual contest websites, or try an awkward Internet search.

Internet search engines tend to work on finding the most popular, or most referred to web pages. Perhaps it would be useful to be able to somehow sort the results by date, so that when you look for matches for 'CONTEST RESULTS 2006', maybe adding your callsign to the query too, the newest ones would be displayed first, rather than somewhere in the middle of a long list you had already looked at.

So while RTTY enthusiasts can find their results easily, SSB and CW operators don't currently share the same luxury. The SM3CER service now has an expanded list of contests' official websites to follow, but the list of results has fallen out of date. There is no indication when the new results will be ready to guide you. It must be a never-ending and probably almost thankless task keeping the rules side up to date, let alone the results, so I can't criticise.

Another option taken up by the RSGB VHFCC has been to allow regular contesters to submit their e-mail addresses. E-mail alerts of updates are then sent out when a results webpage is updated. This method works well for national societies or groups which run a variety of events throughout the year. Direct

e-mails to reflectors like UK-Contest also occur. If anyone has any comments or suggestions for how contests results could be announced, domestically or internationally, please let me know. At work I get sent SMS updates on my mobile phone to inform me when particular information has been published, so I wonder what else is possible.

### **Antenna party**

A local M3 friend of mine has been joining in the 80m Club Championship contests on SSB. He's been a little frustrated and disappointed to be only making a handful of contacts – which he has put down to his power limits. There was a degree of surprise when the scores of the leading QRP stations were revealed to him. Whilst antennas are key, and most of us can't match the height above ground level of some of the leaders, there are hopefully some improvements we can all make. This will be especially true for our newer licensees.

A club antenna party, or antenna hit squad, has been formed to visit and offer some advice and suggestions for more efficient antenna systems. As well as the RF characteristics, they also have to fit in with spouses and neighbours. Single band stealth loops, or antennas that are only pushed aloft and visible when used, are other options. My club has adopted the bacon sandwich as the unit of currency to recompense these antenna party visits. It's good fun, instructional, and hopefully will get more folks on the air (and increase my club's contest totals a little bit too!).

### **Contest pile-ups and redundant information**

Whilst it was hot and sunny recently, I set up my FT-857 outside at the end of my garden and played a little in a 50 MHz contest while there were some Sporadic E conditions. 50 MHz, you may ask? I was not running very

much power, and my antenna was a screwdriver type vertical sat on the shed roof. There were many loud stations audible, but they were working a constant steady stream of stations. It was frustrating to call many stations several times and not be loud enough to make a QSO. I was above the noise floor with the other stations, as eventually some contacts were made, but for the most part I was not louder than the other stations that were almost always there between every QSO. Similar things happened to me in BERU when my HF dipole was at a very low height and there were a large number of UK stations calling a relatively small number of DX stations.

Whilst the pile-up may be fun, several stations lost out on getting points from me. This may have been avoided by making the exchange more efficient. There is often debate about how often a DX or contest station should identify themselves. One the one hand, if you're tuning up and down the band, you haven't got time to wait for a few minutes just to find a station's callsign, especially to find you already have him in your log. On the other hand, if you know the other station's callsign already, and have been waiting for a few minutes to get through a pile-up, the time spent having the callsign announced over and over could have been better spent squeezing in a couple of extra contacts.

It's frustrating to be part of a pile-up that the CQing station must be aware of, and yet no change is made to reduce instances of practices such as the sending of both callsigns, and superfluous phrases like GM / GE / GL / 73 DR OM etc. I can understand it if operators don't wish to appear impolite, but in a contest a simple 'TU' or 'Thanks' should be adequate following the accepted exchange formats.

Have a look on the web for CT1BOH's website at [www.qsl.net/ct1boh/](http://www.qsl.net/ct1boh/). Jose has extrapolated the same ideas, but for high-rate CQ WW contest stations where quickening

the exchanges, or not identifying your own call every time, can be translated into several hundred additional QSOs over the course of a weekend.

For most of us around the UK, we rarely get pile-ups occurring in contests, so you may think these ideas don't apply. The Club Championship contests are good exceptions to the rule, especially during the opening minutes when momentary rates of 200 per hour might be achieved on SSB. If there's one suggestion I could give to anyone who thinks their operating technique can't be refined, I'd suggest recording and then listening to their own efforts in a contest. By using either contest logging software functionality, a stand-alone program, or an old faithful tape recorder, and listening to myself after a contest when I wasn't concentrating on copying callsigns, I keep finding a number of areas I'd like to improve on.

### **Electronic QSLing**

In the last few months I've finally got round to registering for the ARRL Logbook of the World and the EQSL electronic QSL systems. My perennial excuse for not doing something about it previously was that I always had something else to do instead of sorting out the required chore of paperwork. In reality registration was anything but a chore. For

LoTW a photocopy of my amateur radio and driving licence documents were posted to ARRL HQ, and for EQSL I took a photo of my radio licence and uploaded it to the EQSL server. EQSL acknowledged the same evening, and ARRL within a couple of days.

Following that, it just took an evening to upload my log electronically to both systems. It was fun to see DXCC credits accumulate as the logs were accepted. It's also pleasing to see many contesters and contest expeditions putting their logs online in this way. It's also amusing to have 100+ QSLs matched with the very devoted contesters, and to see familiar stations uploading their logs, as I do myself, after each major contest. Having electronic logs makes transferring from contest log to main station log to electronic QSL server all the more easier.

*That's all for now. The July Digest should hopefully be with you before the IOTA contest. I've not published any contest entry stories for a while now, so if you are mounting even just a modest entry, be it from home or perhaps from a small rock in the ocean, please write up a few notes and let us know how you fared.*

73,

*Lee GØMTN*

### **WRTC Brazil, 8-9 July 2006**

The WRTC will be held in Brazil from 8-9 July as part of the IARU HF Championship contest. There will be 47 two-man WRTC teams from all around the world. Please take a moment to read [www.wrtc2006.com/release52.html](http://www.wrtc2006.com/release52.html). This describes the incentives for IARU contesters to e-mail copy of their logs to WRTC immediately after the end of the contest. The WRTC winners are announced only 35 hours after the contest. For accurate log-checking we do need lots of logs to enter into our database. We would be very grateful if you could publicise this programme as widely as possible.

73 de Roger, G3SXW.

## Letters and E-mails to the Editor

**from WK3N** (to G3RTE)

Thanks for the results of the LF Challenge [See page 9. Ed.]. I did not think my score was high enough to qualify for the Tindle Trophy! 160m has always been my greatest DX passion. I knew my 160m score was respectable, but still was surprised to take it.

The LF Challenge is certainly one of the toughest competitions in amateur radio today. One must commit every minute of time available to the radio - from sunset to one hour after sunrise - and sleep during the day for an entire month! I even ate my meals in front of the radio! Thanks really go to my XYL, KB8IHR, for having a great understanding.

**Some may wonder why non-UK stations join CDXC. The answer is simple: CDXC is what all other DX clubs worldwide aspire to be. Its membership reads like a 'Who's Who' of accomplished DXers. Its officers are dedicated gentlemen. Its members are knowledgeable and open-minded. Its Digest is second to none! Much can be learned by joining.**

James Lee Scott, WK3N, aka 'Scotty'

"WK3N NEVER SLEEPS!" (quote from Martti Laine, OH2BH)

**from G5WQ / MØBCG**

I wondered if, in the CDXC *Digest*, you might post a short message for me to say thanks to Hilary, G4JKS, for the assistance she gave me with my application to transfer Reg Witty's callsign.

Hilary helped me 10 or 12 years ago with some EMC advice and then again over the

past few months with some other advice. She didn't ask for anything in return and kept me up to date with news when it was available. I wanted to openly say thanks to her and to let others know that Hilary is extremely helpful and will go out of her way for others. There's not a lot of praise given out in amateur radio these days and so I wanted to give credit where it's due. Thanks.

Ian Williams, G5WQ - MØBCG

**from G3RTE**

Dear Martyn,

I was interested in your comments [Editorial, May 2006 *Digest*] about the W sigs when you were down in 8P6 land. The trouble I found on SSB from VP2V/G6AY was the fact that all the W guys wanted to chat to you. I suppose the Caribbean is almost like us working down to Italy or the north coast of Africa. It is far from rare and in their back garden. After a couple of attempts I gave up and went back to CW!

73 de Jim G3RTE

**from DU9/G4UNL**

I have decided to resign from CDXC as it is obviously for contesters and my opinion of most of them is getting worse and their procedure is non-existent. The final straw was jumping on the Rotary Net on 14.293 MHz twice and calling 'CQ Contest' without listening. Also regarding the 5-star DX trips - what is so wonderful about this? Luxury island resort, top-class equipment - 1KW amplifiers and then so much trumpet blowing! I will of course miss the stories of small ops in hot countries - difficult landings etc. Sorry.

Roy DU9/G4UNL

## Not the GB2RS News

This week's headlines:

- Self-styled DX stations compete for a slot in the *Guinness Book of Records*
- GB special event station rule change
- Croatia does it German-style

More and more self-styled DX stations, especially in the Balkan area, are currently competing for a slot in the *Guinness Book of Records*. Their aim is to see how long they can go in a pile-up without mentioning their callsign. Recently on 20m SSB a YT station notched up almost 30 minutes along these lines, despite understandable cries of "What's the callsign?" in between. It was considerable disappointment for some when he finally gave it. No doubt there were several stations who worked this one and still don't know what his callsign was. Mind you, this style of operation certainly did wonders for this YT operator's ego and made him feel like the bee's knees.

Due to complaints about some UK GB special event stations being far too brief and impersonal in their operating style, especially in 80m SSB pile-ups, these stations will in future be required to give the following information during each and every QSO, with a view to making each contact last for at least 10 minutes: the operator's name and exact QTH in phonetics, the station rig details, what his dog had for breakfast, the very latest local weather report and of course the reason for the special event station callsign in the first place, even if that's long since been noted down by all on frequency.

Not to be outdone by the Germans and their current plethora of DQ2006\* and DR2006\* World Cup stations, between now and the end of the year radio amateurs in Croatia will be

fielding no fewer than 26 special event stations in the 9A2006A-Z series to celebrate the World Tiddlywinks Championships taking place in Flipadiska, Croatia, on 29 July. In the heavyweight section of these Championships the contestants will be playing the game using manhole covers.

Changes to the rules are expected soon in connection with certain very unrare EU stations who call CQ on SSB, then immediately say 'QRZ?'. In most cases there's nobody on frequency who's the slightest bit interested in calling them. So, *merde alors!*, why the 'QRZ'? In the unlikely event that a QSO does materialise, such stations will also be banned from saying '73' at the start of it, seeing as this is highly confusing for some and could easily give *l'impression* that the contact is almost over, although it's only just begun.

### Solution to Digest Prize Crossword 16

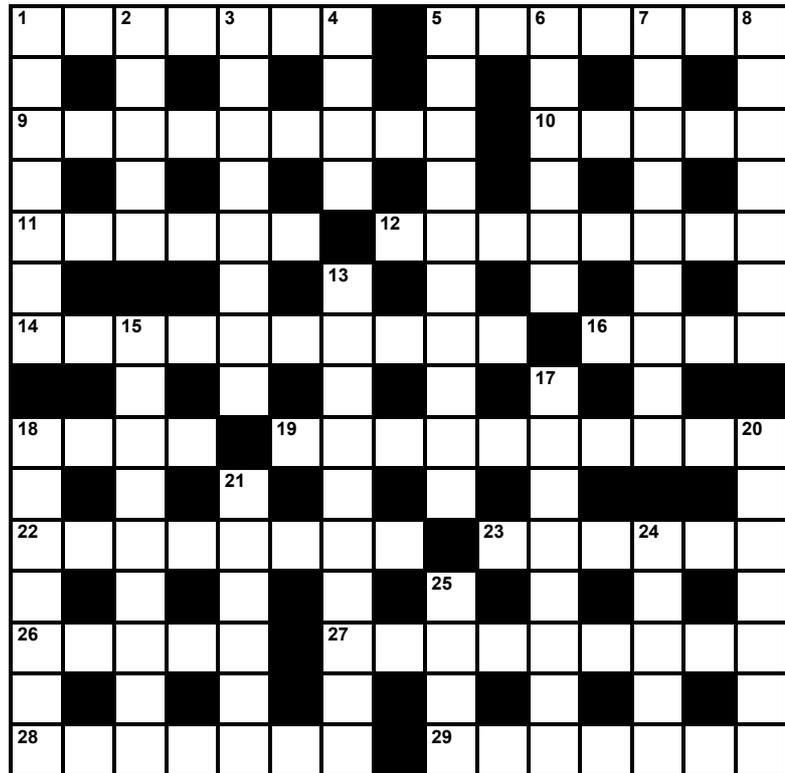
S	T	A	N	D	I	N	G	O	R	D	E	R		
T		D		R		U		N		E		O		F
R	E	U	N	I	O	N		T	R	A	V	A	I	L
I		M		L		E		I		R		S		I
K	A	B	U	L		A	L	M	A	M	A	T	E	R
E		R				T		E		A				T
R	E	A	C	T	I	O	N		E	D	I	C	T	S
		T		A		N		C		A		R		
D	R	E	A	R	Y			C	H	I	M	N	E	Y
E				R		S		A				S		E
B	U	C	H	A	R	E	S	T		A	S	C	O	T
T		H		G		T		T		L		E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

## Digest Prize Crossword 17 *by RFX*

No crossword is ever gremlin-proof, as the venerable Times Crossword itself demonstrates on occasions. 10 Across in Digest Crossword 16, TRAVAIL, also proved the point. As one regular solver commented, 'The only thing I couldn't work out is where the first A comes from'. Quite. I always quadruple-check these things, but it must have been that time of the month or some such when I quadruple-checked this one. My apologies. All of you got it anyway.

The winner of Prize Crossword 16, May 2006, and that brand-new Pavarotti: Stuart Swain, GØFYX, Bedhampton, Hants.

Deadline for entries: 20 August >



### ACROSS

- 1 Blonde disheartened by search for donation (7)
- 5 Carrying no weapons, but the Eastender's still in one piece (7)
- 9 Top fashion accessory outlawed, we hear, by fallen girl (5,4)
- 10 I criticise religion (5)
- 11 Spies recalled, holding back test that's basically simple (6)
- 12 Star group named after Major Barker? (5,3)
- 14 Out of trouble when the receiver's like this? (3,3,4)
- 16 The Welshmen's platform (4)
- 18 Words of encouragement for a clown (4)
- 19 Lovers from Legnica not together, having widely divergent opinions? (5,5)
- 22 Weird single about 2,000 people unthinkingly following others to disaster (8)
- 23 Alpine disaster - or a Himalayan type? (6)
- 26 Cryptographer taken short in European city (5)
- 27 The Rev. Spooner's radiator component for well-known *RadCom* reviewer (5,4)
- 28 Basically a loose woman he invited in (2,5)
- 29 A red one adapted for school (7)

### DOWN

- 1 Daring letter transmitted without any disclaimer initially (7)
- 2 Leave nothing in this capital (5)
- 3 Faculty I quote in conversation (8)
- 4 Type of jazz featured in most radio shows (4)
- 5 Working secretly out of the rain? (5,5)
- 6 Beast the French bird picked up (6)
- 7 Alarm demo turned into a sensational play (9)
- 8 Hoover, for one, takes a long time to get compensation (7)
- 13 Connect on the phone, switching parts for data processed (7-3)
- 15 The *Marseillaise* and how to carry it off? (4,5)
- 17 Untroubled, like Venice around the end of June? (8)
- 18 Meal a prisoner served up first for Pygmalion's perfect maiden (7)
- 20 Isn't art extraordinary? This Wagnerian proves the point! (7)
- 21 Female quartet turning up in capital city (6)
- 24 Informed about why Amstrad rarely employs beginners (5)
- 25 Commotion in prison (4)

# DX and Events Calendar

Compiled by G3XTT

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

Period	Call
till 31/07	8N4OKI: special event station (Oki Islands, AS-041)
till 31/07	A72OO6: special event station
till 31/07	SVØXAN/5: Lipsi Island (EU-001) by IK2WZD
till 31/07	T66T: Afghanistan by OH6MKL
till 03/08	YU8/IV3NVB and YU8/IV3SRD: Kosovo
till 10/09	HF4ØPSL: special event station
till 10/11	YM125ATA: special call by TA3J
till 25/11	HH/PS7EB: Haiti
till 31/12	4N5ØØCC, 4N5ØØZZ, YU5ØØBW: special calls
till 31/12	8S3ØJC: special call (Sweden)
till 31/12	9AØ6P: special event station
till 31/12	9A15DX: special call
till 31/12	9A15ØNT: special event station
till 31/12	9A35Y: special call
till 31/12	9A65ØC: special event station
till 31/12	EI6ØLRC: special call
till 31/12	GB6ØSWL: special call
till 31/12	GB6SWL: special call
till 31/12	HA5ØMHZ: special call by HA5X
till 31/12	JV8ØØ: special prefix (Mongolia)
till 31/12	LZ13ARDF: special event station
till 31/12	LZ5ØKSB: special call
till 31/12	LZ8ØR: special event station
till 31/12	ON4ØDST: special call
till 31/12	TF6Ø: special prefix (Iceland)
till 31/12	YU5ØØCM, YU5ØØJDE, YZ5ØØA: special calls
till December	TF/IW5DCE: Iceland
till December	VKØJLX: Davis Station (VK-03, AN-016) by VK2JLX
till Feb 2007	EM1UC & EM1U: Vernadsky Station (UR-01, AN-006)
till March 2007	T68G: Afghanistan by LA5IIA
till March 2007	VP8DJB: Rothera Station (G-07, AN-001)
23/06-25/07	DAØHAMCAMP: special event station
29/07-08/08	CU8F and CU8T: Flores Island (EU-089)
01/07-13/08	7S6EM & 8S6EM: special event calls by SK6AG & SK6AW

07/07-20/07	SV9/SV1EJD: Crete (EU-015)
15/07-20/07	SV5/MØDOV and J45DOV: Rhodes (EU-001)
17/07-23/07	CS25M: special event call by CTs
17/07-21/07	CU6X: Pico Island (EU-175) by CT1BWW, EA2RC, EA3GHZ
21/07-25/07	CU5X: S. Jorge Isl (EU-175) by CT1BWW, EA2RC, EA3GHZ
24/07-31/07	GB4CI & GW5X: Caldey Island (EU-124)
24/07-30/07	VA7AQ/VE2 and VE7SAR/VE2: La Madeleine Isls (NA-038)
25/07-01/08	VP5/K4ZGB: Providenciales (NA-002)
26/07-01/08	MJØAWR and GJ2A: Jersey (EU-013) by K2WR
26/07-31/07	VE3ZZ/VY2: Prince Edward Island (NA-029)
27/07-01/08	OZ8MW/P: Anholt Island (EU-088)
29/07-12/08	F/ON4XA, F/YO2MBO, F/ON4BEA
29/07-05/08	MM/OS1A and MM/OPØJ: EU-010 by ON5FP and ON4CJK
29/07-04/08	OZ/OP4A, OZ/OP1A, OZØACA: Romo Island (EU-125)
29/07-30/07	TM7C: Noirmoutier Island (EU-064)
29/07-30/07	GM7V: Benbecula Island (EU-010)
29/07-30/07	GMØB: Isle of Bute (EU-123)
from 30/07	OX3PG: Greenland (NA-018) by KD4POJ
July-September	IIØP: Sardinia (EU-024) by IZ1EPM
03/08-15/08	TK/IZ1DSH: Corsica (EU-014)
05/08-17/08	3D2BD: Rotuma (OC-060) by F4ELJ, FØELK, FØELI
06/08	MM/OS1A and MM/OPØJ: EU-008 by ON5FP and ON4CJK
12/08-14/08	JW/IN3TCH and JW/IN3SAU: Svalbard (EU-026)
16/08-22/08	W5BOS/ALØ: NA-238/pr (IOTA NEW)
16/08-22/08	W5BOS/NLØ: NA-237/pr (IOTA NEW)
18/08-21/08	3D2BD: Fiji Islands (OC-016) by F4ELJ, FØELK, FØELI
26/08-31/08	GM3OFT/P: Orkney Islands (EU-009)
26/08-29/08	GWØGRC or GBØSK: Skokholm Island (EU-124)
15/09-17/09	28th Clipperton DX Club DX Convention
30/09-07/10	LX/PA6Z: Luxembourg

### **GM4FDM QSL Manager**

GM4FDM is willing to act as QSL manager for stations operating from abroad, especially UK or ex-pat stations.

E-mail [t.wylie@ntlworld.com](mailto:t.wylie@ntlworld.com)

73 de Tom, GM4FDM

## CDXC Clothing

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

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

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

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

### ORDER FORM:

ITEM(S)	QUANTITY	SIZE	COLOUR	PRICE
<b>Additional text @ £3.00 per line</b>				
<b>Sub-Total</b>				
<b>P &amp; P: £1.75 for first<sup>1</sup> item, £1.50 additional items to a maximum of £10, £1 children's items, £3.00 fleece jackets</b>				
<b>Callsign</b>	<b>Total</b>			
<b>Name/Address</b>				

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

## Standing Order Request Form

To: ..... Bank

Branch : .....

**Please pay:**

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

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

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

1. starting with an **initial payment TODAY**
2. followed by an **annual payment on 1 July** thereafter,  
starting with 1 July 2006 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.**





