

The LongPath

A North Alabama DX Club Publication

Special points of interest:

- This Month's Program
- Short Skip
- ARRL CW DX Contest
- DX Contests
- ARRL SSB DX Contest

How to Join

- * *Come to a club meeting;*
- * *or send in an application by mail (form on www.NADXC.org)*
- * *or call Jason Amos at (256)963-6833*

Ask

By Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

Remember the old saying “the only bad question is the one which isn’t asked”? I believe it’s true. Once we get past worrying about exposing ourselves as morons by asking questions on a subject we think we should know inside out, we’re half way there.

Of course we learn from each other by asking questions. One person asking another a question and receiving an answer with no further exchange provides valuable information transfer, but an exchange of questions, answers, and discussion is even better. A half hour or so before last week’s Huntsville Amateur Radio Club meeting, a young man appeared at the door of the shack and asked “Can you use the key (pointing to the paddles and memory keyer) without transmitting?” Thankfully, he had the guts to ask that question. A little probing revealed that he wanted to practice code, so he could eventually add HF privileges to the technician license he hoped to get after passing the test he would take the next morning. We played hookey from the HARC meeting to practice code for a couple of hours. His was a good question. (I hope section manager W4OZK forgives me for missing his program!)

Now let’s move the forum from one-on-one to a group. The exchanges arising from NADXC programs presentations are an example of a one-to-many situation which quickly turns into many-to-many, and that’s just fine. I have pulled many good ideas (not the least of which are future programs!) from these sessions. Most brew in the back of my mind for a while, but few go to waste. I hope your experience is the same.

Trumping the small group is the great public forum, which we find in the letters and technical correspondence sections of QST, CQ, QEX, QRP Quarterly, etc. All readers are privy to these exchanges: all benefit from a single question. N5DF’s question and the answer which followed, appearing in the current issue of QST, thereby benefits us all. I’m glad I read it, because it reminded me to pick up a couple of IRCs, and true to the prediction in the answer, there was great confusion about which side of the IRC to stamp, or whether to stamp it at all. Thanks, John, for the question.

Speaking for myself, often as not when party to any of these kinds of exchanges, I get a glimpse into just how much I don’t know. This may be disheartening initially, but it’s a move in the right direction, from a truly ignorant and often (again, speaking for myself) intransigent position of not knowing what I don’t know. I therefore apply for an extension to the new year’s resolution period, and resolve to ask more questions, even if it means I must tip my hand and admit ignorance.

Finally, those who conquer their vanity to ask the “stupid” question give great relief and perhaps impetus to do the same to those too timid to ask themselves. Often we find others have the same problems as we do, when we eavesdrop on others’ questions. Imagine that — we’re all in the same boat!

Resolve with me to ask more questions. Inquiring minds need to know!

73, Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

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Meeting started at 19:00 local time.

We had 19 present.

Tom welcomed our visitors Jerry Montgomery, K4SAV and Ken Durham, KE4KCB.

Discussed DX Worked by the group with special mention for the 3Y0X crew.

Minutes from the Jan. meeting were approved.

Jason gave the treasures report as \$2786.11 on deposit and \$320 ready for deposit. Note that dues are now payable. Jason had not yet been to the bank, but would before the next meeting.

Tom mentioned that one of our members Bill Gerth, W4RK would be moving

out of our area and that we wished him and his family well.

The new 2006 Budget was presented and discussed. Mike Maples made the motion to accept and Chuck Lewis seconded and motion carried.

New Business:

Membership applications were accepted for Jerry Montgomery and Kevin Hibbs. Welcome aboard guys.

Meeting adjourned at 19:14 with a program from Tom Homsley on antenna modeling and optimizations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason, KD4BJW

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LongPath Ads

are available at every day low prices. Want to buy, sell, or give stuff away? Contact Tom in the advertising department at

duncant1@ds-s.com or 705-2147 (w)

Ask for multi-issue discounts.

Simple Watt Meters and SWR Bridges for the Radio Amateur

Program by John Stensby, N5DF

This program deserves a special picture from the LongPath Equipment Pictures archive. Hear John talk about power and SWR measurement circuits—some old, some new, some unusual.

As usual, we meet at Ryan's on University at around 6:15 for dinner. The business meeting begins at 7:00, and the program at 7:30.

See you there!



3YØX A Big Success

The long-awaited DXpedition to Peter I island is now history. With more than 87,000 QSOs in their log, the 3YØX team is now headed home. Hopefully, many NADXC members were able to contact them and add a "most wanted" DXCC entity to their own logs. I found it fascinating to follow the DXpedition team's activities through the frequent news updates and photos posted to their website. The photos were absolutely stunning! If you haven't seen them, take a look. Now, we'll just have to wait until the Huntsville Hamfest to get some real firsthand reflections on the experience from Bob Allphin (K4UEE), one of the two DXpedition co-leaders, when he speaks at our DX banquet. By the way, this was a VERY expensive undertaking, and every financial contribution to the effort (no matter how small) can really help cover the costs. How about considering a small contribution yourself. The Peter I website (www.peterone.com) has information on how to do this.

New ARRL Lab Data Presentations

One of the most often read sections of QST each month seems to be the "Product Review" section. Those interested in a new piece of equipment can

often benefit from the measurements made in the ARRL lab at League HQ. Beginning this year, the visual presentation of some of these analyses was changed to make them easier to interpret. See the January and March issues for more information on these changes.

FCC Clarifies Vanity Call Sign Renewal Procedures

The FCC recently issued a public notice applicable to holders of vanity call sign licenses when renewing those licenses. A summary of the FCC's ruling can be found on the ARRL's website (www.arrl.org). A link to the complete FCC public notice can also be found there.

KD4BJW Recognized

Jason Amos (KD4BJW) recently received recognition from the ARRL for having completed all three levels of the ARRL's Amateur Radio Emergency Communications courses. Congratulations, Jason. The League's EmComm courses are very good - why not check out the infor-

mation about the first (Level I) course and see if you'd be interested.

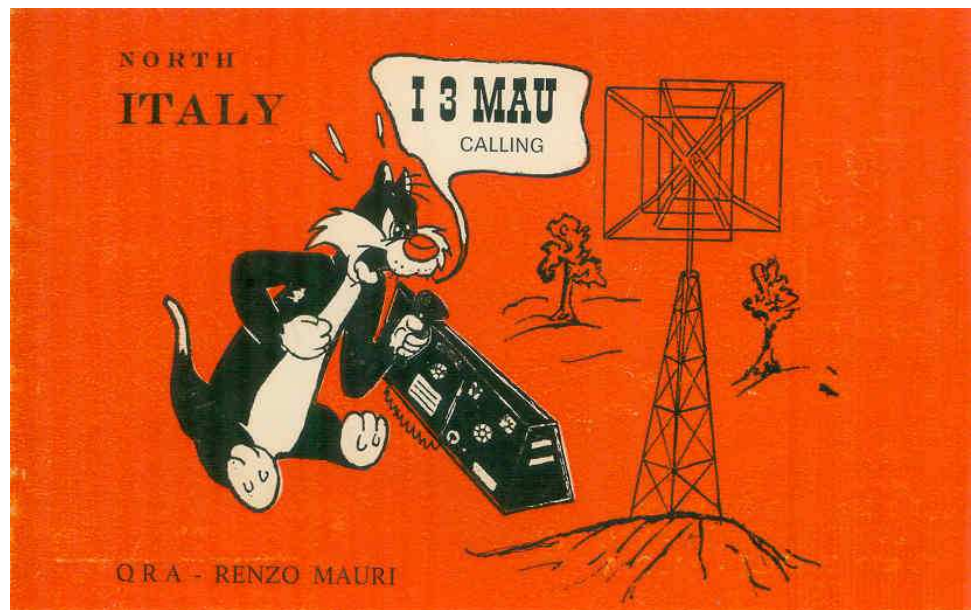
A New Forecast for the Next Solar Cycle

If you'd like some interesting and unusual reading, you might take a look at a news item that was recently posted on the ARRL's web site (at www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/03/07/5/?nc=1). It describes the results of a new computer modeling theory (called the "Predictive Flux-transport Dynamo Model") used by the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado, to predict solar cycle activity. The good news is the model forecasts that the next solar cycle (Cycle 24) will be substantially more intense than the current Cycle 23 that is now drifting toward its end. The bad news is that the current cycle is not forecasted to end until late 2007 or early 2008. Like all analyses, not everyone agrees with the basis of this one or with its analytical conclusions. Regardless, I think the information is worth reading.

73 es gud dx . . . de W4UR

Unusual QSL Card By the LongPath Staff

N4KG submitted this QSO, featuring Felicio at the I3MAU microphone screaming his way through a pileup, a timely reminder of recent phone contests. His fine multi-band quad is aimed right at us, and we're a little concerned the red nose may indicate exposure limits above OET-65 recommendations.



N4KG SOAB (A) LP

The first 9 hours were GREAT FUN on the Low Bands, along with the Saturday morning opening to Europe on 20M. The 15M opening was short, weak, and suffered from less activity but I stayed with it because that was 'as good as it was going to get'. After that, as a Low Power Assisted Entrant, it was a long grind of Packet Pileups. I was forced to swing my Low Tribander (TH7 at 40 ft./12m.) between SA, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific following a night of freezing rain that left my 5L10, 4L15, 3L20, and 2L40 Monobanders literally frozen on Europe. I know, I should have finished the replacement tower for my multiplier antennas that are sitting on the ground waiting for a new support after dismantling my heavily rusted 40+ year-old TV tower.

My goals for this contest were to maximize multipliers and make as many multi-band QSO's as possible. The incredible Low Band Conditions aided by a short SA/Caribbean 10M opening Sunday Noon paid off Big Time with 15 stations on 6 Bands, 17 stations on 5 Bands, 22 stations on 4 Bands, and 33 stations on 3 Bands as listed in the table below.

Years of QRP Contesting taught me that Patience, Persistence, and TIMING can yield surprisingly good results, even on the Low Bands, where my simple Wire Antennas performed Miracles. Who would think that 100 Watts to a tree supported Inverted L would account for 45 countries on 160M from North Alabama (only 70 miles from W5)? I've learned to expect that my 130 ft (40m.) High Dipoles will bust through DX pileups, even with Low Power, and they did, to the tune of 72 countries on 80M. Once again, a hearty Thank You to Cushcraft for their 2L 40M beam that netted 82 countries to my multiplier and has performed admirably

for many years with zero maintenance.. I'm sure I missed many Q's and probably some multipliers on 40M due to lengthy stays on 80 and 160M. There appeared to be a lot of single band entrants, mostly from Europe, especially on 160, 80, and 40M.

Almost all contacts were made by Search and Pounce with just a few short runs on 20 when no more 'fresh meat' could be found. The second 24 hours was particularly grueling after only an hour and a half sleep just before sunrise on Saturday and too many days burning the DX candle at both ends before the contest, mostly chasing 3Y0X on all bands. The net results was a LOT of short breaks to get away from the radio, make pit stops, and walk the dog for some exercise and fresh air. I need a relief operator to take the Day Shift !

Tom, N4KG

Class: SOAB(A) LP
Operating Time: 36 hrs.

QTH: ALA

Band	QSOs	Mults
160:	63	45
80:	125	72
40:	207	82
20:	328	87
15:	157	75
10:	29	17
Total:	909	378

Total Score = 1,030,806

Multi-band QSOS (total 362):

6 Bands (15 calls, 90 QSOs):

8P9PA	FG/N0YY	FS5UQ	HK1AR
J70J	LR2F	P40W	PJ2T
PJ4R	PS2T	TI5N	T09A (FM)
V31PP	VP2MVX	WP2Z	

5 Bands (17 calls, 85 QSOs):

6V6U	C08LY	CU2A	CU7/dl5axx
EA5RS	EA8ZS	FG/N0YY	G4BUO
HI3TEJ	HQ9H (HR)	IR2C	KH6WT
LR2F	P49Y	V31TP	VP5/WJ20
WP3C			

4 Bands (22 calls, 88 QSOs):

DL3YM	EA3AKY	F6BEE	F6HKM
GM3YTS	HG1S	HG1S	HG6N
IR4M	LN4W	LU4AA	OE4ES
OK1RF	OM7M	PI4TUE	PJ7/ND5S
RK2FWA	TI3M	V26G	VP9/K9CC
YR7M	YZ1U		

3 Bands (33 calls, 99 QSOs):

DK3GI	DR1A	EA2AAZ	EA5FV
EA6UN	EA8CN	EA9EU	ED6B
EI4DW	ES5Q	F6HKA	GM5A
HB9CVQ	IO4T	J43J	KH6RZ
KL7DX	LU7EE	OE8SKQ	OH4A
OH6NIO	OL3Z	OM5M	OY1CT
PA0LOU	PJ5NA	RD3A	VP9/W6PH
XE1MM	YT150AU	YV1/w5alt	
ZK1NOU	ZP0R		

NADXC Officers

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N4KG SOAB(A) LP 2006 CW

ARRL DX CONTEST MULTIPLIERS		(Dots from Left to Right: 160,80,40,20,15,10)					
1A	8Q	CT3	FT8W	JT	PJ7	TX0	XE
1S	8R	CU	FT8X	JW	PY	TY	XF4
3A	9A	CX	FT8Z	JX	PY0F	TZ	XT
3B6	9G	CY0	FW	JY	PY0T	UA	XU
3B8	9H	CY9	FY	KG4	PY0T	UA2	XW
3B9	9J	D2	G	KH0	PZ	UA9	XX9
3C	9K	D4	GD	KH1	R1FJ	UK	XZ
3C0	9L	D6	GI	KH2	R1MV	UN	YA
3D2	9M2	DL	GJ	KH3	S0	UR	YB
3D2/c	9M6	DU	GM	KH4	S2	UR	YI
3D2/r	9N	E3	GU	KH5	S5	V2	YJ
3DA	9Q	E4	GW	KH5K	S7	V4	YK
3V	9U	EA	H4	KH6	S9	V5	YL
3W	9V	EA6	H40	KH7K	SM	V6	YN
3X	9X	EA8	HA	KH8	SP	V7	YO
3Y/b	9Y	EA9	HB	KH9	ST	V8	YS
3Y/p	A2	EI	HB0	KL	SU	VK	YU
4J	A3	EK	HC	KP1	SV	VK0H	YV
4L	A4	EL	HC8	KP2	SV/a	VK0M	YV0
4S	A5	EP	HH	KP4	SV5	VK9C	Z2
4U1	A6	ER	HI	KP5	SV9	VK9L	Z3
4U1U	A7	ES	HK	LA	T2	VK9M	ZA
4W	A9	ET	HK0/a	LU	T30	VK9N	ZB
4X	AP	EU	HK0/m	LX	T31	VK9W	ZC4
5A	BS7	EX	HL	LY	T32	VK9X	ZD7
5B	BV	EY	HM	LZ	T33	VP2E	ZD8
5H	BV9P	EZ	HP	OA	T5	VP2M	ZD9
5N	BY	F	HR	OD	T7	VP2V	ZF
5R	C2	FG	HS	OE	T8	VP5	ZK1/n
5T	C3	FH	HV	OH	T9	VP6	ZK1/s
5U	C5	FJ	HZ	OH0	TA	VP6/d	ZK2
5V	C6	FK	I	OJ0	TF	VP8	ZK3
5W	C9	FM	IS	OK	TG	VP8/g	ZL
5X	CE	FO	J2	OM	TI	VP8/h	ZL7
5Z	CE0A	FO/a	J3	ON	TI9	VP8/o	ZL8
6W	CE0X	FO/c	J5	OX	TJ	VP8/s	ZL9
6Y	CE0Z	FO/m	J6	OY	TK	VP9	ZP
70	CE9	FP	J7	OZ	TL	VQ9	ZS
7P	CM	FR	J8	P2	TN	VR	ZS8
7Q	CN	FR/g	JA	P4	TR	VU	
7X	CP	FR/j	JD/m	PA	TT	VU4	
8P	CT	FR/t	JD/o	PJ2	TU	VU7	

N4KG SOAB(A) Low Power

Conditions for this event were surprisingly better than anticipated from what I heard just prior to the contest. Originally I planned on starting on 20 Meters, but on impulse I checked 15 and was pleased to find 6 JA's, LU, PY, ZP from South America, along with KH6, V7, VK, and ZL from the Pacific in the first 30 minutes. Another 18 multipliers were worked on 20 Meters in the next hour.

40 Meters was loaded with strong signals that kept me busy for the next 2.5 hours, netting 34 multipliers. At 0300Z I went to 160M for the anticipated "top of the hour" activity and was rewarded with 5 Caribbean multipliers in 20 minutes. The following hour produced 31 multipliers on 80 Meters. I continued to cycle between 40, 80, and 160 Meters with good results until 0830Z. To my delight, the feared atmospheric noise from approaching storms was considerably less than expected.

Morning found 20 Meters already open to Europe at 1200Z, just before my sunrise, producing 35 multipliers in the first hour, before QSYing to 15 Meters at 1300Z only to find 6 NA / SA stations. Back to 20M until 1342Z and my first 15M European (OE4A) at 1348Z. I stayed with 15M until 1606Z when I took an hour nap due to being overly tired and declining propagation to Europe due to increased absorption with the sun midway between Europe and W4.

For the rest of the day, I cycled between 20, 15, and 10 Meters in Search and Pounce mode with moderate to low rates. 10 Meter openings were brief and sporadic between 1700Z and 2200Z, primarily to CX and LU with an

occasional closer-in multiplier from FY, HC, HK, PJ, YV, and 8P.

Saturday evening I cycled between 20, 40, and 80 Meters looking for 'fresh meat' and an occasional new multiplier until 0244Z when I decided I needed another nap if I was going to be functional during the European Sunrise peak. I expect I missed some 40 and 80 Meter Q's and multipliers while napping. Fortunately, 40, 80, and even 160M were in good condition when I awoke and I was rewarded with a nice opening to Europe on 160M between 0500 and 0630Z. Running only 100W to a tree supported inverted L, I was VERY pleased to work 10 European multipliers on 160M SSB!

I had hoped to get hours sleep after 0730Z but awoke a couple of hours later, made 3 contacts on 40M, including TO1T for a new multiplier, followed by another 2 hours of fitful sleep. Once again, 20 Meters was already open to Europe at 1200Z and to my delight and surprise, 15M opened to Europe just after 1230Z. The 15M opening was not strong and activity levels were low so I tried CQing which resulted in a nice run for 30 minutes low in the band. After spending 30 minutes on 20 Meters, I returned to 15M to find stronger signals but for some reason I was NOT able to establish another run. By 1600Z, a combination of sleep deprivation, slow rates, and NO Voice-Keyer (BIG mistake) led me to take yet another nap.

Mid-day Sunday was frustratingly slow with 20M being the only band open to Europe and 10M only open to CX and LU. At 2000Z I decided to walk my dog and missed the brief but productive 10M opening to most of South America and the Caribbean that my neighbors were delighted to convey

after the contest.

Rates, and multipliers, picked up for the last 3 hours of the contest. ON5SY was logged on 40M at 2311 for a new multiplier but DJ1AA couldn't even tell I was calling through the Broadcast QRM on his listening frequency. He was the first DL I had heard on 40M even though I had many central European QSO's. I went back to fight the Packet Pileups for T18CBT (YAY!) and ZF2NT (no joy) on 20M, returning to 40M at 2340Z. FINALLY, DJ1AA was able to hear me. That left Z36W and TF3YH in my memories. After 10 minutes of calling, Z36W was logged at 2356Z. On to TF3YH who was rather weak in spite of his KW and vertical. Amazingly, he pulled my 100W out of the QRM for my final QSO (and multiplier) at 2358Z.

Multi-Band QSO's were more difficult in this contest due to the very poor conditions on 10M most of the weekend. Only 3 stations were worked on 6 bands, 13 stations on 5 Bands, 31 stations on 4 Bands, and 19 stations on 3 Bands as listed below.

6 Bands:

FY5KE PJ2T T05A (FM)

5 Bands:

CT8T FS5KA G4BUO IR2C
KH7X NP2B P40A P40W
PJ4G (-80) T18M VP5H
WP3F XE7T

4 Bands:

6V6U 8R1EA 8R1ZUM 9A15DX
9A7A EA5DFV EA8ZS F6DZU
G6PZ HG1S HG6N HK6PSG
HQ9F HR1CP IR4X J88DR
JA1ELY KH6/K2YY KH6WT

DX CONTESTS for the coming month include:

RSGB Commonwealth Contest, (CW), 80 - 10 meters

Mar 11, 1000Z to Mar. 12, 1000Z

Exchange: RST plus serial #.

See page 98, Mar. QST or www.rsgbhfcc.org

Russian DX Contest (CW/SSB), 160 - 10 Meters

Mar 18, 1200Z to Mar 19, 1200Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus serial # or Oblast

See page 98, Mar. QST or www.rdx.org

BARTG Spring RTTY Contest, (RTTY), 80 - 10 Meters

Mar 18, 0200Z to Mar 20, 0200Z

Exchange: 3 digit S.N. plus 4 digit time.

See page 99, Mar. QST or www.bartg.demon.co.uk

CQWW WPX Contest (SSB), 160 - 10 meters

Mar 25, 0000Z to Mar 26, 2400Z

Exchange: RS plus Serial #.

See page 99, Mar. QST or www.cqwp.com

OTHERS:

AGCW QRP Contest

1400Z-2000Z, Mar 11

UBA Spring Contest, (CW)

0700Z-1100Z, Mar 12

RSGB 80m Club Championship, (CW)

CW (Mar) 2000Z-2130Z, Mar 15

9K 15-Meter Contest,

1200Z-1600Z, Mar 19

RSGB 80m Club Championship, (SSB)

2000Z-2130Z, Mar 23

SP DX Contest 1500Z,

Apr 1 to 1500Z, Apr 2

EA (RTTY) Contest 1600Z,

Apr 1 to 1600Z, Apr 2

RSGB 80m Club Championship, (CW)

(Apr) 1900Z-2030Z, Apr 3

JIDX CW Contest 0700Z,

Apr 8 to 1300Z, Apr 9

EU Spring Sprint, (SSB)

1600Z-1959Z, Apr 8

UBA Spring Contest, (SSB)

0600Z-1000Z, Apr 9

Dates & times often change or are misprinted in the journals; beware.

Chuck, N4NM



Mr. DX Contests, N4NM

ARRL SSB DX Contest
(cont'd from page 6)

LR2F	LU4DX	OE4A	OE9XRV
OK1RI	OM5M	P40CW	PI4TUE
RK2FWA	V31BH	VP9/W6PH	ZX2B

3 Bands:

DJ1AA	EA6UN	EI9E	GM7V
HB9AUS	HB9CXZ	HK5CPH	HR2DMR
IW3IE	J37K	JA0QNJ	JF1SQC
JH4UYB	LT0H	LU4WG	OA4SS
TO1T (FG)	ZPOR	ZX3S	

Final Results for N4KG SOAB(A) LP ALABAMA

Single Operator All Band - (Packet)
Assisted - Low Power (100W); Operating Time: 32 Hours

Band	QSO	DXCC
160	34	28
80	93	54
40	139	68
20	260	83
15	212	74
10	34	12
Total	772	319 = 738,804 points

"ARRL SSB DX Contest" on p. 8

