September 2003

Fireside Chat With KB8NW

Fellow DX'ers,

Looks like the 2003-2004 DX/Contest season should be very interesting in the next several months. All kinds of announcements are being made for the CQWW DX Contests, but the major DXpeditions/operations should provide many with a new entity or band/mode. As this was being typed a team was heading to Annobon Island (3C0) to start off the fall season. Activity should last until October 10th.

In the coming months, we as DXers, can look forward to Pratas Island (BQ9P – October 9–16th), Kermadec Island (ZL8 – starting October 11th for 10 days, ranked 23rd on the most wanted list) and Europa Island (FR/E – November 22nd-December 4th, ranked 6th on the most wanted list).

The new year 2004 will also start with some excitement. Look for Peter I Island (3Y0) to be active January-February (Bob/K4UEE and Ralph/K0IR are the leaders of this DXpedition). This

island is ranked 7th (4th for Europe) and the last operation took place in 1994 (3Y0PI). Also, we must not forget the Banaba Island (T33) DXpedition that will take place in March of 2004. So, it looks to be exciting over the next several months. Enjoy the DX.

Lastly, please attend the next meeting (October 6th). A special vote will be taken to change the starting time of our regular monthly meeting to an earlier time (7:30 PM).

73 and Good DX de Tedd KB8NW

Minutes of the September 8th, 2003 NODXA Meeting

Tedd, KB8NW, called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM, which was held at Laura's Kitchen in Broadview Heights, Ohio. The around the room introductions followed by the 16 members in attendance.

The treasurer Mary, N8DMM, reports a balance of $Ka-Ching!

A report on the Ohio QSO Party was given by Jim, K8MR.

Tedd, KB8NW, informed us on the E-mails received from the Annoban Island and the Banaba Island dx-pedition groups thanking us for our donations!

NODXA will have a club table at the Cleveland Hamfest held this month.

The Massillon Hamfest will be held on Sunday ,October 26, 2003 starting at 8:00AM at the Stark County Fairgrounds in Canton, Ohio. There will be an auction on odds and ends ham-gear, no computer equipment, starting at 10:AM. For mobile checkins use the 147.18+ repeater pl 110.9. For other info contact w8np@qsl.net.

Tedd, KB8NW, informs us of a dx-pedition to Myanmar from September 30 –October 17, 2003.

Dave. WB8IOU, made a motion, by proxy of Tedd, KB8NW, to donate the sum of $150.00 to the ARRL toward the anti-legislation of BPL. This was seconded by Dwaine, K8ME, and was followed by a discus-sion. A vote was taken and passed.

The amateur radio station at the Rainforest building in Cleveland is now using the call, K8CRF/200, for the Commemoration of the Bicentennial of the Statehood of Ohio as announced to us by Ron, K8VJG. Look for them on Thursdays between 10:00AM and 3:00PM on 14.180-14.270mhz, 7.150-7.270mhz, or 18.110-18.165mhz. For vhf use the 148.82- repeater. A special QSL card will be sent, SASE please

Bob, W8GC, informed us that 3B9FR has received the 3 element Stepp IR antenna.

A discussion on starting the meeting one half hour earlier was opened by Tedd, KB8NW.

Ray, W8BIN, won the 50/50 raffle, his share was $13.00.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34PM by Tedd, KB8NW.

Secretary: Ron, K8VJG.

"Logbook of the World" Goes Live!

ARRL *Letter*

The long-awaited QSL-cardless ARRL awards and contact credit system "Logbook of the World" (LoTW) officially opened for business this week. Within its first five days of operation, the system--which is open to all--already had attracted more than 1000 requests for a digital certificate, the essential pass key to LoTW.

"Although Logbook of the World is a tremendous resource for hams chasing DXCC, VHF/UHF Century Club (VUCC), Worked All States (WAS) and other awards, we hope it will appeal to hams who are not currently active in these awards programs," said ARRL Chief Operating Officer Mark Wilson, K1RO. "The proliferation of logging software has stimulated activity and interest in contest-ing, and submitting log data and verifying award credits online is a logical next step."

Data integrity has been a watchword of the LoTW since the project's conception, and that starts with a digital cer-tificate. Obtaining a digital certificate involves a combina-tion of on-line filing and good old-fashioned snail mail. The first step is to visit the ARRL Logbook of the World Web page <www.arrl.org/lotw>, download the LoTW software and request a digital certificate that ties the participant's identity to a digital key.

"We will need to verify you are who you say you are," ARRL Membership Services Manager Wayne Mills, N7NG, explains. "The security of the entire sys-tem depends heavily on the method used for verifying the user's identity." This first step is called authentication. Every-one who plans to use LoTW first must obtain a digital certifi-cate. There are no exceptions. For US amateurs, this process relies on your mailing address in the FCC database, which must be current.

For non-US amateurs, authentication will rely on other documentation, primarily a copy of the participant's Amateur Radio license and another official identifying document. Mail these copies to ARRL, Logbook of the World Administrator, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111 USA.

Assuming everything goes smoothly, US licensees requesting a digital certificate soon will receive a postcard in the mail that contains a password. "The first batch of postcards has been mailed, and some people have uploaded their passwords," Wilson said. "Those will be checked, and the first batch of digital certificates should be e-mailed to users September 22."

Users then should go to the LoTW Web site and enter the password to complete the processing of their certificate request. Once the password has been entered, the digital certificate will be e-mailed within a working day or two. Non-US stations will receive their digital certificates via e-mail once their documentation has been received at ARRL Headquarters and authenticated.

Participants will use their digital certificates to "sign" and upload either Amateur Data Interchange Format (ADIF) or Cabrillo-formatted files. Participants also may use their primary digital certificates to obtain additional certificates necessary to submit log data and obtain award credit for contacts made under formerly held call signs.

At the heart of the Logbook of the World concept will be a huge repository of log data provided by operators--from individual DXers and contesters to major DXpeditions--and maintained by ARRL. Mills says the system will benefit big and little guns alike by providing quick QSO credit for ARRL-sponsored awards, especially DXCC.

Obtaining a digital certificate and uploading log data are free of charge. There will be a per-QSO charge for each contact credit used, but Mills expects it will be much less than the typical costs involved with exchanging paper QSL cards. When you use an LoTW confirmation for an award credit, the fee will be added to your account and shown in the user's record. The user will be able to pay for these charges on-line using a credit card.

Mills' article, "Introducing Logbook of the World," appears in the October issue of QST. LoTW news and announcements will be posted to the Logbook of the World Web site.

Russian QSLing

There are some aspects in regards to mailing letters to Russia which I think you should know.

First, letters coming from abroad are quite often opened by post employees. They unseal the letters without leaving any marks, remove all valuables, and reseal the letters back or simply trash them. It is better to enclose IRCs rather than Green Stamps (which will undoubtedly tempt the post personnel very easy) or send letters by registered mail. The US dollar exchange rate is around 30 roubles nowadays, while an IRC costs 14. I mean it can be exchanged for postage stamps 14 roubles worth.

Second, the post office requires that full name of the addressee should be clearly written on the envelope when you send your letter to Russia. That is because due to a lack of PO Boxes some people are subrenting them, in order to earn extra money. In order to crack down on them, post personnel will not forward the letters that are addressed incorrectly or incompletely.

Third, don't cross zeros with a slant (/) bar when writing numbers in an address as is commonly done when writing callsigns. Since this is not done in Russia a post office employee will likely think that you made an error and put your letter into a wrong POB.

Forth, don't write the callsign of the addressee on the envelope. The post employees know very well that hams may receive Green Stamps from time to time, and they will pilfer the letters addressed to hams.

And the last, but not the least. Please write address on the envelope as legibly as possible!

Questions:

I have some Russian stamps. Will it worth to use them for SASE?

Using Russian stamps for SASE is not a bad way out at all. I think nobody of post employees will try to unstick them. Hi. Actually this will not work to QSL managers who try to earn extra money on QSLing (e. g. RW6HS). And keep in mind that postage rates increase from time to time, last time this happened in autumn 2000.

Wouldn't it be better if letters are mailed from inside Russia?

Sure, it will. The delivery will be much safer. Besides that domestic postage rates are quite low here. BTW if you are involved in IOTA chasing or any other activity that requires frequent need for direct QSLing into Russia, and you have a friend here, you may ask him to help you. E.g. I manage some foreign friends and quite succeed in it.

I've noticed the order of lines in the address is different in Russia. What is the best way to write the address?

I would suggest the following: name, box number (or street address), city, zip code, country. The order was different until recently, but now it doesn't matter much.

Dennis Eremin, RZ1AK

Rohn Files for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy

ARRL Web Site

Rohn Industries has filed a voluntary petition for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. The best-known manufacturer of tower and tower hardware for the Ama-teur Radio community, the Peoria, Illinois-based company also manufactures towers, antenna support structures and "infrastructure equipment" for the telecommunications industry. In business since 1948, the firm also makes security fencing and provides design and construction services. Rohn announced September 16 that it was filing for Chapter 11 relief in the US Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Indiana.

"Our immediate goal is to stabilize the company's financial situation and utilize the Chapter 11 process to enable the company to conduct normal business operations as the company works to complete a sale transaction," Rohn Industries President Horace Ward said in announcing the company's bankruptcy filing. Rohn says it's now in discussions with an unrelated third party regarding a proposed asset sale while it continues to conduct business as usual. Ward told ARRL there is "no truth" to a rumor circulating on some Internet newsgroups that disgruntled workers had damaged manufacturing equipment beyond repair in reprisal for consolidating fabrication facilities into the single Indiana plant.

The impact of Rohn's troubles on the Amateur Radio community is not clear, but at least one major antenna products supplier reported earlier this summer that it was having problems getting Rohn products, although it continues to offer them. Ward told ARRL this week that Rohn intends "to execute the orders we have and to continue to take orders in the normal course of business."

In the company's statement, Ward attributed the bankruptcy filing to a severe downturn in the telecommunications industry. Last January, the company consolidated its manufacturing activities into a single plant in Frankfort, Indiana. In July, NASDAQ delisted Rohn Industries after it was unable to meet its minimum bid price requirement. The company remains eligible for listing on the Over the Counter (OTC) Bulletin Board, where it's been assigned the OTC BB symbol ROHN. The company's stock had been selling for as little as $0.01 a share over the past 52 weeks.

The bankruptcy reportedly includes five of Rohn's direct and indirect subsidiaries.

At the same time it filed for Chapter 11 protection, Rohn has announced it's entered into a $9.5 million debtor-in-possession credit line with its lenders. The bankruptcy court must approve that agreement.

In the wake of the bankruptcy filing, Rohn Board of Directors members Stephen Gorman and Jordan Roderick resigned, leaving Ward as Rohn's chief executive officer and only director.

As of March 2002
Current DXCC Entities Total is:

335

ARRL Contest Rule Changes

The ARRL Contest Branch has announced rule changes governing ARRL-sponsored operating events. The changes become effective November 1, 2003.

In any contest that requires off-time, any claimed off-time period must be at least 30 minutes long. "Remember that listening time counts as operating time when calculating off-time," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND.

Second, the Northwest Territories (NWT) multiplier has been renamed "Northern Territories"--abbreviated NT--for contests that use ARRL and Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) sections as part of the exchange.

"While not an official RAC section, the VE8, VY1 and VY0 (Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut) are grouped together as a multiplier in the ARRL November Sweepstakes and the ARRL 160-Meter Contest," Henderson explained. "The new name and abbreviation will more accurately describe their makeup."

Henderson said use of the NWT abbreviation was inconsistent to designate a multiplier that also included Yukon and Nunavut. Awards for ARRL-sponsored contests will continue to be issued to the VE8, VY1 and VY0 together as the Northern Territories section.

Finally, in contests using geo-political entities as multipliers-- the ARRL RTTY Roundup, the ARRL International DX Contest and the ARRL 10-Meter Contest--the official abbreviation for Northwest Territories is NWT. "This change brings the multipliers for those events into a consistent form," Henderson said. ARRL encourages contest participants to update the necessary files for their logging software.

For more information, contact Henderson at n1nd@arrl.org.

How to Bust a Simplex Pile-up

Having trouble busting a simplex pile-up?? Set your Split or XIT/RIT so that your XMT freq is 200 - 400 Hz lower than the DX freq. On most XCVRS, this will cause your signal at the DX end to be 200 - 400 Hz higher than the mob, and it will stand out like a sore thumb. Works 98 % of time for me even when competing with W4s using a linear and yagi !!! Try it !!!

Now you might think that since you are transmitting on a lower frequency, the DX should be receiving you on a lower frequency. This would be true for wide splits. For smaller shifts in freq such as << 800 Hz, the product detector in receiver section will create an inverse audio shift in the audio bandpass of receiver.
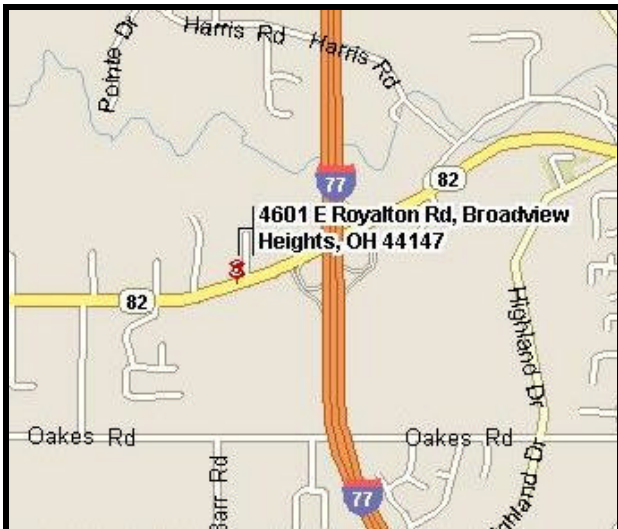
Larry, K4WLS, Magnolia DXA

Digital Recorders for DXing

I can't say enough about digital recorders. I use the DVS-2 with my Yaesu Mark-V. I've got 4 separate versions of my call prerecorded. One is Kilowatt 2 Foxtrot Foxtrot, another is Kilo 2 Florida Florida, another is K 2 Freddy Freddy, and the last is Kilo 2 Fox Fox - K 2 Fox Fox. US operators will pick up anything with Fox Fox very easily, Europeans like/recognize Florida Florida, and Japan/others understand the standard Foxtrot Foxtrot better.

And with the digital recorder, all I'm doing is pushing a button for as many times as necessary until the DX station comes back...then I key the mike and actually talk to say nothing more than "QSL, 5/9 also...Tnx." I call this the "When in Rome Speak as the Romans" method.

Glenn, K2FF, Magnolia DXA

4601 E Royalton Rd, Broadview Heights, OH 44147

NODXA Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at the *Laura's Kitchen Restaurant* on RT.82 just west of Interstate 77 in Broadview Heights at 8:00 PM. Come early and have dinner and meet your fellow DXers and enter the 50/50 raffle.

NODXA Application and Renewal Form

The Northern Ohio DX Association is a non-profit organization with a primary interest in DXing. We encourage all DXers to join our group and share the interest and fun of DXing. Please complete the application below and send along your appropriate dues or renewal to:

NODXA, P.O. Box 450783, Westlake, Ohio 44145

First Time Membership/Renewal (U.S.) $12.00
Foreign Membership (outside U.S.) $22.00
*Foreign Membership (no printed newsletter)
(but w/Web access for newsletter) $12.00
Name_____ Callsign_____
Address _____
City _____ State/Prov. _____
Country _____ ZIP _____
E-mail _____
ARRL Member? ___ Exp. Date _____ DXCC Member?____
Special Interest _____

Newsletter circulation: Pete Michaelis **N8TR**, Mary Michaelis **N8DMM**, and *"Radio Ray"* **W8BIN**

Dated Material
Please Rush

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