



The Bullsheet

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

The Texas DX Society, Houston TX K5DX@tdxs.net October 2010

QRP Revisited for Old Timers

Sept 9th, Thursday 7PM: TDXS Meeting Night at the Tracy Gee Center.

"QRP Revisited for Old Timers" by Cal White WF5W. Renew the "spark" that got us into this hobby and learn about all the newest QRP products available.

Pre-meeting dinner get-

together starts around 5:30PM at Pappa's BBQ on S. Gessner (just south of Westheimer). Visitors welcome, so come on down!



Editor's Note de Doug WB5TKI

This must be contest DXpedition season. We have TDXSer who have just headed off to Botswana as a part of an international team for the CQ WW DX SSB contest. Then a

few weeks later a TDXS team heads back to Octavio's shack in Nicaragua for the CQ WW DX CW contest. Cal WF5W has a new QRP toy, the Ten-Tec R40/30. See his col-

umn for details. I'll also plug my little QRP portable, the Elecraft KX-1. About the same size with up to 4 bands and built-in tuner. I sure like the Ten-Tec display, though.

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The Prez Sez de Paul W5PF

October is the best month for weather in Houston. These last two weeks have been absolutely Chamber of Commerce weather. I'm glad to see the cooler temperatures and low humidity for more reasons than usual. I have a couple outdoor projects that will finally get done now that the hot weather is gone. I am building a 10 by 16 foot storage building so that we can get the lawn tractor, yard and garden tools and a lot of odds and ends out of the garage. I enjoy doing it and even managed to find a few muscles I had forgotten I had.

I also have gotten a tilt plate for my crank up tilt over tower so that the SteppIR elements will be parallel to the ground and only four or five feet high when I need to work on it. Not cheap, but a great idea. I'll also go through the K9AY antenna and get it in shape for the 160/80 meter season.

The point is that the weather has been so great that I haven't had much time for the radio since the TQP/TDXS 40th Anniversary QSO Party. This was the first year that I have made a serious effort from home in a long time. Last year I drove for K5WAF but decided to stay put this year. I managed about 880 QSO's and had a very enjoyable time. I had fun chasing some of the mobiles around on 40M

and had some great runs on 20M. I was called by 5X1D on 20 SSB and had to get him to repeat his call to be sure. I enjoyed talking to several TDXS members including Leon W5NA and Don N5LZ as well as several locals. I was a little disappointed in the turnout of TDXSers, but maybe I just didn't hear a lot of them. My next major contest effort will be from YN in the CQWW CW contest in November although I will play in several others between now and then.

I have been busy outside so I haven't checked out the bands for the new PJ's. No need to hurry on these, they will be around for a while and you can't submit them to DXCC until January. I'll put the new entities in my logging program later this week and see what I can work.

This month we will ask for nominations for next year's officers so please plan to attend on Thursday Oct. 14th. The program will be on the world of QRP through the eyes of WF5W. Cal has built a couple of QRP rigs and has been having a blast working the world on 5 watts, CW of course. The pre meeting get together will be at the usual Pappa's BBQ at Gessner and Westheimer starting around 5:30 PM. We will adjourn to The Tracey Gee Center for the 7:00 PM meeting. As al-

ways further information and directions to the dinner and meeting are on our web site www.tdxs.net.



Tilt Plate by NN4ZZ
73 de W5PF

From the Bullsheet Archives by Steve W9DX

Ten years ago this month October 2000: The October meeting was held at Pappa's BBQ, 7007 SW Freeway with a program on APRS by Carl Hacker KB5LDY. TDXS President Earl Morse N5TU (now N8SS) welcomed new member Bruce Meier, N1LN. Congrats went out to W5NN (K5NZ, K1OJ, and N5TU) for their winning the August 1999 NAQP CW Multi-Two CW category and winning the plaque. Dale, KG5U reporting having a great time in the Texas QSO Party's QRP category and snagging 302/95. Dennis Motschenbacher K7BV was teaming up with N6FF for a low band (80m & 160m) DXpedition to East Timor as 4W/N6FF, with 4W/K7BV to be used on the other bands. The Kingman Reef 2000 DXpedition was on track to start October 20th. George K5KG announced plans to operate from J7 with in November including CQWW with special emphasis on 80m and 160m. Jim Lane, N5DC was busy getting the TDXS packet cluster up and running in time for CQWW.

Twenty years ago this month October 1990: Gabby's BBQ at 3101 N. Shepherd was the site of our meeting. The meeting was a social night with no formal program, although Frank Montgomery W5JWM was said to be holding an informal question and answer session on the stock market and its effects on HF propagation. President Ken

Grabenstein KE5IV (now W5AAC) announced that we had a slate of 2 nominees for each officer's position for 1991 (N5DC and K5GA for President, K5JS and K5RVK for Vice President, K5GB and NN5O for Secretary, KG5U and WB5N for Treasurer). Wes, AC5K was returning to the club, and we welcomed new member Don Butler, KI3L (now N5LZ). DX Chairman Bob Walworth AK5B (now N5ET) said that HA5WA & HA5WE had obtained permission from Albanian authorities to operate for 2 weeks starting early October. TDXS'ers were gearing up for the November Houston Ham Convention. Joe Staples W5ASP announced that he was planning a mini-DXpedition with Bill K5GA and Dave WB5N as V31KF during CQWW-Phone in the multi-single category. Rusty Epps W6OAT visited Houston late September after WRTC and large group of TDXS'ers met for chow at the Hyatt. Members & friends in attendance were W5ASP, WB5RUS, N5IVF (now K5LZO), KE5IV (now W5AAC), N5RP, K7GM/5, WN4KKN (now N5KO), K5XI, K5RC, N5AA, W5ADZ, KG5U, N5DM, and AK5B (now N5ET). Dale KG5U gave a fine report on club entries in the North American Sprint contests, and encouraged more club participation.

Thirty years ago this month October 1980: A dinner meet-

ing and program were held at the Marriott Brookholllow, with featured program devoted to the mechanics of operating in the ARRL Sweepstakes with top tips being dished out by 3 of our contest crazies K5WA (SK), K5MA and KA5CHW (now K7BV). "A golden opportunity for the Know Nots to quiz the alleged Know It Alls and find out what short cuts these guys use to lift their scores toward the top each year." Rich Keller K5WA (SK) and the "gang of four" put together 4 teams of at least 13 members each for a little intra-club competition in the upcoming ARRL Sweepstakes Contest. The teams were dubbed "Grotesque Narcissism" headed by K5GN, the "Washroom Aristocrats" headed by K5WA (SK), the "Mumbling Aborigines" headed by K5MA, and the "Comatose Hopeless Weirdo's" headed by KA5CHW (now K7BV). Frank W5JWM will again try for a clean sweep with his beam rusted in place on ZD9! Alex WA5UHT promised to keep his store (City Electronics) open late to replace all those electronic devices that will crater during the first few hours of the contest. Tom N5EA joined the group of "bottle warmers" already held by Kim K5TU and WB5USV (now N5MV) by bringing a "Jr. Op" into the world.

Contest Chairman's Report by Cookie Cooke, K5EWJ

The big contest for September was the Texas QSO Party and again, it was a good one. This time, we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the TDXS founding with a contest within a contest. Thirty two of our 152 full, associate and inactive members made at least one reported contact. At this writing ten people have turned in logs for the TDXS Party with six full, one associate, two inactive and one non members reporting scores. You have until the end of October to get your entries in for both parties. The Texas

QSO Party logs go to NO5W@consolidated.net and TDXS anniversary reports come to me. You can send them direct to wrcooke@yahoo.com or use the report on the web page. You can even post them on the reflector. I need the number of contacts with members, Inactive, Associate, Full and Honorary. Contacts with Steve using K5DX count, but only for one contact. Big counts in the Texas QSO Party this year were made by K5NA, NR5M, W5CT, AD4EB, N5NA and

N5RZ.

The CQWW DX RTTY contest was held the same weekend (Sep 25/26) as the Texas QSO Party. I noticed some interference from RTTY signals on 40 meters but very little on 20 meters.

Scott, K5DD scored 244 QSOs and 89,300 points in the CQ WW DX RTTY contest and 199 QSOs for 732,510 points during the Oct 9/10 Makrothen RTTY Contest.

Contests coming up:

Oct 16/17	New York, Illinois, Iowa QSO Parties
Oct 18	School Club Roundup
Oct 30	ARRL EME Contest
Oct 30/31	CQ WW DX Contest, SSB
Oct 30/31	10-10 International Fall Digital Contest
Nov 6/7	ARRL November Sweepstakes CW
Nov 20/21	ARRL November Sweepstakes SSB
Nov 27/28	CQ WW DX Contest, CW

The A25-2010 Dxpedition is Almost on the Air by Frosty, K5LBU

Leaving on Wednesday to head for Botswana with a short stop in Pretoria to pick up the 6 meter beam for the EME tries along with other items from Hal ZS6WB. Then over to A25 to pick up the antennas that were shipped 2 weeks ago. W5SL and his xyl are traveling with me and we will start setting up some of the antennas on the 19th of Oct. Then I pickup all the rest of the team in Gaborone

on the morning of the 20th and we head for Stevensford Game Reserve. It is a good 3.5 hr drive. Will work on antennas that afternoon and hope to get them all up on the 21st.

We will have a 2el 40 meter phased vertical set up. A 65 foot vertical from IT9ZMX which is 65 feet tall for 160/80. Also will have a TET 3 el triband beam, a T6 LogP, an R7 vertical and a HF6V.

Rig wise we will have 2 Yeasu FT450AT's, Icom IC746Pro, Elecraft K3 and a Kenwood TS570.

Logs will be posted on the web site we hope every 2 days or so.

(Good DX to Frosty and to Bob W5UQ. More info is available at [http://www.qsl.net/a25-2010/5958/.](http://www.qsl.net/a25-2010/5958/))

Programs, Dxpeditions and Stuff de Cal WF5W

VP Programs: I am giving a talk on QRP revisited for old guys at this month's meeting.. This is next to the last time I have to get a program ready for our club. Not an easy thing to do at the end of the year (kind of ran out of resources).....

DXPedition Chair: We have travelers going to Africa this month for CQWW/SSB - BOB and FROSTY and a group going to Nicaragua next month for CQWW/CW. (PRES, V/P and TREASURER)

NEW TOYS: I just returned from a 5,100 mile driving trip that included the Ten Tec Picnic and tailgate party (our 4th one) in Sevierville, TN.

While in the welcome tent and play area, I saw a new little radio that Had to play with, The R40/30

was 5 watts and less than 1/2 the size of the K-1.

I worked Italy, Germany and Russia in about 20 minutes, then went inside the building and HAD TO BUY IT !!

As the entire Ten Tec crew was attending to the large crowd (about 1,000) none of the techs were available to do a little soldering of the battery pacs. Not to worry, the Nice lady that takes care of tech paper work said "leave it with me" and walla walla the next morning it was fixed and ready for use. That's the beauty of the Ten Tec bunch, they are small enough to know their customers and take care of them.

See the picture attached.:

Anyway, a few days later, up the road in New Hampshire, outside

our B&B with a 30 meter ham stick on the trunk of the car, the internal AA batteries in the R40/30 and about 20 feet of coax. I stood away from the car, transceiver in hand, home made keyer held under the transceiver, and worked the UKRAINE !! What a deal !!

That was my highlight of the trip other than the fantastic color show the trees/leaves made in New England.

The SEA PUMPKIN: Finally, finally, the issue with the power cord for the IC7000 has been solved. Now ready to move out to Red Fish Reef with our fellow TDXER, TOM, KD5TIO /mm.

That's about it from this writer....

c u at the meeting
Cal WF5W / YN2EA



Texas QSO Party From Redfish Island de Tom Campbell KD5TIO

This year's Texas QSO party was special for us in the TDXS. We took the opportunity to celebrate our 40th anniversary by holding our own contest within a contest during TQP. Our contest focused on how many of our own members we or anyone else could contact. It was doubly special for me personally because I am one of the newest members of the TDXS, I am relatively new to HF in general, and more specifically, I had never operated during the TQP before. I didn't really aim to set any records, my main goal was just to make it as fun as I could for everyone else, and at the same time support our club. I figured if I talked to at least one other TDXS member I would have done my part. Many thanks to my lone TDXS

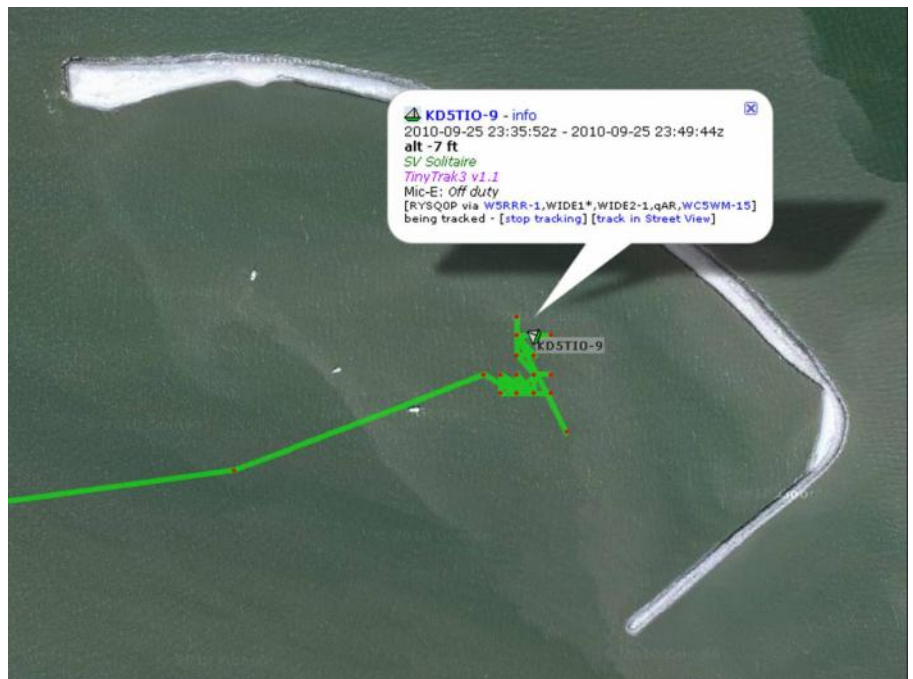
contact Bruce N1LN for making that part of my plan a reality.

My ham shack is a 31-foot long sailboat named Solitaire. She sits in Watergate Marina on Clear Lake next to Cal White's WF5W boat, Sea Pumpkin. The boat is just over a mile from my house. Why is Solitaire my ham shack? Well, partly because I get to mix my two favorite hobbies, sailing and radios, but the main reason is that I can make my entire ham shack disappear. Only the Coast Guard knows how to find me. I always have far too much going on in my life, not to mention two kids under 5 years old. When I finally get to pull away from the dock, I know I will have at least a few uninterrupted hours alone with the radio.

As you can imagine, the down side of having a floating ham shack can be considerable. A contest ends up being like a mini-dxpedition. For example, in planning for the TQP I did the usual things like making sure my logging software worked with the radio. Then I made sure I had diesel, water, propane, and food. I checked the weather, the tides, the batteries, the GPS, the autopilot, etc. Finally, the night before, I packed my bag, kissed the XYL and kids, and got some sleep. The up side of having a floating ham shack fortunately includes things like enjoying a sunrise and a cup of coffee alone on Galveston Bay during the two hour trek to Redfish Island.



Headed to Redfish Island



APRS Redfish Island

Texas QSO Party From Redfish Island (cont.) de Tom Campbell KD5T10

I chose Redfish Island as my operating location for three main reasons. The first was to escape the elevated RF noise floor that is always present at the dock. With 50 other boats equipped with switching battery chargers and all manner of other electronics, you can immediately see the problem. I consistently read S-20 noise on nearly all bands when Solitaire is in her slip. The noise quickly drops as soon as I leave the marina, but out at Redfish Island conditions are truly quiet. The only RF noise I encounter out there is either atmospheric or from some of Solitaire's electronics. The second reason I chose Redfish Island was because it provides a well-protected anchorage in most weather conditions. A cold front was slated to push

through during the contest, and I wanted to make sure I had my weather bases covered.

The final reason I chose Redfish Island was because it is bisected by the Chambers-Galveston county line. I saw that Chambers County was one of the harder counties to come by in the contest, so I figured I could make a bunch of folks happy if I entered the contest as a marine mobile, and stayed put on the county line. I quickly realized that it is a lot of work to make double SSB contacts with everyone that calls you. I wasn't prepared for that. The logging software I was using also had issues with me contesting as a mobile station. When I ran into other mobile

stations on other county lines the exchanges got very long and the software hated me for it. I'm not naming names unless you catch me in person. It's good software, it just struggles in this one area.

I reached Redfish Island and got the anchor down by 8:30am. That left me time to put up my home built 6-meter halo antenna and hoist my rigid PVC 10-meter dipole to the top of the mast. Boy was I being optimistic about band conditions! I made one contact each with those antennas and that was because Leslie AD5WB from Galveston waltzed with me up and down the bands. It really broke my heart that 15-meters was pretty much shut down to my location except for



Redfish Island Anchorage



Solitaires 6m Halo

Texas QSO Party From Redfish Island (cont.)

de Tom Campbell KD5TIO

a few powerful west coast stations.

I quickly learned that 40-meters was for talking to Texans and 20-meters was for talking to everyone else. Calling CQ worked well for me on 20, but on 40 I spent half my time fishing around. Calling CQ runs Solitaire's batteries down much faster than scanning the bands. When the batteries get too low I have to start up the diesel and take a 30-minute mandatory charging break. I found K5DX on 40-meters and I screeched and screeched for

about five minutes to no avail so I moved on. I heard Doug WB5TKI a couple of times but we were always answering someone else's CQ.

My original plan was to spend the night anchored out and run both days of the contest, but all afternoon I heard the lightning noise getting louder and louder. At sunset I could see a couple of massive storms creeping to the south with what was left of the expected cold front. I used my handy dandy 1.6 GHz band rig with GSM en-

coding to have a QSO with my XYL to get a weather update. She told me Houston was getting pounded and that I would likely be next. So how do I put this gracefully... I ran like a chicken... And it never rained a drop.

All told I talked to about 140 folks two times each for both counties. I submitted a claimed score of 39,944. Gosh I miss 15-meters. See you on the air, or in the water. 73's KD5TIO.



10m Dipole Atop the Mast

Texas DX Society Boardmembers

President	Paul Frantz, W5PF	w5pf at cebridge.net	
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How to reach US

On the World Wide Web <http://www.tdxs.net> email address: k5dx@tdxs.net

On 2 Meters: 147.96/36 MHz (100 Hz) On 70cm: 447.00/442.00 MHz (103.5 Hz)

DX Cluster—On Packet: Connect to **K5DX** on 145.71 MHz or telnet via IP address 75.148.198.113

TDXS says "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" to these members with birthdays in October

Jim Whitmire - KD4M

Wes Whiddon - N5WW

Ron Marosko, Sr. - K5LLL

Bill Schrader - K2TNO

Jeff McClain - K5MV

George DeMontrond, III - NR5M

Kim Carr - K5TU

Laurent Thomin - WOMM

Bob Mennell - WB5IUU

This is especially true if you joined TDXS in the last couple of years, as I am working from a list passed to me by the previous Bullsheet editor.

Please notify the Editor if I have missed anyone.