



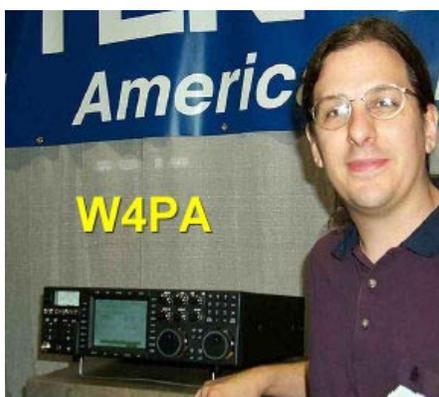
THE BULLSHEET

Official News Bulletin of the
Texas DX Society
An ARRL Affiliated Club

JULY
2005

The Texas DX Society, P.O. Box 540291, Houston, TX 77254-0291

July Meeting, 6:00PM Tuesday July 26th, at the H.E.S.S. Club Scott Robbins, W4PA, of Ten Tec Discusses The Orion and Software Defined Radios.



The speaker will be Scott Robbins, W4PA. His talk will be on software defined radio technology and the Orion transceiver. How the Orion uses the best of analog technology combined with IF-DSP to bring the very best receiver performance available to amateur radio.

Scott is an active radio contester – he has a 4 tower contest station at his home in Tennessee. Scott won CQ WW CW single op high power all band in 2003, ARRL DX CW in 2002 and 2004 and hold the single op, high power, all band record for ARRL DX CW. He is a member of the Caribbean Contesting

Consortium and regularly operates from the club station on Curacao, PJ2T.

Scott has been employed by Ten-Tec since 1995, currently as the Product Manager for amateur radio equipment in charge of managing sales and marketing for Ten-Tec's amateur division.

This will be a dinner meeting and the cost will be \$20.00 per person. TDXS must commit to a specific number of attendees 2 business days before the meeting; H.E.S.S. will charge us based on this number.

The dinner menu includes Herb Roasted Chicken, with macaroni & cheese, vegetables, desert, and tea or coffee. Vegetable Lasagna will be available as a substitute, but you must let me know when you make reservations. Stronger beverages will be available, but will cost extra.

To further entice you there will be several interesting door prizes including a digital multimeter. You must be present to win!

Please see Page 2 for information on Reservatuions and Directions to H.E.S.S.

Texas DX Society Officers

President	Don Daze, N5DD	n5dd@arrl.net	713-464-7286
Vice President			
Secretary	Laurent Thomin, W0MM	tdxs@w0mm.com	
Treasurer	Bill Frink, K5WAF	k5waf@arrl.net	281-286-3330
Contest Chairman	Joe Staples, W5ASP		
Field Day Chairman	Dave Topp, W5BXX	w5bxx@aol.com	281-879-9973
Repeater Chairman	Glenn Anderson, WB5TUF	wb5tuf@earthlink.net	832-595-2855
DX Chairman			
DXpedition Chairman	Jim Carmody, NN5O		
Outgoing QSL Manager	Buzz Jehle, N5UR		
Webmaster	Steve Smothers, W9DX	cougar70@earthlink.net	
Bullsheet Editor	Paul Frantz, W5PF	w5pf@ev1.net	281-351-8930

How to reach US

On the World Wide Web <http://www.tdxx.net> email address: k5dx@tdxx.net
On 2 Meters: 147.96/36 MHz (100 Hz) On 70cm: 447.00/442.00 MHz (103.5 Hz)
On Packet: Connect to **K5DX** direct or via **TDXS71** on 145.71MHz.
TDXS Reflector: To subscribe to the TDXS reflector, go to
<http://moonbounce.n5iq.org/mailman/listinfo/tdxs-list>

July Meeting Information

The H.E.S.S. Club <http://www.hessclub.com/map.html> Time: 6:00 Eyeball QSO
5430 Westheimer, between 610 and Chimney Rock 6:30 Dinner
[HESS is the low freestanding building, behind the tall white building.] 7:00 Presentation

Please respond to n5dd@arrl.net by Thursday, July 21, and let me know how many reservations to make for you. Don N5DD

Prez Sez:

Meetings. This month Scott Robbins, W4PA, will be speaking to us about Software Defined Radio technology and the TenTec Orion. This meeting is being held at the H.E.S.S. Club; The setup there will allow us to eat and have the meeting at the same location, have an excellent meeting room, excellent food, a professional atmosphere. and good parking. On the down side it is a little pricey, and they require us to commit to a head count 2 days before the meeting. I am interested in your feedback about this meeting venue.

In August, Wayne Barker, AD8A, will speak about WinLink. WinLink uses HF digital modes to send email to and from the Internet. This would be amazingly useful when regular Internet access is not available, such as camping, sailing in open water, or on a DXpedition to a remote part of the globe. The August meeting will be back at Tracey Gee.

If you have a suggestion for a future meeting topic, please let me know.

Field Day. Field Day was June 25 - 26. We had a great time at the Topp's beach house. Total attendance was up, we saw a few people who we hadn't see at Field Day before, and everyone had a great time. We didn't make quite as many QSOs, or total points, as last year, due to being further down the solar cycle trough and a number of unforeseen visits by Mr. Murphy. We would not have been as successful as we were with our the help and effort of everyone involved, especially from our Field Day captain, Bill Frink.

73 de Don, N5DD

Contest Corner

August is the time for the Summer NAQP contests, see the Calendar below for dates. If you are interested in getting together a TDXS Team for either the phone or cw contest, please send me your name/call at w5asp@juno.com. There will be further information on a team for the phone contest in next month's Bullsheat.

de Joe, W5ASP

Contest Kudos

Congratulations to the following TDXS members for recent contest accomplishments:

Richard King, K5NA for being the first ever to work all 80 W/VE sections in the ARRL 160 Meter Contest.

Dale Martin, KG5U for his World Wide Victory in the Single Operator QRP CW Only entry class of the 2004 ARRL 10 Meter Contest!

David McCarty, K5GN for his first place finish in the Midwest Region in the 2005 ARRL DX CW test.

Thanks to W9DX for bringing these to my attention. Please let me know if you see any other notable accomplishments by TDXSer's. - W5PF, Editor

Silent Keys

Bob Sorace - WD5CHY - TDXS Member # 61, joined in 1979

Here is the obituary from the American Press Newspaper in Lake Charles, Louisiana:

“Robert L. Sorace, 62, died at 5:35 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2003, in a local hospital.

He was a native of Germany and had lived in Lake Charles since 1981. Mr. Sorace retired from the Houston Country Club as the beverage catering manager prior to moving to Lake Charles. He was a ham radio lunteer for the Moss Regional medicine program.

Survivors include his wife, Zita Zirkle Sorace; one daughter, Dawn Sorace Soileau and husband Alex; two grandchildren, Blayne Alexander and Darby Cecile Soileau, all of Lake Charles. “

Mason P. Pearsall - W5VUM TDXS member # 68, joined in 1979

March 9, 1921 - September 30, 2001

Calendar

July 30-31, RSGB IOTA Contest

August 5-6 Friday & Saturday - Austin Summerfest 2005

August 6-7, NAQP CW

August 11, TDXS meeting, Speaker Wayne Barker, AD8A, WinLink.

August 20-21, NAQP Phone

TDXS FIELD DAY 2005



by Bill, K5WAF Field Day Coordinator

Fun! – Hot!! – Challenging!!! – Outstanding Hospitality by Dave & Lynda Topp!!!! — but Better Luck Next Year.

AC5K, K5WAF, KC5DJI, N4AL, N5DD, N5ET, N5KTN, N5MT, VK4UC, W0MM, W0MYL W5BXX, W5MJ, W9DX, WB5TUF, K1DDO (12 Year Old Dominic!) and our unlicensed help from Annette Layfield, Brian and Mike Frink

The much anticipated and extensively planned TDXS version of the 2005 ARRL Field Day was held for the second year in a row at Dave Topp's summer home at Surfside Beach, Texas on June 25 & 26th.

Running 2A with a beach located, RV based CW station, a garage located (with newly installed AC!) SSB Station and separate GOTA and Satellite under the cover of the porch, we were all set to make a valiant run at a Field Day win. But alas, a win was not in the cards with:

Band	CW Qs	Phone Qs	Dig Qs
80	27	1	0
40	214	438	8
20	273	851	8
15	130	41	0
10	0	11	0
6	0	44	0
2	0	9	0
	644	1,395	16

and a total score of 6,580 including 1,070 bonus points. Not great. Not terribly bad. But lots of fun.

For TDXS members that couldn't make it to Field Day this year, I thought I would capture some of the highlights so you can share in the experience. As you will see, **Setup** was well defined but the problems encountered were not! **Operations** has some real high notes (hint – the SSB, GOTA, Natural Power and Satellite stations did great) and a few low points (hint again – the CW station had its problems!). And **Tear Down** went pretty well with the whole effort concluding with no one getting hurt and leaving with some pretty good memories.



Michael Frink hoists the ARRL flag on the SSB tower with help from Brian Frink & N5MT

Setup

It is pretty easy to jump into describing the setup on the day, but what is easy to miss is the extensive work that a few TDXS'ers provided well in advance of Field Day.

We really need to acknowledge the great antenna refurbishment work done by Steve -W9DX, Madison - W5MJ and Don - N5DD. The HyGain TH6 rebuilt by Steve and used on the SSB station was a killer! The two element 40 meter beam rebuilt by Madison turned out to be the only antenna we had for the CW station and it allowed us to participate admirably. And though Don did a lot of work to get the Cushcraft A4 (with 40 meter element) ready for the GOTA station, we (not Don!) managed to destroy it during installation; a real disappointment, particularly for Don who put an extensive amount of work into the antenna.



The station captains did a great job of arranging for and setting up the CW (Madison – W5MJ), SSB (Mike – N5MT), GOTA (Don – N5DD), Satellite (Glenn – WB5TUF), VHF (Dave – W5BXX) and the Natural Power (Wes – AC5K) station.

So we had the equipment and the newly refurbished antennas and all we had to do is set it all up. As they say, easier said than done. Here are some of the challenges we faced;

- **GOTA Antenna Destroyed:** The assembled A4 looked great on the ground and the crank-up, 40 foot tower was positioned and ready to accept the antenna. The lines were manned, the antenna was installed and up she went – well at least until the cable pulley assembly broke and the extended tower came screaming down, antenna and all. All hands (and bodies) shot out of the way of the freight train sounding center tower section and it hit the ground with a thud! Seconds later, the reflective element of the A4 sheared off and surprised most of us as it hit the ground behind us, luckily with no one in its path. What a mess. But you do what you have to do – the undamaged driven element was intact, so the mangled antenna stayed up on the single section of tower and played like a hapless dipole for the duration on the GOTA station.
- **1 of 2 Generators Not Operable:** We lugged the first and presumably the primary, 6.5KW generator out of the garage and set it up about 70 feet from the garage. And as a late request in the planning, we asked Madison to bring his generator, “just in case”. So out it came as well. After fueling, priming, and tugging till our arms felt like they were going to come off, it became clear that before we even had made Q #001 we had lost the primary generator. Though we held our breath and hoped for the best, Madison’s standby generator did the trick and it worked continuously through out the weekend. There were a couple of us that were pretty concerned, though.
- **Networking Not Functioning:** The WriteLog software had been chosen, the concept of repeating last years standard of networking all the stations was well in hand – but we couldn’t make it work! While not a disaster, it sure removed some nice operating and logging features we thought we would have.
- **Log Periodic (CW Station) Shorted Out:** The main antenna for the CW station was the Tenedyne T8 Log Periodic mounted on the 50 ft, RV installed, crank-up tower. Sounds pretty slick and simple! Aux contraire monsieur! What a struggle getting in mounted below the 40 meter, 2 element yagi. The U bolts didn’t fit. The brackets didn’t line up. And some field modifications obviously went “south”. What we ended up with was a nice looking 50 ft tower with two antennas – the Log Periodic, though, being totally shorted out and unusable. Wow, what a mess. But as with the GOTA station, we made due using the 40 meter yagi on all bands with a tuner.

- **Lost 1st Hour on CW Station with Antennas Setup:** Not only did we have the physical problems with the Log Periodic, we had schedule problems as well. We didn't get to an operating position until about 2pm on Saturday, which was a loss of at least 1 hour of initial operation.
- **75 Meter Dipole Destroyed:** By this time we were getting pretty good at messing up antennas. So for good measure, the 75 meter trapped dipole (courtesy of Mike – N5MT) that was installed on the SSB, trailer mounted tower was hoisted up with the yagi's. But true to form, it got entangled with the guy wires and broke free. So much for 75 meter SSB.

But everything else went great!!! (Well, at least we were able to operate all the stations). Seriously, the station set-ups were really well executed. Glenn did an amazing job with the satellite station as did Wes with the natural power station. And the same can be said for the Yaesu FT1000 SSB station arranged for and provided by Mike and the Kenwood TS-2000 CW station arranged for by Madison.

We ended Friday night, by the way, with a great dinner at a local haunt, Willie Joe's. Actually the meal was great, but the company was better. We should do this sort of thing more often.



Amy Daze KC5DJI coaches Michael Frink as Annette Layfield looks on at the GOTA station



Don N5DD helps XYL Amy KC5DJI with logging at the GOTA station.

Operations

With everything set-up and ready to go, all we had to do is push the pedal to the metal – or was it the fork into the shrimp, or something like that. I guess, I keep thinking of the post setup dinner at Willie Joes. Anyway, here are a few highlights of the different operations.

- **Natural Power Station:** Right out of the chute, Wes – AC5K seized 100 bonus points by setting up and operating the natural power station. In fact we were still working on the Log Periodic antenna when we found Wes disassembling his setup and taking it home because he was all done! Neat! Anyway, for the record, the battery-less setup that Wes put together was comprised of a Solarex 40 Watt solar panel with a home-brew (from scratch) switching regulator, powering a heavily modified Ten-Tec Argosy 1 transceiver running 5 Watts output. Voltage output of the regulator was continuously monitored with a home-brew expanded scale 12 volt meter to reduce the chance of chirping due to voltage changes. (The sun was bright enough to run the full 5 Watts+, but should the voltage have started diving during key down power output is reduced until the power no longer dives. In this way, the solar set-up can still be operated during light clouds.) There was no power storage device of any sort used. The power was DIRECT solar. As a side note, there was also a hand cranked generator available on site if the weather would not have supported the solar power. Some of the modifications to the Argosy were: addition of a home-brew digital readout for frequency and time; a home-brew keyer built into the radio, all incandescent lamps were removed and replaced with super bright LED's to lower power consumption, etc.
- **GOTA Station:** The operation of the GOTA station was fun to watch. Don not only set it up, but nicely stewarded it's operation with at least a couple of rookies. Mike Frink gave it a good go with about 20 Q's or so. And Laurent – W0MM's 12 year old son, Dominic – K1DDO, worked it like a pro. And there were others that took a turn and the GOTA clearly maxed out their bonus points, despite the massacred A4 antenna and the interference problems with the SSB station.



Glenn WB5TUF Ready to work the birds!

□ **Satellite Station:** If you haven't watched Glenn at work with his satellite tracking, receiving and transmitting equipment, it is more than intriguing. After what seemed very long waits, but a very definitive schedule, Glenn was able to locate and make several contacts. The one I personally liked the most was the contact with ISS, the International Space Station. Nice work Glenn!

□ **VHF Station:** We also tried 6 meters from an Icom 746 setup on the RV. Most of us thought it was a lost cause trying six meters, but with a little persistence from Dave Topp, in particular, bingo. 55 Q's really wasn't too bad and Dave, Madison and a couple of others had a great time picking out the openings.

□ **SSB Station:** Now for the big producer in terms of Q's. Mike, Don, VK4UC, among others operating the SSB station actually had pretty good luck. Saying that, I know that they would comment on a couple of things; (1) being grateful for the air conditioning unit that Dave Topp installed in the garage wall Saturday morning and (2) a wish that the power line noise would go away. But at the end of the day, they had over 1300 Q's, which by the way, was close to meeting the goal set for the SSB station.



Mike N5MT at the SSB Station



Bill K5WAF takes a turn at the CW Station

□ **CW Station:** Well what can I say. It started out rough with the Log Periodic problems and losing the first hour of operation. It was followed by an RV generator failure early in the morning that lost us another 5-6 hours (which might have been less, but we also had scheduling problems to boot). K5DX was not dominating the band or any frequency below 40 meters and the reports I had after the fact indicated that we were a pretty weak signal on the bands. Yet despite all, we got some good operating in and had fun doing it. Wait till next year!!

Field Day scores are not all from making Q's. There are 1,750 points (equivalent to 875 low power SSB Q's or 438 low power CW Q's) related to bonus activities. We didn't get them all, but we did get 1,070. Here is the breakdown:

Bonus Category	Description	Possible Score	TDXS Score
Emerg Pwr Bonus	Use of generator Power: 100 pts per transmitter	200	200
Public Location Bonus	Beach, park, etc	100	100
Web Submission Bonus	Submit scores on web	50	50
W1AW Bulletin Bonus	Copy of ARRL FD Bulletin [PSK31, CW]	100	—
GOTA Station	100 QSO's assuming all SSB @ 1 pt each	100	100
GOTA Station Bonus	Bonus for setting up station	100	100
Youth Participation	Youth <18 Yr — 5 @ 1 QSO each (GOTA)	100	20
Satellite QSO Bonus	1 Satellite QSO	100	100
Non-Traditional Demo	Solar, APRS, SSTV, Fox Hunt, etc	300	300
Media Publicity Bonus	"Attempt" for media coverage [press release]	100	100
Public Info Table	Set up table with ARRL info and TDXS info	100	—
Gov Official Visit Bonus	Local government official visit	100	—
Agency Visit Bonus	Agency visit [Red Cross, etc]	100	—
Message to Sec Mgr	1 Message/Traffic to ARRL Sec Mgr	100	—
Message Hndlg Bonus	10 Messages/Traffic	<u>100</u>	<u>—</u>
		1,750	1,070

Tear Down

It sure came down faster than it went up. It took about 14 hours to put it all together – about 5 hours to take it all down. All the equipment found it's way back to their owners, the antennas disassembled and returned either to secure storage in Dave's garage or back on top of the Don's or Madison's car to be reworked again. And boy, did we get smart about how to handle the yagi's. To bad we got smart too late.

So, wait till next year!! Actually, there are some things we can learn with probably the central themes being (1) KISS – perhaps keeping it a bit simpler from the standpoint of antennas and towers and (2) improving execution of the plan.

Thanks especially to Dave and Lynda Topp for their outstanding hospitality and to all the TDXSer's who participated. And a real thanks to our guest, supporters and helpers who topped it all off and made this years Field Day a memorable weekend.



Our hosts Dave & Lynda Topp



The CW and VHF Stations in the motorhome.

More Field Day Pictures



12 yr old Dominic - K1DDO eagerly awaits his turn as mom (W0MYL) works the pile-up on the GOTA station and dad (W0MM) logs.



The SSB station tower with TH-6-DX and 2 el 40 at about 50 ft.



Brian & Michael Frink on the GOTA station



“Are we having fun yet?”
Y’all know who this is