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Texas DX Society

An ARRL Affiliated Club



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The Prez Sez - de Don, KI3L/5

Since my last column in the June Bullsheet, my DXCC status took a major leap. But unfortunately, it didn't last. I did manage to nail a solid contact with Romeo at 5A0RR during his only night of operation (thanks to a long distance telephone tip from N3AKD in Maryland). I was convinced that I had finally worked them all.

You know the rest of the story. The current feeling is that Romeo was "detained", and was eventually allowed to return to Moscow, but without logs or equipment. Unfortunately, I still need 5A. I did see a recent announcement that 5A0A may become active in the near future, so there is still hope on the horizon.

Field Day 1993 can be declared a success. The heavy rain on Friday evening put a damper on setup activities, but the continuous cloud cover that followed kept sunburns to a minimum, and the temperature stayed in a comfortable range. Fortunately, there was no rainfall during the operating period, but there was plenty of mud, and plenty of fire ants!

Thanks to all who participated, including both TDXS members and the Houston Area AMSAT Group. Special thanks to Dave, WB5N, who served as Field Day Chairman, and very special thanks to our host, Bob, W5SJS. Bob trailered the towers and antennas into position, set up his motorhome at the CW station, and made countless jeep trips up and down the hill just to keep things going. He kept the generators running, the coffee pots full, etc. Thanks again, Bob! The fall contest season is rapidly approaching.

By the time you read this, the CW version of the North American QSO Party will have come and gone. The Phone NAQP is scheduled for August 21. Please plan to participate. These are great contests that move quickly, and don't require a big station or a major time commitment. Call Chuck, KE5FI to get assigned to a team, and have some fun! The Fall Sprints are coming in September, so be thinking about them also. The agen-

da for the August TDXS meeting, which will be held at the downtown Emergency Operations Center, will include discussion of the proposed Fall antenna maintenance party, and further discussion of TDXS's involvement in the 1993 Houston Convention. The program will be a showing of the video classic, "To Win the World", which is an excellent documentary of the multi-multi effort of N2AA in the 1980 CQWW SSB Contest. I hope to see you all at the meeting.

Announcements

DX PacketClusters - The TDXS Contest and DX PacketCluster operates on 144.970 MHz with the call **K5DX**. This cluster node is operated by Rich, K5WA from his home in southwest Houston, and is sponsored by the Texas DX Society. It is regularly linked to the Texas PacketCluster DX network. K5DX may be accessed directly, or using the TDXS97 packet node by first connecting to the TDXS97 node and then connecting to K5DX, i.e. C TDXS97, then C K5DX, all running on 144.970 MHz. K5DX is also accessible using the TDXS digipeater option, e.g. "C K5DX via TDXS")

The Brazos Valley Contest and DX PacketCluster Bulletin Board is located in Hempstead, Texas and operates on 144.990 MHz with the call **KE5IV**. This node is accessible either directly or by connecting through any of several local packet nodes, e.g. IAH, HOU, etc. The Galveston County DX PacketCluster, located in La Marque, is active under the call **KC5SC** and operates on 144.930 MHz. It is usually connected with K5DX and KE5IV via the 446.100 MHz backbone link.

Bullsheet Articles - Articles or other newsworthy items are hereby solicited by the editor. Articles should be submitted in the form of either ASCII files or as word processor files. Files may be uploaded to the TDXS area on **KB5NFN's Bulletin Board** at 713-777-0821, or sent to the Editor. If necessary, text may be sent to via FAX to the editor by prior arrangement. Files or other messages may be sent to the editor via CompuServe or Internet to 71045.2632@compuserve.com. For those with VHF Packet ASCII text can be sent directly to the Editor. Contact W5ASP at 713-974-3455 to arrange for either fax or packet transfers. Publication deadline is the first Friday of the month.

TDXS Weekly DX and Contest Net - Each Tuesday night at 2100 CST, the Texas DX Society sponsors a **DX and Contest net** on 147.96/36 MHz. The purpose of this net is to exchange information of interest to DXers and contesters. The agenda includes general and club announcements, DX information, contest information, QSL routings, propagation forecasts and various related topics. It should be noted that participation is not limited to members of the TDXS, but is open to all and everyone is encouraged to join in.

DX Report

de Jim, N5DC

Eritrea. E31A is on the air. QSL JH1AJT (See my DXAC column.) Eric, NM5M apparently was on the air as E3A, and was reported on July 16 from 1325 to 1545 UTC. He worked no U.S. stations (at least none were heard).

Pratus Island. Martti, OH2BH may be going to Pratis in October!

Mongolia. JT3 set for 8/26-9/2. 6 meters thru 80 meters w/ SSB, CW, RTTY. QSL via JR0CGJ.

Tunisia. 3V8W reported 21.022 Mhz. as usual, WFWL. QSL DK2WV QSL via N5FW.

Iran. 9D5CW has been reported 14.017 MHz 0425 UTC. QSL Box 24754-154 Tehran.

Burkina Fasso. XT8BW is active on 40 meters and WARC Bands. Contact WB2YQH, his QSL Manager, for a sked.

Chad. TT8OBO is N4JBI, QSL via WA4OBO.

Upcoming:

9V1WE....Aug 13-21. QSL via JH1FNS

D6.....Aug 11-20. QSL I4ALU

XU6WV....Aug 21-25. QSL VS6WV

VK9M (Mellish Reef)...Sep 19-28

ZK1XR....May thru Sep 4. QSL N7NKG

ZD9CQ....Now thru Nov.

Russian Prefixes

(The following article, apparently taken from a recent issue of *QRZ DX*, appeared in the *Bay Area DXers Newsletter* for May/June 1993..ed)

CIS Prefixes - What the future may bring.

The breakup of the Soviet Union has brought many changes, but we haven't seen much in the way of the changes we expected in the area of amateur radio prefixes. A proposal was made to the ITU for changes in the callsign structure, and the changes were expected to take place January 1, 1993, but little has happened. There have been a few strange callsigns reported during early 1993, but nothing that resembles the widespread changes that were proposed. The following prefixes were proposed for the republics within the Commonwealth of Independent States:

Armenia (RG, UG) - EK

Azerbaijan (RD, UD) - 4J

Belarus (RC, UC) - EU-EW

Georgia (RF, UF) - 4L

Kazakh (RL, UL) - UN-UQ

Kyrgyz (RM, UM) - EX

Moldova (RO, UO) - ER

Russia (RA, UA, etc.) - RA-RI & UA-UI

Tadzhik (RJ, UJ) - EY

Turkmen (RH, UH) - EZ

Ukraine (RB, UB, etc.) - UR-UZ & EM-EO

Uzbek (RI, UI) - UJ-UM

During recent weeks some stations in Kazakhstan (UL) have been using callsigns with the prefix UN. NT2X notes that UN7=UL7, UN8=UL8 and UN9=RL7. But evidently, not all oblasts in the republic have converted to the new prefix. 4L9A has been reported to be active from Georgia. ER/UB5FBV is active from Moldova (UO). We can expect some confusion as these republics convert to a new callsign structure. In addition, several oblasts have changed names: Celinograd (UL-B) is now called Tselinograd...

DX Advisory Committee

de Jim, N5DC

The big vote on yet another addition to the DXCC Countries List is at hand. The DXAC is to vote the week of August 9th on Eritrea, E3. It is my belief that we will make it a new one without much problem.

The area that will probably stir up the "troops", is the question of what date will be used to determine when Eritrea became a new country for DXCC purposes. Do we simply reactivate it as a former country? If not, do we make it effective May 1991, the date that they declared their Independence? Or do we make it effective as of May 24, 1993 when they held their referendum and formally became independent?

It is my belief that the date should be May 1991, as they have been effectively independent ever since. Hence that should be the date we (the DXAC) should recommend to the ARRL Board.

I will have been in Austin over the preceding weekend making a presentation at the convention about the DXAC, and I intend to take an informal poll to see how the DXers over that way feel about the "start date". I'll let you know the outcome next month....stay tuned!

ARRL DX Bulletin

From ARRL Headquarters

Newington CT August 5, 1993

Thanks to Bob, WB2CJL, and the Western New York DX Association for the items in this week's bulletin.

ERITREA. The E31A group remains very active on CW and SSB, including the WARC bands. Computer problems have hampered RTTY operations thus far. A fix is in the works and the operators hope to be RTTY-active by the time this bulletin makes it to the airwaves. QSL via JH1AJT.

NORTH COOK ISLANDS. N7NKG is on from Manihiki Atoll, IOTA OC-014 in the North Cook chain. His call sign is ZK1XR and can be found on CW and SSB. He should remain there through September 4. QSL via N7NKG.

BELAU. Members of the Kyoto ARC, Japan, will operate from August 8 through 13 on 160 through 6 meters with CW, SSB, FM and RTTY. The six meter beacon will be on 50.130 MHz. QSL via JA3OIN.

SAINT PAUL ISLAND. Three stations will be active from August 14 to 18. Listen for them on 160 through 10 meters with CW, SSB and possibly RTTY.

KOREA. Here is an item for prefix hunters. HL93 is a special prefix celebrating the Taejon International Exposition. The prefix will be used from August through November of 1993. The Korean Amateur Radio League, KARL, is making an award available for those who work one or more HL93 stations. Also listen for 6K93XPO.

MELLISH REEF UPDATE. This DXpedition is slated for September 19 through 28. There will be two completely self-contained operating sites, thus allowing two stations to be able to work simultaneously on the same band. Arrangements have been made for the use of three generators totaling 10 KW of available power. Further updates to follow.

PETER ONE ISLAND. This 16 day DXpedition is scheduled to begin on February 1, 1994. Plans call for 10 operators, four stations, all bands and modes. Ralph, K0IR, is looking for an experienced operator. If you have any interest in this once-in-a-lifetime adventure, contact him via his CBA.

Propagation

de Roy, AD5Q

(The following article is taken from the Northwest ARS Newsletter for August 1993..ed)

July propagation was awful. This was the peak of the summer season, and absorption was at its worst. There has been little activity on either 10 or 15, but it appears that day path propagation held up nicely on 17. Judging by the DX spots, the band stays open well past sunset for propagation back into daylight areas. This is the sort of day/night propagation we enjoy in spring on 15 when flux levels are higher.

17 Meters could prove to be an interesting band through the bottom of the sunspot cycle for daytime work, since propagation on higher bands will be in short supply. Daytime bands give us that morning path to Europe and the afternoon path to Asia. With fluxes declining to levels that will not open the northerly paths on either 10 or 15, we should look for these same openings at lower frequencies. 20 Meters is one alternative, but 17 may be the optimum choice. It's time to think about a new beam.

Due to our shortage of day path propagation, most DX activity has been across the night paths of 20 Meters. Band openings begin several hours before sunset into Europe, and continue for several hours after sunrise into Asia. Summer is also the peak season for morning long path to the Indian Ocean and southern Africa, and ZS8 has been active on the path to the northwest (no CW). Other long path circuits, such as VU/4S7, EU, Russia, NE Africa and the afternoon path to the Far East and VK are at their worst during the summer.

Expect slow and gradual improvement on 15 Meters during August, and slight improvement on 10 toward the end of the month. September is coming, and fall DX is a different story. The bands are starting their transition. Whereas springtime conditions on 15 bring out spectacular conditions across night and day paths, fall propagation on 15 is strictly daypath, like 10. The fall season on 15 should be pretty good, but 10 Meters does not hold much promise - especially from here in 5-land.

Propagation on 40 Meters never does drop out during the summer. There is little activity in the northern hemisphere because everyone has moved to 20. QRN levels are also high. Contacts into the southern hemisphere are easy to make, because nobody is watching the paths. In the winter, pileup frequencies are quickly overrun with lids. Tune this band for openings to Africa and Antarctica, and in the morning to the west. VK activity is common on 80 at our sunrise.

Attorney Hunting, Texas Style

(Strange as it may seem, this "news release" appeared in the *Garden City ARC Wireless* of September 1992. Apparently the Texas Bar Association was able to suppress its publication by the local news media..ed)

Here are the key provisions of a proposed law to regulate the hunting and harvesting of attorneys in the state of Texas.

370.01 Any person with a Texas rodent hunting license may also hunt attorneys for sport (non-commercial) purposes.

370.02 Taking attorneys with traps and deadfalls is permitted, but the use of U.S. currency as bait is prohibited.

370.03 Willfully killing attorneys with automobiles is prohibited unless such vehicle is an ambulance being driven in reverse. An attorney accidentally killed by a motor vehicle

should be removed to the roadside before the motor vehicle proceeds to a carwash.

370.04 It is unlawful to chase, herd, or harvest attorneys from a power boat, helicopter, or aircraft.

370.05 It is unlawful to shout "Free scotch," "Whiplash," or "Ambulance" for the purpose of trapping attorneys.

370.06 It is unlawful to hunt attorneys within 100 yards of a BMW, Mercedes, or Porche dealership.

370.07 It is unlawful to hunt attorneys within 200 yards of a courtroom, law library, health club, country club, hospital, or brothel.

370.08 It is not necessary to have a license to hunt, trap or harvest an attorney who gains elective office.

370.09 It is unlawful to be disguised as a reporter, accident victim, physician, or tax accountant while hunting attorneys.

370.10 Daily Bag Limits (per day):

Yellow-bellied sidewinders (2)

Two-faced tortfeasors (1)

Back-stabbing divorce litigators (3)

Horn-rimmed cut-throats (2)

Honest Attorneys (0) (Endangered Species..PROTECTED!)

Contest Corner

de Chuck, KE5FI

The phone weekend of the North American QSO Party is coming up on Saturday, August 21. The contest begins at 1800 UTC and goes until 0600. However, a single operator station can only work ten of the twelve hours. Multiply the total number of contacts by the number (by band) of North American countries (except U.S. & Canada), 50 U.S. states (including KH6, which I know is not USUALLY in N.A., but IS in the northern hemisphere and is a state! What the hey... they griped!) and 12 Canadian call areas (VE1-8, VO1-2 & VY1-2). Power is limited to 150 watts out, and off times must be at least 30 minutes long. The exchange is name & state (province or country) and yes, you CAN work non-North American stations for contact credit, but not multiplier.

NAQP is the contest I went to Turks & Caicos to operate this past February (placing #3 overall as VP5V..ed). I thought I would be clever and take my off time at about nine p.m. so 80/160 would be better, and then all I could work was Europe. I went for the wrong contest, I suppose! LZO and ASP have advised to work straight through and move as many multipliers from band to band as you can. There are five man teams, so leave me a message on packet or call me to be on a TDXS team. (TDXS placed 4th CW, 3rd SSB in January..ed)

The September Sprints will be on the 12th for CW and 19th for Phone. They run from 0000 to 0359 UTC on those Saturday nights. Off times should be taken in four hour increments (Its a joke Perring). Work 80, 40 & 20 only and give the other guy's call, your call, #, name and state. For example: K5RC de KE5FI 123 Chuck TX K. There is a QSY rule: move at least 5 kHz to CQ or QRZ, or at least 1 kHz before answering someone else's call. Usually you would answer someone, take the frequency, someone answers you and then you move. Its a contest you can both love and hate at the same time!

(The European DX Contest (WAE) CW runs Sat. & Sun. Aug. 14-15th. It's a great time to learn to QTC with CT..ed)

Due Dates

(Contest Logs must be postmarked (or received *) by the dates listed...Get Your Logs In and marked TDXS!)

July 30.....All Asia DX CW (*)

Aug. 11.....IARU HF World Championship

Contest Scores

Results**1992 WAE CW**

ZF2NE (W5ASP) 1105 Q x 1098 QTC x 262 M = 577K
 Winner, Non-Europe Contest Expedition Trophy

1992 ARRL 10 METER

W5WMU (K5ZD) 2384 Q x 266 M = 1.58 M #1 W/VE
 HiPwr/Mxd

KI3L 2130 Q x 217 M = 1.29 M #3 W/VE HiPwr/Mxd

NR5M 2679 Q x 167 M = 895K #2 W/VE HiPwr/SSB

KE5FI 2077 Q x 150 M = 623K #1 W/VE LoPwr/SSB

VP2V/K5LZO 2021 Q x 203 M = 1.26 M #1 DX

LoPwr/Mxd

W5ASP 675 Q x 139 M = 361K

K5DX 321 Q x 30 M = 19K

AC5K 46 Q x 28 M = 5K

KC5CP (w/ Net) 708 Q x 206 M = 400K

K5EC (w/ Net) 434 Q x 128 M = 134K

January 1993 North American QSO Parties**SSB**

VP5V (KE5FI) 1055 Q x 202 M = 213K #3

TDXS #1 (VP5/KE5FI,W5ASP,K5DX,K5CA) 3RD

TDXS #2 (K5XI) 8TH

CW

TDXS #1 (W5ASP,KI3L,AC5K,K5DX) 4TH

TDXS #2 (K5GA,AA5NK) 12TH

North American Sprint CW

WN4KKK 336 Q x 43 M = 14K 3RD

K5GN 336 Q x 42 M = 14K 6TH

TDXS #1 (K5GN,K5LZO,K5GA,KI3L,W5ASP,NT5D)

8TH

North American Sprint SSB

K5LZO 290 Q x 53 M = 15K 4TH

TDXS #1 (K5LZO,NT5D,W5ASP,KI3L) 3RD

Claimed**North American QSO Party CW**

N5RP (w/ KG5U) 500 Q x 139 M = 69.5K

W5ASP 422 Q x 133 M = 58K

NZ5I 300 Q x 132 M

K5RC 103 Q x ?

From Across The Pond

de Andy, GM0ECO

Here are some of the highlights of the IARU contest as seen from the hills above the Devon river, Scotland.

* Only 10% of Q's were from US (contrast the normal 70% plus in a good contest)

* Good short skip into Mainland Europe with 100+/hour rates for 3 point contacts.

* 10m very poor but sporadic E helped pick up a few mults.

* 15m Ok to Europe, 1 contact with W !!! Very little DX to far east

* 20m Good to US for a while but died to early on the saturday night.

* 40m/80m, low qrm levels for a change but not enough US on the bands.

* Worst part was local time 4-5am (the hour after sunrise) - 20m hadn't opened. 80m had died. Called CQ on 40m for the

hour and had very few takers other than one ZL and one VK. Nice to hear them loud and in the clear for once.

* Lots of HQ stations active. Got very confused with IU2A and IS0*** both giving out ARI as their reports! Never heard W1AW at all.

* The SU called me.

* Worked one W6 in the whole contest.

Antenna's

TH7 @60' plus low dipoles for 10/15/20m 2el phased delta loops for 40m + sloper Loop for 80m Inverted L (low) for 160m (Efficiency extremely low due to the grazing Haggis in the next field being resonant on this band) Short Beverages for N/S/E/W.

Contest finished at 1.00pm local time. Fell asleep during the Formula 1 British Grand Prix an hour later but managed to catch Nigel Mansell retaining first place in the Indy Car series.

TDXS Field Day - 1993

de Dave, WB5N

Now that the 1993 edition of the annual ARRL Field Day is over, it's time to look at the results and recount the events. TDXS entered Class 2A (Club/Non-Club Portable) and operated again from Bob Burns, W5SJS's ranch near Brenham TX. In spite of the rain, mud, and fireants, we made a total of 3426 QSOs.

The breakdown is (Band/CW/Phone): 80M/60/23, 40M/354/233, 20M/506/503, 15M/374/371, 10M/10/221, 6M/4/81, 2M/0/52, 432 Mhz/0/6, Satellite/12/56, Packet/47, Novice/138/375. With the bonus points I calculate the score to be 10,862. How does this score stack up?. I think it's pretty good. Rumors put us in the top 3 of Class 2A.

Field Day started off looking pretty bad Friday afternoon, with about eight of us sitting in our cars for an hour waiting out a storm. That left the site WET. By Saturday morning most of us had donned rubber boots (Tuna Boots as they are popularly known in these parts). By about 10 AM about 25 persons were on site, and the setup went pretty smoothly. All stations except the VHF/UHF were on the air by the start of the contest. Aside from the usual minor antenna problems (I'll come back to that) operations were pretty routine. VHF/UHF was on the air within the next 90 minutes and all stations were then on the air.

This year we were hosts for the AMSAT satellite group, lead by Andy, WA5ZIB, who handled the satellite operations for us. They were a great bunch of guys who did a super job and gathered many satellite QSOs for us.

How good was our score. The record for 2A is listed as 14,060 points. Don, KI3L was part of that operation, and he tells me that score was probably reported in error (bonus points added BEFORE power multiplier.ed) TDXS won 2A in 1990 with a score of 12,366.

Could we have done better this year if we had tried? Maybe. We would need 3,200 more points to pass the 14,060 mark. Assuming the same power (multiplier of 2), and about the same ratio of added CW/SSB QSOs, we would have to get just over 533 Qs on each mode. Our CW over-all rate was 62 per hour. The phone rate was 80 per hour. Increasing the rates to 84 per hour on CW and 102 per hour Phone would result in the needed Qs. These added rates could, under the right conditions come from improving Novice and regular 10 M phone rates, from 6 Meters, and better use of the digital techniques which count as CW pointers. Obviously another, perhaps easier way, is to go all CW. But then, is it really worth it just for another record. (We already hold five other Field Day records.)

Regardless of what we choose to go after next, it is very clear that all of the antennas must work RIGHT!. That needs to be done before Field Day gets here. We have talked about having an antenna party in the fall to check out and fix antennas before Field Day. Interest looks good, so it appears that sometime in September we'll try and get a crew together, trek up to the Field Day site, and check out and repair as many antennas as we can.

I think this Field Day went very well. I must thank and congratulate the stations captains, Don, KI3L (CW), Bob, N5RP (SSB), and Bill, K2TNO (novice/tech) for a great job. Bob, W5SJS I know worked harder than anyone, and I think he deserves special thanks. I believe he was really the key person that made this Field Day a success. I can't list all the operators and workers here but they ALL did a great job.

Take down set a new record! Including site clean up, everything had been picked up and hauled back to the barn by 3 pm Sunday. Things went so well I actually am looking forward to next year.

Dispatches from the Pacific N.W.

(Here is a portion of a letter I recently received from Dennis, AA7VB, a.k.a. KZ5M. Figured his old friends would be interested..ed)

Hello TDXS. Like a bad rash I just keep popping up. KZ5M is now AA7VB in Portland, OR. I hope this is my final resting place...so to speak.

...I married Lieske, a 38 year old...YB0 of Chinese decedent in October '92, and we live a quiet happy life outside Portland proper. No towers or rhombics are planned in the next 12 months or so, but the potential for a mountain top QTH is high after that time. (The IRS and I have an "arrangement". I agree to work hard to earn money this next year, and they agree to take the money!) I will have a 4BTV up soon though, and I hear AG7M needs a climber/operator associate, so I should be QRV in the near future.

...So, take care my friends, and we will see you in the pileups. I miss being there with you. 73, Dennis, AA7VB

(Dennis Motschenbacher, 15171 #E S. Walker Road, Beaverton, OR, 97006)

The (INTER) National Packet System

de Jim, NN5O

(Jim claims to be an "advanced novice" in the field of packet radio. That probably means that most of us can understand what he has to say..ed)

About a year ago, I discovered the strange world of non-"Packet Cluster" packet, primarily in the form of the local BBS. In those happy times of the P.C. (pre-Clinton) era, the messages on the occasional BBS were local in nature and amounted to announcements of flea markets, towers for sale, etc.

Passit unum annum! Today, the local BBS ain't local. If you were to connect to one of the local BBS options today (CNBBBS or IMZBBS, e.g.), and go through the simple sign-up procedure, you would get a row of letters explainable with the "H" for "Help" command. Type "L" for "List," and you will be presented with lots of messages from all over the world. You could probably copy and QSL DXCC on the BBS with some patience. As a matter of fact, you will probably see

a few mindless CQ calls @WW which means that the pointless call will be sent worldwide.

So how do you use this thing? Well, if you wanted to send me a message (Grin), you would type:

S NN5O@WA4IMZ.#SETX.TX.USA.NA

Then you would respond, as is usual on the Packet Cluster for messages in the directory, with a Control-Z at the end to post the message. When I check in to the BBS, I might read your message with "RM" without killing it first ("KM"), if I like you. Similarly, if you make a given BBS your "HOMEBBS" after first log on, your address will be, e.g.

D5ZZZ@CNBBBS.#SETX.TX.USA.NA

And if you want to send our friend, Boris Stepanov (UW3AX) a message, his address is:

UW3AX@RK3KP.MSK.RUS.EU

You will see a few strange and amusing things on the BBS system, including information about UFO sightings and, mirabile dictu, regular postings of recipes for all kinds of meals. Also, you will see activists who are "screaming" about the need to stop posting of "food messages" for the good of amateur radio! Yes, it is a strange land, the international packet world.

It is beyond the scope of this short piece to explain how all this stuff gets shipped all over the world in a few days on packet radio (Read: I don't know how it works). However, the efficiency of the system is improving on a monthly basis. Packet E-MAIL is obviously going to change the face of ham radio in a couple of years, partly owing to the fact that some of the long haul traffic is going on INTERNET and via satellite. By 1995, you will be seeing BBS packet messages on 2 meters from OH2BH/very rare country, indicating that he is setting up antennas now and will be on 20 meters in an hour.

CAUTION, if you send a message @WW, you are actually sending the missive everywhere on the big blue marble. So, when I asked for comments on modifications on the TS-50S and sent @WW, I triggered an avalanche of messages in response which lasted for more than a month! I think that hams in at least 20 countries responded and demanded to know what I knew about the little rig.

OK, OK! so how do you get into this? In Houston, you have to connect to one of the active and World-Wide connected BBS stations. I connect to WDL (a node) in the Woodlands on 145.07 Mhz, and then connect to IMZBBS, which gets its feed from CNBBBS. Either BBS can be accessed via any node in Houston or directly.

In conclusion, have fun with the system and try not to post more food/recipe messages. Also note that Moscow State University is looking for a throw down TNC for its BBS station. If you can help, contact Dick,

N1MDZ@K1RQG.ME.USA

So for now 73,

JIM@JRSYVIL.TX.USA.EARTH.SLRSYS.MLKYWAY.
COSMOS

Upcoming Events

August 13.....Texas DX Society Monthly Meeting
 August 14.....WAE European DX Contest CW
 August 21.....North American QSO Party SSB
 August 21.....Seanet SSB Contest
 August 27.....New Orleans DX Convention
 September 04.....All Asian SSB DX Contest
 September 10.....Texas DX Society Monthly Meeting
 September 11.....North American Sprint CW
 September 11.....WAE European DX Contest SSB

Bits & Bytes

de Ron, KB5NFN

I'm sure you're all familiar with the good news/bad news routine. We'll make no exception here. Good news: I've got a new job. Bad news: It's back here in Houston. Good news: My home BBS is running great on a really spectacular system. Bad news: Cell-Bio is down for the count.

Let's start with the more pertinent material first, the bulletin board situation. I'm pleased to report that the **primary TDXS bulletin board, USS Pegasus**, is fully operational out of our home QTH. It's running on a homebrew 386, 660 Megabytes of hard drive storage space, and one of the fastest modems available on the market, the US Robotics Courier 16.8k HST/DualStandard. The system will be able to handle connections up to 16800 baud using the HST protocol, or 14400 baud using the V.32bis protocol.

The system is available 24 hours a day, and has numerous Amateur Radio related message areas, and two dedicated file areas, one for Amateur Radio generally, and one for TDXS specifically. If you don't have access to the TDXS area, please let me know, and I'll flag your user account accordingly.

Unfortunately, the Cell Bio BBS has fallen somewhat into a comedy of errors. I started having system problems with it generally, so I pulled out the existing computer and dropped in a new one. The new system worked great, but then the modems started acting up. Fine, I pulled out the first internal 2400, dropped in a second. That one started having problems. I pulled it, and added an external 2400. That one worked fine as long as it answered. I'm sure some of you remember that one. Since I brought the Courier home from Austin, I figured I'd put the USR Sportster 14.4 up there. That thing had problems from day 1, wouldn't answer with good tones. Next day, I checked it out and the thing had totally died. What next, I wonder. I pulled an internal 2400 from here at home, took it up and installed it. Called back to the home system to pick up mail, everything was working great. Since that time, the system has given a continuous busy signal. I don't know what's wrong now, I haven't had a chance to go back up and look at it again. By the way, that USR Sportster is going back to the factory for warranty repair/replacement. As you can guess, all is not happy times at Cell Bio. Accordingly, **please shift your calls to my home system, USS Pegasus. The number is 713-777-0821.**

In other news, my new job. I'm now a senior technical consultant with the Computing Resource Center at Baylor College of Medicine. Now, I not only handle technical questions like I did at Dell, but I even have the privilege (horror?) of being a Novell network administrator. Needless to say, I have learned a lot about networking in the last three weeks.

One of the benefits of being with Baylor now, I have regular Internet access. Those of you on the Internet may contact me at rmarosko@bcm.tmc.edu. Alternatively, my father, Ron Sr., K5LLL and I have addresses through AMSAT, and we may be contacted through there; kb5nfn@amsat.org and k5lll@amsat.org, respectively.

With this issue of the Bullsheat, I have assumed the duties of getting the master copy printed and delivered for publication. Right now, I claim no responsibility if the Bullsheat is delivered late. (It's hard to find responsible help these days..ed)

For those who contribute articles to the Bullsheat, either on a regular basis or from time to time, I urge you to make use of this BBS. It is a very reliable and efficient way to get the material to the Editor. Bullsheat files DO NOT have to be in "zipped" form. Put them in the TDXS area. (DITTO..ed)

Packet Racket

(The following is taken from the July 1993 issue of the T.C.A.P.S. (Texas Coastal Amateur Packet Society) membership newsletter written by Philip Fell, WA4IMZ who is President of T.C.A.P.S. It contains a collection of information that I, and probably many other TDXSers, have never seen in print before about the local packet radio system..ed)

The TCAPS owned and affiliated network of nodes is as follows:

WDLBPQ - KB5ECL-4 (Spring I-45 & Rayford Rd.) (with emergency batteries)

1200 baud: 145.07 & 446.100

9600 baud: 145.67 (soon)

19,200 baud: Backbone

IAHBPQ - K5VMX-1 (Beltway 8 and Hiway 249) (with emergency batteries)

1200 baud: 145.01 & 446.100

9600 baud: 145.61 (soon)

19,200 baud: Backbone

HOUBPQ - K5VMX-2 (Hiway 59s and Beltway 8) (with emergency batteries)

1200 baud: 145.09 & 446.100

9600 baud: 145.69 (soon)

19,200 baud: Backbone

SGLBPQ - FE6CNB-3 (Sugar Land)

1200 baud: 145.09

19,200 baud: Backbone

CNBBPQ - FE6CNB (Sugar Land)

19,200 baud: Backbone

56k baud: Wormhole

BCTBPQ - WB8FVB-1 (Bay City)

1200 baud: 145.01

9600 baud: 145.xxx (soon)

19,200 baud: Backbone

HMPBPQ - KE5IV-3 (Hempstead) (Hempstead DX Cluster HMPDXC)

1200 baud: 144.91 / 144.99 / 145.67 & 446.100

9600 baud: (soon)

19,200 baud: Backbone

DKNBPQ - AB5A-3 (Dickinson) (Galveston County DX Cluster GCDXC)

300 baud: 7.0890

1200 baud: 145.01 / 144.95 / 446.100

9600 baud: Louisiana Link 1

9,200 baud: Backbone

GLSBPQ - KG5RG (Galveston, UTMB)

1200 baud: 145.01

IMZBPQ - WA4IMZ-3 (The Woodlands area) (IMZBBS)

1200 baud: 145.05 & 446.200

9600 baud: 145.67

19,200 baud: Backbone

PBCBPQ - N5PBC-3 (Spring) (TCAPS test node)

1200 baud: 145.07

9600 baud: 145.67

19,200 baud: Backbone

All the nodes use the G8BPQ switch software. This allows us remote access and tuning.

In order to keep your traffic moving, each location, radio, TNC and function of the node must be taken into account as each port is adjusted separately for parameters and routing. We have noticed that TNCs tend to arrive with various setups. Below are the suggested parameters for your TNC. Please try to adhere to them, otherwise your communications will be slow, erratic and cause others needless retries to get connected or keep a QSO going.

SPEED=9600 (between TNC and PC - do not run this any higher)

MAXFRAME=4

TXDELAY=300 (If you have a fast switching radio, Handhelds use 450)

SLOTTIME=100

PERSIST=32

FULLDUP=0

FRACK=10000

RESPTIME=2000

RETRIES=8

PACLEN=236 (CAUTION: NO MORE AND NO LESS !)

Product Review - AEA PK-900

de Jeff, N1EWO

(The following article appeared on a local packet BBS courtesy of OZ1H DU. It apparently is published in the August 1993 issue of 73 Magazine. Errors in the text suggest it was "scanned-in" from the original. Hope we don't step on any "toes", but it seemed go along with some of the other articles in this issue..ed)

The dual-port PK-900 represents the next evolutionary step in AEA's multi-mode controller technology. Unlike the revolutionary DSP-2232, the PK-900 uses traditional modem technology with a few high-tech twists. The PK-900 offers improved ease of use and some changes in the computer-controlled portions of the unit's circuitry. LCD City Unlike previous models, even the top-of-the-line DSP-2232, the PK-900 sports a sexy new LCD annunciator panel in place of the traditional LED Christmas light display. This high-contrast, backlit panel is easy to read under most lighting conditions, (with the exception of some occasional glare from reflected light.) One thing that makes this new display particularly useful is that, unlike the LED arrays of previous models, these indicators say just what they mean. The operating mode of either port can be seen from across the room - no more memorizing LED locations or guessing. The display provides a lot of information: operating mode, link state, TX and CD indicators, various status indicators and, at the bottom of the display, a tuning meter.

Those of you interested in HF modes have, no doubt, spent a lot of time in front of your controller's tuning meter trying to get those LEDs to look just like the picture in the manual. I have, too. To be honest, my first reaction to the new LCD version was not good. It is quite different to use than the LEDs I had come to know. But after I had used the 900 for a while I found the LCD just took some getting used to. It is at least as good, if not better than, its predecessor. At the very least, it is physically wider, making it easier to see. Note that the 900 display has only fixed annunciators, it does not have the ability to display arbitrary text messages like its DSP-2232 big brother. While this would be very nice to have, it really does detract from the 900's utility.

Also located on the front panel are the traditional threshold control (a nice, big, easy-to-use knob) and the power switch. This knob adjusts the sensitivity of the DCD (Data Carrier Detect) function, and is only functional for port 1. Moving the power to the front is a nice change from the PK-232, the 900's predecessor.

The Back Panel. The back panel of the unit is a pleasant blend of the old and new. The 900 uses the same coaxial power connector as previous models, making upgrading a little easier. A five-pin DIN connector provides output for a tuning scope, and for direct CW keying, which supports pins 1 through 8 and 20. These keying, although I'm not sure this is

an improvement. The RCA approach was verthis connector is the unit's reset button, which operates in conjunction with the power switch to reset the 900 to factory defaults. Four additional trimmers located on the right side of the box allow screwdriver adjustment of the AFSK levels for each radio. The PK-232 had only one, pointing out that the 900 is a true two-port unit, not just able to switch between radios.

What Can It Do? The specifications of the PK-900 are impressive. The unit will operate to see the unit do it that a modem ham could want: AX.25 (Packet) HF and VHF, Baudot RTTY, ASCII, AMTOR, PACTOR, Morse (send/receive), HF Wefax (Weather Fax) in Greyscale, NAVTEX reception, TDM (Time Division Multiplex) reception, Bit-inverted RTTY (encrypted) reception. The PK-900 accomplishes all these modes with some very nice hardware. AEA has always been known for superior HF performance, and the PK-900 incorporates the same eight-pole Chebychev bandpass filter used in the better than average with poor signal conditions, an assertion borne out by experience-not just mine; ask around. The 900 has each mode's precise needs be accommodated.

On the output side, the unit uses a DDS chip (Direct Digital Synthesis) to modulation you might want, including DTMF or two-tone sequential paging, if the mood struck you. A user program capability makes this\$7), the PK-900 is ready to keep up with the world of packet as it grows. By the time you read this, PACTOR will be a standard in the upgrade. Dual Port. The big question I hear about the PK-900 concerns its dual-port capabilities. He can do anything - any mode the controller is capable of. Port two, on the other hand, is restricted to packet - HF or VHF. By a switch, the PK-900 can keep your VHF packet station on the air while you work AMTOR, or PACTOR, or any other mode on packet. Designed this box to be used in the shack, not as a node in a packet network. Its features and capabilities are targeted to combining the qualities of packet and AMTOR for excellent weak-signal performance. The PK-900's inherently excellent HF performance on 40 and 20 meters. It sounds like an AMTOR station on barbiturates. This mode will probably eventually replace AMTOR, since it familiar with AEA hardware, the PK-900 will not present any surprises. The unit's autobaud routine easily sets the data rate thorough section on setup and connection of the unit.

Once again I am forced to say that, while AEA's manuals contain lots of ... (A diplomatic way of saying I don't care for the manual.) On the other hand it does include the most important information: only one way to use the PK-900: with AEA's new PC Pakratt for Windows. This program, which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue it also provides concurrent access to the two radio ports - a neat trick. If you can't run Windows, you should seriously consider of Pakratt available from AEA, as well as third-party terminal programs that work with the unit. While the 900 can be operated learning curve without the computerized assistance.

Performance. What else can I say? The PK-900 performs were two units were indistinguishable. Both showed excellent HF performance - especially noted in poor conditions or with weak signals has trouble on VHF packet, something is wrong. If you want some opinions on PK-900 performance, you can ask some PK-232 owner. Conclusion. Teamed up with PC Pakratt for Windows and a pair of transceivers, the PK-900 is the heart, but the difference in cost is reflected in the capabilities of the box