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

Club News and Views

Editorial

Martyn Phillips, G3RFX

This year the Great British Summer was in June. We were away for a week or so during that month, so we missed it. By mid-August it was then largely back to the usual grey skies and rain which make our summer so memorable. Those fond recollections of many a sunny summer holiday in Devon or Cornwall, just down the road from here, are clearly a figment of my imagination.

But I digress. Yes, it's only a 44-page *Digest* this time round. Sorry about that, but recently I've been having a bit of a hard time with the Mini-skirted Maidens. Clearly imbued with the fighting spirit of some of the British Airways cabin crew working out of Heathrow, they suddenly announced that 44 pages was all they were prepared to do this time round. So there. Meanwhile I'm hoping to get them round the table again soon with a view to making it 60 pages again in September.

It wasn't just that, though. Recently, President Neville and Chairman Chris in particular have been doing a grand job in chasing up one or two outstanding DXpedition reports (and one or two less outstanding ones as well...). So we've now whittled down the backlog to almost zero. Hence the 44 pages. Mind you, we do have a few DXpedition reports in the pipeline for next time round. At which point you might well be thinking, "And I should jolly well hope so too!"

Anyway, as you will see this month, we have another SXW trilogy. That kicks off on p. 20 with the latest in Roger's 'Theo' series entitled 'Theo/QRP'. Another thought-provoking piece. Yes, where does he get his ideas from? Talking of which, some years ago I remember a television interview with

the playwright Tom Stoppard in which he was asked that most difficult of questions, "Where do you get your inspiration from?" To which he replied, quick as a flash: "If I knew, I'd go there."

Equally inspirational in this *Digest*: Roland, PA3EWP, and our very own Gordon, G3USR, telling us all about a wee expedition of theirs to GJ-land, Jersey, aye. Or, as it says in the title, 'Two Scots and four Dutchmen try Jersey for size!' And by all accounts Jersey fitted them very well indeed. Read all about it, starting on p. 14.

Before that you'll find the Minutes of this year's (as opposed to last year's...) AGM and Summer Social. No fewer than 64 attendees, with a sizeable contingent travelling from as far afield as GW-land. I don't know which border crossing point they used, but I can only hope they got back to the frontier before their visas expired. Anyway, as always a super day, with many thanks to Neville and Trish!

Talking of barbecues, Jane assures me that it's high time I re-joined the local barber queue with a view to having what's left of my hair cut. All that assuming I can actually get out of our drive. It's a long story, but for the past six weeks (it seems more like years...) they've been digging up the road with a view to providing improved access to a new nursery opposite for 65 kiddiewinkies and their yummy-mummies in their 4 x 4s. The noise, dust and general inconvenience has been driving us nuts. Indeed on occasions we've even been known to escape to the pub. Which shows you just how bad the situation is...

73 Martyn, G3RFX

Chairman's Chat

Chris Duckling, G3SVL

It was good to meet so many members at the AGM & SS – and a record turn-out, as reported elsewhere in this edition. The weather was the best we've had in years and conducting the Raffle draw outside in the sunshine was a real bonus. Thanks obviously go to Neville and Trish for allowing us to invade their lovely home once again.

Summer has really been upon us and the bands have been quiet. Few people mount major DXpeditions during the summer period – other than to islands in late July for the IOTA contest – and just as well because propagation, at least on the Sussex coast, has been rather dire. I hope it improves for the approaching DXpedition season.

On that subject, we have decided not to offer sponsorship to the recently announced DXpeditions to the new Netherlands Antilles DXCCs – assuming they do actually get created. The rationale for this is that while they are new and thus immediately rare, like FJ a few years back, they are easy to get to and will very soon drop down the list as various well-known DXpeditioners activate them. We should continue to use CDXC funds to support the more difficult entities, as well as supporting our own members who go on DXpeditions.

One of the fascinating things about the lack of activity on the bands is the increase in activity on the various radio-related reflectors. And while some of it can be rather dreary, I was struck by a particular thread that made accusations of elitism in our hobby. It was that old chestnut of CW versus SSB (or CW versus any other mode, come to that). I recall seeing a letter to the RSGB Bulletin circa 1963 on the same topic when I was still a SWL. Of course the argument will never be resolved – and so it

shouldn't be, it's a hobby - and mode is a matter of preference, not elitism. I'd like to think CDXC members respect others' choice of mode.

A different thread set out to explore another myth – that dropping the Morse test has resulted in a reduction of newer-licensed CW operators in contests. GW3NJW, GM4AFF, G3VAO and G3WW reported their findings from the EU HF Championship contest where 'years licensed' is part of the exchange. Although this is a very small sample, the three CW logs show bell-shaped distributions which correlate with each other to within two percentage points in every decade. The peak is for those licensed in the 1970s and 80s. The one SSB log shows a skewed distribution, with almost half of the QSOs coming from those licensed in the past 20 years. It would be fascinating to do a broader study and then, the whole point of this ramble, apply it to DXing. If we are indeed seeing a reduction in CW operating from newer licensees, could this mean the nature of DXing will change with more emphasis on SSB and the digital modes? Or is it that newer licensees do chase DX on CW, but don't enter CW contests? If you have a view, or better still, some data, then you might want to send it to the *Digest* Editor (but no elitism, please!).

CDXC will be at the National Hamfest from 1 – 2 October, so please come and see us. The weekend after that is the RSGB Convention, where we will also have our stand. Regrettably I have a diary clash (polite wording) that weekend and will still be in France on holiday – so for only the second time in many years I will miss the Convention.

73 Chris, G3SVL

President's Patter

Neville Cheadle, G3NUG

I'd like to start this PP by thanking all those who supported the AGM and Summer Social here at Lower Withers Barns.

First of all a big thank you to all those who donated Raffle prizes. This support was really tremendous. Thanks to Paul, G3WYW, of Yaesu UK for the star prize, the FT-450 transceiver. Also thanks to Mike, G3SED, of Nevada Radio; Martin, G4HKS, of ML & S; David, G5HY, of Kenwood Electronics; Ian Lockyer of ICOM UK; Mark Allgar of the RSGB - and the many members who brought prizes on the day. Let's support these companies and our advertisers when we are in the market place.

We raised the remarkable amount from the Raffle of just under £1,300.

Trish and I would also like to thank our band of helpers, in particular Mark and Jeremy, who prepared the food and ran the BBQ - and the ladies, including the raffle ticket sellers: Ann, Jenny, Marion and Rachael.

It was really great to have some many members and guests here, around 105. Both Trish and I are delighted that this event is becoming a real social occasion, with lots of partners enjoying the party. Thanks to all who e-mailed and sent notes to say "Thank you". They were all really appreciated.

Trish writes: "Just a PS. There's nothing ladies like better than to have a good look around an old barn! This was what it was like when Neville decided that this is where we would like to live. He had the vision (I didn't!), but he was right and from the feedback I think that many others think the same. So once again, thank you all for joining us. It was certainly our pleasure to

see so many here and perhaps we'll do it again some time.

A bright-green plastic chair-back or chair-seat was found in the field at LWB after the Summer Social. If this belongs to a member, please e-mail me and I will post it on.

We've had some real success selling FSDXA antennas and masts through the new website and the *Digest*. To date we have sold five antennas and 12 push-up masts. We have one Cushcraft A3S still to sell and four Trident Yagis. These were used on the record-breaking 3B9C Rodrigues DXpedition and are in very good condition. Check the website for further details.

If members have kit to sell, do try the new website. It seems to be really effective, with CMIS notifying those interested of changes in status.

Whilst writing about items for sale, I should mention that I received the following note from LUSO Japan, the tower manufacturers who advertise in the *Digest*.

Dear Mr Neville Cheadle, G3NUG,

Thank you for your continuous support to us regarding carrying our advertisement. As you know, the exhibition in UK will come soon (Newark). We plan to display LUSO28EU at the exhibition.

We have a serious problem; we have not received any inquiry from UK since the last exhibition and we are afraid we have no prospect of selling our tower there.

We would be glad if you would buy our tower. We are willing to offer special price and would appreciate it if you would think about buying it.

If you do not need the tower, could you introduce us to someone who would like to buy one? We are ready to offer a special price to him as well.

I look forward to your reply.

Best regards,

K. Shimoda

LUSO CRANK-UP TOWER

*6-5 Gobancho Chiyodaku Tokyo 102-0076
Japan*

SUPER-TECHNO CORPORATION

TEL +81-3-3265-2465

FAX +81-3-3265-2333

URL: www.lusotower.eu

E-mail: crank@lusotower.eu

Having gone through the trauma of getting planning permission here for the two existing masts, I decided not to take up this offer, but if any member is interested please do not hesitate to contact Shimoda san.

In the last *Digest* I showed some drawings of the hinged bracket I use here so that I can work on the antennas at ground level. A very similar bracket is now available on the market. Visit www.nn4zz.com/tiltplate.htm

I mentioned in the last *Digest* that I am building a 40m four-square that I will loan to the forthcoming FSDXA Pacific 2011 DXpedition. In the past few weeks as I have collected together all the parts for the four-square I have found some excellent suppliers of alloy, stainless fittings etc.

Shropshire Stainless & Aluminium – Alloy tube – Metric and Imperial:

www.ssaltd.net/

GenCat - Heavy duty stainless steel pipe clamps:

www.gencat.co.uk/index.html

Pratt Lay - Stainless bolts, nuts etc. in small quantities:

www.stagonset.co.uk/

DX Engineering – Control console, phasing cables:

www.dxengineering.com/

I cannot finish without making special mention of CDXC members Andy, G4PIQ, and Dave, G4BUO, for their outstanding 9th place in the Moscow WRTC. Well done guys, a superb result!

73



New Members

CDXC offers a warm welcome to the following new members:

Call	Name	Location
ET3SID	Sid May	Addis Ababa
G3ZKN	Donald Morgan	Gloucester
I22AMW	Paolo Reda	Milan
TF3DC	Oskar Sverrison	Reykjavik
VK3FGRC	Peter Dernikos	Ashburton

Minutes of the 2010 CDXC AGM

Held on 17 July 2010 at 1200

Lower Withers Barns, Middleton on the Hill, Leominster, HR6 0HY
(QTH of G3NUG)

Members Present (64)

5B4AGX, G0ECJ, G0MRH, G0RQF, G0TKT, G0VJG, G1FON, G2HDR, G3BJ, G3LHJ, G3LUW, G3KHZ, G3LAS, G3LQP, G3LZQ, G3NHL, G3NUG, G3PLP, G3PSM, G3RDC, G3RFX, G3RWF, G3SJJ, G3SVL, G3TXF, G3USR, G3WGV, G3WPH, G3XTT, G3ZAY, G3ZKN, G3ZQH, G3ZVW, G4AXX, G4BUO, G4EDG, G4EJW, G4EZT, G4FKA, G4HKS, G4HZV, G4IUF, G4JKS, G4JYL, G4KIU, G4LDL, G4NQQ, G4PLY, G4PZK, G4VSS, G7BTA, G7VJR, G8MKO, GW0ANA, GW0RYT, GW3NWS, GW4BKG, GW4BLE, M0DLL, M0GHQ, M1MST, M3ENF, MD0CCE, VP8NO.

Welcome

Chris, G3SVL, CDXC Chairman, welcomed everyone to the AGM and said how pleasing it was to see so many members present.

Apologies for Absence (69)

5B4AGN, 5B4AHJ, 5B4AHK, G0FVYX, G0KBL, G0OPB, G0ORH, G0PHY, G0PSE, G0SBQ, G1DJI, G1DYN, G1VDP, G2BKZ, G3AB, G3AKU, G3DBJ, G3JNB, G3KMA, G3NKQ, G3RAU, G3RZP, G3SNN, G3SVD, G3SVK, G3SWH, G3SXW, G3TTJ, G3UEG, G3VKW, G3WKL, G3YBY, G4BYG, G4CGG, G4DDX, G4EJW, G4FAL, G4LMW, G4OCO, G4OPL, G4RKO, G7NOT, G8KVP, GI4TSK, GM0NBM, GM0VRP, GM3JQJ, GM3OFT, GM4ESD, GM4XQJ, GU0SUP, GU4YOX, GW3KJN, GW4HAT, GW8IQC, M0AEP, M0AUG, M0BJL, M0BLF, M0DDT, M0KPB, M0MCV, M0MRW, M0NOV, M0REX, M0URX, M0XIG, MW0IDX.

Previous Minutes

The Minutes of the last AGM held on 18 July 2009 were received and approved as read by those present.

Matters arising

None.

Chairman's Report

This is my first report as Chairman and I must say the year has raced by. I'll report on the highlights of the year if I may.

CMIS: At the first Committee meeting after our last AGM we received a detailed report and demonstration of potential new membership systems from Michael, G7VJR. We gave the go-ahead to investigate one in detail and a sub-committee was set up to explore, test and generally assess the potential of the recommended one. This culminated in a go-ahead in February to

implement the new system. We are most fortunate to have secured sponsorship from Martin Lynch, Nevada and Yaesu UK to cover the software licence costs.

The system already provides members and the Committee with new features and I'm pleased to say that the 'For Sale' and 'Wanted' forum is gaining in popularity, events can now be booked online, overseas membership can be paid via PayPal and we are gaining 2 or 3 new members a month through the system.

Of course we have been caught out by the renewals system – entirely our fault due to not testing that feature.

DXpedition support: Following feedback last year we have modified our approach to funding DXpeditions. Firstly we have decided that we can gently draw down on the reserves we have built up over the past 2 or 3 years. Secondly we have increased our donation to IREF (the Island Radio Expedition Foundation) from \$400 per year to \$1,000 and as a consequence will not fund DXpeditions that are rare IOTAs but not rare DXCCs. Thirdly we have increased the maximum grant we will give to worthy DXpeditions and will now consider more carefully those 'holiday style' small efforts. We will, however, continue to look favourably on DXpeditions where one or more CDXC members are part of the team. Finally, we have reduced the time required for a full LoTW upload to six months.

LF/HF Challenge: Another successful year, with the top places highly contested as usual. You will see that we have taken over the running of the HF challenge from Gary, ZL2IFB – so do support it in September.

Committee: My job is made easier by the loyal work and dedication of the Committee members. Between them they put in many hours and drive many miles. They all contribute: without the *Digest*, the website, the Reflector, Treasury and Secretarial functions, the Reflector, the awards, DXpedition support and marketing – CDXC would not exist.

I will, however, single out a few special praises – to Gordon, G3USR, for picking up the Secretarial task at short notice; to Tony, G4LDL, for agreeing to be co-opted to take that role from Gordon - and to Gordon for assisting Nigel in taking over the Treasury function. And on that note it's right to make special mention of Nigel, G3TXF, who is standing down this year after 7 years as Treasurer. In that time he has guarded our finances and produced many useful reports to allow the Committee to plan our strategy. Handing over these functions while also introducing a new membership system is not a task to be taken lightly and I'm pleased to report that Nigel will stay on the Committee with a special role to oversee a smooth handover of the data and systems he has built up over the years. We might then allow him to retire gracefully!

All that remains is for me to thank Neville and Trish for hosting us for the third year running.

Chris G3SVL

Secretary's Report

The role of Secretary has been fragmented this year due to various Committee changes. However, your Committee has kept things moving forward after sometimes vigorous debate during the four regular meetings.

Membership is down slightly during the year from 742 to 735, with 46 new members joining, but 53 members leaving (including 14 SKs).

The Club recognises the following Silent Keys during the year and passes our condolences to the families of Alf, 5B4AFB; Albert, BRS 48462; Ron, M0MSM; Peter, G3ASQ; John, G3EZZ; David, G3MIR; John, G3TLG; Robert, G4KTI; Barry, G4VXT; Alan, G8FMH; Terry, GW3NXR; Gary, KI6T.

Notwithstanding the slight fall in numbers, the Annual Dinner in March at Wyboston Lakes proved as popular as ever, with places being filled quickly. Those who were able to attend in the afternoon had the chance to look at the new membership system, CMIS, presented by Michael, G7VJR. Following the Dinner Ken Cheetham of Ofcom gave an excellent talk about the Ofcom Baldock Monitoring Station.

The new membership system has proved a very steep learning curve for all of your Committee, but having seen what it can do and once we have adapted it more to our needs and way of working I am confident that it will make control of our membership records easier and enable us to communicate better with you, the members.

Tony G4LDL

Treasurer's Report

Nigel, G3TXF, presented his report, which had been published in the July 2010 *Digest*. He commented on the healthy state of the finances.

Nigel went through each section of the accounts and the membership numbers and concluded with a summary of the DXpeditions we have supported in the past year.

The accounts were approved by the members present.

Election of Committee

At this point the entire Committee resigned, as required by the Constitution. The Chair was taken by Don, G3XTT. Tony, G4LDL, was proposed as Secretary. Gordon, G3USR, was proposed as Treasurer and Nigel, G3TXF, as a Committee member. All of the other members offered themselves for re-election.

It was proposed by John, G3LAS, and seconded by Colin, G3PSM, that the Committee be elected *en masse*.

The 2010/2011 Committee is thus:

President	G3NUG
Chairman	G3SVL
Secretary	G4LDL
Treasurer	G3USR
Digest Editor	G3RFX
Awards Manager	M0ZAK
Reflector Moderator	G4AXX
Committee Members	G7VJR and G3TXF

G3SVL took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Election of Auditor

John, G3LZQ, agreed to continue to do an independent examination of the accounts (for the next year) and was proposed by G3USR, seconded by MOZAK and duly approved by those present.

Any Other Business

G3RFX read out a message on a postcard from Friedrichshafen commenting on the lack of reserved front-row seats for CDXC members at a local night club – and the urgent need for this to be ‘sorted’ at the next AGM.

Tony Bettley G4LDL
Secretary, CDXC

Subsequent to the meeting

The trophy for the LF Challenge was presented to Chris, G3SJJ, by the Chairman.

The President then made a special presentation of a plaque to Nigel, G3TXF, in recognition of his dedication and sterling contribution to CDXC.

The Chairman presented a shrub rose to Trish Cheadle.

CDXC QSL card

The CDXC QSL card is available to all members by direct order from Hertfordshire Display PLC, 51 High Street, Ware, Herts. SG12 9BA. Tel: (01920) 461191, Fax: (01920) 463212 or www.hdprint.co.uk.

HD Print have asked if we can update our order form to add a daytime telephone number as this is needed for verification of credit card details. We have updated the form on our website, but if you use an old form, please add your daytime contact number to avoid unnecessary processing delays.

E-mail from a satisfied customer:

“Just a short note to praise the CDXC QSL card printers (HD Print). I ordered 500 on Monday AM at 0900. I had a proof by e-mail at 1100. They were then delivered on Wednesday PM. What good service! They were also very helpful on the phone and via e-mail.”

73 Dick, G4DJC

DX an' all that

Don Field, G3XTT *don@g3xtt.com*

It's been very quiet on the DX front over the summer period, with little worthy of note other than the usual Sporadic E to enliven things on the higher HF bands and, for those with a head for heights, 6m and upwards. I have spent very little time on the radio, but substantial amounts of time doing radio-related stuff. The RSGB has a new edition of its Operating Manual due out later in the year, updated from the previous edition, but this time not so much a solo effort by me but a joint effort with Steve, 9M6DXX. This is the second book project where I have worked with Steve; the time difference keeps us both on our toes – while one of us is sleeping, the other is working on the project!

Then I was at WRTC, which proved to be a great experience, not least because it was my first visit to Russia. I feel sure it will be reported on elsewhere and, indeed, G4BUO and G4PIQ have already done a great write-up in RadCom. *[As they have here in the Digest. See 'Contest, page 32. Ed.]* As one of the judges, replacing G3SXW who had decided for a number of reasons that he had to give this one a miss, I had a great opportunity to watch the proceedings and drop in on many of the teams, both during set-up and as the contest was in progress. What was perhaps most notable was the support-in-depth in Russia, with some volunteers travelling, usually overland, from as far away as UA9/Ø, to help out behind the scenes. I cannot imagine the UK or even many of the major Western nations being able to put on a similar show. It looks as though the next one will be hosted either in Bulgaria (thanks to K1LZ of Acom) or on the US East Coast.

I always find it fascinating to experience propagation from a new part of the world. Moscow is a very long way from any ocean,

but Western Europe booms in, as you would expect (think how loud the Russians are here) and Japan is a much easier path than from the UK. But the US is a tough haul, especially right now with the dearth of sunspots. I managed a handful of QSOs from the demo set-up at the hotel, borrowing an FT-817 from one of the visitors and signing R3/G3XTT. My short 'run' on 20 CW included just one UK station. Clearly the band was open, but no one was about!

As the contest started, principal organiser Harry, RA3AUU, fellow judge EY8MM and I listened to the ensuing chaos, again from the hotel, this time on an FT-5000 which had been extracted at the last minute from UA3 customs, where it had been held for several days awaiting the necessary clearance (Yaesu were the major commercial sponsor of the event). The radio is excellent, noticeably so on CW at narrow bandwidths, where its only peer is probably the K3.

K3s were in evidence everywhere, the transceiver of choice for about half the teams. After that it seemed to be a close-run thing between various vintages of FT-1000 and Icom 756. There were a few other rigs such as a TS-850 and an Icom 7800, but only one- or two-offs. That said, the Austrian team lost both their K3s early on when an electrical storm passed overhead, and ran most for the contest using a pair of FT-857s which they had taken as a back-up, and still put in a respectable score. Which probably goes to show that when you have some of the world's best operators, the hardware is something of a secondary issue.

And talking about Harry, RA3AUU, some CDXC members of a certain vintage will recall when we hosted Harry for an evening

at a hotel near Heathrow during his very first visit to the UK, many years ago and after the XYØRR ‘Myanmar’ operation led by the subsequently infamous Romeo Stepanenko. These days Romeo languishes in an American prison, I believe I am right in saying, but Harry has emerged from his shadow to become a frequent and respected expeditioner and all-round good guy, who seemed to be ubiquitous in Moscow, solving problems 24 hours a day.

My other big ‘project’ recently has been to get recruited by Neville to take on the antenna planning for the next FSDXA effort. More on this in due course, no doubt, but suffice to say it is an ‘interesting’ challenge. Thank goodness that I am not alone in the task, but can call on a huge amount of expertise within the FSDXA/CDXC ranks.

Pile-up Technique

In recent years it is notable that many expeditions are seeking out experienced contesters for their team. In days gone by it was generally thought that DXpeditions should be manned by DXers, but this is a false assumption. The typical DXer is happy if he works a needed DX station after hours of calling. The DXpedition operator is happy only if he is running stations at maybe 200 an hour, while pulling the calls out of an unruly pile-up. Quite different! But this is what an experienced contester does all the time. So next time you get frustrated when that contest interrupts your DX chase, think about the potential DXpedition operators who are ‘in training’!

But I wonder whether the skills needed for an expedition operator will change in future. There is no doubt that RTTY skills have changed. The days of lugging a Creed 7B to an expedition location are long gone, but so are the days of using character-based DOS software such as WF1B to copy and log RTTY callers. Nowadays no expedition operator would be without a waterfall display, where he can point and click at one

of the callers. This completely negates the practice of calling on the last caller’s frequency – you are far better to try and find a completely clear frequency so that when your signal pops up on the DXpedition’s screen, he will be minded to click on it and work you next. I have discussed this before. But the question arises as to whether the same is becoming true on CW, where expeditions are increasingly likely to employ CW Skimmer to help extract calls from the pile-up. The expedition operator may, in that scenario, end up doing ‘point and click’ at decoded calls that look OK, and work through the pile-up that way.

New Entities

The big news for the coming couple of months, apart from the nice upcoming expeditions (ZL8, KH5, etc.) which I have mentioned before, is the break-up of the Netherlands Antilles in a way which should bring us some new DXCC entities. That said, those of you who have been ‘reading the mail’ will be aware that it is anything but straightforward. There are rumours that the vote on separation has been delayed on at least one of the islands, although the date of 10/10/10 has been in the calendar for quite some months now. Several teams have announced their intention to activate the various islands including Bonaire and Curaçao, with some pretty ambitious plans. It will all look a bit odd if the big event is delayed.

But assuming everything goes ahead, what does it mean for the DXCC list? Actually, we don’t know, and won’t know until ARRL make an official announcement. But, all being well, from 10 October we should be having lots of fun working these new ones on all bands. Of course, they are all easy ones from the UK, both from a propagation point of view and because they are regularly activated, especially in the major contests. But that won’t in any way reduce the initial feeding frenzy. And there are a few interesting aspects, such as the team that hopes to get its hands on the

Radio Nederland antennas on Bonaire during gaps in the programming, which could lead to some big signals on the HF bands (I recall working my first KHØ on 40M many years ago when a contest team borrowed the curtain antennas of the VOA station on the island, with something like 24 dBi gain – quite an eye-opener!).

iPhone APPS

As a follow-up to an item in a previous column, my latest acquisition is 3D Sun, courtesy of NASA's Heliographic's division. It gives you alerts to significant

solar events and there are some great pictures.

Finally, it was great to see so many of you at Neville's summer bash, and especially the GW contingent, several of whom (GW4BLE, GW4BKG in particular) I haven't seen in many a long year. Clearly, border controls have been eased, so hopefully we will see these guys more often in future!

73 Don, G3XTT

FSDXA Remaining Antennas for Sale

FSDXA is selling some of the antennas used on their past DXpeditions. They have 'gone vertical'. These antennas have been used very little and are in very good condition, but are nevertheless 'sold as seen'. The antennas are complete with manuals. They are partially assembled and can be collected from Portsmouth. Some can be shipped to UK addresses; carriage extra at cost.

Please contact Neville, G3NUG, if interested: g3nug@btinternet.com

Description	Band	Price
Cushcraft A3S with balun	10/15/20	£295
Trident TA10M5L (5-element monobander)	10m FM	£150
Trident TA15M4L (4-element monobander)	15m	£150
Trident TA20M3L (3-element monobander)	20m	£150
Trident TA30M2L (2-element monobander)	30m	£150

The Trident antennas were built for the record-breaking 3B9C DXpedition. They are of lightweight construction and have riveted elements.

G3NUG

Two Scots and four Dutchmen try Jersey for size!

Ronald Stuy, PA3EWP, and Gordon Rolland, G3USR

Introduction and background

At the end of 2009 CDXC member Tom, GM4FDM, was approached by amateurs in the United States asking if it would be possible to make a trip to Jersey (GJ) with the intention of activating it on 6m. The rationale for this came from a previous visit by Tom to this Channel Island in the winter of 2007/08. Tom's frequent DXpedition partner, Ronald/PA3EWP, then became involved and discussed the plan with other members of the PI4COM Dutch Contest Team. A number expressed an interest in taking part and 'The Jersey DXpedition 2010' was born.

To try to satisfy the request from the US, timings were adapted to the period at the end of June / early July when 6m has the greatest chance of propagation to North America. In combination with other obligations such as Friedrichshafen and the availability of the GJ location, we chose the period from 29 June to 6 July 2010 as the most appropriate.

Plans involved three HF stations, one 6m station and one 2m station. We calculated that this would need a minimum of six operators. They consisted of Tom/GM4FDM, Gordon/G3USR and four Dutchmen. The Dutch operators were a mix of experienced and interested volunteers. Rien, PA1BDO, and Jo, PA9JO, went along as SSB operators with previous experience only on the other side of the pile-up. Ronald, PA3EWP, was the most experienced DXpedition operator together with Alex, PA1AW, who specialises in non-SSB modes and is interested in VHF, particularly 2 and 6m.

The location

Jersey is a relatively easily accessible

location by road and fast ferry. This has the advantage over air of easing the transport of more and heavier equipment. With the addition of a plan for 2m, this resulted in additional equipment requirements including an antenna. In addition to 2 and 6m we planned to have three HF stations on the air to allow each operator ample opportunity to enjoy the pile-ups.

Operating five stations at the same location can prove challenging. Tom had arranged access to the Jersey ARS club premises at the old signal station at Le Moye. This is in the SW corner of the island near the prison, overlooking the lighthouse at Corbierre.

The club has a number of operating positions and permanent antennas including a tri-band yagi on the roof and dipoles for 160m, 80m and 40m. It also has an R8 multiband vertical. We were aware that the ideal situation for multiband simultaneous operation would be monoband antennas with good physical separation and planned for this. Each station would also have a bandpass filter. By installing additional antennas and positioning them in a judicious manner we hoped to be able to achieve our objectives. This proved to be the case. We used fibrestick quarter-wave verticals each with four tuned, elevated radials. A simple plan was devised to avoid the possibility of two stations transmitting on the same band - the bandpass filter box was placed in the centre of the club and if a required filter was NOT in the box, it was in use! The aspiring operator would then need to choose an alternative band. This procedure worked well.

Most of the team members were already familiar with Win-Test from previous contest or DXpedition experience and so we decided to use this program. However, for others it was their first encounter with this

logging program and to prepare we had an informal briefing. But we had to arrange other things too - like where we would sleep and who would devise a drinks provision rota from the kitchen on the lower floor.

Travel arrangements and arrival

Monday, 28 June, arrived and with two cars the Dutch contingent set off from home for St Malo, Brittany. They arrived on Tuesday the 29th at 0800 at the ferry terminal and then caught up with sleep after the overnight drive. At 0915 they drove off the boat at St Helier and checked into a guest house in the village of St Aubin. Thereafter a brief visit to Phil, GJ4CBQ, retrieved the key of the clubhouse and at around 1030 they arrived at the club.

The clubhouse is in a beautiful location. It is 70m high, is within a few hundred metres of the sea and has an unobstructed 180° view out to sea. The clubhouse is an old German concrete bunker from World War II which was used as a radar station. The immediate area around the clubhouse has big gorse-like thorny bushes and is no easy place for antenna erection! However, we planned the antenna layout and began installation.

We installed the VHF antennas on the roof of the bunker. Our first priority was to assemble the 6m beam to ensure that we could be active as soon as possible in case an opening occurred. During our planning of the expedition the UKSMG had donated a 5-element Tonna to the Jersey club and this antenna is now permanently installed to enable both visiting and local amateurs to easily put Jersey on the 6m map.

However, just before the Dutch team left the Netherlands, they had been offered a long-boom 6-element yagi antenna. As this antenna would provide higher gain, we decided to try to use this antenna first - and it was installed on a small rooftop tower with a rotator. We also assembled a 9-element 2m beam which was installed on a

stub mast also on the roof.

At around 1200 Tom and Gordon arrived and further installations gathered pace. We connected and configured the operating positions and installed 12, 17, 30 and 40m verticals. These were sited around the bunker. Tom, Gordon and Jo got a lot of scratches from the thorns of the bushes - they reported that it was no fun at all!

By late afternoon everything was ready with the verticals and we could start. We made a few test QSOs and then stopped for other important priorities. We went back to the guesthouse and searched for a good restaurant. After a few cool and delicious beers we spent a few hours planning the next day and went to bed. Most of us had been awake for more than 36 hours. The next morning after breakfast we returned to the club shack fully refreshed.

The party then began. After some minor glitches we had three HF, one 2m and one 6m station active. Most initial QSOs were made on 20 and 40m.

Our HF experience

During the week we were mostly active on three and sometimes four HF bands simultaneously. Most SSB QSOs were made by Jo, Rien and Gordon. Tom was usually found on CW or RTTY. When Alex and Ronald were active on HF they were usually on CW. HF equipment included an Elecraft K3, an FT-1000MP and two ACOM 1000s. The pile-ups on all HF bands were huge and were sustained. We continually checked for 10m and 12m openings which we tried to exploit and most days we were active between 0700 - 0100z. Then we went back to the guest house for a few hours sleep and breakfast.

VHF - 2 meters

On 2m we had problems with interference from the 20m station. After many hours of troubleshooting we managed a partial

solution. Changing an IC-7400 for our spare FT-847 helped a lot, but the QRM was enormous from the HF station, sometimes S9+20. This was also dependent on both antenna directions. Unfortunately we had no band pass filter for 2m.

Two metres was given a lower priority than other bands. However, we still made some nice QSOs. The majority (105) were on SSB, but a few (58) were made on FSK441. Our best DX on tropo was HB9FAP over 800 km and with FSK441 LZ2KO at almost 2,000 km.

On the weekend of our visit VHF National Field Day took place. However, we found that conditions were disappointing despite the increased activity. During the contest we made 131 QSOs in less than six hours. Best DX was DR9A at 775 KM, with an average distance for each QSO of 381 KM. Disappointing, but not really surprising as few would be naturally beaming to GJ during a contest. All our 2m QSOs were made with 400W to a 9-element DK9ZB yagi.

VHF - 6 metres

Prior to the DXpedition Rupert, G4XRV, had made a superb 6m bandpass filter for us. This worked very well and we experienced no QRM on this band. Outside of the contest we used Tom's call, GJ4FDM, and during the contest Gordon's call, GJ3USR. This avoided big gun stations making duplicate QSOs with all our call signs to the detriment of the little pistols.

On our first day, 30 June, we worked 30 stations on 6m, but with the exception of KP4EIT there were no QSOs with North America. The next day, 1 July, propagation was reasonable to Europe with 280 QSOs logged. The first hours of 2 July were very difficult as propagation was poor. However at around 1500z the band opened to North

America for a short time and three US stations were worked. Throughout the day only 35 other QSOs were made on 6m. Saturday, 3 July, was the day of the contest, with more activity expected. We also had pre-agreed that if 6m opened to NA during the contest then we would cease contest operation and work the NA DX. 77 QSOs were logged before the contest and at around 1250z the band opened to the US. 86 Americans were logged on CW in the next two hours.

When the opening fizzled out we joined the contest. However, propagation was not good. The first day we made 83 QSOs, all within Europe. The second day was a little better. We logged 183 QSOs, but encountered no spectacular openings. In total we ended up at 267 QSOs. After the contest we made 50 further QSOs, all within Europe. In the evening we went for dinner locally and we had the pleasure of the company of Phil, GJ4CBQ, and his wife - and another club member, Mathieu/MJØASP. [*Mathieu, who is a keen HF Dxr, is now a CDXC member. Ed.*]

On Monday, 5 July, we began progressively dismantling the stations. The whole team was to depart on the Tuesday, but we continued operating until late on the Monday evening. We kept 6m running until the last moment in case of an opening to North America. Sure enough, at around 1340z the band opened and in the next two hours over 90 stations were logged, including 45 USA and Canadian stations. At 1600z it was time to dismantle the remaining equipment and reload our cars.

In total on 6m we made 890 QSOs, including 135 North Americans. In the contest we made 267 QSOs. Altogether we can look back on a successful 6m activation of GJ giving many operators a new VHF DXCC and IOTA. On the HF bands we made over 11,000 QSOs.

Summary of QSOs by Band and Mode

Band	SSB	CW	RTTY	JT6M	FSK441	< Mode
160	5	18	0	0	0	23
80	1	0	0	0	0	1
40	1,664	429	0	0	0	2,093
30	0	513	120	0	0	633
20	4,122	260	0	0	0	4,382
17	1,489	308	76	0	0	1,873
15	641	0	0	0	0	641
12	613	216	21	0	0	850
10	679	0	0	0	0	679
6	443	705	1	8	0	1,157
2	231	9	0	0	58	298
TOTAL	9,888	2,458	218	8	58	12,630

Conclusion & appreciations

Our thanks are due to the members of Jersey ARS who allowed us the full use of their club premises for the week and to the UK Six Metre Group for their antenna sponsorship.

We all had a great time. Jersey is a beautiful Island and well worth a visit. There were plenty of opportunities for everyone to operate and of course we also talked about potential future destinations for the same

group as we worked so well as a team. Traveling by car has many advantages as you can carry much more equipment than travelling by air. We have much food for thought.

Hope to see you in a future pile-up then from ... another convenient location!

73, Ronald & Gordon

Chiltern DX Club - Aims and Objectives

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

Membership Full details are available from the Secretary.

Subscription £18.00 for UK members, £24.00 for overseas members (US\$48 or 40 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/>

PW8J – A History of the DXpedition

Cicero Silva, PY7ZY

The start of the Lençóis Island activation really started in the beginning of 2009 when we selected two islands to activate. Well ranked were IOTA SA-062 and SA-041 - they appeared to have few confirmations especially among the Asian community. Given the difficulty of transport to Lençóis Island we decided to activate Coroa Vermelha Island in 2009 and Lençóis Island in 2010. This way we could better define our goals and seek to raise funds among radio amateurs and ham clubs.

Just after operation in SA-062 we began planning the operation from SA-041. We contacted a tour company in San Luis specialized in ecotourism. We knew beforehand that Lençóis Island was an 'ecoreserve', part of a government environmental project. The Maiaú archipelago comprises ten islands, but only two are inhabited: Batevento and Lençóis. This ended up being our target due to the possibility of lodging in what this tour company calls an 'ecolodge'. The ecolodge remains closed all year long and just opens when groups are formed to visit Lençóis Island. The island lies around 50km from our mainland departure port.

The initial costs were estimated to be about \$8,000. We asked for support - and positive feedback was received from IREF, GDXF and CDXC. Other Brazilian groups helped us as well. Finally the DXpedition could be planned to start on 9 June and end on 15 June. As a bonus we also decided to activate Sao Luis Island (SA-016) from 16-18 June.

We launched our webpage to announce the DXpedition around the world. In addition to contributions committed by clubs and organisations, we also have received some individual donations from foreign hams. However, the major contributions were received from Brazilians hams.

The first major difficulty was equipment transportation. The high cost of transportation made it impossible to ship our material by ground before the operation. Thus we choose to reduce the material to a minimum and carry it with us, paying the airline excess baggage.

On the island there are electricity restrictions. The island's power generation is part of an experimental project of the Federal University of Maranhão. The system installed recently uses wind, sun and fuel to constantly charge a large battery bank. By means of inverters, AC power is produced to feed a very simple power grid to supply electricity to the fishermen community. Therefore, we were limited to only 500 watts per station, which consisted of Icom transceivers and two ACOM 1010 amplifiers. Vertical antennas were mounted on the beach. We also set up an 80m Zepp antenna between two coconut trees.

Antony, PR8AL, lent us a gasoline generator for back-up. The generator was already in Sao Luis and thus considerably reduced the weight that we would have to carry. During the operation we were probably the largest 'energy customer' in a 50km radius. Other than the operating licences from the Ministry of Communications, we also got an environmental permission to carry on the operation on the island.

Jim, PY7XC, and I began the journey at 0930z from Recife airport on 7 June. Fred, PY2XB, left Sao Paulo the day before. We met on the night of 7 June in São Luis for a briefing, since our departure for the island was scheduled at 0700z on 8 June. By the way, 0700z = 0400 local time. At 0800z we boarded a ferry that crossed São Marcos Bay, which separates the cities of São Luis and Alcantara. Once on the other side of the

bay, we proceeded by land to Apicum-Acu town, the last stop before sailing to Lençóis Island. This leg of our trip was 315 km and took over five hours.

We have arrived in Apicum-Acu at around noon. We waited for high tide in order to continue the journey to Lençóis Island. Maranhão has the second highest tide in the Americas (up to 9m every six hours). At 1630z we set course to Lençóis Island. Finally, at around 2000z, we reached the island and we put a station on the air on the same day, 12 hours ahead of plan. We quickly installed the Cushcraft R-7000 antenna, along with an Icom 706 MKII and an ACOM 1010 amplifier. The operation had started

Our big problem was the poor propagation. We noticed that during the morning period there was no propagation to anywhere. We ran endless CQs on CW on two stations without any answer. Between 0600z and 0900z the island's power was turned off. We operated battery- and generator-powered, but could not hear anything in that time window. Invariably, the propagation began to open at around 1500z and closed again at around 0000z. It was very frustrating. Just one night we were able to make a good run on 40m until 0600z when the electricity was turned off.

Frequently we halted the pile-ups to try to listen for Asia and Oceania with very little success. We worked only 75 JAs, 6 ZLs and 3 VKs. We have done everything we could to accomplish QSOs with this rare IOTA. Our final QSO count was 8,878 QSOs.

When we are on DXpeditions we have to adapt to the local circumstances. To upload logs we had to climb a dune, about 40m high. It was the only spot on the island where one could connect to a 3G Internet cell system. Jim, PY7XC, held a rod that supports 3G mode and the notebook while Ciro, PY7ZY, typed.

We finished our operation at 0219z on 15 June. We repacked everything and started our return journey at 0800z on the same day. At our arrival in São Luis on 16 June at 0200 we completed our DXpedition to SA-041.

São Luis, the capital city of Maranhão state, lies on an island also called São Luis. São Luis Island is IOTA SA-016. From there Jim, PY7XC, and I worked 2,714 QSOs with the same propagation difficulties. Far East stations were barely heard. Luke, PT7WA, who was to have replaced André, PYØFF, also had personal problems and could not join us. Fred, PY2XB, had left for São Paulo.

On behalf of operators Fred/PY2XB, Jim/PY7XC and I we would like to thank everyone for the support we received from individuals and organisations all over the world. We also thank everyone who joined the huge pile-ups to work us. There are no more exciting rewards during a DXpedition than being called by thousand of hams belonging to this wonderful community.

Our operation in SA-041 was not a fully enjoyable one, because our dear friend André, PYØFF, could not join us for health reasons as originally planned. We dedicate this operation to him. Furthermore we will not fail to have André with us on our future operations. Sooner rather than later.

Best regards and we shall see you soon!

73

Cicero, PY7ZY Team Leader

Theo/QRP

Roger Western, G3SXW

Credit where credit's due: Theo had built up a big station over the years, effective antennas and had successfully chased DX avidly for many a long year. The walls in his shack proved it: barely a square inch was left uncovered by all those awards and contest plaques. He still filled DXCC slots with every opportunity, but new ones were becoming rare. On top of that he came to realise that to do substantially better in contests he really needed more real estate, and that was just not going to happen.

Theo needed new challenges and started to mull over new directions.

Amplifier-less

Came a day when by chance he was without an amplifier. It happened quite suddenly and offered up an ideal opportunity to provide a new challenge although he didn't quite realise it at the time. He had lent out his back-up amplifier to a pal and suddenly his main amplifier went on the blink. Yes, it blew up while calling some juicy DX. He was darned keen to get this rare one in the log, so he kept calling barefoot, with just 100W. Almost every pile-up had been cracked down the years with the full 400W, so it was inconceivable that he could do so with a paltry 100W. Or so he thought.

It turned out that he cracked this pile-up almost as easily without those extra 300W – and steps back in amazement! Over the next day or two he played in several mini pile-ups simply to check out his ability to work them with barefoot. G'Lord, he cracked them one after the other with barely any more calls than he would have expected with the amplifier. Very interesting. It got Theo thinking. Firstly, a halving and another halving of power output, down from 400 to 200, then down to 100W in theory only knocked an S-point or two from his radiated

signal. Also, it occurred to him that many (most?) second- and third-tier DXers are also barefoot, so perhaps he wasn't as disadvantaged as he feared – instead maybe his long-term development of operating skills was standing him in good stead.

At most being amplifier-less meant that in all but the biggest pile-ups he could expect to get through, almost as quickly. He decided not to invest the cash to repair his amplifier for a little while and see how it worked out.

DXing Barefoot

Sure enough over the ensuing weeks and months Theo cracked all but one or two monster pile-ups. Losing those one or two contacts rather hurt, but it occurred to him that there were some alternative advantages which were significant. He did fix the amplifier, but rarely switched it on these days, only when a vital fish needed reeling in.

It felt good, more of an achievement, less like falling off a log. It helped hone his propagation skills because that little bit more effort was required to think through bands and timings of openings which might suit his weaker signal. Less importantly, he was consuming less electricity AND his neighbour stopped banging on the wall whenever she was watching Coronation Street. Hmm, this is fun, and re-introduced some of the magic of amateur radio which – although he hadn't recognised it – Theo had been very gradually losing, in recent years.

One trick that he perhaps missed out on was to start a whole new series of tick sheets for DXCC worked with barefoot. But his tick sheeting had become somewhat obsessive over the years, so perhaps it was no bad thing that he began to ease off and just

enjoy logging the rare ones for their sake. He also enjoyed entering some contests in the 'Low Power' (100W) category and even won some first places. That was a turn-up for the books!

The Beacons

As part of mastering the vagaries of propagation Theo realised that there was much more that he could do to improve his knowledge and thereby to work more DX. This could also hopefully save him wasting hours and hours calling in pile-ups fruitlessly - when trying an hour or two later might more easily secure the contact when the path improved.

In discussion with old Bill down at the Bristol club he was reminded of a whole fresh idea: checking beacons for band openings. He had often heard the 10m beacons and found them interesting, even somewhat helpful on occasions, but had not heard about the NCDXF (Northern California DX Foundation) system. This transmits signals on five HF bands from 18 locations around the world. Importantly these transmissions were at four power levels: 100, 10, 1 and 0.1W. Hmm, yes, let's see what we can learn from this system, Theo thought.

It takes three minutes to listen through a whole cycle of 18 stations on one band. To cover five bands could occupy 15 minutes of SWLing. OK, so on many occasions it needed only to check a couple of relevant bands, but that time would be well invested. He got into the habit of picking a band, switching on the receiver and leaving it running on the Beacon frequency whilst sorting out other stuff in the shack, eating his Weetabix or whatever. Later he even discovered software which would do all this for him: a dedicated receiver and omnidirectional antenna connected to his computer switched frequencies at the right moments and produced a map on the screen portraying all five bands and the signal strength of any station heard all at one time.

Nice one! This meant that you didn't even need to decode the CW! There you had it: what could be heard and where, real-time, at your OWN location. He would eventually go on to experiment with reverse Skimmer beacons and WSPR, but that was later.

What thoroughly astonished Theo was the signals that he could hear from these NCDXF beacons which use only omnidirectional multi-band vertical antennas. A huge firework went off in his head one day when he heard the signal from Hawaii on 14.100 MHz all the way down to 100 milliwatts. And this happened several evenings running when he would never have guessed the band was even open to Hawaii, let alone that wide open. This was something quite outlandish.

He spent the next few months wallowing in the joys of the NCDXF beacon system, always checking current propagation in this way before starting DX hunting. His NG3K list told him what he needed to chase, NCDXF told him on which bands he might stand a chance of making the contact. A big sign hung on his shack wall: 14.100, 18.110, 21.150, 24.930, 28.200 MHz were the frequencies, and the callsigns in order of transmission were: 4U1UN, VE8AT, W6WX, KH6WO, ZL6B, VK6RBP, JA2IGY, RR9O, VR2B, 4S7B, ZS6DN, 5Z4B, 4X6TU, OH2B, CS3B, LU4AA, OA4B, YV5B. These 18 stations were strategically located around the globe to cover all latitudes and longitudes.

Brilliant: if you couldn't hear the VK6 beacon on that band there was little chance of being able to work Cocos-Keeling Island. If you could hear VR2B, then Spratly might be feasible. If you could hear the KH6WO beacon down to 10W on 15m then that Kingman Reef station might be easily workable. Of course, as we know, propagation paths can end abruptly in time and in distance. A station even 200 miles away may have different propagation potential. So these beacons are not fool-proof.

Trying QRP

The next train of thought in Theo's head was that surely if he could hear Hawaii down to 100 milliwatts transmitting only with a vertical antenna, then surely with his tribander at fifty feet he'd be able to make a two-way contact easily enough – when the band was open. A lot of the time we assume that a band is dead to an area, but in reality this is only because there are no stations transmitting from that area, so this really was increasing Theo's propagation knowledge, rather than simply having to rely on other stations being active. The beacons were ALWAYS active, around the clock and the calendar!

One morning he heard a VK4 calling CQ on the bottom end of 40m with a 569 signal. In the good old days he probably wouldn't have bothered to call this DX station who was simply not 'needed'. Theo called with 10W and the VK4 came straight back with a 449 report. They had a fun QSO! This one QSO opened up a whole new phase of Theo's hamming career, exactly the new stimulus and challenge which he perhaps needed to avoid the risk of the hobby becoming a little humdrum in between the biggie DXpeditions.

When something really rare came along he'd still crank up the output power in order to secure the contact. He wasn't about to let QRP interfere with his serious DX chase for those last few, elusive needed countries, but for much of his operating time it was QRP all the way. He was astonished every time at just what could be achieved with 10W and wondered why on earth he was blasting the ether with forty times that much power when it was so unnecessary to do so! And what fun . . . that beaming smile broke out on his face far more often these days!

QRPP

With modern radios we don't need highly-specialised equipment to measure low-power output, but when reaching the

milliwatt range perhaps the digital read-out of many transceivers was not quite accurate enough. As it turned out Theo did not, yet, take this last step – he was having too much fun with his 10W. But what an extra challenge lay in wait for later. He read about two-way 100 milliwatt DX contacts and believed them, having heard those beacon signals down to such puny power levels. Seriously QRPP was even being used down to microwatts.

Another weird event showed what's what. One day Theo was checking the messages he had punched into his function buttons before the start of a contest. Lazily, he had simply turned the output power down to zero, instead of hitting the VOX button. He 'transmitted' his F1 CQ message a couple of times to get it right and darn me, a W8 called him. What? With zero output on the meter? Clearly the meter was under-reading, but he surely couldn't have been transmitting with more than candle power, nonetheless. Again, the power of QRP made its mark.

He also began to pay attention to the detail on incoming QSL cards which showed the output power of stations he had worked in contests (something which isn't done with electronic QSLing!). Just occasionally he would get a card from California or Indonesia showing QRP levels down to 5W or less.

Lessons Learned

Falling off a log to work most stations and getting through big pile-ups quickly (or first call!) can eventually pale into something more mundane and enthusiasm can drop. Look for new challenges!

QRP is fun, more satisfying, injects new enthusiasm, saves QRM, saves TVI and electricity bills. After all, one of the basic tenets of amateur radio used to be that we use only the power necessary to establish effective communication. We have all grown used over the years to blasting out

maximum power because that became the normal way. Not very socially responsible, though!

In addition, for those who enjoy construction, of course this also opens up or re-opens the whole wonderful world of building your own gear and the magnificent sense of achievement when it actually works. Gone are the days of using black boxes which are impossible to fix when they

go wrong, so that we don't even dare to take the lid off.

This marvellous hobby has dozens of sub-hobbies. Perhaps it's worthwhile to re-check every few years whether there is some other aspect which might be investigated: different modes, different bands . . . It might just open new, challenging and FUN opportunities!

Visit to W7-land

Roger Western, G3SXW

Wayne, N7NG, is a good pal. He had been suggesting a visit for many years. I finally got around to it, spending a long weekend mid-August with him and Margaret in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. This is a world-famous ski resort, but I much prefer summer! "What's the difference between Jackson and Jackson Hole?" I asked. It seems that Jackson is the town itself and Jackson Hole is the area surrounding it, and the Snake River, because it is a hole or valley between high mountains, which reach some 14,000 ft.

If natural beauty is your thing then this area takes your breath away. Some of the most stunning scenery I have ever seen. In summer it is a lush green, in winter apparently it is white for several months. Jackson itself is 6,200 ft above sea level: dry lips, no hair drier needed!

Radio

Shame on me: I did not get around to making any QSOs from WY! Wayne has a nice set-up with big antennas: TH6, 402CD, D3W plus wires. He has five acres, plenty of space for long beverages. But this was always intended to be a social visit, not a

mini-DXpedition. Wayne holds a BBQ for local friends each summer, so I made sure to coincide my visit dates. Amongst those I had the pleasure to get to know were:

N7NG – Wayne & Margaret (Jackson, WY)
- host
KØTO – Todd (Idaho Falls, ID)
KA7T – Don and Leona (Boise, ID)
N4CC – Greg (Boise, ID)
NE9Z – Bill (Moran, WY)
W6RGG – Bob and Gwen (Castro Valley, CA)
W7LR – Bob (Bozeman, MT)
W7ZQ – Jim and Bonnie (Blackfoot, ID)

Some of these 'locals' drove 100 or more miles to attend: distances are great in the NW of the USA! This was a marvellous day because I recognised almost all these callsigns from the pile-ups. Non-stop chatter ensued!

Separately Wayne and I managed to solve all the problems of the ham radio world and most of the non-radio ones too! Of course, Wayne spent several years in charge of the DXCC programme at ARRL headquarters in Connecticut and is still intimately in tune with everything. Upcoming new PJ countries were but one of many topics

covered. He also helped to develop the marvellous Logbook of the World system and visited the RSGB HF Convention several times as the DXCC representative from ARRL.

Yellowstone

But if nature also appeals then go to the Yellowstone National Park. Whatever you may have heard about its beauty, just multiply it ten-fold. It is stunning. The roads form two circles, the south and the north loop. We went round the south loop, a total of about 150 miles driving from Jackson, a comfortable one-day tour.

On show are huge forests covering massive mountains, many rivers and some huge waterfalls, all in a massive protected area. See:

www.wyomingtourism.org/overview/Yellowstone-National-Park/4796

Then of course there is the Old Faithful geyser and several other tourist attractions. But for me it was the wildlife which blew my mind. Large herds of bison (which I learned is the same as 'buffalo'), a circling bald eagle, elk, various deer and of course the bears. Three times we encountered a 'bear jam', a traffic tail-back due to wildlife munching grass immediately beside the road. Once it was a very large bison, once a black bear and once - perhaps the highlight - it was an extremely large grizzly bear. I could have stretched my hand out of the car window and touched him, but decided that might not be such a good idea!

Travel works well: United Airlines, change at Denver. Wayne and Margaret also took me over the mountains to nearby Idaho, so my tally of states visited now stands at 25, only half way there!

Thanks Wayne, a terrific weekend - relaxing and yet full of wonderful new experiences!

The Cyprus Amateur Radio Society QSL Bureau

The QSL Bureau of the Cyprus Amateur Radio Society is receiving large numbers of QSLs that cannot be delivered to the intended recipient because that station has a QSL manager outside Cyprus. The problem is threefold:

- a) Those generating the QSLs are not bothering to check to see if the station has a manager.
- b) Even if a manager's call is written on the QSL, many QSL bureaux are still sending the QSL to Cyprus.
- c) QSLs for calls 5B/DXcall are being sent to Cyprus when either they should be sent to the manager, or in the absence of a manager, to the bureau for the home call.

I've produced a list of stations with foreign managers at www.shacklog.co.uk/5BForeignManagers.htm. Please pass this information far and wide, including to your local QSL bureau.

73 Alan, 5B4AHJ CARS QSL Bureau Manager

PVRC Webinars

Roger Western, G3SXW

Q: What on earth is a 'Webinar' when it's at home?

A: It's the new-fangled Internet-speak for a 'Seminar on the Web'.

Q: And PVRC?

A: The Potomac Valley Radio Club, one of the biggest radio clubs in the USA, located in the Washington DC area.

Starting a year ago PVRC has organised regular webinars covering many subjects: DX, propagation, contests, antennas etc. They take the form of PowerPoint slide shows, with live commentary and live Q & A sessions. All presentations are archived for later viewing at:

www.pvrc.org/webinar/webinars.htm

Upcoming webinars are also posted at:

www.pvrc.org/webinar/upcoming.html

The upcoming programme is:

Tuesday, 7 September 2010, 1400-1530
EDT

*A Look at the 2010 WRTC Competition -
European Teams*

Sunday, 19 September 2010, 1500-1630
EDT

A Look at the CQ WW RTTY

www.pvrc.org/webinar/cqwwrtty.htm

As you might guess, I got involved because we were invited to present the story of the VooDoo Contest Group's activities in West Africa. Mike, KC7V, ran this show, with my help on 22 August. Our group has taken part in the CQ WW CW contest for the past 20 years, from thirteen mostly West African

countries, achieving seven World first-place finishes.

To take part in any of these webinars you need to pre-register (no charge) by going to the page for your selected topic, for example:

www.pvrc.org/webinar/africa.htm

And there is a quick guide of how the system works at:

www.pvrc.org/webinar/quick_ref.pdf

So it's really like attending a club meeting without having to leave your house! The organiser who does such a good job is Ken, K4ZW. Attendance at any one webinar ranges from 100 to 200 folks. For example, our 'Contesting in Africa' presentation on 22 August had some 130 pre-registered. Most talks last 60-90 minutes and the timing of recent webinars has been set to suit North American and also European audiences.

Join in – it's fun!

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

GØVYR Norman Vickerstaff
GØWFK Max Bamford
G3MIR Dave Parr
G3NOH George Eddowes

E-mails to the Editor

From G3RZP (1)

Hi Martyn,

I read with interest Derek/G3KHZ's comments on CW pile-up operating [*Digest*, July 2010]. There are some points that are, I feel, worthy of further discussion

5. Tuning up 'What takes so long?'

Who knows? In one contest that the local club did from my QTH, one guy complained that you needed a PhD to tune up the rig and an amplifier. He was a bit miffed when I pointed out that in 1942 he would have had 12 weeks from off the street to learn Morse code and radio theory, and to tune a TX just about as difficult as the amplifier while in a Lancaster 15,000 ft over the Ruhr while being shot at! The time taken for tuning up, especially on top of a DX station or a net, is one of life's unanswerable mysteries.

6. 'You don't need to send your callsign again.'

Maybe. Especially where the response has been to a similar callsign and you don't know if they have it right. But even if they came back to you and you know it, but someone else thinks they came back to him, and proceeds to send a report without a callsign, they may not know who they did work - especially with QSB. You may well assume (probably correctly) that if he's 339 with you, you're unlikely to be much stronger with him. So sending the call once and report twice can be faster for all.

9. Dupes.

If the DX station sends 'wkd b4 73', it may not be you, but a similar call that he's worked. You KNOW you haven't worked him or you wouldn't (I hope) be calling. Or he may have come back to you, but you

missed it in the QRM and someone else was mistaken for you - especially if they sent '599 TU 73'. In contests it's generally faster to work them than to argue about it, and surely the same can apply to DXpeditions? Now, of course, you could figure that since he's heard you and decided you're a dupe, you can still claim the QSO, but the problem may be that you don't know when he worked the other 'you'. This is a problem for paper QSLs; presumably LoTW or online logs will allow you to get that right for a paper QSL if you want one - which I prefer anyway. Additionally, of course, it's really cheating.

10. 'Calls outside area'

This may be worse on SSB. There are a number of UK DXers, more experienced than I, (and "tell it not in Garth, whisper it not in the streets of Absalom", this includes a number of CDXC members) who are frequently heard doing this in a pile-up. How a request for 'SMxxxx' can justify 'Gxxxx' calling is beyond me.

But I've only been DXing for 47 years - and am one short of Honor Roll, as well as one card short of 5BDXCC.

73 Peter G3RZP

From G3RZP (2)

Hi again Martyn,

A few comments arising from thoughts arising from Nigel's article [G3TXF: Dipping into the 'DXCC Yearbook 2009', *Digest*, July 2010].

It's interesting that there a number of UK amateurs who haven't reached the coveted #1 spot who have more countries confirmed

than some of those who have! The latest QST has the up-to-date list, which shows this. Now there must be an awful lot of DXers of all nationalities who, certainly with the current political uncertainties in Korea, do not appear to have a hope of getting the #1 spot. If you haven't already worked and got P5 confirmed, you're most unlikely to get it in the foreseeable future. Some of us still need one country, but fortunately in my case it's not P5, thanks to a telephone call at 0725 hrs one Sunday morning from G3HCT! People keep saying that Navassa KP1 is just round the corner, although they have been saying that for some time. That is, of course, my last one.

There is an argument that if a country hasn't been active for a period of time - say 10 or 15 or even 20 years - it should revert to 'deleted' or perhaps 'deferred' status, and not be included for Honor Roll eligibility. Certainly, the P5 situation suggests that the current system has some difficulties - note here that I'm a disinterested commentator, having got it 'in the fist', as they say.

I will be looking for any real news about KP1 at the W9DXCC convention in Chicago on 10-11 September, as some years back there was a presentation on what they were doing to get KP5 on - which, of course, eventually proved successful. I've also been asked to repeat my ATU lecture at W9DXCC [...].

73 Peter, G3RZP

From MØURX

[and the CDXC Reflector, 13 July 2010]

Hi Guys,

The *Digest* hit the doormat (or should I say office desk) yesterday and with a day off work today I have enjoyed a excellent read from front to back over a morning brew and listening to 20m.

There were several references to 'QSL Management Software'. As a QSL manager here I often search for QSL management software and apart from the obvious like BV7 - which, I have to admit, did not really suit my needs, I wonder what other CDXC members use for their QSL management? As many of you are DXpeditioners, I would be very interested to hear how you prepare your QSL cards for outward sending?

I hope that the Mini-skirted Maidens don't mind me expanding this on the Reflector? Maybe my mail should go straight to the Editor. [*Which is why I'm reproducing your Reflector message here, with some very small modifications! Ed.*]

With 60 logs to manage here (not many compared to some of you guys...) I use Winlog32. Over the past 18 months Colin, GØCUZ, has helped me a lot in improving the software to make it much more user-friendly for QSL managers.

The most important feature I asked Colin to work on was that of QSO label printing. The first change was to make each label printing session automatically print MYCALL MYNAME at the bottom of each label so that without any typing - no matter which log I was using - the correct call and name was printed, for example '73 de 9M6DXX Steve'.

One feature where Winlog32 was generally not very user-friendly was that Multi QSOs and Single QSOs were printed on different print runs. So I asked Colin to combine this to print Multi and Single QSOs on one print run, alpha-numerically of course.

There was one feature that drove me nuts. This was the pink box that had 'Radio: xxxxxxx, Ant: xxxx I asked Colin to find a way so that I did not have to delete this line on the label every time I want to do a label print. So now there is MYGRID MYIOTA in that

box. If you do not require the grid reference or IOTA on the label, just leave the field in Station Information blank - this will ensure that nothing is printed in that field.

MYCALL MYNAME MYGRID and MYIOTA data are now all entered in the Station Information point accessed from Tool Bar 'File' drop-down to Station Information. Once this box has been entered once, all the text on the QSO Report Label is all automatically grabbed and entered onto the appropriate

label.

It is quite normal here to have 30–40 letters a day arrive in the post requiring QSL cards, all usually from different log files. So having a system that works for me is very important. But I just wonder what you guys use – and can I benefit from a feature that your software uses?

73 Tim, MØURX

IOTA News

Update of data in IOTA Directory (2009 edition)

New IOTA reference number issued

NA-235 KL Semidi Islands (Alaska)

Operations which have provided acceptable validation material

EU-040 CQ7OA Berlenga Grande (June 2010)

NA-158 AB5EB/KLØ Kalgin Island (August 2010)

NA-158 AD5A/KL5 Kalgin Island (August 2010)

NA-235 KL7RRC/P Chirikof Island (July 2010)

SA-041 PX8J Lencois Island, Sao Joao Islands (June 2010)

SA-060 ZX8C Cotijuba Island (July 2010)

SA-060 ZX8W Cotijuba Island (July 2010)

This list includes operations where validation material was volunteered, ie not specifically required for credit to be given. In all cases cards now submitted will be accepted by Checkpoints if they meet normal standards.

This means that the island name should be printed on the card.

Roger Balister, G3KMA, RSGB IOTA Manager

20 August 2010

E-mail: IOTA_HQ@rsgb.org.uk

Personal website: www.g3kma.dsl.pipex.com

RSGB IOTA website: www.rsgbiota.org

The RTTY Column

Roger Cooke, G3LDI

GB5ØATG

This is another short update on the year's activity with this call. In total using five different operators we made nearly 8,000 QSOs. This included two entities, England and Wales. When John, GW4SKA, was using the call it will obviously count as Wales, but the rest of us reside in England. To somebody who is unfamiliar with DXKeeper, uploading logs is difficult enough. With one callsign involving two entities, it has been a nightmare. One log was late. Just as I thought, I had finished uploading. As I was trying to process and upload this log, my shack computer died on me irrecoverably! I now have to obtain a replacement shack computer. It's not before time and the new one will be quite fast in comparison. So please have patience if you are checking the LoTW logs. They should be all complete by September.

The second BARTG 75 Baud Sprint

Following the huge success of the first 75 Baud sprint, BARTG is running a second one, this time on all bands at a different time. The rules can be found on the BARTG website, following the same format as the annual BARTG Sprint that runs for longer in the spring.

It will be held on 19 September from 1700 – 2100z. RTTY 75 Baud only. Briefly, just to save you looking them up:

Bands: 10, 15, 20, 40 and 80m.

Exchange: Serial number only.

QSO points: Each completed QSO scores one point. Stations may be contacted again on other bands.

Multipliers: All DXCC countries and JA, W, VE and VK areas count as multipliers. Multipliers and continents count only once in the contest, regardless of band. US stations must use correct call or suffix for area of operation.

Scoring: QSO points x Multipliers x Continents (maximum of 6).

Log Submission: Logs must be submitted in Cabrillo format by e-mail (see below).

BARTG Changes

BARTG recently made some fundamental changes to the way it operates, which we hope will bring some exciting changes to the RTTY contesting world. We are trying to streamline all BARTG activities and the standard Committee format has been changed to make that possible.

1. The post of BARTG Contest Manager has been replaced with a Contests/DX/Software Sub-group consisting of Phil, GUØSUP, and Ian, GM4KLN, assisted by John, GW4SKA, and Arf, G1XKZ. Thanks are due to John, our BARTG President, for 20 years plus of excellent service to the contesting world, and for initiating many of the rules and concepts that other contests have now also adopted. John's vast knowledge and experience is still available to us as he is remaining within the Sub-group, but his workload will be reduced.
2. The same applies to the post of Awards Manager. This has been replaced with an Awards/QSLs Sub-group, consisting of Phil, GUØSUP, and Andrew, M5AEX, assisted by

Arf, G1XKZ. Phil has also given years of service to the Awards scheme, but now, assisted by Andrew and Arf, we hope to launch some new designs and a more exciting range in the near future.

3. The rules of the existing BARTG HF and BARTG Sprint will be re-written to remove current ambiguities, clarify and update.
4. An additional contest, the Sprint75, will be introduced after its successful pilot this year.
5. Additional sections will be added to our contests.
6. New software is being developed that will allow quicker, easier log submission, accommodating a wider range of log formats consistent with the revised rules. Final adjudication will still be done by a human being!

Please bear with us while we implement these major changes, and feel free to join us at www.bartg.org.uk. Donations are always welcome!

Please note: we are also in the process of updating our highly successful awards. Why not check those out too? We hope soon to be able to automatically notify testers whether they qualify for any of our awards shortly after each of our contests. Three important additional e-mail addresses are now available. They are:

logs@bartg.org.uk

This will be the address to which all contest logs should be sent - in Cabrillo format, please.

contests@bartg.org.uk

This one can be used for all general contest enquiries.

awards@bartg.co.uk

This is used for all award applications and enquiries.

75 Baud RTTY

A few more comments on the first BARTG 75 Sprint. This was from Bob, KØRC.

“The contest itself was a blast. The first hour or so was a matter of getting accustomed to the accelerated rate and quickly logging the contacts.

During the contest I made 116 contacts running SO1R and 300W. I started on 20m, running for the first 20 minutes with about a 65 QSO/Rate. I then went to S & P to pick up new calls before checking on 15m. There were only two stations I heard and worked at that time, AA5AU and K4GMH. I came back to 20m for some more S & P and eventually settled down for another 20-minute run. During later S & P sessions I received a couple of ‘QSO B4’ messages (when is that concept going to finally die?) and I replied with NOT IN LOG - GOOD LUCK. In both cases the station came back with a serial number. As everyone knows, this takes longer than if they had simply sent a new serial number in the first place. By the end of the contest I had become fully accustomed to the higher speed and was feeling it was ‘normal’. I can only imagine how some operators felt when they returned to the last section of the DRCG contest.

Overall I think this trial run of the SPRINT 75 was a success. I think the 4-hour format is ‘just right’, although maybe a more favourable date(s) and times might be selected. It felt like I ran out of stations to work at times, causing the rate to suffer. That said, I think the turn-out was excellent for a first-time event. I would like to see two events like this each year. My opinion is the

RTTY contesting community should look toward moving to this higher speed.

Most are in favour of running a few more like this, so we shall see what happens in the second 75 Sprint. With several of these per year, running at different times, we can try to involve as many countries as possible over the year. I am very interested to see how 75 Baud RTTY behaves on 80 metres.”

RSGB CC Contests

These are now over until January and I have suggested that we might try 75 Baud RTTY in these tests. I do suspect it might be a problem, but experimentation is all part of our hobby, so I feel we should at least try it. Perhaps we could alternate between 45.5 and 75. It would more than make up for the snail pace of PSK31! Having said that, using the filtering within MMVARI, using two notches either side of the run frequency and also reducing the bandwidth, all help with copy and QSO rate. However, it is still a done deal that the more QSOs you make on PSK31 the higher your position.

ROS

I have been playing with ROS for a while. This is a multi-tone type of data mode, similar to the Piccolo modes. It came onto our bands in February of this year. Written by José Alberto Nieto Ros, hence the name, it can be found on 14.101, 14.103, 14.112 and 14.115 MHz. It can also be found on 3.600, 7.053 and 28.300 MHz. The software for ROS is free and you can download it along with the User Guide and Introduction to ROS Spread Spectrum at

<http://rosmodem.wordpress.com/>

All you need to start with is your HF radio, a PC and a sound card interface. I used my MicroHam II and it worked first time. The GUI is a little disconcerting. There is what looks like a series of meters flicking up and down. It is spectrum-hungry, occupying up to 2.2 kHz, so not quite as environmentally friendly as PSK31 or even RTTY. The

software has two symbol rates: 16 and 1 baud (the latter aimed at weak signals down to -35 dBs of S/N) and can automatically synchronize any symbol rate. It is too early to judge - or even state - what it is capable of, but it is supposed to be sensitive, producing copy on signals so weak that they don't even show up on the waterfall. Time will tell. To be fair it is easy to get going, once the initial configuration has been done, and there is a lot of activity so why not try it? The copy is not instantaneous and personally I don't like it as much as RTTY. I can't see it replacing RTTY, that's for sure, and it is certainly not suitable for contests. However, it is another data mode to play with and there are dozens of them, so you will never be bored!

73 de Roger, G3LDI

Heard on the Air

(with thanks to G3RZP)

Some years back, a big DXpedition (possibly Bouvet). A ZS6 station, female operator, cracks the pile- up:

“You're 5 by 9, that's 5 by 9, the QTH is Johannesburg, that's Juliet Oscar..” etc.

Then she spells her name, followed by the piece de resistance:

“QSL direct to my callbook address and don't forget the addressed envelope and two IRCs, or I won't reply”

More recently on 20m on a DX net (where else?):

“I don't see the point of these DXpeditions. You can't work them because they won't come on the DX nets and take lists!”

Contest

Lee Volante, GØMTN

For this edition's Contest column Andy, G4PIQ, and Dave, G4BUO, have kindly agreed to share some of their experiences from their very successful participation in WRTC-2010 in Russia. By the time you read this, there will likely be several other reports of WRTC in the amateur radio press. For those with a mainstream radio amateur audience, a lot of the article will necessarily be taken up with describing the history and rationale of WRTC, the qualifying process, and the programme of events that took place in Russia in July. My idea was that for the CDXC audience, as most readers will be aware of the background already, Andy and Dave could tell us more specific details about field day-style contesting with the rest of the world's best testers literally in the next field. I'd asked some questions about conditions in the operating tent, how the travel logistics had worked, and the on-air strategy, all of which may be useful insights if anyone has plans to represent the UK at WRTC-2014.

Some thoughts from R37M

We had a great time at WRTC and the Russians did a superb job. I don't think we can say enough about the support from the whole Russian ham community. I'd love to think that in the UK we could even get 18 - as opposed to 180 - volunteers to travel up to 5,000 km to set up a station, make coffee, fill the generator and to sleep in tents just to support a visiting team - but I'm not sure it's true! There are lots of young enthusiastic amateurs over there and I do have the impression that the hobby has a good image amongst the youth community.

The contest was very enjoyable. We had a target of 3,000 QSOs which we understand was more than many stations were expecting to make - and we stayed pretty much on track for that throughout the event,

with a little acceleration on Sunday morning. I was worried about the impact of having stations only 500m away, but everyone had decent radios - no horrible transmit broadband or phase noise and decent receivers. So while, if you were close in, you knew that someone else was on the band, there was almost no troublesome QRM during the contest from them. Stations in the same field were about 45-50 dB over 9 on the meter of the MP on the HF bands where you were both beaming similar directions so were probably off the sides/back of antennas in the worst case, and 60dB over on 40/80m. This was well within the blocking capabilities of an MP or a K3.

The most amazing box we had was the triplexer designed by Bob, 5B4AGN. This, combined with W3NQN filters enabled us to share the tribander between the two radios, transmitting on one band and receiving on another. To give a measure of the scale of this success, while transmitting at 100W on 20m, the 2nd harmonic on 10m was just S9 and sounded like a normal signal on the band.

We were lucky with the storms. While we suffered quite high winds for 15 minutes or so, and a lot of QRN + static discharge from the antennas, the lightning didn't get closer than a few km from us, and we didn't get any of the cherry sized hailstones which hit a small group of about 4 stations in one of the fields. At least one of the toilet shelters (a tent over a hole in the ground!) blew 500m away! It was pretty hot - about 35 degrees - and that would have been dreadful in the tents were it not for the metalised blankets thrown over the top of the tent and the generator which helped keep the heat down a lot.

We didn't know how well we were doing through the event, which is an odd position.

I knew we'd had an awful first hour, but it was hard to tell how anyone else was doing. Personally, I'd rather know how we were doing.

On Sunday morning we figured out one of the things that we had been doing wrong. We weren't CQing with our two interlocked radios (only one transmitter on at a time) on two bands at once. Dave was running a nice CW pile-up on 20m and moved someone to 15m. I just dropped my call in once on 15m and someone (not the station we moved) called me, so I worked them, and then several stations called me, so I worked another (all the time while Dave carried on with the pile on 20m), and then a huge pile-up erupted. We then found out just how well two interleaved CW pile-ups could work and had the last 100 rate meter up to around 290 and the last 10 meter over 400 at times. Great fun! We had practiced dual CQing, but not flat out running hard on two bands at once. We also probably didn't work SSB hard enough. You really didn't get any great joy on SSB until you were spotted and sometimes we just didn't hang around long enough to wait for a spot to appear.

Luggage - well - we got away with it! We flew BMI and asked them if they would sponsor our excess baggage, but no joy. However, their rules are that carry-on can be as heavy as you like, as long as it fits the standard size, and you can lift it into the overhead bin yourself. That was a challenge to be met, so I had 20kg of carry-on, 25kg of hold baggage (against a 20kg allowance) and about 4kg of laptop bag with two laptops in (we took a spare)! Dave had 21kg of hold baggage and a slightly lighter carry-on and laptop. Going out they let us on with that without any problems. Mine was heavier because I was carrying the weighty FT-1000MP and the spare K2, while Dave was carrying the K3. On the way back I had to take a few kilos of clothes and stick them in Don/G3XTT's hand baggage to get away without any excess baggage charges. However, looking at the gear that some stations brought we were very lightweight!

Finally, of course, we both did 24 hours (or about 23 hours 58 mins to be precise - one break each!) in the seat.

Thanks, Andy and Dave, for those insights, and of course congratulations on your hugely impressive 9th place finish in the competition.

Other WRTC voices

Luckily for the armchair supporter, there was a variety of ways to enjoy the WRTC experience from home. Following a tradition started at previous WRTCs, the National Contest Journal website was publishing blog entries from a number of the competitors in the lead-up to, and then following the competition. Some entrants had to contend with missed flights and delayed luggage before they even arrived in Moscow. During the contest itself Team Austria, OE3DIA and OE6MBG, had their K3 radios fail due to a nearby lightning strike, and continued the competition with borrowed FT-857 radios. Read more about these stories here:

www.ncjweb.com/wrtc2010blogs.php

Randy, K5ZD, has published his contest audio online and also, thanks to a Writelog feature, offered a callsign search feature on his website that will play the contest audio for your particular QSO. Both radio's audio streams are provided, so you can get an idea of what the referees listened to over the 24 hours. Randy asks "How did you sound in Moscow?" For my own station "weaker than I would have expected" is my reply, as I can hear myself disappearing in QSB!

Also hosted on Randy's website is a detailed story of the WRTC experience written by his team mate at R34P, Tom/W2SC. Look here for more details of the log search

www.k5zd.com/live/wrtc/index.php

Don't forget to revisit the official WRTC 2010 website at

www.wrtc2010.ru

which contains the final results, including the radios and software used by all of the entrants. There are also videos to watch and several hundred photos have been collated of this very successful event.

I was operating the IARU contest from home, and was keeping a watching eye on the online scoreboard. It was interesting to see how teams changed places hour by hour. An opportune band change, beam heading change or flurry of multiplier-finding activity often being the cause. Personally I was surprised at how many teams reached 3000+ QSOs over the 24 hours with their 100W. With many teams using filters and triplexers, both operators were able to run stations on two bands at once, which boosted the rate. How well the contacts could be interleaved was a skill that was setting the top teams apart from the rest. Many QSOs I had with WRTC stations had a slightly longer than normal pause between some of the overs – understandable, given the timesharing for transmit time between the two radios.

I also watched the WRTC closing ceremony video online, and shared the excitement when some of the top placings were interchanged after adjudication. Congratulations to the deserving winners RW1AC and RA1AIP, and to ES5TV and ES2RR, and N6MJ and KL9A in second and third places respectively.

The biggest winner is WRTC and radio contesting itself, as Dave/K1ZZ summarised emotionally in the closing ceremony. The organisation of the Russian WRTC was superb, and the idea to move the stations to the field to remove any differences in location worked out very well. The enthusiasm from an army of Russian volunteers, many travelling thousands of kilometres to assist and be part of the event

was unprecedented. If only this 'ham-spirit' could be bottled and stored for the future. As everyone returned home with great memories, we should all try to recreate this atmosphere for other parts of contesting. The final news was that the next WRTC may be held in the New England area of the USA, or remain in Europe in Bulgaria, as letters of interest to host the 2014 event have been submitted.

WRTC Errata

In my WRTC article in the last issue, I was not aware that Don/G3XTT would be on-site in place of Roger/G3SXW on the Judging Committee, and a genuine oversight on my part was that I had not mentioned our friends Marios, 5B4WN (GØ,WWW) and Stavros, 5B4AFM (MØBBB), who operated as R37Q and placed 21st in the competition. My apologies to all.

Other Contests

The other big HF contest in July was, of course, the RSGB's flagship IOTA contest. It appears that it could be another record-breaking year for entries, despite some mediocre propagation. I only had limited time to enter this year, so partly for fun, and partly to prove that previous strategy choices I made were correct, most of my contacts were made by CQing. As expected, the island multipliers were few and far between and the final score was far below what I would have imagined if I had operated more by Search and Pounce.

Also as expected, after the contest there was a flurry of activity on the UK-Contest reflector suggesting alternative scoring schemes to disincentivise non-IOTA stations from occupying space on the band, and/or working other non-IOTA stations, so that the typical low-powered island expedition can make easier QSOs. There does come a tipping point whereby eventually it's in no-one's best interest to call CQ if the non-IOTA point score is so small relative to the IOTA one. Later

discussions involved the shortening of the lengthy IOTA exchange. On the one hand, it is presently a long exchange compared with most other contests. But then again, many stations are making 3,000+ QSOs in the 24 hours - there are other contests with longer exchanges, and information exchange is part of the skill and challenge of the whole event. For the entrants concerned about their boredom thresholds whilst listening to 'meaningless' 59 and 599s being exchanged, I would suggest that it's time to consider SO2R! But away from the politics and rule debates, many groups have reported enjoying their trips away, combining the contest with a summer holiday.

The RSGB Club Championships have now concluded for 2010 after the adjudication of the July sessions. Congratulations to the Bristol CG for first place after 7 months of diligent operating. I hope more of the 80m CC entrants will try the RSGB Sprint series, or indeed more RSGB and non-RSGB contests. Only a small fraction of those

regularly entering this series seem to participate in most other contests.

Endpiece

One reason I can think of for the errors mentioned above is that my major focus recently has been on getting married. There has been more organisation involved than for a world-beating multi-multi contest entry, and more paperwork than arrived at the CQ WW log checkers' PO Box in the middle of the 1970s! But I'm very pleased to report all the preparation was successful and Sylwia and I were married in early August. So contesting has had to take a back seat, and getting the *Digest* article to 'Martyn and the Maidens' (which sounds like it should be a rock group) on time has been at the expense of some QTC fun in the WAE DX contest this weekend. My life / work / radio balance will hopefully reach some form of equilibrium in a few months, or it may be a case of 'famous last words!'

73 Lee GØMTN

CDXC News Service

News and updates are published through the CDXC News Service on our website at www.cdxc.org.uk/news.

Information about forthcoming DXpeditions, details of members' trips as well as CDXC events or other announcements which are relevant to CDXC members are widely publicised through this page. The News Service is also monitored by certain DX newsletter services and websites.

If you would like to submit your own news, please click the link at the top of the page, or go directly to www.cdxc.org.uk/submit_news. There is an option to submit a photo as well as text. All news is credited.

If you have any questions about the CDXC News Service, please contact Tim Beaumont, M0URX (tim@m0urx.com).

Not the GB2RS News

- Ofcom to charge for special contest callsigns
- New island country makes its debut
- No contests on this coming weekend

In order to raise some much-needed extra revenue, Ofcom have announced that as of 1 January 2011 they will be charging commercial rates for special contest callsigns in the GØA to M9Z series. The charges will be similar to those levied by the DVLA for personalised car registrations, where prices start at £250, and also apply in retrospect to existing licence holders. Also under discussion are charges for GB special event station callsigns.

A new island country featured recently on the front cover of a well-known amateur radio magazine: Madiera. Several DXpeditions are already thought to be heading for Madiera, as soon as they've found out exactly where it is. Currently Madiera is thought to be located some 740 miles to the SE of the Arozes and 600 miles to the SW of Lisnob.

It has been confirmed that no contests at all are scheduled for this coming weekend. As a result an unprecedented number of Italian radio amateurs have been seeking urgent appointments with their psychiatrist with a view to coming to terms with an entire weekend with no contests whatsoever. Meanwhile countless forlorn-looking souls, thought to be keen amateur radio contesters, have been seen roaming the streets of... well, Rome - and mumbling disconsolately to themselves, "Five-a Nine-a Zero Zero One-a", "Five-a Nine-a Zero Zero Two-a"...

Meanwhile radio amateurs in the United States continue to be encouraged to be more specific about which state they are in when operating in a contest, seeing as these days

this is not always obvious from the number in their callsign. Indeed some of them seem positively reluctant to divulge such important information. In a recent very hectic contest, for example, when asked which state he was in, a W7 simply replied, "In a state of total and utter confusion!"

Summits on the Air (SOTA) is now taking off in a small way in the United States in the shape of Mini-SOTA and several small activations recently from northern WØ and Eagle Mountain, at 2,301ft the highest point in the state of Minne... yes, you've guessed it.

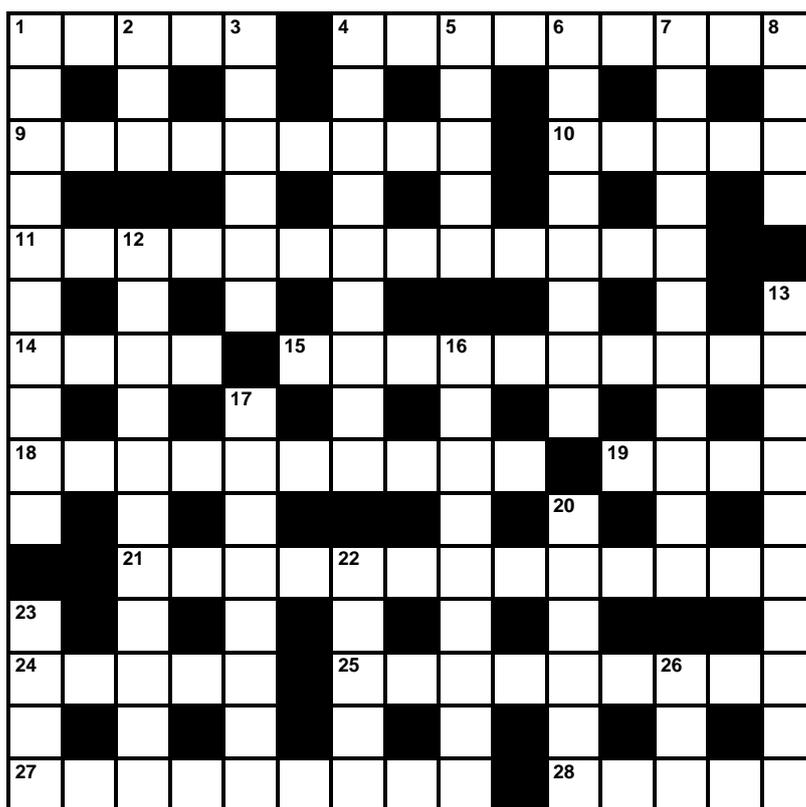
Recently voted their favourite car by members of Norway's national society, the NRRL: the Fjord Focus – ideal, they say, for driving around the famous waterways of Norway. Whereas if you need to get directly from one side of the water to the other the clear favourite is the amphibious version, the Fjord Transit.

[Does this mean that next door in Sweden they'll soon be bringing out an underwater version, the Saab Marine? Ed.]

Solution to Prize Crossword 41

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

Digest Prize Crossword 42 *by RFX*



The winner of Prize Crossword 41,
July 2010: Jim Evans, G3VDB,
Chelford, Cheshire (via e-mail).

ACROSS

- 1 Dish from Pescara, Italy (5)
- 4 Starting now, I'm to assist in negotiations (9)
- 9 Mark's half of Panama port? (9)
- 10 Cold-blooded creature starts to get every
contestant knocked out (5)
- 11 Have no more energy to continue, with no
more diesels or electrics available? (3,3,2,5)
- 14 American racing popular at the beginning and
end of day (4)
- 15 Planned to make slaves again? (10)
- 18 Giving evidence is somehow fitting, yes (10)
- 19 The big boss's easy task left unfinished (1-2-1)
- 21 This composer ably seduced us when drunk
(6,7)
- 24 Private Cooper? (5)
- 25 Dane Cuban ordered to achieve wealth (9)
- 27 From where you get a good view of the bride
on BA, say? (5,4)
- 28 Famous negative response by Mr Heath (5)

DOWN

- 1 Checks made by tutor during breaks (10)
- 2 Movement part of Verdi's *Macbeth* (3)
- 3 Build up a team, we hear (6)
- 4 Folly, I see, in need of restoration in this old
county (4,2,3)
- 5 Cares for objects (5)
- 6 Bank the French set up? Nonsense! (8)
- 7 Goes along with current concerns (11)
- 8 God, if upset, would be angry (4)
- 12 Holiday centres for those who have nothing on
(6,5)
- 13 Live with migraine, perhaps, somewhere near
Eastbourne (6,4)
- 16 When drunk, Toni bound to be convinced
(2,2,5)
- 17 Amount of information provided by our
country for short (8)
- 20 Scotsman to rein in evil in African city (6)
- 22 Plymouth bowler who might be hoping for a
duck? (5)
- 23 Italian high-rise seen in Scottish town, not
Greek (4)
- 26 Hazel, maybe, organised teachers (3)

Deadline for entries: 20 October

CDXC HF Challenge 2010

By the time you read this the HF Challenge will be several days old. The HF Challenge, started in 2009 by Gary, ZL2IFB, and adopted by CDXC in 2010, is a month-long event running the entire month of September. Its aim is to work as many DXCC entities as possible using any mode allowed by your licence on the bands from 15m to 6m inclusive.

There will be quite a lot of activity during September as there some major contests taking place including the SSB leg of the WAE DX and CQ WW RTTY contests plus a whole raft of club activity contests.

Scoring the HF Challenge is easy as each DXCC worked counts as 1 point towards the final total and counts only once regardless of the number of times that DXCC is worked or the number of modes used.

The full rules are available at www.cdxc.org.uk/hfchallenge.

Entry is by way of log submission, with the preferred method being an electronic log upload to ClubLog, which can be found at www.clublog.org. The use of ClubLog is free, but requires registration, which takes only a few minutes. Once registered, logs should be uploaded on a regular basis, daily if possible, which will add an extra competitive aspect to the proceedings as well as encouraging others to do likewise.

Participants not comfortable with uploading their logs to ClubLog may send a list of the DXCC they have worked to the Awards Manager at the address at the front of the *Digest*.

No QSL confirmations are required, but CDXC reserves the right to request a copy / print-out of an entrants log in the unlikely event of dispute. Participants are encouraged to submit their soapbox comments, which will be collated and published in a future edition of the CDXC *Digest*.

Awards will be available for the overall winner (a trophy), second place (a trophy), band leaders (a salver for those attaining the highest total on each band) and the remainder of the overall Top Ten (a certificate).

Winners will receive confirmation of their success by e-mail or letter, as appropriate, and their awards in due course.

So all that remains for me to do is wish everyone good luck, happy hunting and may the sunspots rise accordingly.

Jim Steel, MØZAK

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)

Starting with an immediate payment of **£18.00** (eighteen pounds) and then annually on **1 July** of each year.

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, please send the signed form to the UK bank branch looking after your account and not to CDXC. If you are using ONLINE banking, then make the Standing Order request directly ONLINE.

