

The NODXA DAG



Fireside Chat With KB8NW

Fellow DXers.

It has been an exciting two months for DXers. There has been plenty of DX on the air and the higher bands have been on fire. If you are new to DXing and have never heard 12 and 10 me-



ters open, then it was a real treat for you. For us old timers, "it seems like old times again" as I heard someone say to me. With several major operations taking place during the last two months, everyone was happy to say - "I got them on all bands." And guess what, the fun is not over yet! This is just the beginning. The sunspot numbers continue to climb as we head into the winter months and more DXpeditions are expected to hit the airwaves -- for at least the next three months.

So what is coming up on the bands? Major DXpeditions to: Nepal (Nov. 8-22nd, 9N7MD), Tuvalu (Nov. 10th-Dec. 6th, T2T), The Gambia (Nov. 20-29th, C50C/C5A), Ethiopia (Dec. 8-13th, EA3AA/ET3SID), Sable Island

(Dec. 28th- Jan. 6th, CYO) and Malpelo Island (Jan. 24th-Feb. 8th, HKONA). Smaller DXpedition to: Somalia (Nov. 21-30th, 600DX) and Palestine (Dec., E44PM).

These operations are just the start of the fall/winter months and will be nice catches on 12 and 10 meters. So if you have not been on the air, it is time to blow the dust off the old rig and join the fun again on the air.

Lastly, I hope everyone will have a great holiday season coming up, and I hope to see you at next NODXA meeting.

73 and Good DX de Tedd KB8NW

"The Mission of the Northern Ohio DX Association is to promote and support Amateur Radio and the DX Community around the world."

Minutes of the August 1st, 2011 NODXA Meeting

The meeting was opened by the President, Tedd, KB8NW, at 7:33pm. There were 20 members and 1 quest present. A round of introductions was held.

The minutes of the July 11th meeting were read. After a name and callsign correction, Gary, NI8Z moved, seconded by Ron, K8VJG, that the minutes be approved. The motion passed.

The treasurer, Mary, N8DMM, reported a balance of \$Ka-Ching in the account. Tedd, KB8NW, reported that the repeater was okay. He also asked who had worked the recent Southern Sudan DXpedition. Almost everyone had. Dave, WD8IOU, reported that the newsletter is out.

<u> Old - New Business</u>

Dwaine, K8ME, reported that Dee Logan, W1HEO, would give a presentation on his recent operation from Aruba, P4/W1HEO at the September meeting. Ron, K8VJG, reported that the next C.A.R.S. meeting would be held in the

Brecksville Reservation pavilion.

Tedd, KB8NW, asked if anyone had worked Byron, OA4/KF8UN in Peru. Some had. He also reported that Southern Sudan, STOR, would be on for another week. He also reported that the U.S. accounted for only 14% of STOR's contacts. A discussion followed as to bands, propagation and time difference between here and STOR. Time-wise, noon here was midnight there and vice-versa. Europe has the best chance as it is a north-south path like here to the Caribbean.

Bruce, N8DJX, wondered if anyone had heard the VK9 during the recent IOTA contest. Some had.

Tedd, announced that he will not be able to attend the Cleveland Hamfest. He said that Dwaine will need help at the club table. Pete, N8TR, moved, seconded by Ron, K8VJG, that the club spend \$10 for a sales table next to the club promotional table at the hamfest.

Joe, K8YN, reported that the feast day of Fr Maximillian Kilby, SP3RN, the patron saint of amateur radio, was coming up.

Tedd reminded everyone that the Findlay and Cleveland Hamfests were coming up in September. Metro, W8MET, reported that he had won the top prize of \$150. at the recent NOARSfest.

Tedd, reminded the members that the next meeting would be on Monday, September 12th due to the Labor Day holiday.

The 50-50 raffle was won by Vicki, K8VGM. The winning amount was \$20.

The meeting was adjourned by the President, Tedd, KB8NW, at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Al, N8CX, Secretary

Minutes of the September 12th, 2011 NODXA Meeting

The meeting was opened by the President, Tedd, KB8NW, at 7:33pm. There were 19 members present. A round of introductions was held.

The minutes of the August 1st meeting were read. A clarification on the information concerning Fr Maximillian Kolbe was requested. The secretary said he would follow up and report at the next meeting. Karl, K8BCK moved, seconded by Mary, N8DMM, that the minutes be approved. The motion passed.

The treasurer, Mary, N8DMM, reported a balance of \$Ka-Ching! in the account. Mary also announced that our program speaker for this evening, Dee Logan, P4/W1HEO, had joined the club with a 2-year membership.

Tedd, KB8NW, reported that the repeater was okay.

Dave, WD8IOU, was not in attendance so there was no newsletter report.

Old - New Business

Dwaine, K8ME, reported that Jeff, N7VPN, likes our newsletter and has requested some DXCC Honor Roll patches.

Ron, K8VJG, wondered what big vendors would be at the Cleveland Hamfest. Al, N8CX, replied that there would be many parts and accessory vendors there.

John, K8YSE, reported that the annual Route 66 operation was active until next Sunday. There are 18 stations along the way.

George, K8KR, reported that back in 1965, he and his brother drove Route 66. George had a license at the time.

Tedd, KB8NW, reported that he had been approached by Ed, KD8QRN, from Polaris Tech about setting up four portable stations to help the Boy Scouts to earn their Radio Merit Badge. Ed would teach the class and the students would make contacts on the stations including one satellite contact. Polaris would furnish snacks and lunch. The matter will be considered.

Tedd also reported that he had received a thank you letter from the 4W6A, Timor-Lese team for our donation. They will be on the air from September 16th until the 26th. In addition, Tedd received a donation request from Bob, K4UEE, of the Malpelo, HKONA, DXpedition team. They are scheduled to be active from late January 2012 until late February. Tedd also reported that our club logo is on the Southern Sudan, STOR's website. Dee, W1HEO, moved, seconded by Dwaine, K8ME, that the club donate \$250 with a matching donation of \$250 from one of our members to the STOR DXpedition in order to get our club logo on their QSL card. The total amount needed is \$500. The motion passed along with our thanks to the additional donor.

Bruce, N8DJX, moved, seconded by Ron, K8VJG, that the club donate \$100 to the Rotuma, 3D2R, DXpedition. Our club logo will be on their website and on their QSL card. The motion passed.

Bruce, N8DJX, reported that a tower weighing 17K pounds and standing 120' high was available in Columbus.

The 50-50 raffle was won by Dee, W1HEO. The winning amount of \$37 was donated back to the club to help pay for Field Day expenses.

Ron, K8VJG, moved, seconded by Jim, KE8G, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed. The President, Tedd, KB8NW, adjourned the meeting at 8:06 PM.

The program this evening was an excellent presentation by Dee, W1HEO, about his recent DXpedition to Aruba at the P49J DX contest station. His callsign was P4/W1HEO.

Respectfully submitted, Al, N8CX, Secretary

The 4W6A Story By Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX (G4JVG, 4W6AA)

A well-known DXer recently told me that he rarely reads DXpedition reports in radio magazines or DX clubs' journals. He said they were all the same: "we travelled to an unusual place, we made lots of QSOs, we came back". To some extent this is true, but what does interest *me* in a report about a DXpedition are the details that are particular to that particular location: the sort of infor-

mation that might help me if I wanted to organize a DXpedition to the same place. This may include licensing, why the location was chosen, what went wrong, what went right. And so that is what I will concentrate on in this report. The bare facts and figures can be found in separate tables.

LICENSING

Licensing in Timor-Leste (East Timor) is now very straightforward indeed. It is still not widely known, but in 2008 Timor-Leste adopted the 'Class Licence' system, based on the Australian model. The



Antennas at sunrise.

Photo by 9M6DXX

"Instruction manual for filling AT applicant notice form", available on the ARCOM (Timor-Leste licensing authority) website, states: "In accordance with the Class License Overseas Amateurs Visiting East Timor, 2008 Overseas Amateurs could operate an amateur station up to 90 days from their arrival to Timor-Leste without applying for Amateur License."

What this means in practice is that any amateur can operate as 4W/own call (or own call/4W - it is not clear which standard ARCOM favours) without even having to apply for a reciprocal licence at all.

However, for this DXpedition we wanted to use a 'proper' 4W callsign and so three of the team members put in applications for full Timor-Leste licences, each with a

choice of three requested callsigns. Here, we must thank Geoff Williams, 4W6AAD, an Australian amateur working in Dili, who took time out of his busy schedule to take our applications personally to the ARCOM office, chase up progress and, eventually, collect the completed licences for us. This whole procedure took several weeks but eventually we received our individual callsigns. We were particularly pleased that a single-letter suffix was issued for us to use on the DXpedition.

The licences were issued free of charge and are valid for one year.

LOCATION

Two main factors influenced our choice of location. Firstly, we had heard from several amateurs that downtown Dili had high levels of electrical noise, so we wanted to be well away from the town centre. Secondly, since we planned to use mainly vertical antennas, we wished to have access to a beach so the antennas could be located within a few metres of the ocean, thus providing us with extra low-angle gain. Although Dili is located on the north coast of the island of Timor, the main east-west road runs right along the coast, and all accommodation is on the 'wrong' (landward) side of this road. It would be impossible to put antennas on the beach if we were located in Dili.

We therefore looked at the island of Atauro and quickly found that it ticked all the boxes. Firstly, there was no mains electricity at all on the island, so we figured it *should* be electrically quiet. Secondly, the only accommodation available to visitors on Atauro, a small 'eco lodge' known simply as 'Barry's Place',

offered 150 metres of ocean frontage, allowing us to line up all our antennas along the beach at the high-tide mark.

From an amateur radio point of view, Atauro Island also had the advantage of having a separate IOTA reference from the main island of Timor. OC-232 had only been activated once before, by 4W6GH/P way back in July 2000, and had been claimed by only 17.9% of IOTA chasers prior to our operation.

Barry, the owner of the lodge, is an Australian married to a Timorese lady, and they could not have



MWOJZE operating SSB Photo by 9M6DXX

been more helpful. We were accommodated in two two-storey wooden chalets. All four stations were on the ground floor of one chalet, with one bedroom above. Four of the operators slept in the other chalet, while two operators opted to sleep in tents (also supplied by Barry).

The accommodation at Barry's Place is basic but quite comfortable. There is a shared 'ecofriendly' composting toilet and an adjacent shower room. Known as a mandi, this consists of a tub filled by a natural spring, from which you scoop water over yourself. Later in the day the temperature of the stored water had risen somewhat, but at 6.30am the mandi might best be described as "invigorating".

With no mains electricity, illumination in the shack and elsewhere is by solar lighting. This is not designed to operate continuously throughout the 12 hours of darkness though, and the lights would simply switch off at around 3.00am when they ran out of stored energy. From then until sunrise, all operating was done entirely with the light from laptop screens.

POWER SOURCE & TRANSPORTATION

The disadvantage of operating from Atauro Island was that since there was no mains electricity we had to hire generators. We hired two Honda 3kVA petrol (US: "gas") generators in Dili at a cost of \$1200 (the US dollar is also the currency of Timor-Leste).

There is a passenger ferry which runs between Dili and Atauro once or twice a week at very low cost. This is used mainly by local people to go to the weekly market on Atauro. There is also a 'water taxi' which runs when required but, with seven operators, around 600kg of equipment, plus the generators, it was too small for our use. We therefore had to charter a larger boat to take us to and from the island. We made arrangements for generator fuel to be sent on the water taxi when required. Petrol cost \$1.90 per litre, three times the amount of petrol here in Malaysia.

NOISE!

One of the main reasons for choosing Atauro Island as the DX pedition location was that with no mains electricity we assumed there would be no electrical noise. *Wrong!*

Imagine our surprise, not to say disappointment and even shock, when we first turned on the rigs and heard 59+30dB noise across the whole of 160, 80 and 40 metres!

Where could this noise possibly be coming from? It was too late to investigate on our first night, so we operated on the higher bands plus made a few QSOs with the strongest stations through the noise on 40m. Late in the night, the noise disappeared but the following day it was back again.

It took two days to track down the source of the noise. It turned out to be a Chinese-made mains inverter that Barry used from time to time to power a 220V fridge, freezer and satellite television



VK2IA and VK8NSF operating CW Photo by 9M6DXX

from batteries. Grounding the inverter helped a little, but 160m was still completely unusable. Barry was as helpful as could be and agreed to switch off the inverter and use his generator instead. What a great host!

With 160 and 80m now quiet apart from the occasional static crash, we thought the local QRM problem had been solved but, the next evening, just as the East Coast of North America was being worked on 160m, a strong 'buzzing' noise came up on the band. This continued until after 11.00pm local time, and then went off. The next day we discovered this was the mainspowered television which was now running off Barry's generator.

This, and an earth noise loop from our own equipment, continued to plague 160 and 80m operations for the whole DXpedition: the noise situation was what might be expected in a large city but not on a remote island with no permanent electricity supply!

PROPAGATION

Propagation conditions can only be described as "superb", especially on the higher frequency bands. The experience of team members in VK8 and 9M6 led us to think that all the bands would be very quiet from an hour or so after sunrise until a couple of hours before sunset each day, but nothing could have been further from the truth. For the first time since the previous solar cycle, 10 and 12m really opened up, with superb signals from North America – even the east coast and Caribbean area – as well as South America, Europe and Africa.

On 15, 17 and 20m we had excellent long-path openings into Europe and all the high bands – even 10m – stayed open until well after midnight local time every night. Simply *unbelievable!* After sunset all nine bands from 10 to 160m were open simultaneously, but with only four stations available (and only seven operators) we had to make some difficult decisions on which bands to use. We figured that 4W was most wanted on 160, 80, 12 and 10m, so these were the bands we favoured when they were open.

Before the DXpedition we were told that no-one on the east coast of North America had ever worked 4W on 160m. John, 9M6XRO, was therefore on 160m every evening at sunset, during the very

short opening to the east coast. Propagation did not play ball every night but, when there were good openings, QSOs were made with KV4FZ, N3XX, N4WW, NX4D and N4IS. Many more North American, Caribbean and South American stations were worked on 80m, both on CW and SSB, as well as Europeans and a number of stations in southern Africa.

We made over 41,000 QSOs in total: for the statistical break-down, please see the tables.

SPONSORS

We are very grateful - and were somewhat overwhelmed - by the superb response to our request for sponsorship. A few DX clubs and foundations even volunteered sponsorship without our requesting it from them. What wonderful ham spirit!

Sincere thanks, then, go to: CDXC (Chiltern DX Club), LA DX Group, Oceania DX Group, Northern Ohio DX Association, German DX Foundation, Northern California DX Foundation, RSGB DXpedition



4W6A team on boat Photo by 9M6DXX

Fund, European DX Foundation, GM DX Group, IREF (Island Radio Expedition Fund), Clipperton DX Club, Nippon DX Association, Northern Illinois DX Association, Twin City DX Association (Minnesota), Western New York DX Association and Swiss DX Foundation.

In addition, we received sponsorship from seven commercial companies and donations from around 90 private individuals before the DXpedition took place. All are thanked most sincerely: their names and callsigns can be found on our website at www.4w6a.com/sponsors

All the operators paid their own air fares from the UK, Malaysia and Australia to Timor-Leste, plus their own accommo-

dation and food and drink costs both *en route* and in Timor-Leste itself. Thanks to the sponsors, though, we did not have to worry too much about the cost of shipping the bulk of the heavy equipment, including linear amplifiers, antennas and coaxial cable, from Darwin, Australia, to Dili in advance of the operation. Without the sponsors we would also have thought twice about the high cost of hiring and fuelling generators, and of transporting everything in a specially chartered boat. Finally, sponsors are helping to pay the cost of providing high-quality four-sided colour QSLs for those who worked 4W6A.

4W6A DXPEDITION TEAM

In 4W:Stuie Birkin, VK8NSB (team leader)
Oliver Bross, VK8DX
Bernd Laenger, VK2IA
Ant David, MW0JZE

Pilot: Col McGowan, MMONDX

Tim Beaumont, MOURX (also QSL Manager)

John Plenderleith, 9M6XRO

Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX

Assistant QSL Manager: Kev Haworth, MOTNX

EQUIPMENT

- 3 x Elecraft K3 transceivers
- 1 x Elecraft K2 transceiver
- 2 x Elecraft KPA500 linear amplifiers
- $1 \times A$ com 1000 linear amplifier
- 1 x Yaesu FL-2100Z linear amplifier

ANTENNAS

160m Titanex V160E with 24 ground radials

80m Quarter-wave wire vertical on 18m Spiderbeam pole with 16 quarter-wave ground radials

40m Rippletech (Australian-made) quarter-wave ground plane with 4 elevated radials

30m Rippletech quarter-wave ground plane with 4 elevated radials

17m Rippletech quarter-wave ground plane with 4 elevated radials

15m Half-wave vertical wire dipole on 12m Spiderbeam pole

12m Half-wave vertical wire dipole on 10m Spiderbeam pole

Butternut HF6V-X vertical for 10, 15, 20, 30, 40 & 80m with 18 ground radials

G3TXQ Hexbeam (by MW0JZE) 2-eles on 10, 12, 15, 17 & 20m

STATISTICS (with thanks to Clublog www.clublog.org)

Band/Mode breakdown							Breakdown by Continent					
Band	CW	PH	RTTY	Total		Continent		Total		%		
160	508	0	0	508			Africa			273		0.7%
80	985	1298	0	2283			Asia			14619		35.3%
40	1802	1423	0	3225			Europe	2		14297		34.5%
30	2422	0	0	2422			•	America	1	9668		23.4%
20	1448	4552	0	6000			Oceani	ia		2052		5.0%
17	2006	3018	1181	6205			South	America	1	452		1.1%
15	3433	5477	27	8937			Totals			41361		100%
12	3472	2040	8	5520								
10	2878	3383	0	6261								
Totals	18954	21191	1216	41361								
Continent By Band												
Band	160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	Total		
AF	1	26	34	15	58	31	58	20	30	273		
AN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
AS	200	911	1367	801	1664	2065	3400	2322	1889	14619		
EU	112	360	667	616	2647	2164	3868	1358	2505	14297		
NA	138	789	873	913	1317	1619	1127	1516	1376	9668		
OC	57	191	229	61	235	257	400	249	373	2052		
SA	0	6	55	16	79	69	84	55	88	452		
Totals	508	2283	3225	2422	6000	6205	8937	5520	6261	41361		

You Can Enjoy Contests Even If You're Not A Contester By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

I often talk to guys who say that they're not contesters. Some even go so far as to say that they hate contests. I'm really not a contester, either, but I do enjoy operating them from time to time. There are several ways to enjoy amateur radio contests even if you're not a "contester."

This weekend, for example, the CQ World-Wide (CQWW) SSB DX contest was being held. As usual

for a Saturday morning, I was down at WA2HOM (www.wa2hom.org), our club station at the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum (www.aahom.org). Now, the museum is only open from 10am - 5pm on Saturdays, so there's no way I'm going to score very highly in the contest, but I still decided to participate.

What I did was take advantage of the contest activity to add countries to our DXCC list. Over two hours of operation, I managed to make 63 contacts, including at least five new countries. The new countries that I added to our log included Iceland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, the Cayman Islands, and Madeira Island.

None of these is rare DX, but for whatever reason, we hadn't worked them before. Now, we have. In addition, some of the big contesters will travel to exotic

locales and operate from places that normally have no or few ham radio operators. Contests are good opportunities to get those countries in your log.

Operating in a contest is also a good test of your radio and antennas. It's true that contest signal reports are basically meaningless, but if DX stations regularly hear you on your first or second call, then chances are your antennas are working well. If they're continually asking for repeats or never hear you at all, it's a good bet that you need to do some antenna work.

Working a contest can also improve your operating skills. In a CW contest, for example, the good ops are generally operating at 25+ words per minute. That's OK, though, because it forces you to copy that fast, and because you know what the exchange format is, you pretty much know what characters to expect. Try it sometime. You'll be surprised at how fast you can copy during a contest and how much your CW speed improves.

If none of the above reasons convince you, and you're still a bit apprehensive about jumping into one of the bigger contests, let me suggest that you try one of the smaller contests. State QSO parties, for example, are a lot more laid back than say the ARRL Sweepstakes. The CW speeds are a lot lower and the phone contacts are a lot less intense. You may even learn something about a particular state's geography. You will for sure learn a lot of county names.

It's all about having fun. And you can have fun in a contest, even if you don't have the time or the equipment to be competitive.

Headphones and Hearing By "Scotty", WK3N

As the average age of the DXer is constantly on the rise, age related problems can creep into the shack. Hear loss and tinnitus's one of them. Here is how I overcame tinnitus aka loud ringing in the

- 1) I feed a set of Shure SE 115 Sound Isolating earphones and a Heil Pro-Set Plus into an ILUV i111 splitter with dual volume controls, then into the front phones jack of my K-3.
- 2) I first put on the Shure earphones and the Heil headset over them. You can then adjust both sets of phones to your liking as well as having phase reversal. This gives me an isolation factor so good I cannot hear the phone ring 2 feet away.
- 3) The two headsets do not touch each other, as the SE 115 buds are designed with an angle, thus deeper fitting the canal. You must run the wires over the top

of your ears. I find no exaggerated discomfort wearing both units. Having two sets of wires required harnessing then together for ergonomic efficiency.

- 4) What I do find is that this combination puts the ringing in my ears into a background level. Creating an enhancement of intelligent foreground audio. Thus this combination works best for me.
- 5) Like all with ideas, I am interested to hear from those who have accomplished hearing enhancements and how my idea can be improved upon?

Antennas For Sale

Cushcraft-X-9

Frequency Coverage - 40, 20, 15, 10meters

Total Number of Elements -9
Total Elements per Band- 4

Boom Length -28 feet

Turning Radius - 21.7 feet

Wind Surface -9.9 ft

Wind Survival --- 100 mph

Wind Load ----255 at 80mph

Total Weight ----85 lbs.

Excellent Shape

Price: \$750 or best offer

Cushcraft -A3WS/30

Frequency Coverage - 30,17 &12 meters

Forward Gain 8.0 db

2000 Watts PEP

Boom Length - 14 ft

Turning Radius - 14.4 ft

Weight - 22.5 lbs

Wind Surface - 4.1 ft

Feed point --- 50 ohms

Needs a new Boom and Element end caps

Two New 30 Meter Traps

Price: \$150 or best offer

CONTACT: Dwaine Modock, K8ME E-MAIL: <u>k8me@sbcglobal.net</u>



Left: NODXA Club President, Tedd, KB8NW, finds the perfect retirement community for Old Hams. I wonder if there are any antenna restrictions?





Meeting Information

NODXA Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at the Gourme Family Restaurant at 15315
Pearl Road (Rt. 42) just west of Interstate 71 and south of Rt. 82 in Strongsville at 7:30 PM. Come early and have dinner and meet your fellow DXers and enter the 50/50 raffle.

NODXA Information

NO8DX: Special Event Callsign

W8DXA: NODXA Repeater 147.360

Web-site: http://www.papays.com/nodxa.html
Newsletter Submission: wd8iou@adelphia.net

NODXA Club Officials for 2011-2012

President: Tedd Mirgliotta, KB8NW (440-237-2816)
V. President: Dwaine Modock, K8ME (440-582-3462)
Secretary: Al Moriarty, N8CX (216-221-3682)
Treasurer: Mary Michaelis, N8DMM (440-236-5426)
Newsletter: David Autry, WD8IOU (440-238-0417)



DXCC Info

As of July 2011, the current DXCC Entities total is: 341.

Newsletter Contributors

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this months edition: N8TR, N8DMM, KB8NW, N8CX, K8YSE, K8ME, 9M6DXX, WK3N, and KB6NU.

NODXA Application and Renewal Form

The Northern Ohio DX Association is a non-profit organization with a primary interest in DXing. We encourage all DXers to join our group and share the interest and fun of DXing.

Please complete the application below and send along your appropriate dues or renewal to:

NODXA, P.O. Box 361624, Strongsville, Ohio 44136

First Time Membership/Renewal (U.S. and DX)

\$20.00

Name	Callsign				
Address	 				
City	State/Prov				
Country	ZI	P			
E-mail					
Telephone					
		DXCC Member?			
Special Interest	•				
•					