



THE BULLSHEET



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Texas DX Society

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Bullsheet Mailing List - TDXS wishes to provide the Bullsheet to all amateurs in the area with an interest in DXing or contesting. Donations to help defray publication and mailing costs are appreciated. Visitors to our club meeting will receive the "Sheet for three months free of charge simply by signing the attendance list. Articles or other newsworthy items are hereby solicited by your editor. Send articles to K2TNO or via FAX (713-790-1275) addressed to "Dr. William Schrader." I also have a modem now at work and can hook it up to receive files if you call me first at my office, 713-799-6231.

The President's Corner

(de George, NR5M)

The "Where do we go from here?" question revisited-- In January of this year I posed the question above in this column and set out an agenda I hoped would result in healthy development of the TDXS. I think each member of the Club can take pride in our accomplishments this year.

Our membership procedures function well at last. We have streamlined the process to allow new membership after a reasonable "get acquainted" period. I think the process has been instrumental in bringing aboard new members NN5O, N5AQT, WX5S, K2UA, KF5MY, WB5BIR and K5/GW0ECO.

The packet cluster project has brought the DXers and testers closer together in spirit. We've just begun to explore the profound effect that this new tool will have on our hobby in the next few years. We've started late in the packet cluster game, but I'll predict we'll make up for lost time.

I'm pleased to report that a combination of sunspots, new members and TDXS encouragement have resulted in some new aluminum gracing the Houston skies. The contest ranks were filled a bit by addition of K2UA, WB5BIR and N5RP to the hardcore bunch of exchange exchangers.

The Ham-vention was a success for the club. We had fun, made some money and nursed some hangovers. Suffice it to say the TDXS is financially sound as we head into 1989.

So where DO we go from here? I'm optimistic that they "ain't seen nothin' yet!" Next year promises more spots and even better HF conditions. The computer revolution has just started; I'm sure by next fall we'll see over twice the participation on the cluster. You have a new crew of officers, and you won't have old NR5M to kick around any more.

Announcements

Meeting Notice - The Texas DX Society meets on the second Friday of each month, except when the date is changed by the Board of Directors. This month the date was changed to the first Friday, in order to avoid conflict with the ARRL Ten Meter contest. The December TDXS meeting will be held on Friday, December 2 beginning at 7:30 p.m. It will be preceded by a Board meeting. The meeting will be held at *St. John's School*, at the corner of Claremont and Westheimer Roads. Claremont is the name of Buffalo Speedway after it crosses north of Westheimer. There is a parking lot entrance just north of Westheimer; park and enter the school building. The meeting will take place in the senior lounge.

Program - This month's program features the videotape of the Western Sahara operation under the call S0RASD.

Weekly DX and Contest nets - Each Tuesday night at 9:00 p.m. local time the TDXS sponsors a net on 147.96/.36 MHz. Participation by non-members as well as members is encouraged for the exchange of information of interest to DXers and testers. The TDXS Packet Cluster DX bulletin board is up and running on 144.95 MHz using the call K5DX. This is the AK1A system; use AX25 level 2 protocol. It is located in Hempstead and can be accessed via the ALD digipeater north of Houston if not direct. Frequently it is linked into both Dallas and Austin for additional DX coverage.

Houston Com-Vention 1988

(de Joe, W5ASP)

The eleventh annual Houston Com-vention was held November 11-13 at the Sheraton Crown Hotel near Intercontinental Airport. The gathering featured the ever popular vendor exhibits, swapfest and equipment auction, as well as FCC exams and a full schedule of seminars. Attendance was up dramatically compared to recent years, and the overall response from attendees and exhibitors was very positive.

TDXS again presented its traditional DX and Contest forum under the auspices of K5RC and WA9VLI, with an assist from KC5M. The program was kicked off by W5KNE's DXpedition to ST Paul (CY9). Then K2TNO detailed the whys and wherefores of the steel and aluminum jungle at NR5M. K5GN ran the pile-up tapes to round out Saturday. On Sunday morning, NN5O did his show about his contest junket to the island of Guernsey (GU). A slide show of the Peter Island (3Y) venture, and videotape of SORASD rounded out the program. Two other TDXS'ers, KE5FI and AC5K were also on the convention program, presenting seminars on propagation and power-line noise respectively.

Needless to say the TDXS Hospitality Suite was the focal point for many a ham on the two evenings. The faithful who flocked to the watering spot got to see TDXS raffle ticket sales again conducted aggressively by NR5M and crew. The porcelain repository used for the tickets set a new low in tasteful decor, but boosted sales significantly. As Yogi Berra would say, "it was deja vu all over again", as none other than Warren, N5CJQ, walked away with the raffle's TS140 for his SECOND win of the past five years. (Warren also won the Alpha 76 a few years ago!)

Now for the good news/bad news: Next year the HHC will be held over ARRL Sweepstakes CW weekend! The same QTH will be used, and the organizers say they had to get that weekend in order to get the hotel. So you CW SS hounds out there won't be able to party with the club next year (Good news: I intend to use SS as a great excuse not to get stuck behind the bar of the suite -- ed.)

The club did fairly well financially; not up to our usual grand style, but enough to keep us in guyrope for Field Day. A tip of the hat in closing to all the clubbies who helped out. And special kudos go to Don, N5DM, for his work at the suite. (And to you, Joe, for being our delegate and not killing anyone on the organizing committee--ed.)

TDXSer becomes QSL Card checker

John, W5LLU, has been appointed by CQ Magazine as a card-checker for their WAZ award program. That means John can certify cards in person, and you don't have to mail them anywhere. John likes expensive meats, wine, new radios and crisp \$20 bills

DX Roundup

(de Jim, N5DC)

This will be my last DX column for the Bullsheet. I want to thank George for the chance to air my views about DXing and other subjects. I hope the interest in DX will continue to grow in the club.

I wonder if the XW that K5GA worked at NR5M this weekend on 20 was a "good one" or not? (Personally, I think it was a broken call!--ed.) The latest QRZ DX indicates that the HA ops in 3W would not be able to go to XW, but the rumor mill has been wrong before. I'm pleased to say that Jim, WB5JBP, has been re-elected as West Gulf Director. Jim has asked me to serve as DX advisor for him. So, if you have anything that you feel the League needs to know through your Director, let me know and I'll pass the dope along. I've known Jim for some time, and I can promise that he'll not just let your issue lie, but will take some sort of action.

As I write this on Sunday night after the CQ WW CW contest, it seems to me that conditions have dropped off to some extent. The gang on two meters (both packet and FM) were putting stuff out like mad, so maybe the numbers don't tell the whole story. I noted a lot of good DX showing up in the announcements, especially from N5CJQ "Lucky" and John, WA5ZVE. The packet cluster had over a thousand announcements. I think we need to get several more ops involved, so that new announcements keep appearing. The cluster sure does provide lots of info; I checked several times for a 3V or XT that I need, and it sure is easy to check for them that way.

Bulletin Browsing:

4J1 counts as a new one!

U1MIR/U2MIR reported to be making Q's on 2M.

SU1EK is WA9INK; QSL CBA

VK9 Mellish & Willis Is. due in early January

JD1 is on the air

VU5 Laccadives possible mid-March

ZL5CCU Antarctic is on packet

ZS2MI is a possible upcoming operation.

● ADVERTISEMENT

(de Dennis Motzenbacher, KZ5M)

Radio Booth Goes QRT

For sale: Nearly 5 acres of RF-enriched land, neatly trimmed, available for nearly immediate occupancy. Priced for prompt sale in the low \$30's. Lovely lot, shaded by three Rohn trees. Ideal for railroading enthusiast. Contact Dennis at home 343-0032, or work 943-0920.

Come out with your hands up! I'm armed with a Bencher!

(de Bill, K2TNO)

The following is my own true story of an operation from the home QTH during Sprint CW, September 1988. The names have been unchanged to indict the guilty.

I got out of the box really well this time. Twenty played fine for about an hour, and after about another 90 minutes I realized on 40 that I was really cooking! I was staying even with the rest of the regulars, which I usually can manage to do until we go to 80 where my antennas stink. Oh yeah, you don't have any idea what I have on this city lot, do you? I run a tri-band Gemquad on a crankup at 60 feet, a pair of fullwave loops fed at the base for 40 strung through two giant oak trees in the front yard, and a Butternut HF2V for 40 dx and for 80. I also have a terrible inverted vee for 80 with the apex at 45 feet but it's pointed north-south and is a rotten antenna. The rig is a TS 930 driving a Clipperton amp at about 900 watts out.

So anyway, it was kind of a typical Sprint for me, doing well on 20 and 40, and expecting once again to get pasted on 80, finishing about fifth in my own team's lineup. But lo and behold!! Came the 80 meter time and I was still right up there!! Mults were way up; maybe this would be the year that I'd finally break 300 Q's and the 10K point barrier. I'd also taken all of my usual precautions I reserve for SERIOUS contests like Sprint: (1) inform neighbors I'll be killing their TV sets Saturday night from 7 to 11 so why don't they go to a movie? (2) unwired the shack telephone so they can't disturb me (3) sent XYL and jr op to a shopping mall and a movie (4) schlepped a cooler of Cokes for during (and beers for after) the contest and (5) locked myself into the garage shack area after turning out all the house lights. Just a nice, comfortable Saturday of radio for the kid.

The time is now 0325, and I'm S and P'ing on 80. The rate is going great! Somehow I'm even able to get some responses when I QRZ after inheriting a frequency. Knock, knock, knock goes the door to the shack. I ignore it and hit the "K2TNO NA" button on the CK-1. KaBNOOM-KaBOOM-KaBOOM!! goes the knocking door this time. "W1WEF 265 Bill Tx K2TNO", I reply in cw to this latest intrusion. Still it won't quit-- there goes the damned knocking again --- Oh hell I gotta answer the door! I hit the CQ button to save the freq and dart to the door, unlatch the sliding bolt and open it, ready to do mayhem upon the bodies of the interlopers in my contest fanatic's fantasy world.

Is it an irate neighbor complaining about TVI? No, what I see before me jerks me back to semi-reality: there stands my 10-year-old daughter all in tears and Momma behind her who looks lke she's just seen a ghost.

DADDYCOMEQUICKTHERESABURGLARIN-
THEHOUSEANDHESHIDINGIN
THELINENCLOSETONTHESECONDFLOOR!

The cans on the operating table come alive with band noise as the CQ finishes, and I hear K1ZX drop his call. My mind whipsaws from burglary to Iceman and back again. Jim will be gone and so will my rate, I think.

"What's going on? What the hell do you need that can't wait?", my eyes demand of my wife.

DADDYREALLYREALLYYOU GOT
TACOMERIGHTAWAYTHEBURGLARISTHEREAN
DIMSCAREDOHDADDYIMSOSCARED!

My training as an urban cowboy comes rushing back. This is all I need, two hysterical broads standing there in the garage yelling at me. Omigod! What if they're right?! I've been out here in the garage, and they've been gone for hours- maybe there really IS someone in the house!

DADDYPLEASEPLEASEYOUHAF
TAGOANDGETHIMOUTRIGHTAWAYBECAUSETHEK
ITTYISINSIDETHEHOUSEANDIMSCARED
HEWILLHURTTHEKITTY!

I go into defend-the-homestead-against-the-Comanches mode after that last blast. Frantically, I race toward the house, stopping at the garage door only long enough to grasp the biggest, meanest anti-burglar weapon you ever saw in a leftwing eastern liberal's garage: a shovel. And I unchain the fierce guard dog at my disposal, a year-old Labrador (VO1 would be a mult) puppy who can literally lick a person to death in hours. I race into the house (bravely following the dog who thinks this is great fun since she usually isn't allowed into the house). I bound up the stairs and spy the evil linen closet door, behind which lurks the devil incarnate of my daughter's fertile imagination.

I grab the door handle and pull quickly, so I can get this damned charade over with and return to what's left of the contest. My pull opens the door about an inch, when just as suddenly the door is PULLED SHUT AGAIN FROM THE INSIDE! Egad, there really is someone in there! I pull the door even harder-- Whupp! The door is pulled shut even more firmly!! I step back away from the door and briefly ponder my next move - the old shovel trick!

There's a part of the brain that we have inherited almost unchanged by evolution: it controls an instinctive reaction to protect one's territory. I hoist the shovel and begin attacking the middle of the door like a madman! As a fullgrown biochemistry professor, I'm not in the best of shape, but at over 200 pounds when I get the hang of attacking a door with a shovel I quickly destroy the target. The door panel is a pile of rubble in three fast chops, revealing the inside of the closet and my hidden tormentor.

I expect to hear him begging for mercy as I chop, but the reason for the silence is revealed along with the closet's innermost recesses: there's nobody there but the bed linens and the towels! (In retrospect, I can say in all candor that the linens were scared out of their wits).

I look inside, startled to find the emptiness where felons are to lurk. What the heck is going on? Suddenly the immense stupidity of the whole act comes over me: the closet door sticks at the top! If you open it in a normal fashion it works fine, but if you yank on the knob the top grabs. The harder and faster you pull, the more force you build up to re-pull the door closed. Just like somebody inside pulling from the other side!

I race back down the hall, nimbly leaping clear of the scattered shards of what had once been a handsome closet door. "There's nobody here," I cry as I fly past my family cowering near the back door. I say not another word, nor even break stride as the Terminator in me subsides and K2TNO begins to take over again. I bet I'm the only op in the contest who actually "sprinted" to his shack. I re-latch the door from the inside, and quickly ponder upon what suitable invectives will be fitting when the XYL soon appears to demand that I fix the door I busted.

I grab a pencil, put on the cans and begin to tune. Another station signs his call and "NA". A clear invitation to drop in my call. I punch at memory button 5 on the CK-1, but my finger flies off to the left at the last moment and I activate number 7, the CQ one. Damn! Just more useless QRM, and I listen helplessly as some other op gets the QSO. A couple of tunes and I get my first QSO of the post-bash era. This time I break the auto pencil lead about five times and throw the Pentel across the desk, grabbing for a real yellow wood one with about a 4H lead that even a four-year-old couldn't break. I realize I'm shaking like a leaf! I can barely send on the paddles; the first few times I try I cause those little pivots to jump out on both sides, totally disabling the paddle (you Bencher owners know what I mean, non-Bencher types wouldn't understand anyway).

I look at the clock: it's only 0330. The whole crazy episode has taken only five minutes of my life, but seemed like it took ages. My nerves are shot, I can't hit the right buttons, and my writing looks like the handwriting of some outpatient. Somehow I muddle through the remaining thirty minutes of the Sprint: no longer was I even with the leaders; no longer was I able to CQ effectively; no longer did I get a QSO on each try. It was business back to the usual old-fashioned way: TNO getting stomped on 80, my old nemesis.

I finish with 290 QSO's, a personal best but oh-so-agonizingly far from the three century mark. Once again I'm fifth in the TDXS team. Only this time I have something else, something no other contester in the land could share with me this night: I have a closet door that needs a lot of fixing.

73, Tuna

Contest Corral

(de Dave, K5GN)

Editor's note: Dave is out of pocket at press time, due to the Bullsheet's one-week advance deadline. So there will be no regular column this month.

THE SHORT PATH

Dec.2-3: ARRL 160M rules last month, or Nov.QST

Dec 10-11: ARRL Ten meter contest. Rules Nov. QST

Week of Dec 24-31: The NR200M official FCC-sanctioned club operating special-call-sign event. We can be on all bands, all modes from Radio Hempstead. At the December meeting we'll try to set some operating times. One idea to ponder: how about planning a club multi-multi (both modes) for the day after Xmas, say, Dec 26? Does anyone know if these special calls have attracted much of a following?

THE LONG PATH

January brings more contests, but it also brings you a new contest editor. I'll go back to my radio hole in Crosby.

RUMORS

CQ WW CW was a blast!! It doesn't matter where you operated last weekend, I'm sure you found tremendous opportunities to hit the long ball and score some great new ones. Conditions on all bands were good to outstanding, with a solar flux opening up about 150, A=3, K=1. The A index went up a bit over the next 48, but at the start propagation was great on the high bands. Ten was open until about midnight. The low bands were a big disappointment, due to static levels that reached epic proportions. TNO reported 60-over-9 static on 160, and we would have worked zilch except for that big array of sixteen thousand-foot beverages (eight on 160, eight on 80). Tuna remarked at one point that the low bands sounded more like Radiosport than they did like CQWW CW!

It looks like another second-place "win" for the Avis of the contest multis, NR5M. We ended up second to W3LPL for the umpteenth time, but this year we definitely made it a fairer fight. They had about 12.5 meg and we had about 10 megapoints. (Editor's note: LPL sat on 7000.1 for hours on Friday night running EU; on Saturday night they had evidently milked the low end dry and they slid all the way up to 7000.5 instead). Hats off to K5GA for his spearheading effort on 20, where he beat the LPL score. Also, thanks and 73 to KN5Hose for jetting down together with friend and fellow CO contester Tom, AB00. The station played really well, thanks mostly to the efforts of KESIV to keep the aluminum up-and-running (and turning! --ed.) Dan, W5XZ, also came over from his new QTH in Longview to join in

the festivities. Dan spent most of his time on 40 and 80, for which he wins the coveted TDXS brass figlgee with two oak leaf palms and almond clusters.

The lumberyard had a big turnout in multi-single, as W5ASP and crew braved a new, loud line-noise problem that plagued them a lot. Most notable new op at the 'Yard was Jan, K5MA, who appeared over the radio horizon from Cape Cod to pick up his Boomer (hey Jan: thought you were at K5NA--ed.)

SCORES:

W5ASP (m/s)---about 1200 Q's x 130 zones x 320 countries

W5BIR (SOAB)-	412	112	207
N5CJQ (SOAB)	134	39	99
NR5M (m/m) 160M	70	20	37
80	294	27	58
40	835	36	99
20	1274	40	148
'15	1083	38	120
10	1049	35	118
Totals	4505	196	580

Lightning Got You Down?

(de Dennis, K2UA)--I have acquired a catalog from TII Industries, who manufacture commercial surge suppressors and noise filters. These come packaged in various ways, including weatherproof housings suitable for mounting at the base of a tower, for example. Contact TII at 1375 Akron Street, Copiague, New York 11726 for a catalog and locations of distributors.

The Other Fellow's Shack

(de Bill, K2TNO)

FRC Newsletter, Oct 1988: Rumor has it that the new version of the AK1A software will automatically disconnect stations which do not input anything into the system for some period of time.

Try propagation reports put out by Radio Australia. They're on 9.580 MHz and the report is aired at 1225 and 1230 UTC, plus four other times the writer didn't know.

PVRC Bulletin, Sept 1988: New president of PVRC is Fred Laun, K3ZO. Recently an OK3 on 10 M asked W3LPL if he was QRP. Quite upset, Frank now has 6 over 6 over 6 (copycat! -ed.) fixed on OK3.

Johnson Space Center ARC, Oct 1988: In an article about refurbishing the W5RRR antenna farm, the writer says "and then Dale, KG5U, directed NASA/JSC rigging support in putting the 15 and 20 meter beams back." (That's the hard part, Dale - directing the riggers. Just ask NR5M how hard it is to direct riggers!- ed.) How does TDXS get on the list Dale?!

ARRL Field Forum, Oct 1988: ARRL proposes to improve the "youth connection" in ham radio. One suggestion is that radio clubs "adopt a school", and help youngsters interested in hamming gwet into our hobby. (Anybody looking around the HHC this fall knows we need some replacements for those of us who are now long-in-the-tooth! -ed.) How about TDXS proposing a station at St. John's School where we meet? Maybe they would let us put up a tower the kids could use, and we'd have it for our own meetings. Comments, anyone?

