



The LongPath

A North Alabama DX Club Publication

Special points of interest:

- Installing Skyhooks
- Program Announcement
- Short Skip
- Conway Reef Sponsorship request
- DX Contests

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

Installing Skyhooks 101

By Mark Brown, N4BCD

All the antenna books tell us the same general story – get your antenna up as high as possible. If you lack the location or budget for a tower but have some tall trees, here's a good way to take advantage of that free height. I'm not talking about some wimpy slingshot or trying to cast a fishing weight almost straight up, I'm talking about using weapons to attack the problem. Archery weapons.

With this method one can easily clear a 100' broadleaf. Evergreens are somewhat trickier due to the sticky sap. **WARNING! NEVER UNDERESTIMATE HOW FAR AN ARROW WILL TRAVEL IF THE LINE BREAKS.** One of my arrows came down in the flowerbed of a house 3 doors down.

Here's what works for me...

Crossbow or regular bow - doesn't matter. Whatever you're good with.

Line1 for really high shots = Spiderwire XXX monofilament 12lb test.

Line2 for shots less than 80' = Stren 17lb (this one is fluorescent)

Other's will probably work, but I literally threw

a reel of Berkley Trilene in the trash after several consecutive line breaks.

Prepare a 1.5 inch piece of electrical tape.

Lay your fishing line on the arrow between the nock & fletching so that about 4 or 5" of line is pointing towards your arrow tip. Use your tape to go around the arrow just behind the fletching. Now tie your monofilament into a knot over the tape. I usually trim any excess monofilament about 1" from the knot. This method I've described here works really well for me - the tape might be acting a bit like a shock absorber to the line.

Now you're ready to take the shot. I shoot a crossbow right-handed so I lay the reel of line in front of my left (forward) foot. - making sure there's no tangles with arms, or bow limbs. Also make sure you don't have a lot of slack or kinks in the line before the arrow leaves. The shock of that line going taut can snap it. Sometimes I get some nice line burns on my left forearm but it's a small price to pay for the height you get.

Depending on several factors - strength of the bow, angle of the shot, weight of the arrow, and wind to name a few, you'll probably want to arrest or brake line as soon as it clears your

Quad Installation

Program by Steve Werner, AG4W

Steve's new QTH sports a new antenna—3 elements on 20, 17, 15, 12, and 10m, and 4 elements on 6m. Come hear about the antenna and tower installation, and the DX Steve is now working. See you at Ryan's next Tuesday at 6:15 pm for dinner, 7:00 for the business meeting, and 7:30 for Steve's program.



The LongPath Staff

Interim Publisher/Editor:

Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

Departments:

Tom Homsley, N4WBS, Short Skip

Chuck Lewis, N4NM, DX Contests

Key Contributors:

Mark Brown, N4BCD

Steve Werner, AG4W

Photographer/Consultant:

Jared Cassidy, KQ4VT

Thanks Jason, KD4BJW for an informative program at our August meeting. Jason covered the details of his 2-radio truck mobile installation—all aspects, from power, grounding, cable routing, positioning controls, and on-the-air experience. A great program, and offered by Jason with no arm-twisting required, the way programs ought to be.

September's program by Steve, AG4W was also offered up, ready to go,

and we'll see it Tuesday. Thanks, Steve — those of us like myself contemplating their first tower will benefit from your experience.

Got a program of your own, either full-blown and ready to deliver, or in need of just a few final touches? Don't keep it hidden under a bushel. Contact KG4CUY with the program title and a brief description. You'll find yourself on the schedule.

Installing Skyhooks 101

(cont'd from p. 1)

Table of Contents

Installing Skyhooks 101	1
September Program Announcement	1
Programs	2
Short Skip	3
AG4W Antenna Sneak Preview	3
Conway Reef Sponsorship Request	4
DX Contests for September	4
Boatanchor of the Month	5

tree notch. Be careful here. A gentle hand that slows the arrow is better than a sharp jerk that could turn the arrow sideways from it's downward path resulting in a stuck arrow.

You've heard the saying "an apple doesn't fall far from the tree". Same is eventually true with arrows. I've had two stuck arrows fall back to earth a few months later when the monofilament deteriorates or breaks.

A little more about line. While I like the Spiderwire for shots, it's a little weak for tugging Dacron rope through tough spots. It's a major disappointment when the line breaks after you're made that great shot and you're rope is halfway up and back down. To mitigate that I've taken to using the 17lb Stren as an intermediate between the light line & rope. It's more pulling and winding but it's more of a sure bet.

Worth mentioning again: NEVER UNDERESTIMATE HOW FAR AN ARROW WILL TRAVEL IF THE LINE BREAKS.

All told, lost target arrows plus lots of reels of line (line does wear out - you'll begin to feel rough spots from abrasion with trees) the price does add up.

Compared to the price of a tower though, it almost free.

The antenna books talk about counterweights, pulleys, and such but I don't use them. What I've taken to doing is put an eye bolt into a tree just up where you can reach it. Get your antenna up as high & tight as you can. At that point, put a carabineer on your support rope so you can unhook it. About 10 or 15 feet down the slack end put another one. Then it's a simple matter to relieve tension on your span when the trees blow in different directions. Not saying it's perfect but haven't lost a wire yet using this method. carabineers are now available almost everywhere - Home Depot / Hardware stores - even seen in bargain buckets holding key chains at Target.

Good DX'ing
Mark - N4BCD

Short Skip

By Tom Homsley, N4WBS

New Entities

St Maarten (PJ7) and Curacao (PJ2) will become countries within the Dutch Kingdom (similar to the British Commonwealth) by October 2010, just in time for CQ WW SSB 2010. In addition, the status of Bonaire (PJ4), St Eustatius (PJ5), and Saba (PJ6) could also change. Should a change in status occur, there will no doubt be a change in the DXCC and CQ DX status, as well. Watch for news on the subject and be prepared for an update in the CTY files your logging software uses, too. (ARRL Contest Update, Daily DX)

Solar Field Day

The Orlando ARC used renewable energy for a portion of its power for Field Day. Not only was a generator in use for auxiliary power, but they used a hybrid solar power system from Solar Stik. It not only has regular solar panels but also a small windmill on top of the apparatus. The solar power station generated 300 Watts with the panels and the windmill. The 20 meter station was fed by two big batteries charged with the power from Solar

Stik of St. Augustine. Scroll down about halfway on this page http://www.solarstik.com/Press_Release.php

Tristan da Cunha.

Tristan da Cunha Island was settled in 1816 by British marines sent to guard Napoleon, who was in exile on St. Helena, 1300 miles to the north. When the garrison left 16 months later, one marine chose to remain. He was joined over time by sailors from passing ships and shipwrecks—and imported women. They and their descendants made up the island's seven founding families, who have lived there ever since. As a result, most Tristanians bear one of seven surnames: Hagan, Swain, Rogers, Green, Lavarello, Repetto, and Glass. Because of intermarriage, many look strikingly similar—tall with pale brown skin.

<http://www.parade.com/news/2009/08/30-life-on-the-worlds-loneliest-island.html>

Solar Update

A small sunspot group from Cycle 24 has emerged and is making its way

across the solar disc! Sunspot numbers for August 20-26 were 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0 and 0 with a mean of 0. The 10.7 cm flux was 67.6, 66.4, 66.6, 67.3, 67.6, 67.1 and 67.3 with a mean of 67.1. The estimated planetary A indices were 11, 8, 5, 5, 3, 3 and 4 with a mean of 5.6.

(ARRL K7RA Propagation Report)

September Contests

The Tennessee QSO Party and the Russian Radio RTTY WW-Digital are this weekend. Information concerning upcoming contests is provided in the current issue of QST in the new Contest Corral section. Also see the WA7BNM contest calendar at <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/weeklycont.php>

So long 'til next time. . .



de N4WBS

AG4W Antenna Sneak Preview

Here it is—Steve Werner's new quad. There are a lot of wires between those spreaders. Some DX snags include VR, VU, BX, VK9N, XW, 5N, and 9M2, all in one week.

Hear all about it at the September NADXC meeting.



Conway Reef Sponsorship Request

Dear OM, Hamburg, 25.July 2009

During the HamRadio in Friedrichshafen it was announced, that Hawa, DK9KX, formed a team, based on the crew of TX9 (Chesterfield Island in 2004), which will activate Conway Reef OC-112 in October this year. The 7 operators are highly experienced by various DXpeditions.

DJ7JC (TI9KK,OH0EC,VU4RG,VU3NLF)

DJ8NK (OJOMA, TX9, VU4AN...)

DJ9ON (3D2CR, TX9, VP6DIA, PY0Z...)

DJ9RR (9Y4ZC, TX9, VK9DWX...)

DL6JGN (5H1GHW, TX9)

PA3EWP (VP5C, TO5C, J79WP, ZF2WP...)

The callsign of this DXpedition was issued to commemorate a DXpedition 20 years ago, when DK9KX as organizer and leader of a crew, which included today's member DJ9ON, visited this island for the first activation ever.

We tried to keep the costs and expenses of this DXpedition as low as possible and the crew is prepared to invest \$4.000 each (total \$28.000), but still the total amount is estimated to \$64.000. Therefore we kindly ask you, to support this DXpedition to one of the

rarer DXCC countries. Of course you will be mentioned with your logo on our WEB-page www.conwayreef2009.de.

If you need any additional information or have any requirements please do not hesitate to contact us.

We hope for your positive decision and remain with

VY73 de Jan DJ8NK
(dj8nk@hotmail.com)

A contact address in U.S.A. is:

Leon A.Katz K2EWB, CR-2009

4136 Lakespur Circle North

Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410-5547

DX Contests for September

By Chuck Lewis, N4NM

All Asian DX Contest, (SSB), 80 - 10M

Sept 5, 0000Z - Sept 6, 2400Z (48 hours)

Exchange RS plus age (YLS can use "00")

See page 78, Sept. QST and www.jarl.or.jp/English

IARU region I Field Day SSB, 160 - 10M

Sept 5, 1300Z to Sept 6, 1300Z

Exchange: RST plus Serial #

See page 78, Sept. QST and IARU web pages

Russian RTTY WW Contest (RTTY), 80 - 10M

Sept. 5, 000Z - 2400Z

Exchange: RST plus WAZ zone or Oblast

See page 78, Sept. QST www.radio.ru/cq/contest/rule_results/index2.shtml

DARC 10-Meter Digital Contest (Digital Modes), 10M

Sept. 5, 1100Z - 1700Z

Exchange: RST plus Serial #

See Page 78, Sept. QST and www.darc.de/referate/dx/cqdlcont/fgdcc.htm

Worked All Europe (WAE) DX Contest (SSB) 80 -10M

Sept 12, 0000Z to Sept 13, 2400Z

Exchange: RST plus QSO #

See page 78, Sept. QST and www.waedc.de

Scandinavian Activity Contest, (CW), 80 - 10M

Sept. 19, 1200Z to Sept, 20, 1200Z

Exchange: RST plus Serial #

See page 78, Sept. QST and www.sk3bg.se/contest/sacnsc/htm

CIS DX Contest, (CW/DIG), 80 -10M

Sept. 26, 1200Z to Sept. 27, 1200Z

Exchange: RST plus Serial # or CIS area code

See page 78, Sept. QST and www.cisdx.srars.org.cisdx.pdf

Scandinavian Activity Contest, (SSB), 80 - 10M

Sept. 26, 1200Z to Sept. 27, 1200Z

Exchange: RS plus Serial #

See page 78, Sept. QST and www.sk3bg.se/contest/sacnsc/htm

CQ WW RTTY Contest, (RTTY), 80 - 10M

Sept 26, 0000Z to Sept 27, 2400Z

Exchange: RST, State/Province, and CQ zone; DX sends RST and CQ zone

See page 78, Sept. QST and www.cqwwrtty.com

OTHERS:

International G3ZQS Memorial Straight Key Contest

2300Z, Sep 4 to 2300Z, Sep 6

RSGB SSB Field Day

1300Z, Sep 5 to 1300Z, Sep 6

RSGB 80m Club Sprint, SSB

1900Z-2030Z, Sep 11

FISTS Get Your Feet Wet Weekend

0000Z, Sep 11 to 2400Z, Sep 13

PODXS 070 Club 80m Autumn Sprint

2000 local, Sep 11 to 0200 local, Sep 12

Swiss HTC QRP Sprint

1300Z-1900Z, Sep 12

QRP Afield

1500Z-2100Z, Sep 15

RSGB 80m Club Sprint, CW

1900Z-2030Z, Sep 23

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

Chuck, N4NM

Huntsville Hamfest yielded up a single purchase for me, a BC-906 in almost as good shape as this picture from the manual. An absorption wavemeter circa 1943, it covers ~140 - 225 MHz, although you would be hard pressed to determine that from the manual, which refers only to the G and I bands. Made for servicing aircraft transmitters capable of cranking out a few hundred watts, it is somewhat deaf compared to its HF cousin the BC-221, but is a much simpler and smaller device.

The loaded Q of the cavity tuning arrangement is extremely high—I had little problem resolving 10 kHz frequency differences, although converting them from dial readings to MHz was a bit approximate using the charts. The dial mechanism is a beautiful piece of me-

