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Club News and Views

Editorial

Martyn Phillips, G3RFX

Welcome to this special CDXC Silver Jubilee edition of the *Digest*. Nobody seems to remember exactly when CDXC came into being, with some saying that it was 25 years ago in 1981, others 1982. We eventually decided that if we were to sit around debating this one for very much longer, then it *would* be next year or possibly even 2008, so why not get on with it and start to celebrate it now, in 2006?

You'll notice that we've pushed the boat out a bit this month and that the 'centrefold' pictures are in colour. Ideally I'd like to make it colour every time, but unfortunately the longer-term cost of this would be prohibitive and mean, amongst other things, that we'd be unable to continue to help support various DXpeditions, an important part of CDXC's remit.

On pages 6-7 you'll find, courtesy of the G3NUG archives, an extract from the very first *Newsletter*, as it was known in those days. The name was changed to the *Digest* in September 1998. And on page 5 we have a look-back by G3YMC at the early days of CDXC. Fascinating reading. Thanks, Dave.

And what was going on 25 years ago, in 1981? Well, amongst other things:

- Margaret Thatcher was firmly in charge at 10 Downing Street.
- Pope John Paul II was shot by Turkish gunman Mehmet Ali Ağca.
- The first traffic crossed the new Humber Bridge.

- 'Stand and Deliver', by Adam and the Ants, was No. 1 in the UK Top 40.
- Lady Diana Spencer married Charles, Prince of Wales.

On the amateur radio front in 1981:

- We were into the G4M**, G8Z** and G6*** series of callsigns.
- The WARC bands at 10, 18 and 24 MHz were still something of a novelty.
- RSGB HQ was still at 35 Doughty Street, London WC1. The RSGB President was Basil O'Brien, G2AMV, and the General Manager David Evans, G3OUF.
- The FT-101 was still the hi-tech HF workhorse for many.
- As for the Internet: what's that?

All of which might help to put things into perspective.

Meanwhile here's looking forward to another 25 years of CDXC – and the Golden Jubilee in 2031, when there'll probably be somebody else editing the *Digest*. Mind you, the mini-skirted maidens here in the *Digest* Editorial offices in Bristol (CDXC Penthouse Suite, 35th floor) continue to do a grand job in helping to keep me young, so you never know.

73 Martyn, G3RFX

Chairman's Chat

John Butcher, G3LAS

I'm sure you are all waiting for an update on the condition of my garden, after the whingeing about drought which I slipped into my September CC. Well, a week or so ago (as I write this) it was practically under water after a couple of days of torrential downpours. I don't know whether this is global warming, El Niño or retribution of the Gods following a misspent youth. To be positive, it must have increased the ground conductivity a bit, I suppose.

Enough complaining, let's talk about conditions... or perhaps, let's not! The SFI seems to be permanently stuck in the 70-80 range at the moment – so much for the early start of the next solar cycle. Nevertheless, the microliters of ZL8R seem to be making a reasonable showing over a path which is never brilliant. I must admit that getting up early is not my strong point, so I can't speak from first-hand experience, but the comments on the CDXC reflector, albeit mixed, suggest that quite a few people have picked up a new one in some form or another. I did see that some people have made it on 40m at the pm grey-line, but of course I picked up that piece of intelligence the day before they closed down... oh well!

Speaking of the reflector, it still seems to be buzzing and providing a valuable service for CDXC members – thanks again, Mark, G4AXX. We all hope that it won't degenerate into the kind of trivia exchange or petulance medium that some similar forums have become, so if you feel tempted to trivialise or petulate – please don't. Your witty quip may drive others to exasperation. In case any of you haven't tried it yet, you'll find the URL at the bottom of page 2 of this *Digest*.

The recent RSGB HF Convention near Gatwick seems to have been a great success again. The well-tried format attracted a

goodly crowd of visitors from all over the UK, Europe and the USA. For me the highlight was the presentation by K4UEE on the Peter 1 expedition – whoever calls these people 'amateurs'? Any professional explorers would probably be proud to be associated with such a highly organised and thorough undertaking. The description of the incident when some members of the team became stranded for several days on the island in bad weather (that's Antarctic bad, not UK bad) just showed how close these 'amateurs' can come to a fatal accident if the planning isn't right. Fortunately, in this case it was right.

In the absence of wildly exciting DX to work, I've taken the opportunity to re-organise the LAS shack. Several years' of wiring and re-wiring had created the usual rats' nest of cables, dust and cobwebs under and behind the desks. Sorting this out is always an illuminating experience, albeit exhausting when lying under said desks with said cobwebs probing every possible body orifice. At least I have my new wife who is willing (so far) to lend a hand with the torch and the essential bit of string to pull up the new wires. I guess about 10% of these seemed to be completely redundant, pointing to short-lived experiments and equipment set-ups which never worked. I'm sure you've all been there too.

This is often the way to discover little-known facts, usually at the most inconvenient times. This time I found mine after stripping out all of the interconnecting leads and re-arranging the rigs: all I had to do was put the necessary leads back. This is the time to discover that the 8-pin DIN sockets on the back panels of the Yaesu rig and linear aren't actually 8-pin DIN sockets at all, in spite of looking and feeling like 8-pin DIN sockets. The difference is marginal, but vital. I wasn't too surprised to find I

couldn't insert the DIN plugs whilst lying on my back with dust up my nose and poking left-handed at the back of the rig. However, I was surprised that when I stood up and pulled the rigs out of their normal positions so that I could get at them, I still couldn't do it.

A panic phone call to ML & S fortunately reached guru George, G3NOH. "Oh, yes," said George. "The sockets are slightly different from DIN standard. Not a lot of people know that!" "Grrrrh!!" So I turned to the Icom and moved the computer link from the CI-V remote terminal to the RS232. I switch on – and zilch! Half an

hour later I gave up and turned to the phone again – Icom this time. "Ah, yes. The version of the software you're using had a problem with the RS232 data output." "Double Grrrh!" Time to call it a day and have dinner, before I do some damage.

Enough moaning, or you'll begin to think that your Chairman is always like this (be quiet, Rachael!). Come and visit the CDXC stand at Kempton Park on 12 November. It's always a good place for a natter – or a moan – about DX and such like.

73 es gud DX John, G3LAS

CDXC Memories

Dave Sergeant, G3YMC *dave@davesergeant.com*

I no longer have the first CDXC Newsletters [*But see below! Ed.*], so I am not sure of the exact dates. Newer members may not be aware of how CDXC started.

In the dim and distant past there was a DX spotting net on 144.525 MHz. Here in the Thames Valley we were on there all day, long before the days of the packet cluster, exchanging spots and other chit-chat. I'm not sure exactly when these started, but my involvement began shortly after I got my FT-290 (Gosh, that is also 25 years old and still going strong!). I see my first QSO in the log on .525 was on 8 January 1982 with G3KMA (who says we should never keep logbooks...). I remember that CDXC was formed out of the .525 group soon after that, which would make next year the actual 25th.

Another relic is a tape I still have of the VP8 Falklands activity on the evening of 2 April 1982. I must have another listen to the

recordings of the undercover operation from Goose Green. I have considered transferring these to digital, but I don't have the gear to do it. They are definitely of historical value. Unfortunately there is quite a lot of chit-chat from .525 superimposed. Either way, we were definitely alive and kicking by then.

I have had a look at Steve's photo of the 85 Belfry. I don't seem to have made it that year, but there are loads of familiar faces. When I have put callsigns to them I will forward them to Steve - there are quite a few there who current members won't know, sadly including a few silent keys.

I was a lapsed member for quite a few years in the 1990s as my interests changed, but have strong memories of the early days down here in the Thames Valley (and Chilterns, hence the name). It is also worth also mentioning the gatherings we used to have in those days:

Since the original CDXC was based in the Thames Valley, most of our gatherings were also in this area. I have vivid memories as (and still) a young DXer with very modest means, of visiting some of the big stations at the time: G4DYO, G4LJF, G3OZF (then near Aylesbury), G3KMA, G3YJI and G3GIQ. We also put on a special event station at Runnymede with the callsign GKØJFK on the USA-owned plot there to celebrate one of the Kennedy anniversaries. The club was much smaller in those days,

no more than 25 or so, and we had a telephone alerting list where we would call each other at all hours with that juicy DX. It was much later that the packet cluster appeared (GB7DXI - run by Ian, G4LJF - was one of the first nodes), by which time CDXC had expanded into a nationwide organisation.'

73 Dave, G3YMC

The very first CDXC Newsletter

[cover note by G4DYO]

123, Reading Road,
Finchampstead,
WOKINGHAM,
Berks.,
RG11 4RD

0734-732393

Dear Member,

So G4DYO is back in action.....!

The enclosed is offered for comment. It is not intended to duplicate DXNS but to provide background info which may be of interest. THIS is the place for the confidential info which one would prefer not to discuss on the air. THIS is the place for members' news. It doesn't have to be DX info – how did that 10 element sloping log periodic quagi go on 160??? No lengthy articles – just brief info. Is it worth trying???

I will try and push out an edition each fortnight – or more often if news warrants it.

To obtain future copies please send me at least SIX self addressed stamped envelopes. When they are used you can send more or opt out. No other cost involved.

Your comments by letter or phone or just a few SAEs are awaited.

Best 73,

Brendan G4DYO

Vol 1 of an irregular publication for members.

6th October, 1983

VIDEO PRESENTATION of the Jim Smith VKØ dpxpedition to be held at G4DYO on Sunday 6th November around 3pm. Max number 2Ø – ayes or noes to Henry, G3GIQ ASAP. The video is of general interest and not slanted towards ham radio. Maps of routes to G4DYO available on request and a simple buffet – cups of tea – a few beers, etc, will be provided. Sri, no YLs – space for such a presentation is limited to those with a direct interest as we want as many amateurs to see it as possible. Remember, cost is £2 per head – all of which will go to Jim Smith.

FROM THE DX BULLETINS:

BY4AA will commence operation from Shanghai on Oct. 12th. To celebrate 10th Anniv. of twinning of Shanghai and Yokohama, five JAs will be guest operators for 5 days of SSB and CW 10-40m. BY4AAs chief op, Mr. Jyo, will make an initial contact with BY1PK followed by Mayor of Yokohama, Mr. Saigou (a licenced amateur) with a contact with his city. After this BY4AA will be QRV and JH1CZT (The Yokohama City Ham Club) hopes to be able to operate until Oct. 15. The operating schedule is not known at this time but there is some indication that most of the operation will be SSB. QSLs for contacts by these JA ops will probably be handled by JH1EDB. Marcel, F2SA, will be in China for 7 weeks from Oct 5 and has permission to operate (phone?) from several Chinese cities. In the light of yesterday's statements on 2Øm by VE7BC will all this nw happen???

MALPELO Should commence at 1900z on 11 Oct. with a WCY-greeting from the President of Columbia. Scheduled to finish 19ØØz on 16 Oct. QSL HK3DDD. Ops : HK1s AMW, DBO, QQ, HK2YO, HK3s BAE, BAV, BED, DBQ, DDD, DES, DEU, DQM, TF, HK4s BHC, DKR, DUM, EBY, HK5s ASF, LA, HKØBKX. During the previous op in 1977 many were disappointed by the poor signals caused by operation from the wrong side of a rock. Hopefully this time the Columbian Navy will assist with helicopters to place a station atop a 1235 ft peak. It could be some years before it is active again so DON'T MISS IT.....

VR6 and VK9N Feature in October National Geographic Magazine.

ANDAMAN VU2TN has applied for a licence to operate Dec or Jan.....

1ØM N4XX predicts that 1Øm will respond to a fairly active sun and cold ionosphere beginning next month. C21 has been heard weakly in EU around mid-morning via short path.

9V1VP New QTH: Bob Furzer, 1Ø-Ø1 Naga Ct., 355 Bukit Timah, Singapore 1Ø25. His antennas are nw at 175' and he is vy QRV around 142ØØ at 17ØØ& will immediately QSY to 4Øm on request.

HZ1AB has worked 56 countries on 16Øm. They try to be QRV on 1827khz at Ø2ØØz on Thurs and Fri.

[13 more DX items follow. Ed.]

Contributions to the newsletter greatly appreciated by G4DYO.
Let's see if we can keep this show on the road.....!

New Members

CDXC offers a warm welcome to the following new members:

<i>Call</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>
G3PQA	John Rogers	Cookham
G4AHK	Barrie Palin	Bromsgrove
G4KMH	Steve Cottis	Maidenhead
GJ4CBQ	Phil Daniells	Jersey
MØAEV	John Stevens	Somersham

CDXC Annual Dinner, Saturday, 31 March 2007

Please note the change of date to that previously announced.

The Annual Dinner will be held at the Waterloo Hotel, Crowthorne, Berks, at 7.30pm - the same venue as last year, but under different management. This will form part of our 25th Anniversary Celebrations and will be followed by a talk on 'DXing then and now' by Don Field, G3XTT. Don will look back over the last 25 years at how DXing has changed, the major expeditions and personalities involved and how techniques have evolved.

Full details, menu and a booking form will be included with the January *Digest*, but make a note of the date in your diary NOW.

Peter Hart, G3SJX

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>.

The CDXC LF Challenge 2007

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

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

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

Modes: No restrictions.

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

DXCC entity, Call, Date, Time and Mode.

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

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

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

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

Awards – Multi-band.

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

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

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

Awards – Single band.

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

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

DX an' all that

Don Field, G3XTT don@g3xtt.com

The bands have been fairly quiet, with disturbed conditions for a lot of the time, despite the arrival of the autumn equinox. The ZL8R operation was quite a surprise and is still in action as I write this. UK stations appear to have worked them on 40, 30 and 20m so far. 17m ought to be a possibility too. Time will tell. This is another effort by some of our Microlite friends running barefoot. Their argument is that it's up to the DX chasers to make the effort to hear them, rather than the DXpedition having to do all the work. But at the bottom of the sunspot cycle and when your beam heading is straight through the auroral curtain (as is ours to ZL8) I suspect we need all the help we can get, at both ends of the QSO!

DXCC listings

I appear to have seriously upset one member by not including him in the listing I put in the recent CDXC *Digest* of those on top of the Honor Roll. A word of explanation seems to be in order as I now realise that not everyone is familiar with the ARRL terminology. To ARRL, 'Top of the Honor Roll' means those with all current DXCC credited (335 in all, as Swains and Montenegro were not included at the time that list was produced). My correspondent is short of two countries on the current list, while having an all-time total that would put mine and many others seriously to shame, hence his frustration. Anyway, if anyone else was wondering why they had been omitted from the list, I hope the above explains the situation. A full UK Honor Roll listing would no doubt be appropriate in the *Digest* from time to time, but would be much longer. That said, John, G3LZQ, kindly provided me at Gatwick with a list of UK amateurs currently featuring on the ARRL DXCC Challenge standings, so I will

further risk the wrath of members by publishing them (if you don't feature, I guess you'll have to work more, get more cards or at least submit what you have!):

G4BWP 3014; G3KMA 2996; G3XTT 2827; G4OBK 2690; GM3YTS 2606; G3TXF 2576; GØJHC 2403; G3SJV 2245; G3KWK 2139; GM3PPE 2106; G4PWA 2026; G3NDC 2025; GM3YOR 1821; G5LP 1797; G3LZQ 1763; G4IRN 1692; GØOIL 1482; GU3MBS 1467; G3OAG 1437; G3NOH 1403; GMØAXY 1402; G3LUW 1330; G3VQO 1317; G4VXT 1315; G3HSR 1278; G4OWT 1268; GMØVIT 1220; G3UAS 1195; G3TTJ 1151; G3SNN 1150; GW3SFC 1146; G4WFQ 1134; GM3POI 1120; G4XRV 1114; G3IFB 1078; MMØBQN 1077; G3AKU 1029; G3VXJ 1020; G3LAS 1019; G3VKW 1017; G3AEZ 1005; GM3WIL 1002.

And in case you don't know what that is all about, it's the total of your current DXCC entities credited on 160 through 6m inclusive, with the threshold at 1,000. I know there are many UK amateurs whose totals are well above the 1,000 mark (just look at the quarterly tables that Henry, G3GIQ, kindly compiles for my RadCom column, for starters), but perhaps the biggest challenge of the Challenge is to get the cards and have them checked. I recall, one year, taking something like 700 WARC band cards to the ARRL booth at Dayton, because no way was I going to risk that many cards to the postal system. Nowadays LoTW helps in that respect, although very few older DX logs are likely to find their way onto it, simply because of the effort of typing up what were originally paper logs in most cases. Incidentally, W4DR continues to lead the DXCC Challenge, with 3094 credited.

YU6AO credits on hold

On 4 October, 2006, Bill Moore, NC1L, ARRL DXCC Branch Manager, reports: "A number of DXers have had their YU6AO credits rejected by the DXCC Desk. Although we are entering these confirmations, we are currently not allowing DXCC credit because of possible irregularities in the QSLing process. We have received several independent reports relating to the QSO dates, some QSOs made prior to 4 July, 2006, being post-dated to dates 4 July and later. We take this very seriously and we are seeking clarification, but our latest attempt to communicate with YU6AO has not been acknowledged. Once this matter is cleared, credits already submitted can be claimed with a note to the DXCC Branch Manager, Bill Moore at dxcc@arrl.org."

US band plans

Many of you will already have seen this but, if not, here are the new band limits for US amateurs. There seemed to be some confusion about when they would come into effect, but it looks as though it will be in November, so too late for the CQ WW Phone contest.

Band	General	Advanced	Extra
75m	3800-4000	3700-4000	3600-4000
40m	7175-7300	7125-7300	7125-7300
15m	21275-450	no change	no change

Forthcoming expeditions

Some interesting ones due in the New Year. An S2, Bangladesh operation from 10 to 16 January by Spanish operators, and a 9MØ Spratly operation from 9 to 20 March by a mainly Japanese group, for example. Also, YT1AD has announced a Swains Island effort from 12 September to 3 October, a pre-emptive strike, I guess, to ensure that others don't start planning to activate that one. And a large group will activate XT, Burkina Faso, in January. But the Laccadives VU7 expedition scene is

becoming more confused by the minute. First there was news of a January operation under the auspices of NIAR (National Institute of Amateur Radio), then ARSI (Amateur Radio Society of India, the 'official' IARU-recognised society) announced an earlier operation. In response, NIAR brought forward the dates of theirs (to 1 to 10 December). So we are now faced with two operations, running through much of December. However, if they keep leap-frogging backwards like this we may find the operations have already taken place and we didn't notice! For sake of completeness, here are the latest notices:

NIAR:

We are happy to inform you that the Hon'ble Minister for communications and IT has approved the NIAR proposal for holding Hamfest – a convention of International amateur radio operators in Lakshadweep Islands (VU7). The event will be held during December 1-3rd, 2006. The event also coincides the year of Golden Jubilee celebrations of Union Territory of Lakshadweep.

Another major attraction for the event is that Indian and foreign hams can obtain permission from Government of India to operate their amateur radio stations during the HAMFEST being held at Lakshadweep Islands during December 1-10th, 2006. Several agencies of the Government of India have come together to support Amateur Radio activity in our country, particularly the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Tourism, Lakshadweep Administration, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of HRD and Department of Telecommunications. This was made possible with encouragement we received from DX agencies like GDXF, Germany and DERA, USA etc.

Hamfest is likely to attract a large number of operators. It has been decided to spread amateur radio stations to different islands to ensure most efficient operations with their

physical separation of 10-60 km. The operations will take place at least from: Agatti Island, Bangaram Island and Kadmat Island. Lots of attention will be put in the organisation of each island operation site: Experienced operators, carefully selected equipments, large antenna farms, and awareness of conditions to all continents on all bands.

ARSI:

The Amateur Radio Society of India, ARSI, has gotten the needed written permission to operate from Kavaratti Island in Lakshadweep, and the callsign VU7LD. The permission is for December 1-30, this year. This callsign will be on all bands and modes, with almost a dozen Indian operators. QSL via W3HMK. The last VU7 operation was in 1989. It is now second worldwide on the most needed list.

NN2C SK

Marty Miller, NN2C, passed away on 30 September. Marty was a regular at the RSGB Convention, so will be familiar to many CDXC members. He was very active in the IOTA Programme (living, of course, on one of the US IOTA groups). Here is an extract from the notes which appeared in *The Daily DX* after his death:

“Marty was active in the Long Island DX Association, LIDXA, for the last 25 years. He was President of the club for seven of those years. Marty was also President of the Quarter Century Wireless Association Long Island Chapter 81, an honorary member of the Mid-Florida DX Association, and was active in the Grumman Amateur Radio Club. Marty regularly brought his new DXpedition videos to LIDXA meetings and, according to K2MFY, Ed Whitman, was always trying out new software and hardware in his station. Ed says Marty "loved the hobby with a fervor and would relate to us, with

gleeful excitement, his stories about chasing down a new IOTA.”

First licensed as WB2VEX, Marty was encouraged in ham radio by his older brother. Marty was active with DXCC, IOTA and lighthouses, a regular Dayton Hamvention attendee, and often went to the IOTA Conference in England. Marty was 82 and was part of the D-Day invasion of Normandy, France.”

Wrap-up

It was great, as always, to meet so many members at Gatwick, some for the first time. Hope you all enjoyed it. I found the 3YØX presentation absolutely spellbinding. I would love to do something like that before decrepitude sets in (if it hasn't already!) but, in fairness, I had been asked at one stage if I was interested and had to demur, given time and money constraints. And, let's be fair, it was nice to be able to chase them from home, too! \$16,000 (plus airmiles) and a month or so of your time is a big commitment to make to the sport of DXing, but what a unique experience!

I can't finish this item without mentioning the ARRL 10m listings, which show our very own G3KMA in solitary splendour at the top, with a massive total of 354 (including deleted). A fantastic achievement on 10m from our (relatively) northerly latitudes, as Roger keeps reminding me!

73 Don, G3XTT

CDXC
CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

Borneo Bulletin

Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX

teleniuslowe@gmail.com

Greetings from Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. The long-running saga of the 9M6DXX antenna mast continues: the joint water tank tower (to provide sufficient water pressure in the house at all times) and radio mast is now erected, complete with 200 gallon water tank at the 20ft level. I am hoping to organise an antenna party and to put a KLM KT-34 beam on top of the tower in time for the CQ World Wide SSB contest, which is still two weeks away as I write this.

The KT-34 beam was first assembled in P29 in 1991 and has never been totally dismantled since. For over 10 years it sat in my garage in Stevenage and was then shipped out here. Unfortunately in that time it had become rather corroded, so a clean-up job was necessary before putting it up in the air. As anyone who knows the KT-34 can attest, disassembling it, cleaning it up, and re-assembling it is a major task, there being almost 400 separate parts, including hardware, and numerous metal-to-metal joints where corrosion can – and does – occur. However, the clean-up job has now been completed and it is just a matter of re-assembling the element halves on to the boom and attaching the balun to the feed arrangement.

The tower is designed to hold a 400 gallon water tank. That amount of water weighs something in the order of 1.6 tons, so I have no fear of antennas overloading this particular tower! Until the beam goes up, it is sporting a simple 20m dipole at the 40ft level.

FT-2000

Back in the late 1980s I bought a Kenwood TS-930S and was so happy with it that unlike most DXers and contesters I never went through the stage of owning a Yaesu

FT-1000 or '1000MP. However, with the move to Sabah last year, I reluctantly decided to sell the TS-930S along with most of my other amateur radio equipment and eventually to buy a new rig out here.

My original intention was to buy an Icom IC-756ProIII which, by all accounts, is a very good rig. Then I saw the first advertisement for a new Yaesu rig, to replace the FT-1000MP series. Anything that is a modernised, updated version of the FT-1000MP must be worth considering, but would it be in the £6,000-£8,000 price bracket? If so, I was not interested! I decided to wait until more details were forthcoming before parting with my cash.

There are no amateur radio retailers in Malaysia. The closest are in Singapore, a 2½-hour flight from here. Fortunately, we have a low-cost airline, Air Asia (www.airasia.com) that from time to time sells off seats at either ridiculously cheap prices or, occasionally, absolutely free of charge other than the ubiquitous airport taxes. So far Eva and I have flown free of charge (at least in one direction and sometimes return) to Kuala Lumpur (several times), Bangkok, Phnom Penh and Langkawi. Earlier in the year Air Asia announced free flights in September from Kota Kinabalu to Johor Bahru, just across the causeway from Singapore. This seemed too good an opportunity to miss.

We booked the flights and spent a very pleasant week in Johor Bahru and Singapore, during which time I visited Blazer Electronics in the famous Sim Lim Tower. There I met Victor, 9V1BH, a larger-than-life Russian character from Krasnoyarsk, who manages the shop. Unfortunately, he said, the FT-2000s had not yet arrived from Yaesu in Japan, but if I

left a deposit I could have one of the first two he was importing. I did so and a week after returning home I received an e-mail from Victor to say that the FT-2000s had now arrived. I needed to go back to Singapore! This time, the flights cost me the equivalent of £54 return (including taxes).

The price of amateur radio equipment in Singapore is very low: the FT-2000 cost the equivalent of £1450. I made enquiries at another shop, Suneast Pte Ltd (literally only a dozen paces from Blazer Electronics) and which specialises in Icom equipment, for a friend of mine who wants to buy the new Icom IC-7000. That is available from stock at £566.

I am *not* recommending that all CDXC members book a flight out to Singapore just to buy their new rigs! It has to be said that the hassle of getting the FT-2000 even the short distance to Kota Kinabalu was considerable. I was hand-carrying the rig myself, but its cardboard box is much larger than the rig itself, and weighs 3.3 kg even when empty, so I decided to post the empty box back to Kota Kinabalu from Singapore. I did not want to send the FT-2000 as checked-in luggage on the flight, because of the risk of it being dropped from a great height or otherwise being maltreated. The FT-2000 is too big to go in a standard aircraft carry-on bag (don't believe the published dimensions: those are without the knobs and other projections!), so I had to buy a new small suitcase in which to carry it.

Finding one just large enough for the rig, but not so huge that it would never be allowed in the aircraft cabin, took the best part of half a day. I was very fortunate that the flight was only half full and I was allowed to carry it on board. Even then, the case was too large (and heavy!) to fit in the overhead luggage compartment or below the seat in front of me, so it occupied the leg-room space of the seat adjacent to me. I can't imagine I would have got away with

any of this on a 100% full Jumbo from Singapore to London!

Bearing all this in mind, the prices quoted by our friends at ML & S, Nevada and W & S do seem pretty reasonable, especially so when you consider that should the rig ever need any repair work carrying out you won't have to ship it back to Singapore! However, having said that, if anyone is travelling through Singapore anyway and willing to take the risk on the warranty, there are some real bargains to be had and I'd be pleased to assist anyone seriously interested in buying a rig here – please e-mail me.

Having eventually got the rig home, how does it work? Well, I have only had it for one day, so it is too early to give a definitive report – it will take a few weeks before I learn how to drive it properly! – but initial results are very promising. My first QSO was with ZL8R (Declan, EI6FR, operating) on 18MHz SSB, using an untuned 20m dipole with very high SWR and a power output of about 8W! I think Yaesu has probably developed another 'classic'.

Third and final 'DXFC' table

Thanks to G3SWH, G3ZSS and G3XTT for their contributions to the 'DXFC' table. Phil, G3SWH, apparently sent in his entry for the previous table, but it fell into one of those mysterious black holes in cyberspace into which e-mails occasionally disappear, never to emerge again. It was good to hear from a former Bornean 'near neighbour', Peter, G3ZSS, who was V85PB from 1992 to 1994. Don, G3XTT, sent a correction to his 'DXFC' total, which must previously have been miscalculated.

As I said last time, I do not plan to run this table indefinitely. Stewart, GM4AFF, has now created a DXFC page on his website at www.gm4aff.net/dx fc/ and he invites CDXC members (and others) to add their scores, so instead of sending your DXFC score to me, why not log on to Stewart's

website and post your score there? Already over 100 DXers have done so, with W6ZH

at the top of the table, having visited 173 entities!

Callsign	'DXFC'	DXCC Operated	IOTA Operated
G3WVG	129	13	12
G3TXF	126	45	34
G3SXW	84	44	19
GM4AFF	84	17	9
9M6DXX	81	34	32
G3SWH	81	22	20
G3LAS	76	4	4
G3ZSS	73	10	6
G3XTT	71	24	14
G4BWP	70	24	7
2E1FHJ	59	1	1
G3RFX	47	7	4
G3VQO	37	9	9
G4AXX	19	5	2

Included are deleted countries (eg Germany, East Germany) but the countries must have existed at the time you visited them (ie you

cannot count Montenegro if it was before independence this year).

The 12th CCF & OHDXF Contest and DX Meeting

Contest Club Finland (CCF) and OH DX Foundation (OHDXF) are proud to announce the 12th CCF & OHDXF Contest and DX Meeting on the 19-21 January 2007. The meeting concept will be the same as last year: a cruise on the Baltic Sea from Helsinki (OH) via the Åland Islands (OHØ) to Stockholm (SM) and back to Helsinki. Cruise schedule (all times are local):

Friday, 19 Jan 2007, 17:30: Ferry leaves Helsinki
Saturday, 20 Jan 2007, 0940: Arrival in Stockholm
Saturday, 20 Jan 2007, 1645: Ferry leaves Stockholm
Sunday, 21 Jan 2007, 0955: Arrival in Helsinki

Presentations on board on Friday evening and on Saturday afternoon (1100-1600 while the ferry is in Stockholm). Contest/DX buffet on Friday evening. À la carte dinner on Saturday evening. More details of special cruise packages, agenda, registration etc. coming soon. Stay tuned! *Book the weekend now!*

Information from the previous CCF & OHDXF meetings can be found on the CCF web pages at www.qsl.net/ccf.

FSDXA St Brandon DXpedition – Bulletin No.1



The Five Star DXers Association (FSDXA) is pleased to announce its next DXpedition, to St Brandon (3B7) to take place in September 2007. FSDXA, closely linked to CDXC (Chiltern DX Club), the UK DX Foundation, is the group which brought you the 1998 9MØC Spratly Islands DXpedition, the subsequent record-breaking 2001 D68C DXpedition to the Comoros and most recently the 2004 3B9C Rodrigues DXpedition. Once again, Yaesu have kindly agreed to be Principal Sponsor, and will be providing twelve FT-2000 transceivers along with six Quadra VL-1000 linears. UK amateur radio retailers Martin Lynch & Sons and Nevada are also committed to sponsoring the operation.

It is hoped that the callsign 3B7C will be allocated. The 'C' in the callsign stands for 'CDXC', the club from which the Five Star DXers Association was formed, and is also a reminder of the group's previous successful operations.

As with previous FSDXA expeditions, this will be a major effort, with a target of more than 100,000 QSOs. There will be up to twelve stations on the air, many using amplifiers and monoband beams, 24 hours a day for almost three weeks, including three weekends, around the autumn equinox when DX propagation on all bands is typically at its best.

Our primary objective is to activate St Brandon 3B7 with a view to giving as many DXers as possible a first contact with this rare DXCC entity and, as a secondary objective, to give as many band-slots as possible. Because the sunspot cycle will be just past the minimum, our emphasis will be on the LF bands. We expect to exceed

100,000 QSOs, a figure that has still not been reached by any DXpeditioning group other than FSDXA. We will be based on Isle du Sud, approximately 250 miles north-east of Mauritius. We have already received agreement in principle from the radio licensing authorities in Mauritius, and have now to finalise all the details of our permits.

Agalega, 3B6, and St Brandon, 3B7, count as a single entity for DXCC. 3B6/7 ranks high in most wanted listings, especially on LF and in the USA. 3B6/7 is much rarer than both the Comoros (D6) and Rodrigues (3B9), so demand should be huge. The last two expeditions to 3B6/7 were 3B7RF (53,533 QSOs) in 1998 and 3B6RF (64,239 QSOs) in 2001.

Despite these DXpeditions 3B6/7 is already well up on the most wanted lists. In the 2005 DX Magazine survey, 3B7 ranked 45th worldwide (up from 75th the previous year) and 18th from the US West Coast. It ranked 58th worldwide in the 2005 Most Wanted RTTY Countries survey, needed by 41.5% of respondents. We expect each of these rankings to have risen by anything up to ten percentage points when the 2006 survey is published, as there has been no recent activity from 3B6/7.

The multinational team is already close to being complete, with the following having signed up to take part: 9M6DXX (Steve), DK7YY (Falk), DL7AKC (Jens), EI5DI (Paul), GØOPB (Tony), G3BJ (Don), G3IZD (Ivan), G3NHL (Chris), G3NUG (Neville), G3SVL (Chris), G3XTT (Don), G4KIU (Nigel), G4TSH (Justin), K3NA (Eric), N6HC (Arnie), SM5AQD (Hawk), W3WL (Wes) and WF5T (Paul). Many of

these operators were with us on one or more of our previous DXpeditions.

At this time we are seeking contributions from sponsors to help defray the very significant logistics costs of this DXpedition. There is no electricity on the island, so generators and fuel will have to be shipped. Accommodation is also limited, so we will have to hire tents and marquees. We also will need to take food, water and other supplies sufficient for a large team for three weeks (plus contingencies). Most equipment has to be shipped by container to Mauritius and then all equipment and supplies taken to St Brandon from Mauritius by chartered vessel (8 days charter in total, at around \$2,000 per day).

Donations in Sterling may be sent to the Five Star DXers Association Treasurer, John Linford, G3WGV, Pennine View, Sleagill, Cumbria CA10 3HD, England (e-mail: john@g3wgv.com): please make cheques payable to the 'Five Star Expedition Fund'. Donations in other currencies may be made by various means. The relevant account details are as follows:

- IBAN Number: IBAN GB14 BARC 2068 7950 8302 16
- SWIFTBIC Number: BARCGB22
- Bank Name: Barclays Bank
- Bank Address: PO Box 44, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1YA
- Sort code: 20-68-79
- Account Name: The Five Star Expedition Fund
- Account Number: 50830216

Donations may also be made by PayPal via the FSDXA Website either using your PayPal account or by using your credit/debit card. Donations in US dollars may be sent to Wes Lamboley, W3WL, 690 Hunterhill Way, Roswell, GA 300075, USA (e-mail:

BLamboley@aol.com). Please make checks payable to 'Wesley Lamboley'. Donations in Japanese Yen may be sent to Taizo Arakawa, JA3AER, 2-974-8-1502 Sayama, Osakasayama, Osaka 589-0005, Japan (e-mail: ja3aer@ares.eonet.ne.jp). All donations will be acknowledged.

The logos of all DX clubs etc which have helped to sponsor the DXpedition will be shown on the QSL card, as will the names and call signs of those who make an individual contribution in advance of the DXpedition (subject, in each case, to a certain minimum amount).

This first Bulletin is intended mainly to alert you to our upcoming DXpedition. G3NUG and G3BJ will be visiting St Brandon later this month to conduct a detailed site survey. More information will be forthcoming once that survey is complete. We are also building a website accessible via both www.3b7c.com and www.fsdxa.com/3b7c where information will be posted as it becomes available.

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10 October 2006

FSDXA Publicity Officer

CDXC
CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

QRV Fox-Papa from Miquelon

Roger Western, G3SXW
Nigel Cawthorne, G3TXF

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We flew with Air Canada to Halifax, Nova Scotia (VE1) and then with a 40-seater Air St Pierre plane out to St Pierre, the capital of Fox-Papa. A 60-minute high-speed ferry ride then delivered us to Miquelon island, where we stayed at the Maxotel and operated CW for four days.

The Maxotel was definitely one of the best hotels we have ever encountered for DXpeditioning.

When: October 2006
Location: Maxotel, Miquelon
IOTA: NA-032
Grid: GN27
Co-ordinates: 47°N 56°W
Callsigns: FP/G3SXW
CW on 80, 40, 20 and 15m
FP/G3TXF
CW on 30, 17 and 12m
Licences: CEPT

QSOs (net of dupes)

Band	80m	40m	30m	20m	17m	15m	12m	Total
QSOs	703	1,149	2,409	2,260	1,150	169	1	7,841
Op	G3SXW	G3SXW	G3TXF	G3SXW	G3TXF	G3SXW	G3TXF	Both

Why Fox Papa?

Any dyed-in-the-wool DXCC chaser has worked FP on many bands and several modes. But then again we rarely come across such an ideal DXpeditioning QTH: ham-friendly, right beside salt water, CEPT, easy travel. It was like falling off a log really.

And we wanted to have some pile-ups. The old itch had set in because it had been some time since we had been away anywhere. FP was begging us to visit and it would be an interesting place to see. Having operated from several French overseas locations, there was the attraction of adding another overseas F-prefix to the list.

Rarity

Rarity is defined by how long the pile-ups last. When first getting on the band with a

new and slightly unusual callsign and starting to make quick-fire '5NN' QSOs, a pile-up is assured. It may last an hour or a year.

In the case of Fox-Papa it was about three days and then the pile-up eased off. So our decision to stay for only four days was spot on. In amongst these callers there are always new DXers or those returning after a break of some years who 'need' it. Indeed a number of direct QSL requests say 'tnx for the new one'. Everything is relative.

Maxotel

These days it has almost become a question of finding a hotel location that is suitable for DXpeditioners rather than picking a rare country and accepting any old QTH. We discovered that previous FP DXpeditions had almost all stayed on Miquelon at the Maxotel.

This is a ten-room 'motel', self-catering, breakfast provided, with all mod cons. What is exciting for DXpeditioners is that it fronts on to the ocean, with acres of space for antennas and no tourists or animals to trample on them. There are NO trees, which is a big advantage for those with verticals. The ocean is right there, stretching from NNW through East round to South, covering all of Europe, Asia and most of the world. There is a small bump just behind the hotel which blocks the Pacific somewhat.

Testament to the DXpedition pedigree of this hotel is the display of QSL cards pinned up on the hotel reception wall, about a dozen of them! That is a first!

QRV

Within a couple of hours of arriving we had each installed a vertical and set up the stations. Everything worked first time.

We are at the low-point in the sunspot cycle and it showed. On the first and last (fourth) day we did have some signals on 15m, but on the middle two days even 17m was rather scratchy. Most of the business was on 40, 30 and 20m.

At our sunset 80m was good to UK, almost like a pipeline. FP/G3SXW worked 75 UK stations on this band. That was fun. After all, it is only about 2,000 miles, so it is second-hop, and all sea path. This opening also reached PA, DL and even SP.

Unfortunately openings to JA, where FP would be most needed, were very poor. Only on the first morning were there short bursts to JA on 20 and on 30m. This is a polar path. Signals from W/VE were surprisingly weak on HF and unsurprisingly loud on LF.

Miquelon

The French have a concept which we do not understand: 'overseas counties' (Départements Outre-Mer). These are fully a part of

the mainland, but can be located half way around the globe. FP is one of these. It is just like being in France: croissants, tricolor flags, gendarmes and all. They are subject to laws, taxes, voting etc. just as if they were on the mainland.

Most of the population live on St Pierre island, about 6,000 people, with only about 700 on the much larger island of Miquelon. The third island, Langlade, is also large, but is a nature reserve with no inhabitants. FP lies at 47° North, a bit further South than London, but of course it suffers cold winters due to its location immediately beside the North American landmass. It is just a few miles South of Newfoundland (VO1).

On Miquelon there are two hotels, two restaurants, two shops, a hardware store, an Internet café, a wind farm with ten propellers, and a church. There are no trees and it does get windy.

Since the EU so successfully killed off the fishing industry, and as tourism is not enough to support the population, the economy of FP is entirely dependent on hand-outs from Paris. Everyone, or so it seems, is employed as a civil servant. Yet the place is well developed and maintained with, apparently, a good standard of living. Presumably it is sufficiently important strategically to France to keep a toe-hold in North America, so this investment is considered valuable.

Jean-Pierre FP5CJ

There are no active hams on Miquelon, but we transited St Pierre overnight both ways, so had a chance to spend time with Jean-Pierre, FP5CJ. There are a few other licensed radio amateurs, but he is the only one who is currently active. His uncle is Laurent, FP5EJ, who has been active on CW over the years. Recent winds had severely damaged Jean-Pierre's antennas, so his one-time 3-element beam is now just a rotary dipole.

Fox-Papa Operating Routine

As on most trips, once the stations are set up and the initial pile-ups have been run for a few hours, a regular routine sets in centered around maximising QSOs, getting some sleep and eating. This all worked a treat in Miquelon. Although breakfast was provided by the Maxotel, we had to take the short walk into town for our evening meal. During our short stay we tried out each of the restaurants. Despite being in the back and beyond, but still being in France, the food of course was excellent.

The low sunspot numbers and generally poor radio conditions meant that 30m was effectively closed between midnight local time and until just before dawn. This allowed the WARC band operator to get a good night's sleep and not miss any significant activity. Even with 40 and 80m things slackened off in the small hours local time. However both FP/G3SXW and FP/G3TXF endeavoured to be back at their operating positions just before dawn.

Even though radio conditions were generally poor during our visit to FP, the weather, on the other hand, was excellent, with clear blue skies all day long. The

sunrise over the sea each morning made it worth being on the air at that time, even if the bands were pretty dull.

Operating was mostly during the day, with the odd pause to do some food shopping in town for the snacks that we prepared in the self-catering apartment that was our shack.

Au Revoir St Pierre et Miquelon

After four days and nearly 8,000 QSOs FP/G3SXW and FP/G3TXF packed up the stations and took the return ferry to St Pierre. A whistle-stop taxi tour was made of the island on our way to the airport. Again the weather was brilliant, with spectacular views of the surrounding ocean and across to Newfoundland.

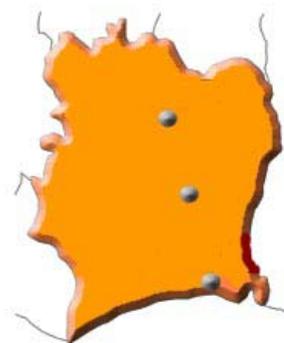
Jean-Pierre FP5CJ came to see us off at St Pierre's magnificent little airport. Even though the visit was short, we enjoyed every minute in St Pierre et Miquelon. FP is a great place to visit for radio, particularly if you go to Miquelon and to the Maxotel. There is even a small store of radio antennas at the hotel. We left behind a Stepp-IR 40-10m vertical in the hope that it might be used in the future by some other visiting DX-peditioners to Fox-Papa.

Which country outlines are these? (answers on p. 45)

1.



2.



Expedition to Mozambique

C94KF, AF-103, and C96KF, AF-061

Ken Francom, G3OCA

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For several years I have been receiving QSL cards for C91RF both direct and via the Bureau and always from Japan. I came to the conclusion that somewhere in Japan I was listed as the QSL manager. These cards I have either returned or forwarded to their correct destination, DL6DQW.

For the past two years I have been trying to organise another IOTA island expedition following my trips to 9G, TR and DU. I decided to contact DL6DQW to see if he would be interested in a joint venture.

The reply came by return: yes, Reinhardt would be really interested. Large numbers of e-mails were exchanged discussing the multitude of details which have to be agreed before such a trip can come about. He found the necessary maps and confirmed with IOTA that our proposed destination would be accepted for the last unactivated group in Mozambique, namely Zambezia District.

It was decided that I would travel to Dresden to meet Reinhardt for the first time and to decide the timing and travel arrangements. The plan decided upon was as follows. The team, DL6DQW and his XYL, another friend of Reinhardt's - a doctor and keen naturalist - and I would meet in Johannesburg on 1 August 2006. There Reinhardt would hire a 6-seater light aircraft (he is a qualified pilot with his own aircraft). He would then fly us to Quelimane via Maputo, where we would collect licences arranged by some friends, and then go to Quelimane.

Quelimane, a town of some 100,000 inhabitants, is the nearest airport to our island destination, some 100 kms to the south and with no road access. Although the

light aircraft would be expensive, US\$ 150 per flying hour, it seemed a far better choice than a voyage on a local native boat. We would need to purchase every item of necessary stores - food, water, generators, fuel etc. - in Quelimane and fly them to an airstrip at Chinde on the island.

We were fortunate that Reinhardt had travelled several times to Mozambique and had friends in Maputo. He had also contacted some UNESCO aid workers on the island of Ihla Inhacamba, where we were to operate. All these contacts certainly made a difficult task a great deal easier.

We intended to operate two stations. We had three transceivers, a 600W linear, a 3-element yagi for 20-15-10m and an assortment of verticals and dipoles for the other bands.

C9 is fairly rare on the lower bands, so we had two basic aims: to activate a new IOTA and provide people with a new country on the low bands.

Like many plans it did not survive its first contact with Africa. We met in Johannesburg OK, but the weather and technical problems with the aircraft meant that we were frustratingly delayed for almost a week, which we spent in a nice lodge near Johannesburg. In order to save time, we decided to fly over the Drakensberg Mountains to Vilanculos. There we could refuel and fly on to Quelimane. Our departure from Johannesburg was delayed until the afternoon of Monday, 7 August, which meant we had to stay overnight in Vilanculos. On Tuesday we finally touched down on Ilha Inhacamba. We had made a

circuit of the airstrip prior to landing, which gave time for a large gathering of people to greet us; visitors are a very rare event on the island.

A pick-up truck appeared accompanied by Jose, who had come down from Quelimane to be our guide. He was a native of Mozambique who had spent 13 years in Germany, so he was able to communicate between our team and the local people.

We travelled into 'town', which consists of a number of dilapidated bungalows built for the Portuguese sugar company employees. They had fled almost overnight during the troubles and had left a sort of ghost town behind.

A large empty bungalow called Sena House was put at our disposal. This building appeared to have been the headquarters of the Sena Sugar Company. The furniture consisted of four chairs and a dining table, four easy chairs and a coffee table, four beds with mosquito nets - and two desks, which quickly became the site of the two stations. There was fortunately a toilet and washing area, including a cold shower.

Cooking was done by a very pleasant local girl. There is almost a complete lack of green vegetables on the island and little meat, but plenty of fish and bananas.

As we got the stations operational the antennas were the first priority. The German verticals were no problem, as we had plenty of space in and to the side of the building. However, the 3-element yagi was a different proposition. There were two large disused flagpoles, but they were about six inches in diameter and we had nothing that was going to fit that. A short piece of wood was found to which the boom was clamped and then hauled onto the roof and secured to one of the poles pointing north. There was no possibility of rotating the antenna, but it was the best we could do. Finally the 30-17-12m dipole was slung between the two flagpoles.

It soon became evident that propagation was really poor. As we had anticipated our main bands were 17, 30 and 40m. There was a total lack signals between 0300z and 1200z, so we used this time for sleeping and exploration. Due to the poor conditions we concentrated on CW, as we often called CQ on SSB with no takers - even when running 500W. A change to CW usually brought results in the form of a busy pile-up. Europe and Japan produced quite large numbers of QSOs, but we had to try really hard for the East Coast of North America and even harder for the West Coast. Almost no QSOs were made with South America and only three or four with VK. A few ZS stations were worked, but almost no other Africans. The generators supplied power, so we became the only house with lights in the place, except when - to everyone's surprise - the local supply came on. It was, however, on for only two hours on Saturday evening and the same on Sunday!

We had arranged a trip up the Zambezi River and the size of the island can be judged by the fact that it took us three hours to travel by boat along just one side of the island, which lay some 400m off the mainland in the mouth of the river. We met a dug-out canoe on the way and found that it had a fine catch of crayfish. We bought the whole catch and dined on them for four days. The whole island exists on simple subsistence farming augmented by fishing, with no industry or employment. It was like a step back into an earlier age.

After seven days of operation it was finally time to take the antennas down and pack all the radio gear ready for the next part of our journey in C9. We loaded the pick-up truck and said goodbye to our guide - with a present of one of our expedition T-Shirts, wishing also farewell to our cook who, besides her culinary duties, did our laundry. We took off, watched by a crowd of local people, and headed north for Quirimba, AF-061.

Having previously operated on the island, Reinhardt was anxious to go there in order to say a last goodbye to a member of one of the German families who owned the island and who was terminally ill. We landed and were met by the usual pick-up truck, which took us to an attractive bungalow only some 30m from the sea. There was only power from the main generator from 1200-2230 local, so our operating time was a little curtailed. However, we found that conditions had dramatically improved and 20m SSB was open to EU/JA and later to the East Coast of the USA. We even worked a KL7, which is a really hard path from East Africa.

The resident family offered us superb hospitality and made our stay extremely pleasant. The weather was, as usual, wall-to-wall blue sky – hot, but not excessively so. Our operating time passed rapidly and with the strong signal levels many QSOs were made. We had originally not intended to visit the island, so we had not checked the IOTA number. Reinhardt thought it was AF-062, and then somebody called us to say it was AF-072, both of which were wrong. I put out a call for anybody with a directory.

G8DQZ and 9A2AA replied, saying it was AF-061, thus ending an embarrassing episode.

We only had the verticals up, so packing did not take long. Saying goodbye to our wonderful hosts we loaded the aircraft for the last time and flew south to start our long journey home via Maputo and Johannesburg.

I would like to express both my and my XYL Joan's grateful thanks to Ken, G3NBC, for keeping a daily sked which provided an opportunity to confirm that all was well when there was no other means of communication from the islands.

The C94KF/C96KF team is very grateful for the support provided by CDXC, GMDX, IREF and NHARG, which helped towards the cost of operation from the AF-103 and AF-061 islands which are so difficult to reach by any of the normal means of transport. Our thanks are also due to ZS6WB, who lent a 500W linear, the property of ZS6WPX, to the expedition.

Chip Margelli, K7JA, joins Heil Sound

Chip Margelli, K7JA, has joined Heil Sound Ltd as the Vice President of Sales and Marketing. In his new capacity, Chip will be responsible for all national and international amateur radio sales and marketing plans. Chip brings his great passion and knowledge of amateur radio to this new post.

For over 42 years Chip has been active in DXing and international radiosport competition. Chip is currently active on all amateur bands from 1.8 through 1,300 MHz, including HF DX and contesting, VHF weak-signal terrestrial and moonbounce work, and satellite operation. He is fluent in Japanese and Morse Code.

In May 2005, Chip and partner Ken Miller, K6CTW, made an appearance on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* on NBC, competing with (and defeating) the US champion cell-phone text messenger in a message-completion speed contest. Outside of amateur radio, Chip enjoys photography, astronomy, and is a marathon runner. He may be reached at Chip@heilsound.com.

Visa? No Problem

Roger Western, G3SXW

g3sxw@compuserve.com

DXpeditioning is not just all about flying around the world and setting up antennas and operating pile-ups and laughing. Quite a lot of preparation work is involved, including getting visas.

After TZ5A (CQ WW CW in November), Fred, G4BWP, Vince, K5VT and Roger, G3SXW, will do a three-day reconnaissance trip to hopefully set up a project for the VooDudes to do CQ WW CW in a new country in 2007. Once travel plans were in place I started to enquire about visas. All third-world countries demand an entry visa, so I assumed that this would be no exception. How could I find out what we have to do to get visas?

Finding the Embassy

This Embassy has no website, so I started with the FCO website. Sure enough it has an Embassy in London. Bingo! This will be easy. Address and telephone number provided. Ring-ring. Ring-ring. Ring-ring. No-one answered after dialling the number thirty times over two days. Must be a problem. Google. Ah, here's a different address and telephone number. Ring-ring. Ring-ring. Yell.com lists no such embassy. Eventually I went back to Google. Here was a third address and telephone number. Ring-ring. Ring-ring. Ah, big progress: an answering machine. I left a message. No-one called me back. No surprise there.

I called again the next day. Ah yes, this used to be the number, but they have moved on, he said. And no, I don't know their new number. Back to the second number. Ring-ring. Ring-ring. Nothing. Two weeks into my efforts (thank God I had started really early) and I still haven't even tracked down their Embassy. In desperation I went back to calling the first number. Ring-ring. Ring-

ring. Then I alternated between the two. This was becoming a full-time job. But there was no more information on the web, so I had no option but to persevere with these telephone numbers.

At last, a human being, a laydee weez a French accent: very encouraging. Yes, we are here at this address. Magic! Yes, you do need a visa; send a reply envelope to get a copy of the form. I posted this the same day.

Two weeks later still no reply, no forms. Ring-ring. Ring-ring. After two days of trying, Madame Fifi (yes, her real name) answered. I have since discovered that this Embassy only works on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but that was really hard to find out and I'm still not quite sure if this is accurate. Oh, she said, did you not get the form? She remembered me - a good sign, she's not dealing with too many enquiries, so the service should be OK. No, I said - no forms. OK she said, I passed your enquiry on, but I will post one to you now. What's your address?

Drum-roll, please, master: the form arrived the next morning. It had only taken three weeks of persistent effort! No information sheet was attached, but I had furiously scribbled down Madame Fifi's instructions about what documents were needed and the fee etc.

I would apply for Fred's together with mine. I already had his (second) passport, fresh back from Paris where the TZ/Mali visa had been issued, and would fill in the form for him and forge his signature. All I now needed was his passport photographs. I steeled myself for the sight of Fred's bewhiskered face again. He sent them to me and finally I had everything ready: two copies of the form for each of us, two

photographs, a photocopy of our Air France e-ticket and of our hotel booking - and of our bank statements, to prove that we wouldn't have to throw ourselves upon the financial mercy of the local welfare system - HA! Yes, Madame Fifi said, Tuesday morning would be fine to submit the applications. Usually it takes 48 hours, but she would do them for me the same day, if I came back an hour later. Come to the Embassy at 11 o'clock.

Submitting Applications

We were now nearly four weeks into this charade, but finally I would get to submit the applications. I arrived at the Embassy at 1100, but no-one answered the door. I kept ringing the door bell. I called them on my mobile phone: ring-ring, no reply. I waited on the pavement for 30 minutes, ringing their door-bell every minute or two. Eventually someone let themselves in with a key, heading for another company on a different floor, so I slipped in with him. He didn't seem to mind. I climbed three floors and found the Embassy: 3-4 rooms on two floors with, as far as I could see, about five staff. Hello, no-one is answering your door-bell. Oh, really? She must have popped out. Can I request a visa? Yes you can. Wait there.

I waited for another 30 minutes. Then a slightly officious lady, but seemingly competent, dealt with my enquiry, busily photocopying all these silly documents and making a dossier each for Fred and me. Then came the handing over of the money: £65 each could be paid ONLY IN CASH notes. I unloaded £130 from my wallet. She double-counted it and said come back on Thursday. I pleaded that Madame Fifi had said it could be done the same day, and I had to travel all the way from Surrey, begging for her mercy. No! Could I see Madame Fifi, please. No, she is upstairs. I left the Embassy, tail between legs and went home, via a lunchtime pub: I needed a beer to cry into. That cheered me up. The

application phase had finally been achieved. Real progress!

Collecting Visas

Two days later, Thursday morning, I made the 1½-hour journey again. Now the form that I had filled in stated the expected arrival date as 29 November and the length of stay as one week. Please note this for future reference, dear reader. I got to the Embassy. Same irritating problem: I couldn't get in. Ring-ring. Again I slipped in with a keyholder who just happened to come along and presented myself on the third floor (no elevator). Oh, the lady who does visas is not here, you will have to wait.

An hour goes by. Ninety minutes go by. The first lady was getting embarrassed herself and started to dig out the passports. The drawer with the outstanding applications had a total of only four waiting. So she quickly found our two passports in their little dossiers. I was relieved to see these old friends still intact. I was allowed to glance at the visas, which had been dutifully stuck in.

Then she said that they had not yet been stamped - I would have to wait. After another 15 minutes the vaguely competent one came in, carrying her weekly Marks & Spencer shopping, huffing and puffing, and apologised for the delay. She would get the official stamp. Err, there's a problem: the stamp is in the Ambassador's office, which is locked. He's not in yet (nearly 1pm). You'll have to wait.

Ten more minutes and in strolls the Ambassador dressed in a suit and shirt, but no tie, looking distinctly hung over with glazed eyes. This really has turned into a circus! Fortunately I am so un-stressed since retiring and had nothing else to do for the afternoon, so I just took all this on the chin and carried on reading DX Magazine.

The stamp appeared and was ceremoniously applied to each passport. They were then taken to the Ambassador upstairs for his signature. Another ten minutes and they were presented to me - job done - excellent - smiles all round. Goodbye. I went back to the reception area and stopped to check the visas. Nice piece of pretty paper filling, yet another full page of our passports, fancy stamp, signature written over - very professional-looking. Looking more closely, I couldn't quite make it out under the big rubber stamp - but yes, it says (in French): 'Last permitted date of leaving the country'. The silly woman had written 28 October instead of 28 December: 30 days before instead of after our arrival.

I went back to Miss Official to point out the error. She had disappeared. I spoke to Miss Stupid, who tried to persuade me nonchalantly that this is all OK, it's all correct. She didn't have a clue. Oh, alright then, you can get it extended in the country. Oh no, says I. Not good enough. OK you will have to wait for Miss Official to return. Twenty minutes later she does return and is, to be fair, very apologetic about her error. She will get a new visa issued. Please wait.

It goes around the whole loop again, stamp, upstairs blah-blah. But it's interesting that this time the whole process took only 40 minutes. By now I have finished the DX Magazine and most of the CDXC *Digest* as well. She finally handed over the passports, which I inspected in minute detail - all fine, a new visa page stuck precisely over the old one. I heaved a sigh of relief.

I exited the building nearly four hours after arriving. Starving hungry, thirsty, needing a pee. Solution? Go to a pub and cry into my beer yet again. But then I miraculously bucked up my spirits. I had the visas. Hard to believe, but yes: I had the visas! I had fought and I had prevailed, I had beaten the very system which is seemingly designed

precisely not to allow me to get a visa. But we Brits are made of sterner stuff that, oh yes we are. Stiff upper lip, Rule Britannia!

All in a Good Cause

Actually, of course, this whole tale is simply one of incompetence: people who are not bothered about doing their job right and seemingly arrogant just to cover up for their incompetence. We have often seen this before in West Africa. But as first impressions go these were not very friendly people - more like the unpleasant people of Cameroon than the kind people of Ghana or Burkina Faso. Ah well, we shall see what awaits us in November.

These are the normal trials and tribulations of putting together trips to third-world countries. If you have the motivation, then it is simply a challenge. You know what they say: there are no problems, only opportunities and challenges. But one thing we have learned is to have your paperwork a hundred point nought per cent in order, so that no petty official with epaulettes can cause you grief.

It's all in a very good cause. When running pile-ups next year all these mini-horror stories will be forgotten. All in a day's work. Well, I mean ter say, guv, you gotter lahf inchoo, mee ole sun?

73 de Roger, G3SXW

CDXC
CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

Good Ears

Roger Western, G3SXW

Listen, Listen, Listen

The old cliché is ‘Listen, listen, listen’. This is the very best advice that any new DXer can ever hear. But it does help if you have a decent rig and antenna to listen with as well as operating skills. Another important factor that is often underestimated is the general noise level at your particular QTH.

In the good old days there were practically no sources of local QRN - and any new one, like a sparking power line, would be sniffed out and attempts made to correct the problem. These days I am afraid it is very different. Every DXer, apart from the lucky few who live isolated in the countryside, suffers from specific noises like thermostats that switch on and off or garbage produced by televisions and other electrical appliances. What is more sinister is the creeping level of general white noise, increasing as the years go by, so that we barely notice it. For a new DXer this must just seem to be the norm. This noise emanates from many household appliances up and down the street, power supplies etc.

It is really fascinating to suddenly show up on a DXpedition to a remote island, switch on the rig and hear a pin drop. It is quite a shock, I can tell you, and reminds us of how things used to be at home some years ago and how bad they have now become. We are just so imbued with a permanent noise of S3, S4 or worse that we have come to live with it and accept it as normal.

Location, Location, Location

This is another often-heard cliché! But here we are referring to the variation in ambient levels of white noise between different locations. Do you live in a ‘quiet’ location? How do you judge that? I reckon that I am

lucky. It’s generally pretty quiet here, although noisier than it used to be.

You can compare by listening to the receivers of friends across town, or (here’s a good one) listening on a Field Day site, which might be well away from population centres.

For a serious DXer this is a major issue when choosing a new house. As well as checking local geological maps at your library to choose an area with good ground-conductivity, it might very well be worth spending some time with a portable radio just listening to the noise level in that street.

And we haven’t even mentioned the sources of noise that are inside your own shack. Solid-state power supplies and computer screens are favourites here. It would be worth spending an evening checking this out by switching off individual items one at a time. Don’t forget to fire up your rig’s back-up power supply as well. When checking, it may be worth listening to more than one band, for example one LF and one HF. At first leave the antenna connected.

On the Air

Having had a good old moan about noise levels, let’s turn to the point which prompted me to ‘put pen to paper’ in the first place: on-air experiences.

We have all come across an odd case where a station constantly calls CQ, seemingly ignoring all his callers. Perhaps he is listening split by mistake, or has left the CQ loop going and fallen asleep. But I suspect that the most common cause is local noise – he simply can’t hear his callers.

Last November in CQ WW CW many callers spent a long time trying to make contact with a 9N7, keen to get the new multiplier. The 9N7 was fairly strong, but he just kept CQing. Later I asked one of the German operators about that and, sure enough, he said that they were in the centre of Katmandu with a horrendous noise level.

What should those callers have done? Well, I suppose they should have just given up and gone in search of more fruitful pastures. Maybe propagation would improve later so that stronger signals could be heard above the noise level in the 9N7 shack.

What should the 9N7 have done? If they knew that an S7 noise level was covering up most of their callers, they should have stopped CQing and gone into Search & Pounce mode instead, then calling the stations that they were able to copy. But it is sometimes hard to discern whether there are weak callers being covered up by noise (because you can't hear them!) or whether the band is dead.

Weak Signal DXing

Everything is relative. We can hear an S9 signal even if we have an S8 noise level. Generally speaking, all other things being equal (which they clearly are not), then the signal strength received at both ends of the circuit is the same. In other words the same power with the same antenna will be heard by both stations at the same signal strength, benefiting equally from propagation between points A and B. Yes, we know some reasons why this may not always be so, but let's go with this thinking for a moment, generalised though it may be.

In practical terms if you hear a station that is very loud, then you would expect him to be able to hear you. Even a difference of a kilowatt or two of power or a highly directional beam will still allow him to hear you if he is S9. The QRP operator knows this equation very well: if the DX station is

S5 or less then he will probably not hear your 10W – unless he also is running QRP.

Another way to paint this picture is to point out the obvious: the louder the signal from a rare station, the bigger the pile-up is, simply because more DXers can hear him. More DXers can hear him on their poor antennas, but can also hear him through their local QRN. The converse is also true: the weaker the rare station, the smaller the pile-up will be, because fewer DXers can hear him. It will always be the DXer with the high local noise level who will lose out.

A Rare QSO

All of which leads me to describe an unusual QSO that I made recently on 30m at sunset. I was idly tuning around 10.105 MHz and heard a really weak signal sending fast CW. He was peaking 449, but was mostly 339 or even 229. It was 7P8JF and he was CQing with no callers. I called him with 10W and he came straight back to me. We exchanged the normal 5NN, with no repeats necessary, and the QSO was completed a mere twenty seconds after I first identified him.

This was an unusual contact. Firstly, it is rare for such a weak signal to hear my QRP call. This suggests that the propagation path was open, but maybe he was also running QRP? I will try to find out.

Secondly, why was no-one else calling him? 7P8 on 30m is relatively rare – if he had been louder I am absolutely sure that he would have generated a sizeable pile-up. Maybe he was operating inside a cave or with a 2ft whip. Whatever the explanation, he was really weak and hardly anybody was hearing him. Yet he heard me first call with only 10W. Why did he then proceed to call CQ for the next few minutes with no callers?

A similar story was when the VooDoo Contest Group was operating CQ WW CW from 5U5Z and I was at home (the first and

only time that I have had to miss one of these fabulous trips!). Naturally, I was very interested to check out the operation and signal strengths. Soon after the start of the contest I found them on 80m, on about 3.545 MHz. They were weak at that time - about 549, but with no QSB, perfectly readable on a clear frequency. Yet they had almost no callers. I sat and monitored their frequency for 20 minutes while they CQed continuously, making only a handful of contacts - while I was copying them a solid Q5 the whole time. So frustrating! Why was no-one else reading them? A rare multiplier should have been generating much interest, even though they were rather weak.

Theories

So, in these two examples something unusual was happening. One possibility is that many DXers do not have adequate filters to be able to pick out weaker signals from a band busy with loud signals clunking and clacking away. Another theoretical possibility is that many DXers do not have the skill to copy weak signal CW. In the two examples above: the 7P8 is a DXing scenario, so maybe it's the old Cluster syndrome and no-one had got around to sending out an alert. Without the Cluster alert maybe many operators do not have the skill to identify the callsign of the weak CW. But in the 5U5Z example I find it bizarre that serious contesters, many of whom do not rely on the Cluster to find their mults - and most of whom have the necessary operating skills - were not picking him out of the noise.

So, I come full-circle and conclude that I have a QTH that is quieter than other DXers, so compared to the average or the majority I am able to copy weak DX better than others. Within a 100 yard radius I have only about ten households - a low density for the outer suburbs of London (and a major reason why I chose to buy this house).

Lessons?

The old clichés about 'listen' and 'location' are very true. But given a location that, for the moment, we just have to live with - and given our very best efforts to listen our hearts (ears?) out - then what else can we do?

My main conclusion is to always bear in mind the possibility that the chap at the other end of the circuit may have a different ambient local noise level, either lower or higher than yours. Hardly earth-shattering, I know, but it is an important factor which may be underestimated and which we should build into the equation. We should allow that apart from difference in output power and antennas, it just might be that the hidden spectre of local QRN is affecting the comms, either at your or at his end of the circuit. If both ends are affected equally, then the problem is much less noticeable.

The next time the fellow just CQs in your face, seeming to ignore all callers, please allow the possibility that he has high local QRN and may not even realise that signals from his callers are being covered up.

Good DX!

Getting your priorities right?

A delightful exchange heard recently on 2m FM in the Bristol area: one station telling another that:

"I live on my own."

To which the other station replies:

"I *don't* live on my own. I've got a dog and a wife."

Eye Ess Zero Pile-ups

Roger Western, G3SXW g3sxw@btinternet.com

Times they are a-changing. You can now fly around Europe virtually for free! So, in October Ian, G3WVG, and I flew to Sardinia, ISØ, for a day trip. We left Stansted early morning and got back late evening. Ryanair charged us one penny (1p) each way, plus airport taxes of about £26 each. We would have about twelve hours on the island.

Landing at Alghero on the north-west coast, we jumped in a hire car and headed for the north coast, about twenty miles away. We found a place to park up immediately beside the north-facing sea and fired up the IC-706. First we had to stop at a hardware store and invest £2.50 in two 10ft lengths of wood slat to make a 'mast' to hold up the dipole. The IC-706 was connected to the car battery with the engine running and we were away.

ISØ/G3WVG was QRV on 20m CW and we were really impressed at how loud all the signals were. This was an excellent site. You can just 'feel' if a site is working or not. Complete absence of man-made noise makes the band feel fresh and alive as well. With SXW logging in a little book, Ian quickly fired off 100 QSOs and then we went for lunch! A fabulous lunch it was too, in a seafood restaurant in Porto Torres. Naturally, we had to celebrate with some good Italian white wine too! Then it was off up to the Stintino peninsula to another site right beside the lapping waters of the Mediterranean. This time ISØ/G3SXW fired up and knocked off 100 QSOs on 30m CW. Then a brief drive-through visit to the towns of Alghero and Fertilia and it was time to get back to the airport.

What fun! The weather was perfect - and it was a slightly insane thing to be doing. Getting QRV was down to Ian, who managed a 9 kg carry-on bag with the rig, keyer, small ATU, a short piece of coax and

some wire. No tools are allowed in carry-on bags, so dipole lengths were adjusted by the ancient method of biting with the teeth! SXW's carry-on luggage consisted of a newspaper and his passport. It felt very strange to be travelling so far with NO luggage at all!

The strangest thing that happened that day was only 15 minutes after getting QRV the first time. A car pulled up and a gentleman approached us. He said in Italian, "Is that an Icom 706?". Wow! That was a surprise. It turned out he was ISØBOW, but he was in a big hurry so stayed only for a moment.

So, this must go in the record books as the DXpedition which was a) the briefest ever, b) the cheapest ever, c) the most efficient in terms of cost per QSO. It also confirmed yet again that anyone can show up on the bands and create a mini pile-up by sending brief 5NN exchanges with an unusual callsign. It also confirmed, yet again, the power of the DX Cluster - until a spot is sent, there is no pile-up, then it explodes. What a shame that so few people are actually tuning the bands these days. My theory is that 'rarity' can be judged by how long the pile-ups last: it was three days on Fox-Papa and would have probably been only a day on ISØ, had we stayed QRV.

The moral of the story: with a little ingenuity and staying abreast of the bargain-basement airline deals you can mount a fun DXpedition to an unrare place for very little cost and enjoy short-lived pile-ups. In passing, you can also have a lot of fun: Sardinia seemed to us an ideal holiday location. Now, if only the sunspots would return, we could organise a trip to somewhere exciting. Meanwhile, I wonder where else we can go for a few hours of pile-up fun? What a giggle!

The Grumpy Old Ham

by Dai Pol-Emic, GWØAF, Llantenna

Most CDXC members will remember that TV series a couple of years ago in which minor celebrities of a certain age sounded off about modern trends (body piercing, people talking loudly into mobile phones on trains, teenage girls being tattooed, you know the sort of thing) which they thought annoying, silly or just plain ridiculous. If, like me, you found yourself agreeing with them most of the time, then you too are probably a grumpy old man (or woman)!

I think one reason people apparently become more grumpy as they get older is simply that they have more time to express their opinions. For example, I have had several amateur radio bug-bears for years, but (other than over several pints at various HF Conventions past) have rarely expressed my views. Now, as I get older, it is time to regale all CDXC members, not just those who enjoy a pint or two, with my grumpy old man attitudes.

Here's the first one, and this is sure to upset grumpy old CW men: I am sick and tired of CW operators complaining of SSB encroachment into 'their' part of the bands. You hear the same complaints year after year following every major SSB contest. My grumpiness is not specifically directed to the anti-contest brigade (that is a different argument that I might get grumpy about on another occasion). Rather it is against those CW operators who, not content with the vast superiority of spectrum they already have when compared to SSB, bemoan SSB operators their right to use any part of the band when - through sheer volume of traffic - there is not enough spectrum available for their use. In practice, this only happens during two or three SSB contest weekends per year, and even then only on a couple of bands (ie 160 and 40m - have you ever heard SSB being used below 3.600 or 14.100 MHz? No, nor have I). But, hearing

the whinges of some CW operators, you'd think the whole of every band was overrun with SSB all the time.

Any scientific look at the HF bands reveals that CW operators already have far more spectrum than the poor SSB operator. This has almost certainly come about for historical reasons: when SSB first came along it was very much a minority mode and therefore it was relegated to the top end of each band, away from the CW DX frequencies. CW operators, meanwhile, felt they needed to use the *whole* of every band, and this is still the case in the band plans of today (It is almost as if the band plans are drawn up by 100% CW operators. Surely not? Perish the thought!).

CW operators are always keen to point out how spectrum-efficient their mode is. Fair enough; good point. But you can't have it both ways. If CW is so spectrum-efficient, that must also mean that it does not *require* as much spectrum as SSB (or most data modes, for that matter).

So, how wide is a CW signal? Theoretically a figure tending towards infinitesimally narrow (depending on the speed being sent), but let's say that an individual CW signal needs somewhere between 250 and 500 Hz of spectrum to operate without undue interference from any neighbours. For the sake of argument, let's call the amount required exactly half way between the two, 375 Hz. As we all know, even this is on the wide side, as many operators use filters of 250 Hz or even less. But the nature of SSB is that it *requires* around 2.1 kHz of bandwidth. This means that SSB operators need somewhere between five and six times as much spectrum as their CW colleagues so as to operate with the same degree of protection from interference from adjacent signals. In other words, there should be 5.6

times as much spectrum allocated to SSB than there is to CW.

Let's look at 80m. SSB users have 3.603-3.800 MHz (197 kHz, or 93 x 2.1 kHz-wide 'channels' - not that I'm advocating channelising the HF bands, far from it!). CW users have 3.500-3.600 MHz (100 kHz, or 266 x 375 Hz-wide CW 'channels'). Of course, the band plans say that CW can be used *anywhere* in the band, so they *actually* have the full 300 kHz, or 800 x 375 Hz-wide 'channels', a superiority of more than 8:1 over their SSB counterparts! And that's on a band where there is rarely, if ever, any SSB 'encroachment'.

The situation is far worse on 160 and 40 m, because most of the spectrum allocated to SSB in the band plans cannot, in fact, be properly utilised by the SSB operator. On 160m, only the bottom 40 kHz of the band can be used at full power and guess what, the poor SSB operator is only meant to operate from 1.843 to 1.850 MHz – a measly 7 kHz, compared with 40 kHz for CW stations! That's not even enough for four separate QSOs. It's no good saying that SSB operators have 1.843-2.000 MHz because of the power level requirement; it is the serious SSB contester or DXer that is being complained about, not those holding local natter nets above 1.900 MHz at a power level of 10 or 25W.

While talking about power levels, how come that 1.836 MHz has been enshrined within the band plans as the 'QRP (low power) Centre of Activity'? That's really intelligent, isn't it, choosing a QRP frequency right in the middle of the only segment of the band where *high* power is allowed!

On 40m, the additional 100 kHz of spectrum above 7.100 kHz, although welcome for

UK-wide or European contacts during daylight hours, is of little or no use for DX work after dark, when it is still full of AM broadcast stations using carrier powers of up to 500 KW. SSB contesters and DXers are still restricted to 7.043-7.100 MHz, only 27 'channels', compared with 106 CW 'channels' at the bottom of the band.

Is it any wonder, then, that SSB stations occasionally venture below 7.043 or 1.843 MHz?

Using the bandwidth requirement, let's take a look at a *fair* band plan, taking 40m as an example, and for the sake of simplicity ignoring data modes (although they certainly have a legitimate claim to a small segment of band without fear of interference from either CW or SSB stations). SSB stations require 5.6 times as much spectrum as CW stations, so to be fair 5.6 times as much spectrum should be allocated. On 40m this would mean 7.000-7.015 MHz is for the exclusive use of CW, 7.015-7.100 MHz for the *exclusive* use of SSB. After 2009, when the broadcast stations should have been cleared from 7.100-7.200 Mz, the band plan could be 7.000-7.030 MHz CW, 7.030-7.200 MHz SSB. The same would apply on all the other HF bands. The *quid pro quo* would be that SSB stations would be expected not to venture below 7.015 MHz, even during the CQ World Wide phone contest. But nor would CW stations be expected to call SSB stations operating above 7.015 MHz. Why oh why do they do that? No awards or contests permit cross-mode contacts, so why do CW operators persist in calling SSB stations on CW? What would they think if SSB stations started calling them when they were operating in the CW section of the band? But that's another grumpy moan, maybe for another time, look you.

IOTA News

Roger Balister, G3KMA

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

AF-103	C9	Zambezia District group (Mozambique)
NA-237	KL	Southern Alaska Peninsula East group (Alaska)
NA-238	KL	Southern Alaska Peninsula Centre group (Alaska)
NA-241	KL	Wade-Hampton County group (Alaska)
NA-246	XE2	Tamaulipas State group (Mexico)
OC-295	9M6, YB7	Sebatik Island (East Malaysia / Indonesia)

Operations which have provided acceptable validation material

AF-078	6W/F6ELE	Carabane Island (June 2006)
AF-103	C94KF	Inhacamba Island (August 2006)
EU-183	YP1W	Sacalinu Mare Island (July/August 2006)
NA-010	VE1/F5AHO	Cape Breton Island (September 2006)
NA-010	VE1/F5PAC	Cape Breton Island (September 2006)
NA-029	VY2/F5AHO	Prince Edward Island (September 2006)
NA-029	VY2/F5PAC	Prince Edward Island (September 2006)
NA-068	VE9/F5AHO	Lameque Island (September 2006)
NA-068	VE9/F5PAC	Lameque Island (September 2006)
NA-081	VE1/F5AHO	Big Tancook Island (September 2006)
NA-081	VE1/F5PAC	Big Tancook Island (September 2006)
NA-126	VE1/F5AHO	Johns Island (September 2006)
NA-126	VE1/F5PAC	Johns Island (September 2006)
NA-127	VE1/F5AHO	Brier Island (September 2006)
NA-127	VE1/F5PAC	Brier Island (September 2006)
NA-154	VE1/F5AHO	George Island (September 2006)
NA-154	VE1/F5PAC	Hog Island (September 2006)
NA-156	K9AJ/VYØ	Fairway Island (July 2006)
NA-156	KD6WW/VYØ	Fairway Island (July 2006)
NA-195	K9AJ/VYØ	Young Island, Hopewell Islands (July 2006)
NA-195	KD6WW/VYØ	Young Island, Hopewell Islands (July 2006)
NA-237	W5BOS/NLØ	Ugaiushak Island (August 2006)
NA-238	W5BOS/ALØ	Unavikshak Island (August 2006)
NA-241	K7A	Neragon Island, Sand Islands (July 2006)
NA-246	XE2K/XF2	Larga Island (July 2006)
NA-246	XE2WWW/XF2	Larga Island (July 2006)

OC-062	FO5RH	Pukapuka Atoll, Tuamotu Islands (September 2005)
OC-114	FO/KM9D	Raivavae Island, Austral Islands (July/August 2006)
OC-181	P29VV	Garove Island, Witu Islands (June 2006)
OC-245	YE5R	Rupat Island (July 2006)
OC-258	P29K	Kranket Island (March 2006)
OC-295	9M4SEB	Sebatik Island (July 2006)

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17 October 2006

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Marty Miller, NN2C

from G3KMA, 1 October 2006

It was with deep regret that I heard a few hours ago of the death yesterday of Marty, NN2C, a long-time supporter both of the IOTA Programme and also of the HF Convention. He came to the Convention 10 or 11 years running with the exception of just one year. It happens he e-mailed me on Friday evening, just it appears a few hours before his death, to say he would not be coming to the HF Convention this year because of some minor health problems. I replied appropriately, wishing him the best and telling him to take care. He acknowledged with kindness. In this exchange he included the words: "I miss all you good people and I will try to keep in touch."

Marty, with his warm and friendly personality, will be much missed by all his friends.

from the Daily DX, 2 October 2006

NN2C, Marty Miller, a longtime subscriber to The Daily DX and The Weekly DX, passed away on September 30th. Marty was active in the Long Island DX Association, LIDXA, for the last 25 years. He was President of the club for seven of those years. Marty was also President of the Quarter Century Wireless Association Long Island Chapter 81, an honorary member of the Mid-Florida DX Association, and was active in the Grumman Amateur Radio Club. Marty regularly brought his new DXpedition videos to LIDXA meetings and, according to K2MFY, Ed Whitman, was always trying out new software and hardware in his station. Ed says Marty "loved the hobby with a fervor and would relate to us, with gleeful excitement, his stories about chasing down a new IOTA."

First licensed as WB2VEX, Marty was encouraged in ham radio by his older brother. Marty was active with DXCC, IOTA and lighthouses, a regular Dayton Hamvention attendee, and often went to the IOTA Conference in England. Marty was 82 and was part of the D-Day invasion of Normandy, France.

The RTTY Column

Phil Cooper, GUØSUP *pcooper@guernsey.net*

Have you ever finished a contest and then found that you cannot convert your log into Cabrillo format? Judging by the number of e-mails I get about this subject, it does appear to be a common complaint. It certainly happens with some contest modules in Writelog, but those modules seem to be third-party modules, so one cannot rightly complain to Writelog. It also happens when you use MMTTY for contests.

I guess the first piece of advice would be to get some software dedicated to contesting? I guess if you only play in the odd contest now and again, it may not seem to be justified, and I can understand this if you have to buy software. However, N1MM is free and, despite its shortcomings, it would be better than MMTTY alone. If you have MMTTY running fully, then getting N1MM up and running should be fairly straightforward.

So, let's assume you have finished the contest using MMTTY and need a Cabrillo file. What now? The first task would be to check the exact layout of the Cabrillo format, and most contest sites have a sample format for this very reason. If they don't, then e-mail them and ask!

There are a few options available to you. First would be to ask someone with Writelog or N1MM to convert it for you. I guess you could also use SD, but I am not sure how to do it with this software. Second, go to

http://sp7dqr.waw.pl/eng/index_en.html

and download one of Marek's free utilities. There is a great tool called ADIF2CABR which will do exactly what it says on the tin! It will take your ADIF file and then convert it into a Cabrillo format.

However, please note that it will convert the file into a 'generic' Cabrillo format, and this may not be exactly the layout you need. The third option would be to ask someone for a sample layout and then manually enter the data yourself. Far from ideal, especially if you have hundreds of contacts, but if you simply had a bit of fun, or maybe worked 20–30 contacts, it is possible and would not take too long.

I can't remember whether I have mentioned this software before, but take a look at SH5. Once installed, this software uses your Cabrillo file to work out various statistics. Using the tabs, you can check on/off times, rates, QSOs by country, and various other interesting things. It is another free utility, and does have uses, especially if you have made a large number of contacts. It is available from <http://rescab.nm.ru/>.

The past few months have been subject to rather indifferent propagation, although there have been a few odd happenings which make life fun! For example, during CQWW, I was running without the cluster, and although I was checking 10m regularly, I hadn't heard any signals on the band at any time. Sometime during the Sunday afternoon I managed to work HC8N on 15m and they suggested I try 10m, as they had just worked EI7M. I did listen, but had nothing here. For some reason, I checked 10m again at around 1900 UTC, which was way after sunset here, and surprisingly heard YT6A and RK2FWA, both of whom I worked, giving me 5 bands for each station. I then heard a much weaker station and, after a few calls, managed to pick out HC8N calling CQ! They heard me first time, and the contact was good.

I can understand YT6A and RK2FWA, but how did I manage to even hear HC8N, let alone work them? I'll grant they have good

antennas, and also very good ops, but I really am at a loss to work out how they were audible on 10m at that time. Sadly, I didn't make it a 5-bander with HC8N, as I missed them on 80m. This was simply because I decided it wasn't worth the 10–20 minutes it may have taken me to get through the huge pile-up they were running. It would have been good to work them on all 5 bands at this stage of the cycle, but I was conscious of my plan to make as many contacts as possible this time, and didn't want to reduce my overall rate too much.

I was also very surprised to work not one, but TWO Zone 23 stations! This is the first time I have ever heard a station from that zone in a contest, so it was especially pleasing to get called by BDØAAI and, later on, work UAØYAY. There were also a couple of JT stations around, but I wasn't able to hear them, just the pile-up they were running.

After CQ WW had ended, there was quite a bit of discussion on how to respond to a CQ call. Personally, I just send DE, followed by my call two or three times, depending on conditions. I also have a buffer set with my call just once, with a leading space and trailing carriage return. If someone asks GUØ? AGN, I send this as many times as needed.

As far as I am concerned, there is only ONE situation where I will send YOURCALL DE MYCALL, and this is on those odd occasions when you get two stations on the same frequency that cannot hear each other. You may then wish to make it clear as to which one you are working, but unless it is some juicy DX, or a much-needed mult, then it is probably better to not work either. The reason is that you could end up wasting a lot of time clarifying things.

During CQWW, there were lots of stations sending YOURCALL YOURCALL DE MYCALL MYCALL. I really cannot understand the reasoning behind this, apart from the fact that it is pre-programmed into

MMTTY as one of the default buffers. There is no gain to be had from sending me my own call! I already know my callsign quite well, and don't really need to be reminded of it. This is especially true when there is some QSB and I see my call clearly, maybe the DE, and then just get garbage. If several stations all send together, I will often just see garbage on screen, and if I send AGN?? this is where that single call buffer comes into its' own. You could get it through before anyone else starts to transmit, or I will see enough to make an intelligent guess at it.

The same goes for the exchange. I have my standard report buffer, but also have the important bit just once in a separate buffer. So if you ask for my serial number again, I can send it once or twenty times, depending on conditions.

Curiously, I had quite a few stations asking me for my Zone in CQ WW! I can see why you might want to query a UA9, especially those that send 18 when they mean 17, or for some of those Ws who aren't where there callsign might indicate, but surely everyone knows that Gs are in 14, don't they? And then there were the few that worked me on one band, and then called me again a bit later on another band, and once more asked for a repeat of the zone!

Up until now, my QSO count in contests is about the same as in previous years, but the big difference is with the total points claimed. This is way down on previous years, mainly due to missing out on those all-important call area mults in W/VE etc., especially on the higher bands. As an example, last year I worked 28 State/Province mults on 20m, and 26 on 15m. This year, I had 32 on 20m, but only 5 on 15m. This had a severe impact on my score. Oh well, maybe 2007 will bring some better propagation!

73 until next time

Phil, GUØSUP

Contest

Lee Volante, GØMTN

The bands have been not very co-operative of late, with usually a low solar flux figure, and the A index figures have often been above my hourly rate. As a result the flavour of the column this time is more about training, planning, and off-air contest related activities.

Contest simulation update

During a recent CDXC marketing drive in Austria (aka a holiday) I presented Chris, OE8CIQ, with a copy of a recent *Digest*. In the 'Contest' column I had been forecasting that the next generation of pile-up/contest simulators might expand to cover different bands and give a portrayal of different propagation at different times. This would add a strategy element to the game that with other software currently just focuses on accurate CW copying ability.

Chris told me that a current example of this exists with CyberCWContest. The software also has a weighting for the number of active amateurs in a DXCC entity – so I'll still be as likely to be called by a pile-up of ZD8s when there is a path open in the software version as I am in real life. See <http://bbcyber.com> for more details. There is a trial version that can be tested for free – and virtual 'DXCC simulations' are also ready or being developed for CW and SSB operators along the same lines as the contest simulator.

More on sending in contest entries

Shortly after you would have read the last column about the importance of checking receipt of contest logs, I suffered another loss myself! Recently I received an e-mail copy of the results from a recent UBA 80m contest I had entered, but was amused to see that my callsign was missing from the results. For some smaller events organised

by other countries, I'm never sure if I am meant to receive a reply confirmation or not. Then I noticed that no receipt came back for my TOEC contest log either. I even thought that the usually reliable EUSprint robot had taken exception to me, but did find the reply e-mail caught in a spam filter that had previously let them through. Maybe the IOTA contest log submission system should be patented and made mandatory for all contests worldwide. More on that later!

Contest extinction

This was the eye-catching title of a recent discussion on the CQ-Contest reflector. This started from comments made about getting newcomers interested in competitive radiosport, and considered what might happen if the current generation of contesters don't do enough to ensure continuation of their favourite part of the hobby.

On the one hand there is plenty of evidence available to show that contesting is on the increase. Contests have regularly seen all-time high entry levels set in recent years, and record scores continue to be set at all stages of the sunspot cycle. At the 2005 Contest Club Finland / OHDX Foundation meeting I saw a great presentation on the history of CQ WW, with a graph of winning high scores throughout the decades. It was easy to see the increasing trend, with the conclusion that there will be more records equalled or broken as the next solar cycle comes into its own.

But there are other factors to consider too. As Roger, G3SXW, also explained at the same meeting, it's never been easier in terms of financial cost, logistics, and technical details to activate a country. If the K2 or IC-7000 had been around 40 years ago, along with CEPT licensing and budget

airlines, there may have been many more multipliers available for the CQ WW contest of the time, which would have boosted the leaders' scores. The popularity of PCs, the Internet, and user-friendly software that lets contest logs be produced and sent to adjudicators in a matter of minutes, could be argued to have as big an effect on one way the apparent interest in contesting is measured – the number of received logs - as anything else.

We can add our own statistics too. Hopefully you will remember the September 2001 *Digest* where Nigel, G3TXF, published his analysis of two of his All Asian DX contest logs from 1992 and 2001. The report sent during the contest is the operator's age, which enabled Nigel to work out the average age of the people he worked had risen by 8.3 years in the 9 years between the first and second contest. This showed that not many younger people were entering this contest and the entrants were likely to comprise of the same group of people.

I don't have sufficient QSOs in these contests myself to make any sound statistical conclusions. Donations for station improvements to enable more JA QSOs are welcome, all in the name of generating better statistics for the CDXC membership of course! I did have a look at some European HF Championship logs though, which have the year of your first amateur radio licence as an exchange. This is a different, but still valid metric to analyse. In 1999 the average 'licensed experience' figure was just over 20 years, and from this year's log it was over 25 years.

From this it could be concluded that as the time the entrants have held a licence is increasing, the most likely reason is an increasing age of the contesters, and a reduction in the number of newer contesters that would have offset it. My 2006 log for the SCC RTTY Championship, which also has the same multiplier and exchange as the SCC- organised EUHFC, revealed the

average RTTY contester to be licensed for 5 years longer than their phone and CW peers. If you can add further examples, please send them to me. Hopefully someone has some evidence of a different trend to those just described. I'd like to hear other considered viewpoints or data that anyone has collected.

Many individuals and organisations are aware of this problem of demographics and have been going to great lengths to try to combat it. I think I should separate the issue of recruiting people into the hobby as a whole, and recruiting into radiosport. The area of Foundation licensing is being adopted by many countries and is making good inroads to keep the overall numbers of the amateur population high.

For contesting specifically there has been a lot of good publicity given to newer and younger contesters - and gestures, for example, sponsoring young teams to WRTC, or places to join a multi-op team in the Caribbean for one of the major contests. Although this generosity can only benefit a few individuals personally, the hope and intention must be to inspire others to take up radiosport. Several UK contesters open up their stations to newer and/or younger operators. The Cambridge University group, G6UW, continue to be very active – sending a large contingent to the HF convention this year.

However, despite these efforts I still have concerns whether just in terms of pure volume today's contesting newcomers (whatever their age) can replace the large group of experienced contesters who are currently active, but may not be in 10 or 20 years time. The Internet Wikipedia encyclopaedia claims that the average age of amateurs is over 60 years old, with most operators earning their licence in their 40s and 50s.

The relatively recent addition of the old 'Class B' licensees to the ranks of HF contesters has helped in the UK, especially

for SSB and Data contests. But I was also reminded of RA3XO's comments about the 2004 RSGB 21/28 CW contest, where Alexander said in his summary sheet that the bands sounded like the 1970s – plenty of G3s, but very few GØs and MØs active. Similarly the results of the RSGB HF Championship, reporting on participation across a range of different events, show few newer callsigns, or indeed Foundation and Intermediate licensee callsigns. I know that many operate with club callsigns or as groups, so perhaps the situation is better than it might initially seem.

Is this observation just pessimism on my part, or reality? Maybe the return of the sunspots will give us some changing trends.

HF Convention

The above topic nicely leads on to the HF Convention, and has fortunately a much brighter conclusion. I was only able to visit on the Saturday this year, but from what I was able to see the Convention did seem to be busier than the last year or two. The main lecture hall was full for many of the presentations, and in the smaller suites it was standing room only. Speaking with Ian, G4FSU, who organised the excellent programme, he said it was a “good problem to have – better than worrying about having too few visitors!”

The HF Contest Forum had two interesting presentations. Firstly Don, G3XTT, and Marios, 5B4WN / GØWWW gave an update on the level of automation now running with the IOTA Contest adjudication. This enabled Don, Marios and a small team of helpers to produce the 2006 contest results literally just weeks after the log submission closing date. One of the key features of the new system was to make the entrant assist the adjudicators by ensuring that their submitted log, data on section entered etc., was good. If the entrants interact with a user-friendly front end, it seems they are happy to confirm their data and help out the adjudicators without much

grumbling. Another vital change over previous adjudication methods was just how many of the numerous pieces of work required to produce contest results was now completely automated. The manual effort required could then be focused on checking the ambiguous QSOs themselves. I've spent long enough with text editors chopping and changing log formats in the past, when really I should have been doing some real analysis of the contacts.

The obvious question from the floor was whether the same system could be utilised for other events in the calendar. This is the intention, but for this system and other really useful leading-edge tools, software and websites, whilst there are many people willing to lend support, the key to development often rests on a very small number of people who are gifted in particular areas of IT and software. It is a sad fact of life these same people usually have far too little free time to help everyone they'd like to. Let's wait and see what happens next – what we've glimpsed so far looks extremely promising.

The second part of the forum was led by Quin, G3WRR, who led us through the responses to a questionnaire about HF Field Days, and the possibility of a future European Field Day (EFD). In the main the CW operators liked 'NFD' pretty much the way it was, with preference for the status quo as regards multipliers, power levels, and points / band rules. SSB Field Day operators were more open to changes but, to be fair, the existing rules for SSB Field Day already revolve around DXCC multipliers and allow high power. I've not got room in this column to delicately explain all the viewpoints regarding how or why fixed stations should or should not enter Field Day, so I'll leave that for another time!

An aim of an 'EFD' will be to inspire groups in countries that don't have their own national field day event at the start of June to have a contest they can enter, and then also other entrants that they can

compete against. Simply put: more entrants = more fun. This is available now to a point, with DARC accepting logs from other Field Day stations (and fixed stations) in other countries. What an EFD would give would be a feeling that entrants would be taking part in true Europe-wide event, and not just sending logs to help a 'DL contest', and also give more opportunity for different European countries to influence development of the event and the rules. It is still early days in the discussions, and the EFD, if launched, might still run in parallel with national contests run in different countries.

Commonwealth Contest 2007

Bob, G3PJT, informs us that the 2007 Commonwealth Contest will be the 70th, and it will take place at the same time as the Cricket World Cup. It is proposed to organise a Commonwealth Team Contest along cricket team lines, to run in parallel with the normal Commonwealth Contest. This should be a fun event, with 11 player sides representing Australia, New Zealand, the UK, and other Commonwealth areas. (Let's pretend for the moment that Canada is a cricketing superpower!)

See <http://www.beru.org.uk/> for more details of the novel rules. Team Captains step forward, and good luck with your team selection. In line with real world cricket, I wonder if the Umpire will need to watch out for 'Balun tampering'!

AFS 2007

January 14th (CW) and 20th (SSB) – mark those dates in your diary now. Please let me know if you'd like to be part of a CDXC AFS team for 2007. We weren't able to submit a team score this year, which was a shame, so maybe it's time for you - yes, you - to have your 15 minutes of fame (well, actually it's 4 hours), and be a flag bearer for the club for the 2007 AFS season.

And finally...

There has been a lot of talk and discussion about safety and maintenance concerning crank-up telescopic towers on several of the UK-centric e-mail reflectors over the last couple of years. Previously in this column I've also been able to publish guidance on safety aspects from a professional. My local radio club run a special event station at the local village carnival each summer. Whilst the club members were setting up our modest sectional mast to hold an HF dipole and a VHF vertical in the traditional carnival weekend rain, we were amused to see a mobile crank-up tower arrive in the same field. It was erected to about the 60 ft level, where there was a small platform attached to the top of the tower. Later we watched in disbelief as a stuntman apparently free climbed to the top of the tower, set himself on fire, and then jumped from the top on to a crash-mat on the ground. Obviously as a professional stuntman strict safety standards would be adhered to, but it did make us wonder perhaps why we'd worried so much about stacking yagis on our own tower in the past.

That's all for now. In the next Digest I hope to have some CQ WW stories to report. I'm suffering from my usual autumn-time cold, which I've noticed has degraded my concentration and copying ability. Those reports that physical fitness helps with mental fitness must be true, and we all need all the help we can get for that second '24 hours' in the operating chair during the big contests. It's time for me to get some rest and drink lots of orange juice before the autumn contest season gets in full swing!

73

Lee, GØMTN

Diary of a Casual Contester

Ian Greenshields, G4FSU

ian.greenshields@gmail.com

[Very much a last-minute item, this. As Ian says:]

Hi Martyn,

I don't know how full your article supply for the November CDXC *Digest* is, but reading the results of everyone's efforts during last weekend's [28-29 October] CQ WW SSB on the CDXC reflector prompted me to write up my own limited exploits. If it, or an edited variant, fits, feel free to use it.

Obviously tongue in cheek, but maybe a message here that it is possible to have fun during a contest with limited time and equipment.

73 Ian, G4FSU

Friday:

1850:

Land back at Bristol Airport after a week's work in Finland.

2000:

Home. The contest starts in just over four hours, so I'd better check the aerials. I have two: a doublet about 50m long and 10m high for all bands - and a vertical delta loop, 40m in circumference and 10m high, for 7 MHz and up.

A small garden, in the middle of city and in a conservation area, so no towers or beams! A silver birch grows close to my delta loop and sometimes a branch snags one side of it; not good for maximum radiation! I look outside: dark, wet. Ah well, I expect the aerials are OK.

2100:

I'm knackered. Finland is 2 hours ahead. All I want is bed.

2230:

I decide the contest can wait until morning. It'll be a zoo on the low bands anyway and with 100W & wire aerials it'll be hard work. I go to bed.

Saturday:

0500:

Alarm clock. My wife is on 'earlies' and has an 0545 report time at the airport [*She flies for British Airways. Ed.*]. Still, 80m and 40m should be good now; let's get going. I go downstairs, switch on the computer and the radio and start up SD (what an excellent piece of software).

0515:

"Daddy, can I get up now?"

"No, it's very early, go back to sleep."

"Is Mummy going to work?"

"Yes, go back to sleep."

"Daddy, when did you come home?"

"Last night, go back to sleep."

0520:

I work a few East Coast stations on 40m. Very loud and easy. I live in Wells on the edge of the Somerset levels. To the west: 10 miles of peat bog, then the Atlantic. I only intend to operate S & P, so just pick off the

easy ones. What a difference that extra 100 kHz makes! I love seeing the '3 C Z' appear in SD's log window! Five QSOs, three Zones and three countries courtesy of W, VE and CT3. Great!

0530:

I'm wearing my headset, so the tug at my sleeve brings me back to the real world with a jump:

"Daddy, I can't go back to sleep."

"Well, just try."

"Daddy, Ken's awake as well."

A pointless statement once my headset was removed, as I was probably the only person on our street unaware of the fact - only 40m SSB in the last weekend of October is noisier than my 2-year-old when he wants to get up.

0600:

Both children dressed and playing happily - as long as I stay in the same room. It's just getting light - I'm missing the greyline!

0800:

Breakfast finished. The sun is out.

0815:

I manage to persuade Katka, our Czech au-pair, to take the kids for a couple of hours, even though she normally has the weekends off.

0820:

Back on 40M. I work a couple more US stations, then all Europeans. Of long path VK or ZL, not a whisper. OK, let's just go for countries. I always run my own DXCC count starting at the beginning of each year.

So far this year, due to work and family, my total stood at a pathetic 67, the worst for three years, although I can count 3YØX as an all-time new one, so not all bad. When operating time is limited, I tend to focus on the juicier pieces of DX, so there's a couple of dozen easy EU countries to be rounded up. Now is a good time!

0900:

Country multipliers adding up, just not much to multiply by: Points and Zones looking grim. Let's try 20m: 4L, CT3YA (again) and UA9 in quick succession. I love those 3 C Zs!

It's very busy, as expected, so I focus on picking up easy multipliers while looking for VK or ZL, but can't hear anything. There's one pile-up trying to work a VK, I think, but it's bedlam and I can't hear him anyway. Judging by the pile-up discipline, nor could anyone else.

0945:

Still on 20m: it's got to be three points or a multiplier, otherwise move on. I'm disappointed at not even hearing Oceania and I spent too long trying in vain to work 9N7JO, but I've at best another 30 minutes and want to check 15m: EF8, RA9, TA3; back on the 3 C Zs!

Unfortunately a 20 kHz section of the band is unusable, centred around G6PZ, whose colossal signal from only 10 miles away seems to mostly end up in my receiver front end. They're running well, but I call them in a lull, wondering if they need G as a mult. I do - no points, but an easy Zone and country multiplier.

1015:

The tug at my sleeve is expected this time.

"Daddy, can we go to the sweet shop now?"

So 54 QSOs in the log, divided by £12 for two hours' babysitting is a tad over 22p per contact. A bargain!

1300:

Well, that was fun. The Saturday morning ritual of the sweet shop, park and market, missed last weekend because I was away on business, was coveted even more by my five-year-old daughter today.

As I sat in Starbucks on Wells High Street, drinking my £2.30 latte while the children noisily consumed a packet of fruit pastels, I wondered whether 10m was open.

1310:

It was wide open. K3NA was a genuine S9+10 on my delta loop and he came back to me first call. Why do we only hear signals on 10m during contests? Just listen to it all! Surely that's one of the strongest arguments for contesting. We have great swathes of spectrum that suddenly spring to life for a few weekends a year. Yet we consider 10m almost unusable for years at a time - what a shame!

1500:

114 QSOs in the log. I like the CQWW contests because you don't exchange serial numbers. It avoids the humiliation of receiving 599 8735 and having to send back 599 027. But I've had a good run. 10m, with the occasional foray back to 15m, has yielded zones 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13 (thanks to CX5BW), 20, 33, 35 - and only the occasional interruption when a fresh painting was thrust under my nose for inspection and approval.

"That's lovely, Emma, can you paint another one?"

15:05:

Ken is awake after his midday nap. At the bottom of the sunspot cycle 10m is no

competition. I take the children back to the market to buy some more French sausages, seeing as I left the first lot in Starbucks, accidentally hidden amongst a mess of sweet wrappers.

1600:

Berit, my XYL, returns from work. Since leaving the house this morning she's flown over almost as many countries as I have worked. We agree that I'll give the kids tea and that she'll put them to bed. And then:

"If Katka can baby sit, shall we go out for dinner tonight?"

Both our jobs involve significant travel, so, juggling our schedules because of the children, time together is a rarity. CQWW is no argument when it's the first Saturday evening for six weeks we've had together. Typical!

1730:

I manage a few more on 15m, which is holding up well. I was pleased to work 8R1EA, who I know is a new one for 2006. But it took a while, as he had a steady pile-up. Some of the Caribbean contest stations also provided some good points and multipliers: 9Y4, VP5, FM, V2, VP9. P4.

Living in the West Country, the Atlantic coasts and Caribbean islands always seem to dominate my log, certainly reflecting the help that an all-salt-water path gives, especially with limited power and wire aerials. Conversely, I always struggle on the north and easterly paths seeing as the Mendip Hills rise to 1000ft within a couple of miles of our house.

1850:

I check 20m. Frankly, 15m is better. Both are open to the US, but South America and Africa are much better on 15m. Switching between the doublet, which fires N-S on the

higher bands, and the delta loop which favours E-S, I pick up some good country multipliers. By now I should be on 40m or 80m for greyline openings, but it's a real mess.

I realise I don't particularly like low band SSB. Living in the middle of a city, my QTH is too noisy and my aerials too small. I switch on the linear to help.

"I can hear you on the Hi Fi!"

comes the shout from downstairs.

Oh! So I switch the linear off again.

1930:

I switch off the radio, open a bottle of wine. Have excellent dinner with XYL and another bottle of wine. Sod the contest! Go to bed.

Sunday:

0700:

Oops, a bit later than intended, but today's a disaster anyway, so let's make the most of it. Right, 80m: any VK or ZL? I heard a VK at about S7, but I couldn't break the pile-up.

I heard quite a few Ws around 3.820 MHz working split, listening down. All really strong; so this'll be easy. I briefly check their listening frequency, just in case there's a G3 net on it. Unfortunately not, only contest racket. I call again. And again: nothing. Why can't you Americans listen? I call – and keep calling. I switch the linear on and call again. Nothing.

Bloody hell, I hate 80m! Something is starting to nag, but in my annoyance I ignore it and continue to call. Still nothing. I check the linear plate current – and that's OK. Forward power – that's OK too. Reflected power – also OK.

I keep calling. My radio, a Ten-Tec Jupiter, sits on my desk and I've had it for four years. My shack doubles as my office, so I spend many hours a day with the radio in front of me. I know it intimately.

0733:

I press the split button and work K3NA on my first call.

0800:

QSOs:150. Countries: 118. Zones: 32. Score: 40,050. A good job and a big improvement on last year. Better still, G4FSU's DXCC for 2006 so far: 101!

0810:

I switch off the radio and the computer. I have breakfast. The children are really excited.

"Why are you so excited?", I ask, as if I didn't know.

"We're going to Bristol Zoo!"

Zoo? Well, just training them for CQ WW SSB, you understand!

73 Ian, G4FSU

CDXC
CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

E-mails to the Editor

from BRS 25429

Dear Martyn,

I think at one time we had quite a number of 'active' SWLs in CDXC. Could be now they are budding M3 stations!

Would there be any chance of knowing which SWLs are still members of CDXC? Maybe I can e-mail them and see if I can drum up some support for an SWL column. I have written the odd articles in the *Digest* before. Maybe you may remember them! But I could not do it on a regular basis unless I was sure other SWLs would support me.

Maybe you could mention in a future *Digest* that you would like to hear from any members who would like to write a SWL column. They would be sure of my support.

I have been in the SWL game for over 40 years now. You may have worked my late brother, G3IGW. Well known for his CW operating, mainly on the LF Bands. A good operator!

Best 73 David A. Whitaker

BRS25429@aol.com

from G3RZP

Dear Martyn,

At work, we have a new computerised expense system. It takes for ever to do expenses, and the system has a number of countries that you can have spent money in. Obviously written by a DXer, the list includes Bouvet Island, Heard Island, South Georgia and South Sandwich (grouped together!) and Pitcairn.

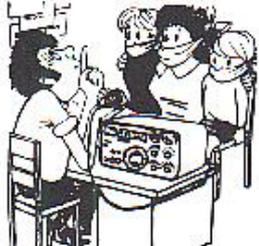
I am a little puzzled as to how the penguins would process a credit card on Bouvet. Or does this mean that the company will sponsor me to go to Bouvet for a meeting?

Currently I'm having trouble persuading them to send me there for a couple of weeks I expect it would be rather popular on 20 CW!

73 Peter

Answers to country outlines on p. 20:

1. Costa Rica (TI) 2. Ivory Coast (TU)



ITALIAN AMATEUR RADIO STATION
ZONE I.T.U. 28 - ZONE C.Q. 15 - WWW LOC. JN70BV

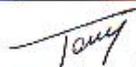
I80CA

ANTONIO CUCCERRE'
Via Viticella 4
 I-80010 QUARTO (NA)

CONFIRMING CQZ WITH!	CQZ	DATE M/DA/YY	CLASS	UTC	MHz	RSY	2-WAY
ZB2FX	07	12 98	1642	14	5-9	SSB	

X PSE QSL TNX QSL

QSL MANAGER
G3RFX




Not the GB2RS News

This week's headlines:

- Major improvements promised for the HF Convention 2007
- Think tank to look into anti-social amateur radio behaviour
- New software set to transform the DXpedition video

In response to criticisms in some quarters that the bar service at the RSGB's HF Convention was extremely slow, especially at peak periods, the venue has promised major improvements in good time for next year's Convention. An additional five bar staff will be recruited, at least one of whom will speak a few words of English.

This year reports were also received of bar staff being unable to process orders due to problems with their computer system. Here, a telephone 'hot line' will be installed behind the bar, giving staff direct access to the computer provider's technical help desk, located in India, thus guaranteeing that in future any such problems will be diagnosed and resolved within seconds.

Plans are well under way with a view to setting up a think tank to look into the increasingly bizarre and anti-social patterns of behaviour exhibited by some modern-day amateur radio enthusiasts, especially in the context of DXpedition pile-ups on the HF bands.

Staffed by an international team of psychologists with a special interest in on-air personality disorders, the aim will be to find as many answers as possible to the question, 'Why do they do it?', and to suggest possible methods of treatment. An eminent brain surgeon, Dr H. Lecter, will also be on standby, should transplant surgery be recommended as the only suitable option.

New software will soon be available which looks set to transform the traditional DXpedition video. *DXpedition Video Pro* is based on the assumption that fleeting images of one operator doing battle with the pile-ups from inside a tent on Clipperton Island, say, can look remarkably similar to brief shots of another operator twiddling his knobs in a hotel room in Kathmandu.

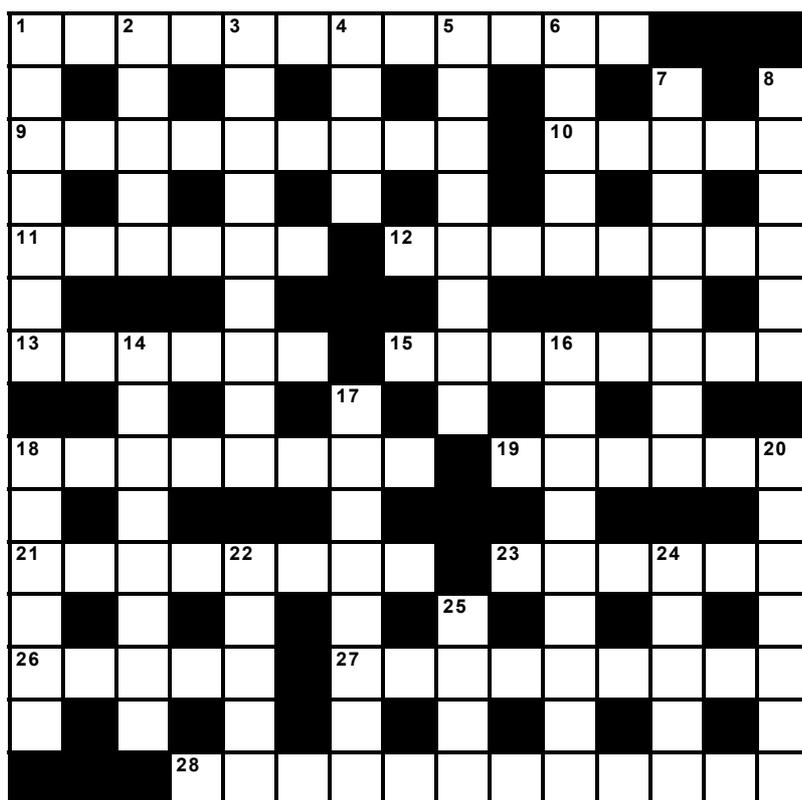
This exciting new digital software enables you to choose from an extensive image and video clip library of well-known DXpedition operators, popular rigs, typical tent and hotel room interiors etc. which best reflect your particular DXpedition experience. In order to provide that all-important local flavour, also included is an extensive library of equally transposable outside location shots and genuine audio clips from virtually every DXCC entity and IOTA island around the world.

In fact with *DXpedition Video Pro* you don't even need to take any pictures at all while on your DXpedition. You can save yourself the hassle and do it all when you get back home.

Solution to Prize Crossword 18

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

Digest Prize Crossword 19 *by RFX*



The winner of Prize Crossword 18, September 2006, and that brand-new tenner: Les Styles, VK4BUI, Queensland, Australia (via e-mail).

ACROSS

- 1 Market entrance to state capital (12)
- 9 Currently they hinder the conductor (9)
- 10 Zambian city captured in commando landing (5)
- 11 S. American poet frightfully rude in N. America (6)
- 12 The Rev. Spooner's divine location for town in Wales? (3-2-3)
- 13 Behead poodle, the best at Crufts? (3,3)
- 15 Bloody QRM? (8)
- 18 I will be measured by them (8)
- 19 English novelist whose name is hard to pronounce? (6)
- 21 Prescribed clothing from us in new order (8)
- 23 Pasta cooked without recipe initially in ancient city (6)
- 26 Retired policeman detained in English hospital for a long time (5)
- 27 Port frequently rated bottom? (9)
- 28 Transport buff coaches young wizard (12)

DOWN

- 1 North London borough imprisons old nobleman (7)
- 2 Type of beam seen in Norway and southern Moldova (5)
- 3 Popular team back in the pavilion the wrong way round (6,3)
- 4 Be in brilliant health, like some worms (4)
- 5 The lights of Georgia? (3,5)
- 6 Tidings initially transmitted by radio (5)
- 7 Tea worth stirring leads to trouble (3,5)
- 8 Nurse, say, embraces key profession (6)
- 14 Portsmouth party, we hear, for former president (8)
- 16 Appetiser that can be turned into tapas (9)
- 17 Awful supermarket chain supplying the royal family? (8)
- 18 Charm displayed by an obstinate person, given time (6)
- 20 Demanding type and former Thespian? (7)
- 22 Matron going topless - that's different! (5)
- 24 Sleeping place provided by Pooh's friend, by the way (5)
- 25 Unusually slow birds (4)

Deadline for entries: 20 December

DX and Events Calendar

Compiled by G3XTT

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

Period	Call
till 31/12	4N500CC, 4N500ZZ, YU500BW: special calls
till 31/12	8S30JC: special call (Sweden)
till 31/12	9A06P: special event station
till 31/12	9A15DX: special call
till 31/12	9A150NT: special event station
till 31/12	9A35Y: special call
till 31/12	9A650C: special event station
till 31/12	DS4DRE/4: Hong Island (AS-093)
till 31/12	EI60LRC: special call
till 31/12	GB60SWL: special call
till 31/12	GB6SWL: special call
till 31/12	HA50MHZ: special call by HA5X
till 31/12	HA506NF and HA501DAE: special prefixes
till 31/12	JV800: special prefix (Mongolia)
till 31/12	LZ13ARDF: special event station
till 31/12	LZ1900K: special event station
till 31/12	LZ50KSB: special call
till 31/12	LZ80R: special event station
till 31/12	ON40DST: special call
till 31/12	TF60: special prefix (Iceland)
till 31/12	YU500CM, YU500JDE, YZ500A: special calls
till December	TF/IW5DCE: Iceland
till December	VK0JLX: Davis Station (VK-03, AN-016) by VK2JLX
till Jan 2007	YI9KT: Iraq by SP8HKT
till Feb 2007	EM1UC & EM1U: Vernadsky Station (UR-01, AN-006)
till March 07	VP8DJB: Rothera Station (G-07, AN-001)
till June 07	OX3PG: Greenland (NA-018) by KD4POJ
till 31 Aug 07	TU2/F5LDY: Ivory Coast
till ??	FT5WL (Crozet) or FT5XP (Kerguelen) by TU5KG
till 20/11	VK9CGG: Cocos-Keeling (OC-003) by W0YG and N0KV
15/11-29/11	5A7A: Libya
15/11-01/12	HK0GU: Isla Providencia (NA-049) by DL7VOG
16/11-14/12	ZL/ON5AX: New Zealand by ON5AX and ON3AX
22/11-27/11	V26K: Antigua (NA-100) by AA3B
November (?)	XF4K: Clarion Island (NA-115), Revilla Gigedo

01/12-10/12	VU7RG: Lakshadweep Islands
December	VU7LD: Lakshadweep Islands
10/01-16/01/2007	S21EA: Bangladesh by EAs
09/03-20/03/2007	9MØ: Spratly Islands (AS-051)
12/09-03/10/2007	KH8S: Swains Island

VU7LD Bulletin – 5 November 2006

The Amateur Radio Society of India (ARSI) is the officially recognised society representing the interests of Indian Amateurs for several decades. It is the society that officially represents the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) in India, coming within Region 3, and VU2GMN, the current ARSI President, is also a Director of IARU Region 3.

ARSI has been working on taking a serious group of Indian amateurs to work from the 'second most wanted entity', Lakshadweep, for some years now and the latest application was made in February 2006. The WPC, after getting all required permissions from the various authorities like the Indian Navy, the Island Administration, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, gave formal permission to ARSI to go to Lakshadweep during the whole of December 2006 and use the special call **VU7LD**.

Most of the members of the group met in Bangalore on the 1st of November 2006 to finalise details of equipment and logistics. All details have been worked out and we also have the movement plan for the various operators, the tentative shipping schedule and the tentative plan for shipping out materials and equipment. We had two of our members actually visit Kavaratti to check out and make arrangements to receive the group and now everything has been firmed up. Conditions are vastly different from the Andamans.

We now also have two more collection hubs for donations - one in Germany and another in Japan. This will make it easier for contributors to send their contributions.

The donation hub for Europe is:

Franz Langner, DJ9ZB
PO Box 150
77950 Ettenheim, Germany
E-mail: flangner@t-online.de

A special e-mail address has been opened for the VU7 information exchange and it is:

vu7ldarsi@gmail.com

Our webpage is: <http://www.arsi.info/vu7>

Details of how to send the money: <http://www.arsi.info/vu7/procedure.html>

We are all looking forward to a great opportunity!

73 de Gopal, VU2GMN

Ze Latest from ze EU Kommission

The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the European Union rather than German, which was the other possibility.

As part of the negotiations, the British Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a 5-year phase-in plan that would become known as 'Euro-English'.

In the first year, 's' will replace the soft 'c'. Certainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy.

The hard 'c' will be dropped in favour of 'k'. This should klear up konfusion, and keyboards kan have one less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year when the troublesome 'ph' will be replaced with 'f'. This will make words like fotograf 20% shorter.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible.

Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling.

Also, al wil agre that the horibl mes of the silent 'e' in the languag is disgrasful and it should go away.

By the 4th yer people wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing 'th' with 'z' and 'w' with 'v'.

During ze fifz yer, ze unesesary 'o' kan be dropd from vords kontaining 'ou' and after ziz fifz yer, ve vil hav a reil sensibl riten styl.

Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech oza. Ze drem of a united urop vil finali kum tru.

Und efter ze fifz yer, ve vil al be speking German like zey vunted in ze forst plas.

CDXC Clothing

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

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

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

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

ORDER FORM:

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

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

Standing Order Request Form

To: Bank

Branch :

Please pay:

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

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

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

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

Please debit my/our account accordingly.

Name of account to be debited :

Account number :

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

Name(s) :

BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

Signature :

Signature :

(For accounts where two signatures are required)

Date :

Address :

.....

Postcode :

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

