



Meeting
Mar 21st
7:30 p.m.
111 Westfall Rd

DX Hints and Kinks Night!

Come and be prepared to share your techniques for working DX, getting that rare QSL card, and how you know when and where to find entities you are looking for.

Just a reminder, March is also a test session month. Spread the word!

Editor's Corner

Dave Wright, N2CK

Here it is March already. Hopefully we've seen the last of winter, though we have had ugly weather in April. A sure sign of Spring - the Newark Hamfest is this month (the 25th)! It's one I always look forward to every year.

I had quite a bit of fun in the ARRL DX SSB test a couple of weeks ago. I invited **George, N2UIO** to come and guest-op on Saturday as a way of saying thanks for all his help up on my roof (if you've ever seen my installation, you'll see that it's not for the faint of heart!). While George found folks to work, I logged. George made 100 or so Q's while he was there. While I'm on the subject of the ARRL DX contest, I'd like to give a nod of appreciation to the folks at 6D2X. These folks were **CONSTANTLY** ID'ing after every contact! No waiting for 10 Q's to figure out **WHO** the DX station was! One of the fine ops at 6D2X was our own **Rus, K2UA**. Rus was the operator on Saturday when we worked them. When Rus said hello thinking it was me, it was quite a

surprise for George. I had to explain to George who was on the other side of the ether. I also had another nice chat with Rus Sunday morning on 20m for my 4th contact with them. I hope your rate didn't suffer too much!

By the time we meet in March, we may have an official constitution available. Thanks to **Mike, N1OKL**'s hard work for putting it together.

If you should happen to see **Rick, W1TY**, make sure you give him some congratulations. Rick recently qualified for DXCC Honor Roll after 9 ½ years of DX'ing. Join me in giving Rick a round of applause for his accomplishment.

By now you've received your invitation to the RDXA Banquet. Get them filled out and back to **Ed, K2MP** soon so Ed can finalize the details.

Contests

Fred Gern, K2FR

The September VHF contest gave two RDXA members a write-up in QST. It seems that **Jeff, W2FU**, and **Chris, K2CS**, not only won the Rover category but they set a NEW RECORD for a Rover in that contest. **Congratulations** guys! **N2OPW**, Paul, also was a rover in this test.

Last summer's IARU contest saw **W2RW** and **W2EZ** enter. In case you haven't noticed, Tom, **W2EZ**, seems to be in EVERY contest! Keep up the good work.

CQ's WPX Phone contest drew RDXA members in good numbers. **BIG** score from **AF2K**. Irv nailed **2nd place in 2 land** High Power with a score of **1,783,366**. Great score, Irv!

Fred, W2TZ, nailed the low power category with an amazing **2,360,340!**

Wayne, N2WK, also turned in a 1 Million plus score for RDXA.

Other scores were turned in by **NA2X, K2FR, N2CK, and K2CS**.

Looks like RDXA members like to rock and roll come contest time. The recent ARRL DX tests in CW and Phone drew many of our contesters.

The 2000 ARRL DX SSB Contest (or how do we do it without 10 meters?)

Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

YES, from the CW guy!!

Honestly though, this sfi at 220 stuff is all new to me. I've commented many times in the past that my good friend **Walter, NQ2O** said one day that 20m would be open "all night long". Well, that day has come.

As many of you know, we're avid hockey fans and with that, most of our Friday nights are taken up with games from September thru April. Since that's exactly the timeframe of the contest season, I'm seldom able to start the contests before midnight Friday. The Amerks were out of town this weekend so I was able to get into the pileups early.

Sticking with the tried and true "highest band open" strategy, I hopped on ten to pick up the JA's. JA1CQT hit the log at 5 after and 49 q's later (32 JA's) the first hour was in the log (all search and pounce).

After working out 10m and hitting 15m, it was time for a nap. Always easy to pick up VK, ZL, KH6, KL7 on 40m & 80m around 5am local. Good time to check 160m too.

As the upper bands were great, the lower bands were not. Just think of the solar cycle as a set of scales. As one side lowers, the other rises and vice versa. Well the high side wasn't 40m & 80m this year. Not running the best and biggest, had a tough time working the low bands. For one, most stations were still on 20 meters able to keep the rates and not have to deal with splits and broadcast stuff. Also, propagation favored those higher bands.

So what! 10 meters opens BEFORE sunrise!! Granted, you lose those mults but can make it up in pure totals and additional mults on 10m.

What a day, EK, TA, SU, HS, TF... 250 q's later I went to 15m to see what I was missing. Well BA1DU was one thing. I've never heard China, (until last week in the cw 'test but didn't get him) let alone work them. 10m was still calling and I knew a whole new group of JA's were there so off I went.

Much to my surprise, it gets even better. BV, YB, HL, JD/o and another 24 JA's. I'm losing my mind here. Half this stuff I've never heard, let alone log. One of the more amusing comments of the contest was XE1L's. He said I was the loudest thing on the band and that I should have no problem working FO0. Little did he know, I already had them on 10m CW, SSB & RTTY.

By the way, to this point I've logged 430 q's and haven't hit 20m!

After another disappointing night (did manage my "token" 160m q with NP4Z), I set out to boost my mult totals on 20m. Funny, no one was there! Band sounded

dead but I know it wasn't. Everybody was on 10m.

Just as in CQWW, stations were up above 29 MHz. Tough to remember all the "LU" only qso's from a few years back.

Well, I had to quit early for a Sunday night game but all told, 711 q's, 211 mults for 450, 063 (only 20 combined q's on 40m & 80m). I operated about 30 hours.

DX 40 Years Ago – March 1960

Ed Gable, K2MP

On this date we learned that Macquarie Island's VK0CC has gone QRT and will go home to a load of QSL chores. (*Sounds a little familiar – Ed*) No problem for the VK0-hungry DX crowd though. VK0's IB and IT take over for another island assignment. It's been a long time since hearing from Danny, VP2VB/mm. Having wrecked two boats so far, he's now back on the *Yasme III* and visiting Swan, Pitcairn and the Marquesas. Switching to the home front, the 1960 RDXA roster reveals 29 members. Of these, only two remain today; Sax Ringler, W2SAW, and Edson Snow, W2BZN. As a measure of comparison, the top RDXA DX'ers in 1960 had DXCC totals of (worked/confirmed) W2CNT 270/267, W2SAW 263/260, and W2TQR 253/247. Hard-to-find RDXA information for this period (Thanks, Sax, for what we have) reveals an interesting but friendly competition between the RDXA and the Niagara Frontier DX Association. The two clubs competed with each other during the ARRL DX Tests, the winning club receiving steak dinners from the

losing club. No indication of who won. Listening on the CW bands we hear some rather good CW fists as of late. Less banana boat swings and 20 WPM code with 40 WPM dots. How come? The introduction of the fabulously successful W9TO electronic keyer. Initially described in the 1960 January QST, this keyer was built and distributed by Hallicrafters. So successful was this keyer that Vibroplex immediately broke from the Vibroplex "Bug" line and started building Vibro-keyer paddles. The rest, as they say, is history.

Calling the Spirits?

Fred Gern, K2FR

Recently I had the pleasure of visiting the home of one of our well-known Dxers. We chatted for a while and then I received a call and had to take it outdoors so my "hi tech" device could hear. While I was outside I looked at the tower, beam, verticals and wire antennae. As my eyes wandered I noticed something very strange. I know this gentleman has made great strides in DXing in the few short years he has participated. Everyone seems to think he's been a DXer for many years but most know his interests were directed to other parts of the hobby until recently. My mind pondered what I saw and tried to relate it to his success.

Is it possible that we can attract radio signals by using hi-tech devices in ways not considered "normal"? What **Ed, K2MP**, had is a collection of CD disks hanging from a rope in his back yard. I was reluctant to question their meaning and the Titles of these disks. All I could think to do was write this article and hope

that it will coerce Ed to let us in on his secret.

PLEASE!

RDXA Awards

Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

The following will be presented at the upcoming RDXA Awards Banquet Saturday 8 April, 2000.

1998-99 Bare-foot Contester Award...

Awarded to the person submitting the highest combined low power score for all club contests, both CW & SSB. No yagis allowed. 150 watt limit. This award is for the small station.

1999 Best First Time CQWW SSB...

1999 Best First Time CQWW CW...

1999 Best First Time ARRL DX SSB...

1999 Best First Time ARRL DX CW...

1998-99 Top Combined SSB Score...

Includes the CQWW SSB and the ARRL DX SSB.

1998-99 Top Combined CW Score...

Includes the CQWW CW and the ARRL DX CW.

1998-99 Most Improved

Includes the CQ & ARRL SSB & CW Contests.

1998-99 MEGA Point Award...

Given to any RDXA member who submits contest scores which total 1 million points

or more for a single contest year. Only those contests in the club competition are eligible.

Included are CQWW (SSB & CW), ARRL Sweepstakes (SSB & CW), ARRL DX (SSB & CW), CQWW WPX (SSB & CW), ARRL 10 & 160 Meter Contests, CQWW 160 Meter (SSB & CW).

1998-99 Cumulative MEGA Point Award

Given to any RDXA member who submits contest scores totaling 1 million points or more. Points accumulate from year to year so that everyone can work for the award. Endorsements to the original award will be given for higher milestones such as 5, 10 and 25 million points.

1998-99 DX Countries (NON Contest) Worked Award...

The KE2WK Memorial Award

Contest-isms

Fred Gern, K2FR

This morning (ARRL DX Phone Sunday) I called 6D2X on a band I hadn't worked them and was surprised when the operator said "Hi, Fred". So I gave my report in return and then found out it was **Rus, K2UA**, at the mike. Of course this gave me a chance to bust their rate for two minutes; something I seldom get to do in a 'test. Hopefully this will provide an interesting program next fall. Of course now the club loses the fine score usually turned in by Rus.

High up the 15-meter band searching and pouncing I came across a 2x2 from 7-land calling CQ in the midst of dozens of

European stations calling "CONTEST". This (at least Advanced class license holder) called:

"CQ 15 CQ 15 CQ 15 CQ 15 CQ15 on 21decimal 385, 21decimal 385"

Thereby informing the world that not only was he overly optimistic about finding anyone, but he could also READ his frequency display. Who said that restructuring will "end ham radio as we know it"?

A "G" station calls for "Utah or Nevada" and is answered immediately by a "4" (of course) who gives him a 59 Florida report. The "G" laughs and gives him a report and says "QRZ". I reply and apologize for Americans not understanding English. The "G" says they have the same problem in England!

NG2P Packetcluster

Fred Gern, K2FR

The 'Cluster has been running well lately. There have been occasional times when we were a bit lonely in the connected nodes category, but not too often. Bob has been considering upgrading the software to a new system, since the original program has not been updated or supported for several years. If you are a 'Cluster user consider sending Bob a donation. Besides software, hardware does need to be replaced at times and it always comes out of Bob's pocket.

How's DX?

Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

As I look through my logs for the last month and see the list of new countries I worked last weekend, I'm wondering what I'll do in my second peak!

The bands have been great, contests exciting and some great cards have ended up here from the other side of the world. Now we only need a few European openings this summer on 6m and I'll be all set.

The FO0AAA expedition was probably the best I've ever had opportunity to work. These guys were much along the lines of the ZL9CI operation last year, knew propagation, good operators and on all the time. All told, I worked them on every mode and every band (except 160m). That's 18 q's of a possible 20. Not bad for a small station. They even operated during the ARRL DX SSB Contest but were not in it! I'd say 5 of those 18 q's were 1 call....

Speaking of the ARRL DX SSB Contest, I've written an article about it elsewhere in this issue. Some pretty amazing stations were on and I hope you had as much fun as I.

VP6BR has been handing out q's like wildfire, in and out of the contests. He has a tremendous signal and is very workable. One thing though, he's very adamant about dupes so no need to work those insurance contacts.

Remember, our yearly DX Awards will be handed out at the Banquet so hope to see you all there and keep those logs coming!

IN THE LOG (non-contest, only the good stuff)

ZK2VF (10m, 15m CW, 17m SSB)
VP6BR (12m, 15m, 18m CW, 15m RTTY, 12m, 17m SSB)
MD/DL3OI (40m, 80m CW)
ZD8Z (40m, 80m CW)
JW6YEA (40m CW)
VK0MM (30m CW)
CE0ZY (12m, 17m, 20m CW)
9G5CW (17m, 30m, 40m CW)
CE0Y/UA6AF (10m, 20m CW)
XW2A (10m CW)
BD5WW (15m CW)
HF0POL (15m CW)
ZK1XXC (10m, 20m CW)
JT1DA (10m, 15m CW)
9H1BM (20m CW)
9H1FQ (20m CW)
SV5TS (20m SSB)
9U5D (20m SSB) **THIS GUY COUNTS**
FO0AAA (10m, 12m, 15m, 17m, 20m, 30m, 40m, 80m, CW, 10m, 12m, 15m, 17m, 20m, 30m, 40m, 80m, SSB, 15m, 20m RTTY)
T32B (15m RTTY)
VR2JK (10m CW)
5Z4WI (20m CW, SSB)
TT8JA (17m CW)
IN THE MAIL (non-buro pack)
E21EJC
CY9CWI (11 q's, 160m – 6m)
SV2ASP/A
9M6AAC
Thanks once again to the 59(9) DXReport, my main source of weekly DX information.
Chris, K2CS
(as told to me by a Russian last weekend, **K2 Contest Station...**)

Ed Note: Chris, did the folks at Clipperton start greeting you by first name?

How Ham Radio Works

From the ARRL Web Site

The site HowStuffWorks.com (<http://www.howstuffworks.com/>) has recently posted a "HowStuff" article "How Ham Radio Works," by **Gary Brown, K4GPB**, an editor and writer for HowStuffWorks.com. The article describes Amateur Radio as "a huge and varied hobby that involves everything from short-wave to VHF pocket radios" and is aimed at nonhams who might be inclined to get licensed. It includes links to other resources, including the ARRL. While you're on the site, you can find out how Mardi Gras "works" too.

Ed Note: I've been to the howstuffworks site many times. It's an EXCELLENT site with detailed, down-to-earth explanations of many, many topics. I'm glad to see Ham Radio represented there!

More DX News

From the ARRL Web Site

CHESTERFIELD ISLAND, FK. Members of Association des Radio Amateurs de Nouvelle Calédonie, ARANC, will be QRV as TX8CI from March 15 to April 1 from this new DXCC entity. Beginning March 23, they will use the call TX0DX. Activity will be on all HF bands and 6 meters, using CW, SSB and possibly RTTY. QSL all HF QSOs via OH2BN, and all 6 meter QSOs via JA1BK.

VIETNAM, 3W. Nag, JA7GAX, is QRV until the end of March as 3W2GAX. QSL to home call. Meanwhile, Scott, AC3A, hopes to be QRV as 3W2SO on 40, 20 and 15 meters near the QRP frequencies. QSL to home call.

SENEGAL, 6W. Marie, 6W1RB, is usually active on 20 meters. Her activity is centered between 14175 and 14190 khz after 0230z and as late as 0500z.

NAURU, C2. Jack, VK2GJH, and Nev, VK2QF, intend to operate C21JH and C21/VK2QF, respectively, from IOTA OC-031 during March and April. Activity is planned on the HF bands and especially on 6 meters. QSL via home calls.

NEW CALEDONIA, FK. Rene, FK8CP, is QRV on 80 meters CW after 1000z. He can also be found on 160 meters at times.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA, P2. Bernhard, DL2GAC, is QRV as P29VMS until March 29. QSL to home call.

SEYCHELLES, S7. Kurt, HB9MX, is active from Mahe as S79MX until April 1. Activity is on 40 to 10 meters with a special emphasis on 6 meters. QSL to home call.

REVILLA GIGEDO, XF4. XF4LWY is QRV on 28040 kHz from 1700z until 0000z each day. QSL via XE1LWY.

U.K. SOVERIEGN BASE AREA ON CYPRUS, ZC4. ZC4RAF is generally QRV on 20 meters around 1930z. QSL via 5B4YX.

New DXCC Entity East Timor now Active

From the ARRL Web Site

NEWINGTON, CT, Mar 13, 2000--East Timor--now under United Nations administration--has become the latest DXCC entity, and a station already has been on the air from the former Indonesian territory. The International Telecommunication Union has assigned the prefix block 4WA-4WZ for use by radio stations within the areas administered by the UN Temporary Administration of East Timor--or UNTAET. The prefix assignment is for the use of UNTAET as long as it exists. It will be released to the ITU at the end of its existence.

UN stations within East Timor may be assigned 4U prefixes for official use, while UN Amateur stations may use the prefix 4U1. This includes the UN Amateur Radio Club station, 4U1ET.

For DXCC purposes, UN Temporary Administration of East Timor will be added to the DXCC List with the effective date of March 1, 2000. QSL cards for QSOs made after that date will be accepted starting October 1, 2000.

Reducing SSB Splatter

Rus Healy, K2UA and Mike Tope, W4EF

Ed note: What follows are 2 posts to the contest reflector from Rus and Mike

regarding SSB splatter and how to determine the source. I found them informative, and hope you do as well. Rus's comments are first, followed by Mikes.

With regard to the complaints about wide signals, I have two comments. I personally believe that "Cleanliness is better than Loudliness." In spite of the triteness of this saying, I try to live by it. I find that it really does **not** cause more people, other than the usual lids, to crowd me. If people would just set their radio's mike gain and speech processor according to the manual, and use a peak-reading wattmeter to avoid the trap of thinking the rig isn't putting out as much power as it should be, our fone bands would be a lot better place on contest weekends.

Second, I know all too well from my experience in a past life evaluating radios as the QST Product Review editor, and especially from my contesting experience throughout the spectrum, that many people use crappy and/or improperly adjusted radios that make **any** strong signal sound bad. Most of the people who use these radios are not discriminating enough to realize that it's **their receiver**, not all the other transmitters with strong signals, that's at fault. Poorly designed AGC circuits, people leaving the AGC on fast in SSB mode (with most radios), having the noise blanker turned on, and just plain poor radios all contribute to this.

This is especially bad on VHF and up, where the difference between the strongest signals and the weakest ones is roughly 100 dB. The loud guys are always having to explain it to the whiners with cheap radios. The situation on 10 and 15 in this part of the sunspot cycle isn't much different, nor is it much different on 160 at any time in the cycle.

My suggestion to those ops who experience interference from what they think is a whole bunch of dirty transmitters on the band is this:

- 1) Always try inserting 20 dB of attenuation before passing judgment on the quality of a signal they're hearing
- 2) Make **sure** that the blanker is off. Even a great signal sounds bad when the blanker is on and the band is full of signals.

--73, **Rus, K2UA**

If the "splatter" in question is generated in the offending station's transmitter, then the only thing you can do is turn your antenna away from him since the interference actually falls onto your operating frequency.

If the offending station's transmit signal is clean, then the interference is probably being generated in your receiver. A quick way to check this is to put some attenuation in front of your the receiver. If the distortion drops more quickly than the signal levels, then distortion is being generated inside the receiver. This is because the kind of interference that is generated inside of receivers (intermodulation distortion) is very amplitude dependent and falls off rapidly when input signal levels are reduced (the so-called third order intermodulation distortion products fall off 3dB for every 1dB drop in signal level).

In terms of your question about sideband suppression, this is seldom a problem with modern transceivers. The main problem is intermodulation distortion which has nothing to do with sideband suppression. The reason for this is simple, unwanted sideband suppression in an HF transmitter is done at an intermediate frequency at a fairly low power level where amplitude distortion (intermodulation distortion) doesn't really

come into play too much. The sideband suppression is set by the selectivity of the crystal transmit IF filters which have very sharp selectivity (some of the newer rigs may use DSP techniques to do this).

Once the unwanted sideband is removed, the transmit signal needs to be amplified from a low level (on the order of milliwatts) up to a high level - 100 to 150 watts. Since the amplifiers used in this process only have finite linearity, the various components of the voice signal will invariably cross modulate each other to some degree producing intermodulation distortion products, i.e. splatter. This splatter is very drive dependent, so in the same way that the intermodulation distortion products generated in a receiver drop off quickly as the signal level is reduced, the intermodulation products generated by a transmitter increase rapidly as the drive power level increased. Automatic level control (ALC) is supposed to mitigate this to some extent, but some have commented recently that ALC circuits used in some of the modern transceivers are of inferior design.

Mike, W4EF

Upcoming Hamfests

Dave Wright, N2CK

I have it from reliable sources, that the Newark Hamfest will be held on March 25th. The Rochester Hamfest will be June 2 – 4th. Get those vacation days approved for Friday (Thursday as well if you're interested in helping to set-up).

Additional area hamfest info:

APR 29 Champlain Valley ARC - Plattsburgh, NY

MAY 6 Binghamton ARC - Owego, NY

Jul 16 Batavia Hamfest Batavia Downs -
8315 Park Rd.

JUL 22 Utica ARC - Frankfort, NY

AUG 5 Tompkins County ARC - NY

Aug 13 Lancaster Amateur Radio Club
Greater Buffalo "Summer" Hamfest &
Computer Show Hearthstone Manor ...
333 Dick Road, Depew, New York
<http://hamgate1.sunyerie.edu/~larc/GreaterBuffaloHamfest.htm>

SEP 23 Buffalo Hamfest - Hamburg, NY
Western NY Section Convention

SEP 30 ARA of the Southern Tier -
Horseheads, NY

Familiar Faces

Ed Gable, K2MP



Scott, W2LC our new WNY Section Manager joined us to talk about the ARRL Field Organization, recent license restructuring and more.



Fred, W2TZ was the recipient of the First Place plaque for Low Power W/VE ARRL CW Contest in 1999. Congratulations Fred!!!

Rochester DX Association Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the Rochester (NY) DX Association, and is published prior to each monthly meeting for the information of members and others interested in Amateur Radio DX and Contesting.

You are cordially invited to any meeting, held at 7:30 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from September through June. We meet in the "auditorium" of the Social Services Building at 111 Westfall Road in Rochester, New York

Club officers and committees

President	<i>Scott Hoag K2ZS</i>
Vice President	<i>Mike Rundle N1OKL</i>
Secretary-Treasurer	<i>Ed Gable K2MP</i>
Board of Directors	<i>Paul Meyers, N2OPW</i> <i>Bob Hunter NG2P</i> <i>Rick Mintz W1TY</i> <i>Dave Wright N2CK</i>
DX Chairman	<i>Chris Shalvoy K2CS</i>
Contest Chairman	<i>Chris Shalvoy, K2CS</i>
Newsletter Publisher	<i>Dave Wright N2CK</i>

Dues and correspondence

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The RDXA website has moved and is located at: www.qsl.net/rdxa
Check it out.



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