



THE BULLSHEET

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Texas DX Society

An ARRL Affiliated Club

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domestic chores etc. Plus, the weather for the week/weekend was for the birds.

We had a good meeting in February, even with some of the fellows making the trip south for the CW test. It sounds like all had a good time, though Mike seemed to think he spent too much time on the tower..

The main item of business was the passage of the motion to cover all the clubs packet site radio equipment. TNC's, radios, duplexers etc. with the ARRL member insurance. With the location of both sites and the probability of lightning, we definitely need the coverage.

I hope I see, (that will be saw by the time this gets into print) some TDXS members at the Lafayette Hamfest. There have been some great times had there in the past. Just ask me about the duck at Mulots in Beaux Bridge. That one still puts a tear in my eye. Just a great weekend getaway.

After several requests, including two from club members, let me put the info here to get hooked up on the TDXS Internet Reflector. Send an e-mail message to "majordomo@wb5fnd.tech.uh.edu". Don't put a subject, and in text portion type-"subscribe tdxs-list". Then you'll be privy to all of our club gossip. If you want to put anything out on the reflector, just address it to "tdxs-list@wb5fnd.tech.uh.edu". Speaking of "How To Reach Us" type stuff, I spoke with our Webmaster, Ron, KK5DK and by the time you read this you should notice a few changes with our Home Page. Check it out at: <http://wb5fnd.tech.uh.edu:80/~tdxs/>

Be sure to try to make it to the March meeting on the 13th. I know Madison will have some new ideas for the club constitution and we might want to discuss lending some aid to the Uof H Radio Club efforts at upgrading their club station. See you at Antonio's Flying Pizza.

73, Bob/N5ET

Announcements

Meeting – The Texas DX Society Meets the second Friday of each month, except when the date is changed by the Board of Directors. **This month's meeting will be Thursday March 13, 1997 at Gabby's, 3101 N. Shepherd at 7:00 P.M.** Gabby's is located just outside Loop 610.

How to Reach Us

On the World Wide Web:

<http://wb5fnd.tech.uh.edu:80/~tdxs/>

On 2 Meters:

147.96/36 MHz

On Packet:

K5WA on 144.950MHz

or

Connect to TDXS95 (144.950MHz) and then connect to K5WA

The Prez Sez – de Bob, N5ET

Sorry to hear about the demise of the SSB effort from XE2. But I can sure understand the conflicts with work,

Programs – de Henry, W5HNS

Just to remind everyone that there is a vice president thinking about TDXS activities, I offer these thoughts. There are a couple of projects/activities of interest to me that are important to TDXS. In the past they have not had a high priority with our group and I would like to change that. These two activities are the Texas QSO Party and the Gulf Coast Ham Convention.

TDXS has sponsored the TQP for several years now and I have monitored that activity with interest. With a business marketing background I have noticed the response to the event from increased marketing efforts increase proportionately. In other words, the participation in the TQP is on the rise. THEREFORE, the priority which TDXS gives this event MUST also RISE.

This year the TQP rules have been revised. New incentives for mobile activity both intrastate and outerstate are in place and the exchange matches MARAC. Right now I feel like the rules will not need altering in the future. The TQP started using marketing techniques last year that mimicked the California QSO Party and we saw instant results.

For TDXS and many others, TQP provides a good warmup for field day. With TDXS being contest oriented I propose INTRACLUB competition for this year. I ask that each of you bring to this month's meeting your ideas about intraclub competition. This is a last minute thing but something which can quickly and easily be put into place and should be much fun for all who participate. What do you think?

The OTHER event is the Gulf Coast Ham Convention. We have several months to prepare but we cannot let it slip up on us. Many NEW hams are attending this convention and are in need of contesting and DXing seminars. TDXS has a lot to offer the GCHC in this area. Think about presentations. Who will volunteer to give DX and/or contest workshop type talks? Who has photos available? Is someone photographing any of our current contesting activities? Our visible presence at the GCHC is vital to our own growth!

Finally, a comment about our meeting location. How do you feel about Antonio's? Do we need to change? Are Thursdays OK? These are annual questions but are necessary ones. Let me hear from you. Hopefully I will see you at our next meeting.

Henry Schneider W5HNS

Things that happen when your main radio is being serviced – Dale, KG5U

NAQP CW Back in early January, I sent my Ten-Tec Omni VI back to Sevierville, TN, for repair and

hardware/firmware upgrades. In the interim, the NAQP CW contest took place and the VK0IR Heard Island operation came and went.

The morning of the contest, I decided to put up an inverted-L for 160 meters. Having 160m capability should be good for a dozen or more mults. I put a new pulley up at the top of the tower, ran a halyard line through it, and attached one end of the halyard to an egg insulator and reeved the antenna wire through it. I tied off the far end of the wire to an insulator hanging on the back fence and secured the other end of the wire at the base of the tower. I hauled on the halyard, pulling the insulator and antenna up the tower. It worked great: It only kinked up a dozen times. Using an MFJ-259 Antenna Analyzer, I made some length adjustments and found a good match. I connected a coax run from the remote antenna switch in the garage to the coax connector at the antenna feed point at the base of the tower. I went running into the radio room in the house--it was now 20 minutes before the start of the contest. I switched the remote coax switch 160m, looked at my radio (a TS-130S) and called myself an idiot! The TS-130S doesn't have 160m capability.

Heard Island DXpedition

The Heard DXpedition was an apparently outstanding success from all respects. The utilization of the Internet to keep the needy apprised of what was and was not happening on the island almost as it occurred was simply outstanding. The success of the team on the island with their equipment led to the success of multitudes of hams making the log. The posting of logs during the DXpedition was a great idea and provided a great way to reduce 'insurance contacts.' It also kept us apprised as to our status of being in or not in the log.

Early on in the DXpedition, I realized that it was going to be tough to nail the VK0, since my TS-130S did not have a second VFO for split operation. One night, the VK0 was loud and listening up about 10 kHz. I made a few practice swings back and forth between his freq and my 'freq' to see if I could repeat 'my' freq. It seemed workable--thank goodness for digital frequency displays.

I put a couple of calls out in the pile-up. After a couple of minutes, he came back saying "KG?" I swung back up, sent my call twice, swung back down to hear him say "KG5?". I went through it again, only to hear him say "KG5?" again. Back up freq, my call a couple of times, and back down, to hear him say "KG5U". At least, I thought it was "KG5U" that he sent. I ran back up freq, gave him a report and swing back down to hear him say "TU VK0IR". After a couple of days, I checked the logs on the Internet only to find that I was not in the log--I wonder who it is in 'my' timeslot?

The next day, I worked him on 40m CW, using the same method. Then a day or two later, I found him on 20m CW

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and listening just a couple of kHz from his transmitting freq. I worked him then with my RIT maxed (1.2kHz). The next day, both QSO's were confirmed via the Internet to be in the log.

Fun, all the way around!!

Postscript: The VK0IR on-the-air operations ceased on Sunday. My Omni arrived from Ten-Tec on Monday.

Contest Corner – de Joe, W5ASP

The past six weeks have been busy ones for TDXS contestors. Starting off with the CQ 160 Meter CW contest in late January, through the North American Sprint Phone and CW events, the ARRL International DX CW contest and finally the CQ 160 M Phone it's been hot and heavy, and I hope, lots of fun for those who got involved. No wonder there is little interest being shown in the ARRL DX Phone event this weekend. Even the intrepid XA5T gang canceled out.

From the scores listed below it's pretty clear that TDXS may not have regained its form entirely, but we're certainly banging at the door. Looks like the CW Sprint Team may have taken 2nd behind a very strong group from the NCCC. And there were several top scores in ARRL DX CW from K5GN, XA5T, VP2EV and W5ASP.

Not too shabby a start for 1997.

Coming up at the end of March is the CQ WPX Phone contest. This is really one of the better contests for the "casual contestor". There's usually a good turn out of DX stations, and when they drop out there's lots of domestic stuff with neat prefixes for the log. Give it a try, I think you'll be pleasantly surprised at how much you can work even with a modest station. And of course, be sure to work K5GA and W5ASP at K5ZD M/S. Gotta see how the East Coast lives.

Jim Haynie, WB5JBP, our ARRL West Gulf Division director has asked me to be the representative to the Contest Advisory Committee. As most of you know this group makes recommendations to the ARRL on matters pertaining to contest activities, rules, etc. I will be looking for input from any and all of those with an interest in contesting. I would appreciate your help in seeing that we, as individuals, have a voice in what happens in the ARRL contest world.

CLAIMED SCORES

TDXS SSB Sprint Teams

TDXS 1

N5TU, Earl	54 x 25	=	1,350
N5DU, Bob	175 x 40	=	7,000
WD5QA, Ed	26 x 8	=	208
N5NZ, Mike	217 x 44	=	9,548

K5RC, Tom	141 x 36	=	5,076
W5ASP, Joe	217 x 43	=	9,114
K5DX, Sharp	173 x 39	=	6,747

TDXS 2

N5LZ, Don	150 x 35	=	5,250
K5GN, Dave	150 x 31	=	4,650

TDXS CW Sprint Teams

Team 1

K5GA, Bill	335 x 44	=	14,740
NM5M, Eric	300 x 46	=	13,800
K5GN, Dave	353 x 46	=	16,238
K5NZ, Mike	262 x 43	=	11,223
N5TU, Earl	217 x 40	=	8,680
N5DU, Bob	244 x 39	=	9,516
AD5Q, Roy	(No Report)		
N5LZ, Don	256 x 38	=	9,728
KG5U, Dale	252 x 42	=	10,584
W5ASP, Joe	247 x 42	=	10,374

Team 2

K5RC, Tom	229 x 45	=	10,305
K5DX, Sharp	141 x 36	=	5,076
AB5LX, Jason	178 x 40	=	7,120

CQ 160 Meter CW

K5GN, Dave	191 x 58	=	30,102
W5ASP, Joe	86 x 27	=	6,176

ARRL DX CW

KG5U SO/AB QRP	292 x 137	=	120,012 Pts
N5LZ SO/AB HP	745 x 209	=	467,115 Pts
K5GN SO/AB HP	1824 X 333	=	1,780,000 Pts #7 USA
WW5DX (KN5H) SO/40M	584 x 82	=	143,664 Pts #6 USA
ZF2NE (W5ASP) SO/20M	2215 x 60	=	390,000 Pts #1 World
VP2EV (K7VB) SO/AB	4396 x 288	=	3,798,144 Pts #2 World
XA5T M/S	4167 x 281	=	3,512,781 Pts. #2 World
(K5NZ, N5RP, N5TU, WB5N, W5MJ, XE2KB, XE2XMH, XE2ABN)			

CQ 160 SSB

N5LZ	449 Q x 61	=	60,146
W5ASP	200 Q x 43	=	18,576

Pratus and Scarborough – de Buzz, N5UR

One out of two isn't bad!

The big news is that Scarborough is a go for April, but that Pratus is on hold due to military reasons (read the PRC is rattling their sabers again). BS7H Tim Totten, N4GN

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TDXS Mexican DXpedition-1997 Style! de Madison, W5MJ

reports that "a multinational team, led by BZ1OK and JA1BK, will set sail from the southern Chinese port city of Guangzhou (a.k.a. Canton) on 28 April, and is expected to commence the one-week operation from Huang Yan Dao [Scarborough Reef, AS-116] on Wednesday, 30 April, using the call sign BS7H. The primary goal of this operation is to provide at least one QSO with as many individual DXers as possible. For this reason, the operators will concentrate on those regions having the most difficult propagation paths (e.g., the eastern half of the US), giving DXers in every corner of the globe the best possible chance to make it in the log. A secondary goal will be to provide QSOs on additional bands and modes, including 160 through 6 meters, CW, SSB, satellite and RTTY, with as many as four stations simultaneously on the air. Operators for BS7H 1997 include BZ1OK, JA1BK (who will also serve as QSL manager), JA1RJU, N7NG, W6EU (ex-WA6AUE) and W6RGG. The complete operating team, as well as the list of transmit frequencies, will be announced once they have been finalized. BS7H 1997 will also employ an 'operations support network' consisting of several stations throughout the world which will be in constant communication with the operating team from the time of their departure until their safe return. Thanks to the CRSA's [Chinese Radio Sports Association] tireless efforts to promote Amateur Radio within the People's Republic of China and to develop relationships with key agencies, this DXpedition enjoys strong support from the PRC government".

BV9P - Joe Fitter, BV/N0IAT reports the following: "Had a nice discussion with several of my Taiwanese/Chinese hams during the Chinese Lunar New Years holiday. One of the topics of discussion was the upcoming DXpedition to Pratas Island, one of the newest of DXCC countries. It is with a sad note that I must report that the application to revisit Pratas Island was rejected. Citing military preparedness, the officials rejected the application for a return to the island for DX operations. So, at this time, there is no plan for a return to Pratas Island during the first half of 1997".

In March we are looking for three all time new IOTAs to be put on the air. March 7-9 listen for 8B8KB with YB1XUR from Tukangbesi Island. QSL YBØRX. Then from March 14-22 HS9AL Terutao Island will be put on by HS0/IK4MRH, E21AOY, HS1ASN and company. QSL I4LCK. Finally in March or April, the first Bangladesh IOTA, Kutubdia Island, will be put on the air by I1SLY IK1FLF and S21AM. QSL info unknown at present.

See you in the pileups, Buzz N5UR

TDXS proves once again that it's CW forever, or at least for 48 hours during the ARRL DX Contest, 1997 CW version. TDXS members N5TU, WB5N, N5RP, K5NZ and W5MJ took US59 to Laredo on Thursday, February 13, and then invaded Mexico at Nuevo Laredo the next day enroute to XE2FU Enrique's ranch. While participation from the CRANTAC group was limited, we managed to get enough antennas on the air to make another excellent showing - 2nd place world wide - according to claimed scores on the 3830 contest reflector. Our KW TS-440s and Heath SB-200s did well on all bands.

There is always something unusual about the comings and goings at XE2FU. This year was no exception. Between the voodoo hex to the Midnight Visitors to the bovine invasion, there were many moments worthy of recalling. From the operations standpoint, we were able to top last year's production on every band except 10 meters in both QSLs and multipliers. The point count was a little over 4.0 million and a few mults less than 300. The only claimed score higher than ours was a DXpedition to V31. Even then, we outscored the V31 group on all bands except 15 mtrs. 10 meters was really quiet: 8 Qs and 6 mults. We spent probably 6 hours listening on 10, but the only NA station we only heard the whole time was K5GN on splatter working an LU. Dave was too weak for us to work, unfortunately, and none of the other NA stations heard the LU. We did make the most of our 5 minute band opening. Had we not been vigilant, we would not have made any 10 mtr Qs.

The antennas, as always, were a source of joy and agony. Earl N5TU had reconstructed a TH-6, generously donated to TDXS by Henry W5HNS, and we hoisted it to the top of the 50 foot tower after removing the 2L40 to the 50 foot level of the middle tower. It played like a trumpet on 10 and 15. Thanks, Henry.

Our HG 204BA on the middle tower played very well, as it has in the past, and was good for 1548 Qs and 58 mults. We had good signal reports on 20 from a number of NA locations after the contest, and we were told we were the loudest DX station on several of the bands even though the max power I saw on the meter was 500 watts. WE9V told us we were S9 on 20 in Illinois on 6' of magnet wire stuck into the antenna port of his TS-930. We put up an 80 meter inverted V at 40 feet, and did 741/58.

Other than 20 meters, though, the middle tower was a disaster. Although it checked out on the ground, the 2L40 showed SWR above 3:1 when installed at 60 feet, and the 160 mtr wire would not play at all in any configuration. We made at least 8 trips up the tower trying to re-rig

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it. We gave up an hour after sunset Friday without a 160 presence, but did put it right under the TH6 first thing Saturday morning. Neither of the amplifiers we had there had 160 capability. Even so, we made 241 Qs and 48 mults on Saturday night, exceeding last year's count when we had 160 available both nights.

Earl put up a delta loop on 40 at 50', and it did well: 1005 Qs and 58 mults. Next year we will have the 2L40 back in operation. It's apparent we need an antenna party some weekend if we want to win it all. The pileups were huge now and again, and there were times when the rate exceeded 300. There were other times when we were competing for the few folks S&P-ing: I saw a rate of 20 at 3:00 a.m. Sunday morning for a few minutes, though 50 was more the norm during the night shift. Several TDXSers found us on 5 bands, and many found us on at least one band. Thanks to all that looked us up. We will be putting the names of the loyal ones in a Bullsheat column, so you will be able to see which ones of the club worked hard for us.

The rest of the stories will have to wait until you catch us at the bar sometime. As with the other trips, you really had to have been there to fully appreciate the good, the bad, and the truly amazing. Put the middle weekend of February, 1998 on the calendar now to be there for the action.

73 es gud DX,

Madison

XA5T Contest Station – de Earl, N5TU

The XA5T station is slowly but surely coming into its own as a player in the ARRL DX contests. The addition of a TH6 to the station during the ARRL DX CW contest added a nice measure of reliability. The station is now ready for action by just stringing some wires for the low bands. A real low maintenance dxpedition awaits any comers.

Future plans for the station include getting the bugs out of the 2 element 40 meter beam, rebuilding the current 204BA (or swapping it for one that has been rebuilt), getting the third tower with the stacked 15 meter beams operational in time for the upcoming sunspots, and replacing the guy wires on some of the towers.

Contesting from XA5T is a simple affair. A five hour drive from Houston takes you to Laredo. Once across the border it is only a short drive through Nuevo Laredo to get to Casa Henihosa aka XA5T Radio Ranch. Accomodations are spartan but five beds and electricity make it better than some places I have stayed. There is no water so it has to be brought in. Temperatures swing greatly depending on time of year and time of day. Thermal underwear to shorts and T-shirts are common in February.

Propagation from XA5T favors any contest in which DX works North America. ARRL DX is the favorite. The only competition comes from the Caribbean. As the sunspots return QSO totals on 15 and 10 meters should rise to close the gap with the Caribbean competition while still maintaining the low band advantage.

It would be nice to see the station used more often. This would keep the antennas in use, inspected, and allow for any needed minor repairs. So make your plans to go down now whether it be a day trip for a 4 hour sprint or the next 48 hour blowout. Contact myself or WB5N if you are interested in putting something together. We will help make the arrangements.

Earl N5TU

PacketCluster Information Available

Rich, K5WA has an article on user parameters for packetclusters available. It's about 9 pages long and too much to print in *The Bullsheat*, but Rich has put it out on the TDXS Reflector or you can contact him directly and he'll work out a way to get it to you.

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