

The LongPath



January 2024 — Volume 48 Issue 1

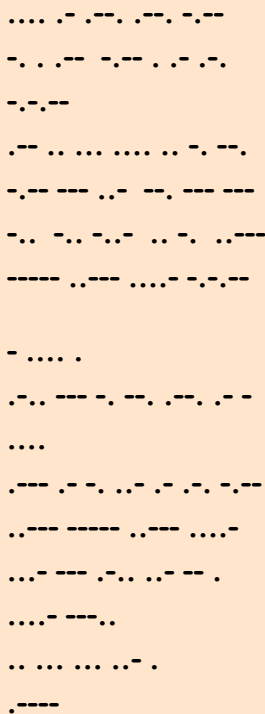
A North Alabama DX Club Publication

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Contributors:

AC4G
N4NM
NG3K
WA4HR



From the President

By Bruce Smith, AC4G

The beginning of a new year is here and now is the time to make goals that the NADXC can accomplish throughout 2024. First of all, I want to welcome our newest officer, Fred Kepner, K3FRK, as Vice-President. Fred has already begun to solicit and prepare a calendar of program speakers for each monthly meeting throughout the year. This is typically one of the most important and difficult tasks to accomplish each year. Next, we need to focus on our next major hurdle which is to plan for the NADXC budget. Barry Barton, WA4HR has built a “strawman” budget for the club officers to review and present to the club soon. The next major event for planning is the DX Banquet which occurs in conjunction with the Huntsville Hamfest in August. This event requires the club’s most intense planning and coordination of the year. Fortunately, we have a fine selection of recent DXpeditions and future DXpeditions to select a speaker for our banquet. Fourth comes the club picnic in October. Perhaps we can find a location suitable by all. And finally, to end the year, the annual DX Holiday Dinner will be held in December, but the club will need to find (reserve) a suitable location as selected by all members. As we all can see, we have plenty of work to do this year to make this a success-

ful year.

I regret to mention that we lost another NADXC member this past year in December. We lost Melanie Winter, N4HIX, after a long nine-year battle with Stage-IV colon cancer. Melanie was a proficient CW operator acquiring her license many years ago requiring significant technical proficiency and demonstrating sending and receiving morse code at a speed of 20 words per minute. Not only was Melanie a member of the NADXC, but also a member of the ARRL, HARC, HARC YL Club, and Southeastern DX Club, among other amateur radio clubs and organizations. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her OM Johnny, KR4F.

Club dues for 2024 NADXC membership are now due. The easiest way to pay is to go to the club website at nadxc.org, scroll down and select either “Single Dues” or “Family Dues”, enter your call sign, then “Add to Cart” where you should be taken to PayPal for further processing and confirmation of payment to NADXC. Another less desirable method to pay club dues is to pay Barry Barton, WA4HR via mail sent to his QRZ mailing address or via in-person at this month’s meeting. If paying in-person, make sure Barry gives you a receipt and records your name,

From the President (continued)

callsign, and type of membership (Single/Family) in his record book.

We have been blessed with many DXpeditions and contests during the month of December. I have been chasing VU7A (Lakshadweep Island) and VU4N (Andaman-Nicobar Islands) off the coast of India to obtain some low band band-slot QSOs. I have also seen many of our membership chasing these entities as well as other DXpeditions on the bands. I have already received many LOTW confirmations for all of these contests and DXpeditions QSOs. As I write this article, I just completed the Stew Perry 160m contest and the RAC contest just prior to New Year's Day. Refer to Chuck Lewis', N4NM Contest page and the NG3K DX Page in our LongPath newsletter for upcoming DXpeditions and contests. I can say that the low bands have finally awakened. As a result, we have had a few good openings on 160m (Top band) to Japan and Southeast Asia. Stay tuned during the next couple of months as the low bands should be in better shape. The higher bands continue to produce long distance QSOs around the world. We should be approaching the peak of Sunspot Cycle 25 this year or next. NOW is the time to operate 10m and 12m, both via

shortpath and longpath. Before you know it, we will be going down to the bottom of Cycle 25 and the high bands will be only a memory and it will be many more years before Cycle 26 opens again. Unfortunately, many will not be able to operate due to old age physical limitations. Please heed this advice, take advantage of 10m and 12m NOW before you regret not being active on these bands with such great conditions.

As we begin 2024, I want to congratulate our 2023 DX'er of the Year, Steve Werner, AG4W for his efforts in 2023 to achieve this award. Steve met many criteria that allowed us to vote and award him the highly sought-after award in December. Steve will be presenting the club's program for the January meeting on his recent DXpedition to Cameroon, Africa, TJ9MD. Steve and the team made many QSOs, giving many members of the NADXC a new DXCC country and/or several new band slots. Steve expects to discuss the team's planning, travel, set-up, and execution of operation plans. I am excited to hear Steve's program on Tuesday, January 9th at the Signals Museum of Information Explosion, 1806 University Drive, Huntsville, AL. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. and afterwards, Steve will provide detailed information on TJ9MD. For club members unable to attend in person, we will have ZOOM up and running. ZOOM details to follow in a separate email.

Success with Two Difficult DXCC Countries

By Bruce Smith, AC4G

There are many very difficult DXCC entities for me to work and make a QSO on the HF Amateur Bands (10m-160m) from my QTH in Southern, Middle Tennessee, grid square EM65. Two specific DXCC entities that fit this category are VU7 (Lakshadweep Island) and VU4 (Andaman & Nicobar Islands). This past month in late-

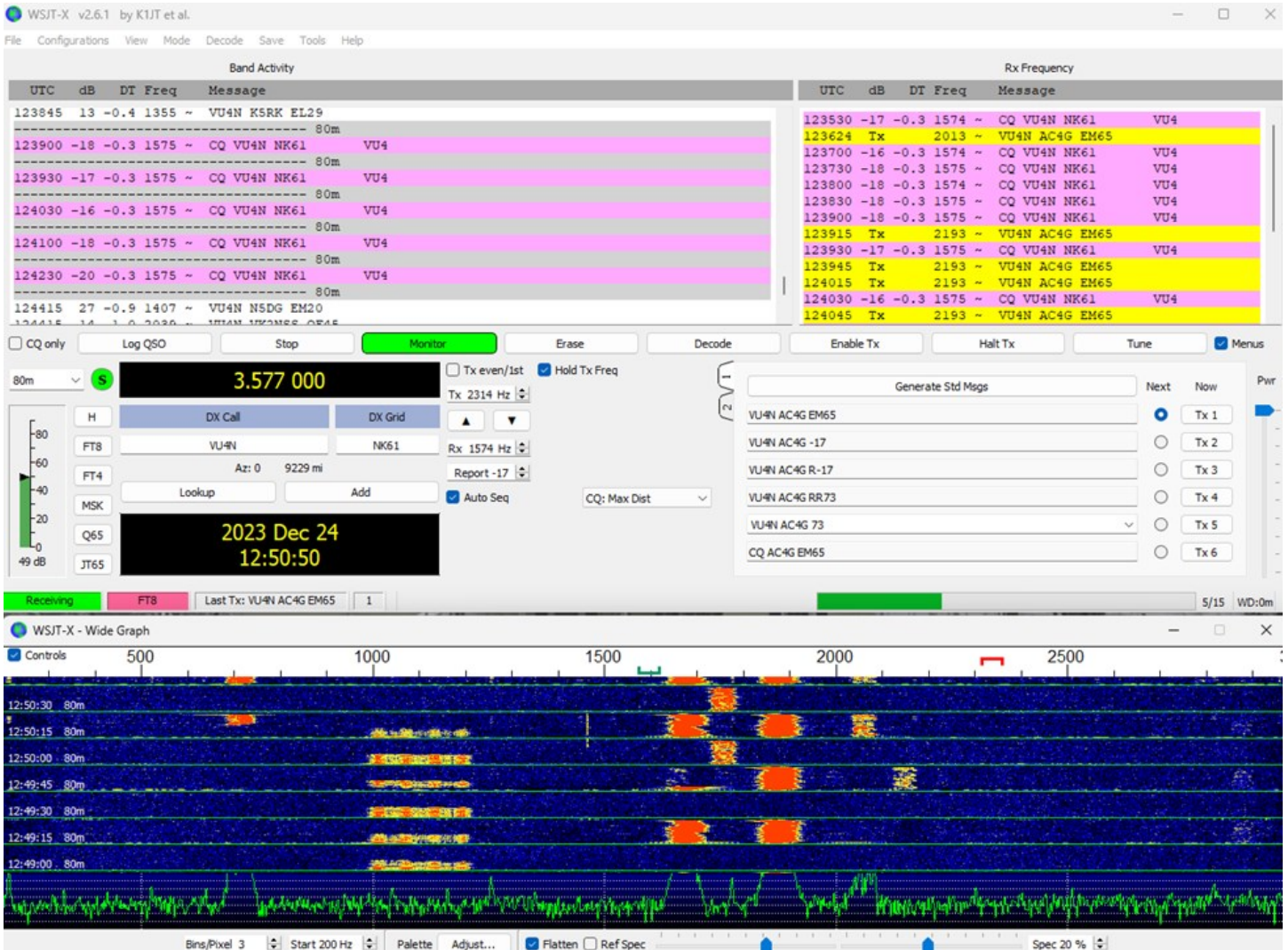
November and December 2023, W4VKU, Krish obtained an amateur radio license to operate from these two locations as VU7A and VU4N, respectively from these DXCC entities. Both islands are located almost on the other side of the world from my QTH in Taft, TN. VU7 Lakshadweep Island is located just southwest of India with a

Success with Two Difficult DXCC Countries (continued)

shortpath (shortest direct path) beam heading from my QTH in Taft, TN of approximately 337 Degrees. Andaman-Nicobar Islands are located east of India in the Bay of Bengal having a shortpath beam heading from my QTH of approximately 0 Degrees. Both locations are about 10,000 miles from the North Alabama and Southern Tennessee area. Since it is not very often that VU7 and VU4 are active on the HF amateur radio bands, the demand is very high, but as mentioned, due to the path and distance is most difficult to make a QSO.

As the Dxpedition began, the pileups were

horrendous as I predicted they would be. Ham operators from all parts of the world were calling at the same time due to the great propagation we are experiencing during this part of the upswing of Solar Cycle 25. WSTJ-X FT8 bandwidth was very crowded with stations stacked on top of each other making it difficult to succeed and bag a QSO from Krish. Polar flutter and propagation played a huge role in making a successful QSO. Even on a good propagation day, it is difficult to obtain a QSO from that part of the world. Although there were a few CW and SSB QSOs made by VU7 and VU4, most QSOs were made via FT8/FT4 digital modes from both DXCC entities. The total number of QSOs made from VU7A was 52,610 QSOs,

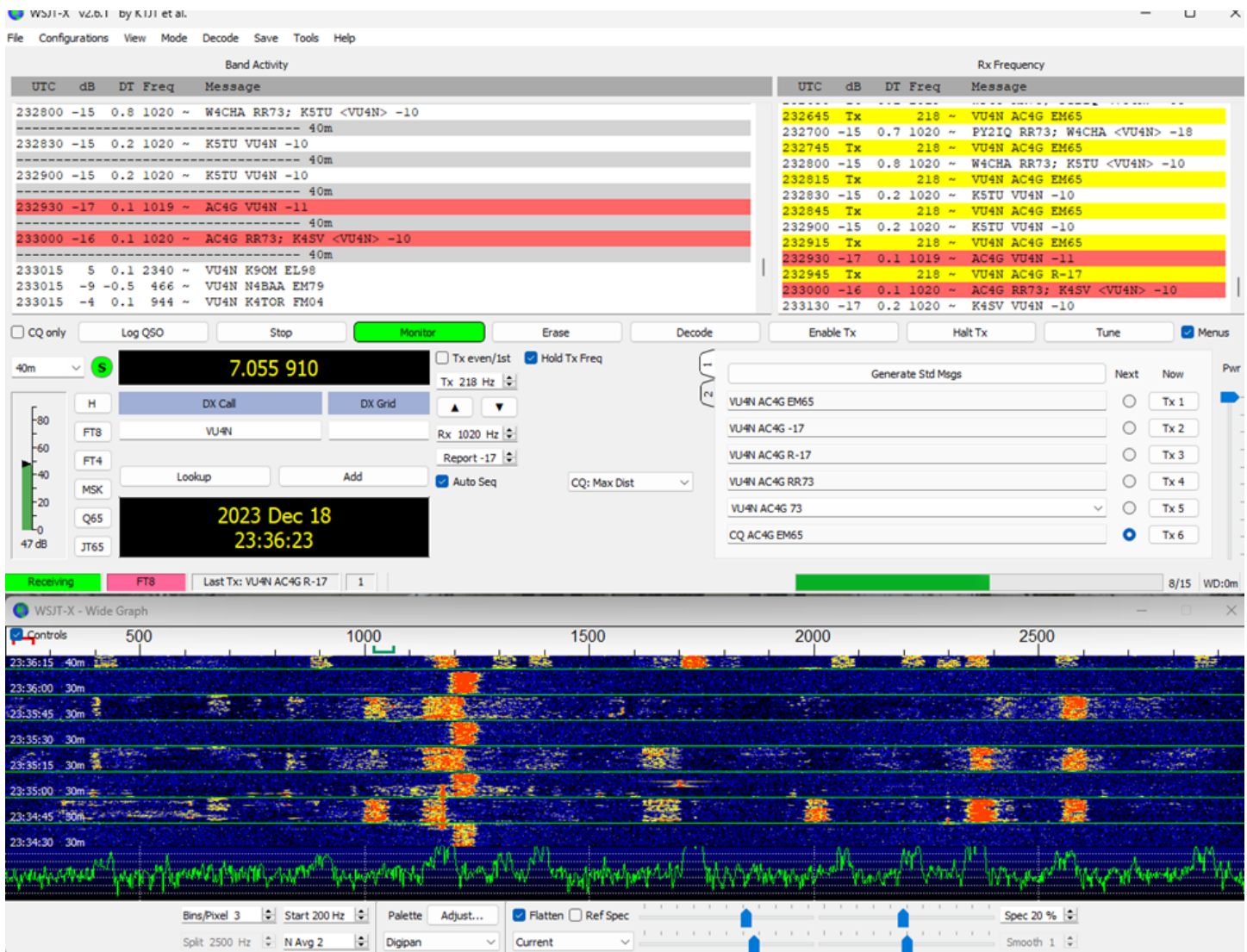


Picture1: VU4N CQing on 80m – no copy on AC4G

Success with Two Difficult DXCC Countries (continued)

while Krish operated from VU4N netting approximately 26,425 QSOs according to data online from clublog.org. I noticed several NADXC members making one or more QSOs with VU7A as was in my case. My goal was to work VU4N several times, however, I was unable to do so as I also saw with my fellow NADXC members. Many of us NADXC club members were lucky to make one or two QSOs with VU4N. If you were like I and needing VU4N on many bands, especially the low

bands, you might as well forget it. I pursued both stations every morning and every night, but never heard either station on 160m, although I checked both shortpath and longpath. All of my QSOs with VU4N were longpath with my antenna pointed in a southerly direction. One reason for the difficulty to make any QSO with VU4N on 80m or 160m is due to the lack of a very short timetable of mutual darkness at both locations. Even though I and other NADXC members were lucky and worked VU7A on 80m during his sunrise, I was not so lucky to make any 80m or 160m QSO with VU4N. I must say that I did copy VU4N a couple of times



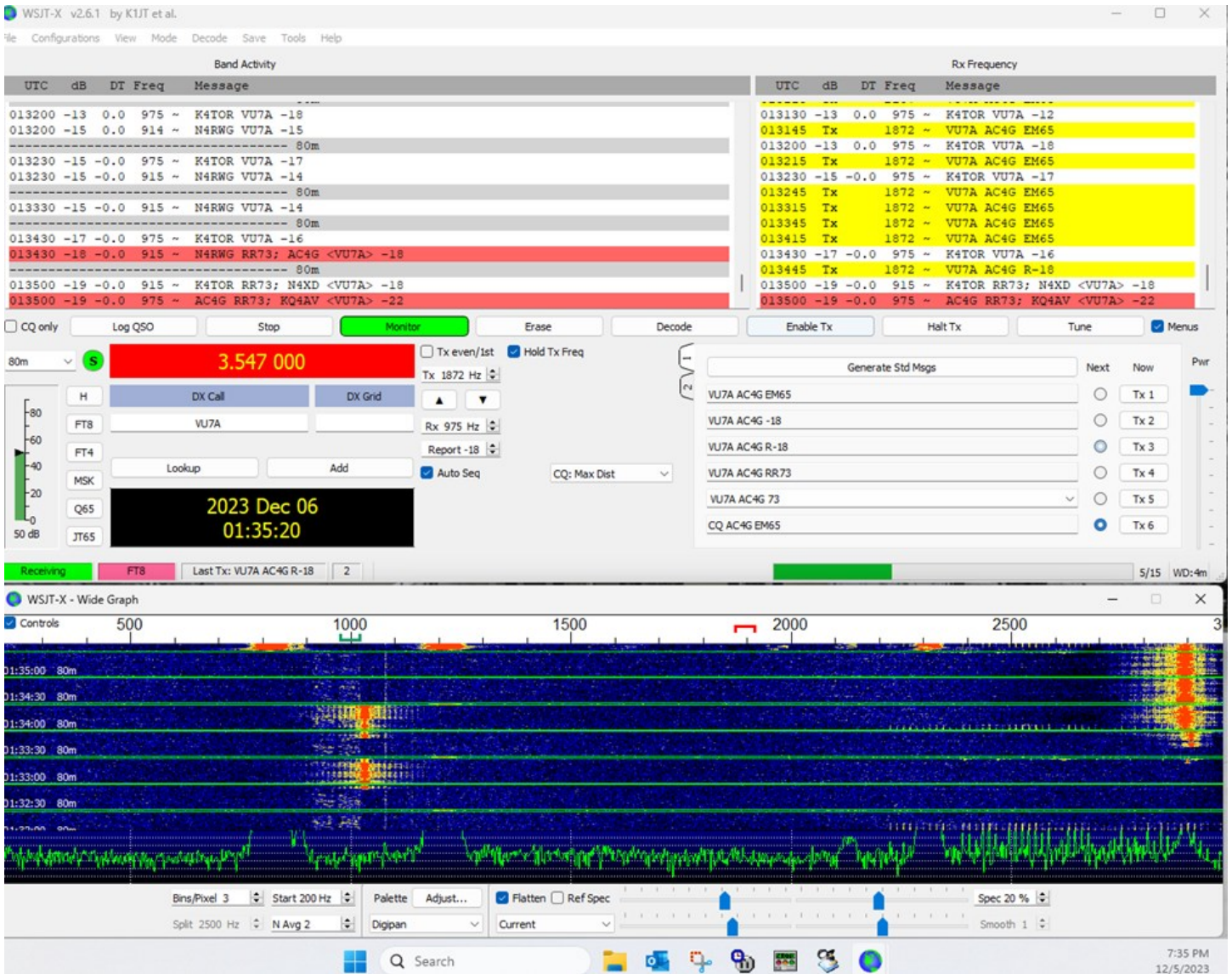
Picture 2: Screenshot of successful 40m longpath QSO signals received from the southeast along afternoon/evening terminator

Success with Two Difficult DXCC Countries (continued)

on 80m longpath, but VU4N was working very few U.S.A. stations and he had terrible noise issues that prevented many 80m and 160m QSOs with NA. Reference Picture on page 3. All amateur radio operators worldwide were made aware of the issues affecting VU7A and VU4N via his QRZ web page(s).

As you can see, I had a copy on VU4N on

80m, but he could not copy me. Actually, he CQed for about 20 minutes, possibly working one or two stateside stations. It is obvious VU4N had a receive issue. As VU4N reported on their QRZ web page, I firmly believe noise was a major issue that he could not eliminate. Yes, this is frustrating, but it is something as an operator we must face from time to time. From Picture 1, one can see there were not many stations receiving VU4N, because very few were calling at this point where I copied his signals being received via the longpath toward the southwesterly direction on 80m, which hap-



Picture 3: Screenshot of successful shortpath 80m QSO AC4G<->VU7A during VU7 sunrise enhancement event

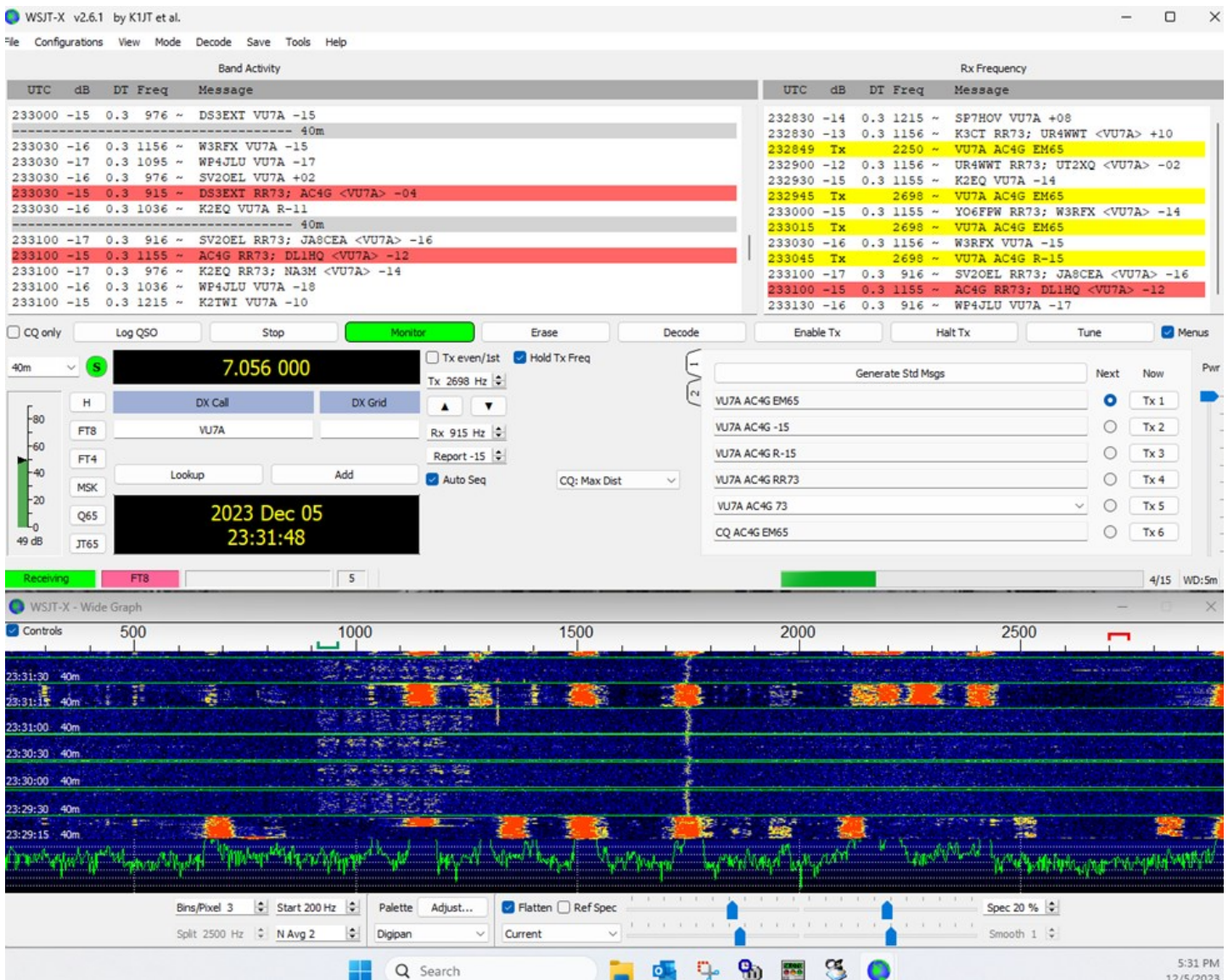
Success with Two Difficult DXCC Countries (continued)

pens to be skewed slightly from actual longpath.

Pictures 2 through 4 show some of the successful AC4G QSOs from DXCC entities discussed.

Quite often, I get frustrated to receive DX signals and not being able to sometimes make a QSO as shown in Picture 1, especially when the DX calls over and over knowing sunrise will come soon and cause your excitement to dissipate al-

most instantly when the DX stops transmitting. I do not remember what was going through my head, but it may have been, “setup a better receive antenna” or “select a quieter operating location”. As an operator in anticipation of making the coveted QSO, you sit in the operating chair just hoping perhaps your signals will be heard on the distant end, but when the DX transmissions end, you know that’s it, try another day. Well, I was unable to make more QSOs with either VU7A and VU4N but am thankful for the QSOs and to be in their logbooks. I know there will be other DXpeditions to those locations in the future, but our pa-



Picture 4: Screenshot of successful evening shortpath 40m QSO AC4G<->VU7A approaching VU7 sunrise

Success with Two Difficult DXCC Countries (continued)

tience will be tested once again with our minds pondering a new strategy to get in their logs when

it happens again. Congratulations to those DXers who made it in their logbooks. These are two tough DXCC entities to work from Northern Alabama and Southern Tennessee, almost approaching our antipode.

Club Business and Announcements

The NADXC Holiday Dinner was held on December 12th at Amerigo Italian Restaurant, in lieu of the December meeting. The 2024 officers were installed and Steve Werner, AG4W was recognized as the North Alabama DX Club's DXer of the Year for 2023. The club officers have developed a 2024 budget, which will be presented at the January 9th meeting.



NADXC Club President Bruce Smith, AC4G presented Steve Werner, AG4W with the DXer of the Year award at the NADXC Holiday Dinner.

Final 2023 NADXC Financial Statement		
Budget Category	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals
Year Start	8,365.65	8,365.65
Dues In	1,000	1,124
Recurring Exp	-683	0
repeater elect	-160	-160
web hosting/domain service	-73	-17
repeater maintenance	-100	
to HARC for Zoom	-50	
use of museum	-300	-300
Misc		-23
hamfest donation/M Brown		500
Other Transactions		
Donation of equipment to sell		1,535
Dxpeditons	-1,000	-1,160
Picnic	-160	-140
DX Banquet	380	-594
venue	-600	-600
food	-2,350	-2,306
speaker - room + travel	-400	-776
tickets	3,800	3,560
raffle	700	270
grand prize	-390	-400
beer/wine/soft drinks/glasses	-250	-237
insurance	-130	-105
EOY Bank Delta	-463	765
Year End Bank Balance	7,903	9,131

Announcement: It's time to pay 2024 membership dues.

Dues can be paid electronically at the [NADXC website](https://www.nadxc.org). Contact Barry, WA4HR (treasurer@nadxc.org) for information about other payment options.

Call for LongPath Articles

Last month was a busy month. Hopefully January brings a slower pace of life for most of us. As you can see, our LongPath was short on articles this month. Please consider writing something for future issues. Each of us has a radio related interest, project, or story that our readers will enjoy. Your article can be submitted as a Word document or just a simple email. The LongPath publisher will clean it up and format it for the newsletter. Articles should be submitted to Fred Kepner, K3FRK at dxK3FRK@gmail.com by the Tuesday prior to a monthly meeting.

2024 Monthly Meeting Topics and Programs Needed

Are you able to conduct a presentation at a club meeting? Presentations can be in person or conducted remotely via the club's Zoom connection.

or

Do you have a suggestion for an upcoming program topic?

Please contact Fred, K3FRK (dxK3FRK@gmail.com) with ideas or to sign up for a meeting in 2024.



Upcoming NADXC meeting

Tuesday, January 9th, 2024
5:45 PM Doors Open / 6:30 PM Meeting

Business: 2024 budget discussion

Presentation: AG4W will share about his TJ9MD DXpedition to Cameroon

Location: Signals Museum of Information Explosion, 1806 University Drive NW, Huntsville, AL 35801 and via [Zoom](#)

2024 NADXC Officers and Directors

President	Bruce Smith, AC4G
Vice-President	Fred Kepner, K3FRK
Sec./Treasurer	Barry Barton, WA4HR
Directors:	Mick Bell, N8AU
	Bob De Pierre, K8KI
	(Ex-Officio)

How to Join

Come to a club meeting or send in an application by mail (form on www.NADXC.org)

Monthly Meetings

Meetings are held at the Museum of Information Explosion at 6:30pm on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Participants can also join the meeting virtually via [Zoom](#).

This edition of The LongPath published by:
Fred Kepner, K3FRK

Upcoming DX Contests

By Chuck Lewis, N4NM

EUCW 160 Meter Contest, (CW), 160 meters



Jan. 6, 2000z to Jan. 7, 0700Z
Exchange: RST, Name, Member or "NM"
See page 76, Jan. QST and www.eucw.org

CQWW 160 Meter Contest, (CW), 160 meters



Jan 26, 2200Z to Jan 28, 2200Z
Exchange: RST + State/province; DX
send RST + CQ zone
See page 76, Jan. QST and
www.cq160.com

YB DX Contest, (SSB), 80-10 meters



Jan. 13, 0000Z to 2359Z
Exchange: RS plus serial number
See page 76, Jan. QST and
www.ybdxcontest.com

BARTG RTTY Sprint, (DIG), 80 -10 meters



Jan. 27, 1200Z to Jan 28, 1200Z
Exchange: Serial no.
See: page 76 Jan. QST & www.bartg.org.uk

NRAU-Baltic Contest (SSB), 80 & 40 meters



Jan. 14, 0630Z to 0830Z
Exchange: RS, Serial #, region/province/
Fylke/lan
See page 76, Jan. QST and
www.nraubaltic.eu

REF French Contest, (CW), 80-10 meters



Jan 27, 0600Z to Jan 28, 1800Z
Exchange: RST plus serial no. (F stns. give
Dept. ID)
See page 76, Jan. QST and [http://
concours.r-e-f.org](http://concours.r-e-f.org)

NRAU-Baltic Contest (CW), 80 & 40 meters



Jan. 14, 0900Z to 1100Z
Exchange: RS, Serial #, region/province/
Fylke/lan
See page 76, Jan. QST and
www.nraubaltic.eu

UBA (Belgium) Contest (SSB), 80-10 meters



Jan 26, 1300Z to Jan 28, 1300Z
Exchange: RS(T) plus serial no.; ON sends
province
See page 76, Jan. QST and [www.uba.be/
en](http://www.uba.be/en)

DARC 10 Meter Contest, (CW/SSB), 10 meters



Jan. 14, 0900Z to 1059Z
Exchange: RS(T) plus serial No., DOK code
See page 76, Jan QST and www.darc.de

European Union DX Contest, (SSB/CW), 160-10 meters



Feb. 3, 1900Z to Feb. 4, 1900Z
Exchange: RS(T) plus ITU zone; EU
send EU region (4 char.)
See [https://www.eudx-
contest.com/rules](https://www.eudx-contest.com/rules)

HA DX Contest, (CW/SSB), 160-10 meters



Jan. 20, 1200Z to Jan 21, 1159Z
Exchange: RST + S.N.; HA sends
County
See page 76, Jan QST and [www.ha-
dx.com/en](http://www.ha-dx.com/en)

Dates & times often change or are misprinted in the journals; beware. See also: [http://www.contestcalendar.com/
contestcal.html](http://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html)



DXpeditions in January 2024

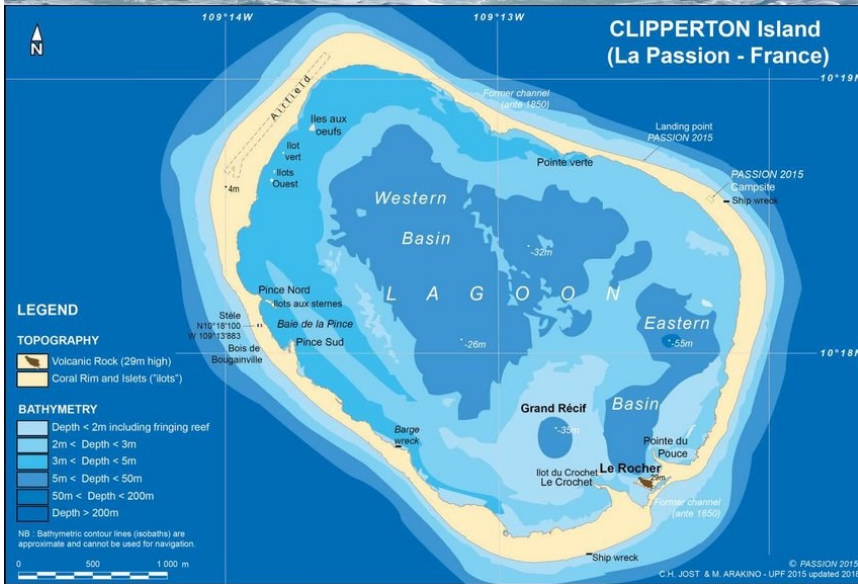
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2023 Dec28	2024 Jan11	Namibia	V5	LoTW	By F5LCX as V5/F5LCX fm Windhoek; HF; 100w; vertical
2023 Dec28	2024 Jan11	Tonga	A31DJ	VK4MAP Direct	By VK4MAP fm Tongatapu and Eau Is (IOTA OC-049); 80 40 20 15 12 10m; SSB; QSL w/ \$4 and SAE
2023 Dec29	2024 Jan16	French Guiana	TO2FY	eQSL	By F4GPK fm Korou; @FY5KE; HF; SSB; holiday style operation
2024 Jan01	2024 Jan05	Svalbard	JW	SP7DPJ	By M0PLX fm Spitsbergen; 160-10m; SSB
2024 Jan03	2024 Jan10	Honduras	HR9	LoTW	By K6VHF as K6VHF/HR9 fm Sandy Bay, Roatan I (IOTA NA-057); 80-6m; CW SSB FT8 RTTY; 100w; QSL via K6VHF direct
2024 Jan11	2024 Jan24	Barbados	8P9CB	LoTW	By WA7RAR; 20-10m; CW SSB; 100w; 1/4 wave vertical; QSL to WA7RAR direct
2024 Jan11	2024 Jan25	St Kitts & Nevis	V4	LoTW	By N4RF as V4/N4RF; @V7JA; HF; CW FT8, some SSB; 100w; holiday style operation; QSL via N4RF direct w/ SASE
2024 Jan11	2024 Jan30	Montserrat	VP2MDX	LoTW	By W2APF; HF; operation to continue until Apr 11 2024
2024 Jan11	2024 Jan31	St Eustatius	PJ5	Club Log OQRS	By SP9FIH as PJ5/SP9FIH fm FK87ml; HF; operation to continue until 3 Apr
2024 Jan12	2024 Jan18	Palau	T8	See Info	By JH6WDG as T88AQ, JA6KYU as T88HS, JR6DRH as T88RH, JA6EGL as T88SM fm Koror; 160-10m; CW SSB FT8; QSL per operator's instructions
2024 Jan12	2024 Jan20	Ethiopia	ET3AA	N200	By W9XY K4ZW; HF
2024 Jan16	2024 Feb04	St Helena	ZD7Z	LoTW	By IV3FSG fm Jamestown (IOTA AF-022 IH74ga); 160-6m, incl 60m; SSB CW RTTY FT8 FT4; vertical, inverted L; QSL via IK2DUW
2024 Jan17	2024 Jan24	Dominica	J79	Club Log OQRS	By FM5BH as J79BH and F8AAN as J79AN; HF; CW SSB FT8
2024 Jan18	2024 Feb01	Clipperton I	TX5S	LoTW	By team fm IOTA NA-011 (DK50jh); 160-6m, incl 60m; SSB CW RTTY FT8; dates subject to change; see Web for full QSL details
2024 Jan19	2024 Jan31	Aruba	P4	Club Log OQRS	By DL4MM as P4/DL4MM and P40AA; 160-10m; CW FT8 FT4 SSB; SOA in CQ 160m CW Contest
2024 Jan20	2024 Jan27	Chatham I	ZL7D	EA3FLW	By ZL1CAP, ZL1LDP, ZL1OV ZL3SSB; HF; hex beams; amps
2024 Jan20	2024 Feb10	Morocco	CN2DX	EA5GL	By F5LRL fm nr. Kenitra; 40-6m; CW SSB FT8
2024 Jan21	2024 Jan28	African Italy	IG9	S57DX	By S51V S52OT S54W S56N S57DX S57UN S59A fm Lampedusa I (IOTA AF-109); QRV for CQ 160m CW Contest
2024 Jan22	2024 Feb01	Indonesia	YB9	LoTW	By F5LIT as YB9/F5LIT; 40-10m;SSB; QSL via Club Log OQRS
2024 Jan24	2024 Feb06	Maldives	8Q7WR	See Info	By G3WRO fm Kuredo I; 40-10m, perhaps 80m; SSB; QSL via G3WRO w/ SASE only
2024 Jan25	2024 Feb12	Yemen	7O2WX	IZ8CCW	By OK2WX fm Socotra I; HF w/ focus on low bands; monoband verticals for 160 80 40m; QRV for CQ 160m CW
2024 Jan28	2024 Jan28	Pitcairn I	VP6		By G3YBO as VP6/G3YBO fm 1800z onward; @VP6MW; 17-10m; SSB; 100w; 33ft vertical; operation tentative due to wx



DXpeditions in January 2024 (continued)



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