The Pileup
Newsletter of the CDXA

The Carolina DX Association

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The "Flavors" of Field Day 2005

By John Scott, K8YC

Field Day 2005 is now behind us. In the past several years I've visited and talked to several other groups on what they "get" from their Field Day (FD) experience. Not surprisingly, there are many flavors of Field Day.

Rebel Radio Club. You'll probably not recognize this group from your everyday travels. Yet, you'll recognize its members. They are "Nobby" Mills, W4UFO, David Colborne (KE4SWT), and Gary Colborne, N1GC. Nobby and Gary live near Statesville, and they like participating in Field Day. As members of the Iredell County Amateur Radio Society, they did just that. Only problem was that Gary and Nobby liked the contesting aspects of the event and their fellow ICARS members preferred the social aspects. This usually resulted in Gary and Nobby being the only two staying the course till the event's end, and, of course, they ended up being the ones taking down all the antennas. Along the way, some of the ICARS members commented that FD was not really a contest. Gary and Nobby's obvious question was, "If it's not a contest, why do we keep score?" Being a rebellious lot, they established their own radio club for Field Day—The Rebel Radio Club—with K4RRC as its callsign.

For FD2005 K4RRC operated from N1GC's QTH operating as a 2E station. Their effort netted something over 1100 QSOs, primarily on SSB, with three operators. Of course, after Gary's XYL, Sue (N4SUE), cooked that great steak dinner there had to be a little time for shuteye. And, of course after waking up, there was a great breakfast waiting, too, but they still had a respectable showing. They had some fun with the youth bonus point option. On Sunday morning, a number of youngsters came to experience at least one QSO, and at least five youngsters got their first chance to talk on a ham radio. A bonus of 100 points was earned, and some young folks now have experienced the thrill of talking to someone far away through a radio contact.

Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society. Many member of CDXA are also members of MARS. In fact, the Field Day Chairman for MARS in 2005 was Ben Antanaitis, WB2RHM, who holds memberships in MARS and CDXA. The MARS approach to FD is to deploy to the field in a true "field emergency" mode and use the opportunity to inform the public of what amateur radio is all about. Traditionally, MARS has a representative of the print media and

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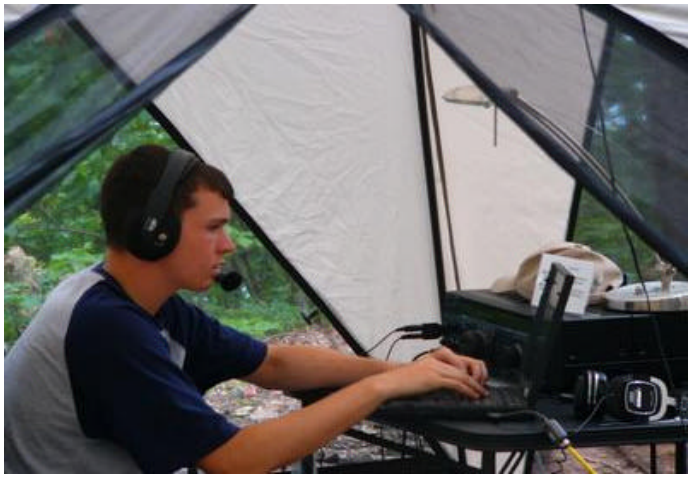
CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems		
W4DXA (11 mi. NE of Mooresville)	144.93 MHz (1200 bits/second)	441.00 MHz (9600 bits/second)
K4MD Charlotte, NC	144.91 MHz (1200 bits/second)	441.075 MHz (9600 bits/second)
K4MD (AR Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.tzo.com	
CDXA Repeater 147.18 MHz (+600)	W4DXA, Near Fort Mill, SC	
World Wide Web Homepage	www.cdxa.org	
Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)	Shoney's, 355 Woodlawn Road, Charlotte, NC (704-525-4395)	

video media visit them at their site in a public park near Mint Hill. In addition, there is always a public information display with handouts for the welcomed visitor. MARS comes well equipped for their FD activity. They have a small travel trailer purchased a few years back which serves as a fine little "shack" for radio operations. They also have a trailer which transports a variety of towers and beams to the FD site, and a large trailer-mounted generator set to provide plenty of power. MARS has a close affiliation with the American Red Cross in Charlotte.

This year's operation was as a 3A station. MARS took advantage of the 2005 FD Rules to have a VHF station on the air without increasing their transmitter count. They also ran digital modes. Being attuned to the role of the emergency communicator, they earned the bonus points for copying the ARRL bulletin, as well as originating and receiving traffic via the National Traffic System. Finally, MARS had a youth station which brought out the competitive juices of a few youngsters who challenged each other for the best "run rate" in a short operating session.

Ben prepared a very informative news release for the media and distributed it before the event. Time-Warner Cable channel 14 visited the site and did an extensive interview with Ben that was aired on the evening news. Ben did a great job of explaining the volunteerism implicit with the Amateur Radio service.

W4WJF (a.k.a. Josh Fisher). Josh Fisher worked real hard to earn his Extra Class ticket shortly before FD2005. Josh is going off to college at NCSU this fall, and his fine credentials have already earned him a couple of scholarships related to his amateur radio connection. So, it was not unusual that Josh sought to be the "control operator" of his own FD station. He was assisted in his 2A operation from Anderson Mountain by his father, Bill Fisher (W4GRW), Phil Martin (K4ATM), Roger Swett (W4SWT), Bill Clark (K4WAC) and Alan Bumgarner (N4ZTK) and a number of other unnamed hams. (All of the named operators are also CDXA members, along with Josh.) W4WJF sported a VHF station and a Get On The Air (GOTA) station in their operation.



Josh, W4WJF, at the "controls" during Field Day 2005.

W4CQ. One of the other larger radio clubs in Charlotte is the W4CQ club. This club has a close affiliation with the Salvation Army. I first saw their operation off Beatties Ford Road near Mountain Island Lake two years ago. They have a wonderful site at a location called Rural Hills Farm. This is where the where the Highland Games are played. Paul Wyse, W4PFM, regularly visits the W4CQ FD site during the event, and he filled me in on this year's operation.

W4CQ's operation was as a 2A station. The W4CQ group really enjoy the social aspect of FD. They get some operating in, to be sure, but food and fellowship are paramount! As a visitor to their site two years ago, my XYL and I were offered some fine fare. How do they produce the good food? Through their close affilia-

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The Pileup
Official Newsletter of the Carolina DX Association
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Published monthly 10 times per year, excluding the months of June and December.

The purpose of the association is to secure for the members the pleasures and benefits of the association of persons having a common interest in Amateur Radio.

Members of the CDXA shall adhere to "The Amateur's Code" as published from time to time in *The ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs*, and shall consist of those valid licensed amateur operators having an interest in promoting amateur radio. Long distance communications (DX) is of special interest to members of the association, but said interest is not a requirement of membership.

Dues are $30 per year for those using the PacketCluster maintained by the Association, $15 otherwise, payable each January. Dues are payable by check to the Secretary/Treasurer: Jim Miller, K4SQR
11600 Hilda Court
Charlotte, NC 28226

Address, telephone, and email address changes should be directed to the Secretary/Treasurer at the above address or via email at: k4sqr@juno.com.

The Carolina DX Association

The Pileup

Second Front Page

NC QSO Party 2005 In The Record Books

Shortly after the last issue of the **Pileup** appeared, the Forsyth Amateur Radio Club announced the results of the 2005 version of the North Carolina QSO party. While the contest results reflect individual excellence in contest operating skills, we're quite pleased that members of CDXA made a good showing in several categories.

Ron Bailey, AA4S, took overall honors for total points—regardless of entry category—and won the "Instate Mobile" category with 165,896 points. Ron's worthy competitor of recent years, NY4N, had a good outing with 133,258 points, placing him second in the Instate Mobile category as well as second in overall points. **Bill Turner**, W4WNT, was also out and about driving through the rain static on the "piedmont" on the dark Sunday evening of the contest.

In the "Single Instate" category, N4C took the first place honors with CDXA's **Roy Lincoln**, WA4DOU close on his heels. Close behind Roy in third place was CDXA's **Ben Wasilauskas** (K4GHS).

Despite losing his tower to a freak wind storm last year, **Joe Blackwell**, AA4NN, managed to get on the air to give and get some QSOs. His effort netted him a first place certificate as a participant from South Carolina.

Last, but not least, the **Carolina DX Association's** entry (W4DXA) in the "Instate Club" category resulted in a first place finish with 97,464 points. CDXA operated from the Radio Education Exhibit at Discovery Place. Through a special arrangement with Discovery Place, the radio room was kept open after normal closing hours to permit completing the contest. A photograph of the trophy is pictured below.

Because CDXA operated from Discovery Place, the winning Club trophy will be displayed in the Radio Education Center. If you'd like to see it, pay a visit to Discovery Place where you can also enjoy the exhibits and the IMAX theatre. John White (WB2NHQ), station manager for Discovery Place, encourages anyone wishing to use the station for an event to contact him. Please allow several weeks advance notice so that operator schedules and administrative details can be accommodated.

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tion with the Salvation Army, the portable canteen/ kitchen is brought to the site for food preparation, and some fine cooks pitch in offering their culinary skills. I'm told a special teriyaki steak an unnamed member cooks is out of this world. This year, a U.S. Marine Corps detachment even showed up with their barbecue cooker and cooked up a storm for the hungry. If the FD awarded points for nourishment, it looks like W4CQ would win at least the state championship!

A portable tilt-over, crank up tower on a trailer allows getting a tri-band beam up about 55 feet into the air over the operating site. Inverted Vs are suspended from the tower. Besides the two regular transmitters, W4CQ ran a 6 meter VHF station and a GOTA station. Both SSB and CW modes were used in the FD effort.

W4DXA. CDXA's effort was much like last year's, which was the first effort in many a year. Once again, the QTH of K4DXA served as "home" for the 2E entry. As you might imagine, the CDXA effort focused on the contest aspects of FD. To be sure there is good fellowship in the pre- and post-event preparations, and we operated with emergency power, but when the contest starts, it is all business. Yet, we know we're not operating from a known contesting site with a huge well-established antenna farm. We started with K4DXA's Bencher Skyhawk multi-band beam and added antennas from there. A temporary 40 foot tall tower was installed to hold a 20m monobander. A flattop antenna was hung between trees for 80m, two turnstile antennas were put up, and a pair of phased 40m verticals were set up to provide some low angle propagation for the west coast.

K4DXA operates as W4DXA from a familiar operator's position.

Since W4DXA operated from K4DXA's private residence, no attempt was made to have a public information booth or a media representative. To involve as many as might be interested, the 24 hour event was broken into three hour intervals with three operators assigned to each interval. Operators were arriving and departing at various times as their "shift" was finished or about to start. An ice chest for beverages slaked one's thirst, a refrigerator came stocked with prepared sandwiches, bags of "salty snacks" were available, and of course, the coffee pot was kept hot all night long. Wayne Starnes (KU4V) from Raleigh and Nyles McKeithan (KS4S) from Lumberton took the honors for coming the farthest to operate. Dick Williams (W3OA) and Ron Bailey (AA4S) drove the farthest as regards "locals" each coming from something over 60 miles away from the station site.

W3OA takes his turn at the controls while, below, AA4S "brings us home" for the last several hours operating CW.

Based on lessons learned from last year, we wanted a better run on CW. We achieved our pre-event goals of 1000 QSOs on CW for 2005. Unfortunately our experience—and that of all the stations above—was that propagation conditions forced most of the operating into 80m, 40m, and 20m with sparse pickings on 15m. With so many operators on the

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phone bands each taking about 2-3 kHz of bandwidth, there was plenty of QRM and our QSO count on SSB was not as good as last year. We ended up well short of our goal of 1750 SSB QSOs for the 24 hours of operation. Overall, we earned several hundred points more than in 2004. Only time will tell if others shared our misfortune in SSB operations.

While the contester in us bemoans the shortfall in reaching our QSO goals, the goal of demonstrating to the American Public the ability of the Amateur Radio community to produce a robust communications capability using emergency power sources was a resounding success. So we all went home a little tired but joyful in the knowledge that we can get the job done, if need be!

Tom Nicholls (W4NCU), Silent Key

On May 15, 2005 we suddenly lost a fellow ham who had been a regular attendee at the weekly CDXA luncheons for the past several years. Tom Nicholls was known to many members of CDXA who are also longtime members of Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society. Tom was active in MARS a number of years ago, but he had let his license lapse along the way. With renewed interest in amateur radio, he took the examination and regained his status as a licensed ham. Tom became a member of both CDXA and MARS, and also served as the editor of the MARS newsletter.

After regaining his license, Tom immediately took to the task of earning his DXCC certificate while serving as a volunteer operator at Discovery Place Science Center. During 2003 he earned the award of Volunteer of the Year. Since becoming a volunteer in 2002 at Discovery Place, Tom had contributed well over 2000 hours of volunteer time in the Amateur Radio Education Center.

Early in 2005, Tom showed up at a CDXA luncheon sporting his newly earned DXCC pin. You could tell that here was a man who enjoyed his DXing! His presence is missed.

CQ Drops Third Shoe With CQ iDX Award

As announced at the Charlotte Hamfest, CQ Magazine has announced its third award to encourage DXing as we approach the minimum of the current sunspot cycle. The third award has a goal of getting newer hams more involved in the excitement of talking to other hams in far away places. This award is an introductory award for contacts made between licensed amateurs in different countries by means of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) linking systems. These systems include, but are not limited to IRLP (Internet Radio Linking Project), EchoLink, WIRES and internet-linked remote base systems, which use the internet and VoIP to connect amateur radio repeaters and operators. At least one station in each contact must be transmitting via radio in the amateur bands (e.g., computer-to computer EchoLink QSOs do not count toward this award). It is called the CQ iDX Award.

The new award will doubtlessly raise a few eyebrows amongst old timers as not being "radio". Yet, if we can encourage the new ham to get on the air by any means and experience the thrill of meeting someone in a far away country, it should not be long before that same person desires to have a conversation entirely through the "ether". The basic award is issued for confirmed contacts with 25 countries, and endorsements will be made for each 25 countries thereafter. Post-licensing interviews in recent years have disclosed that some new hams never get on the air at all, and these same hams often do not renew their licenses on the first renewal date. Accordingly, this latest award by CQ Magazine might be just the thing to capture the imagination of the new ham who only possesses an FM handitalkie. The full details of the award can be found in the June 2005 issue of CQ Magazine.

Welcome New Members!

Welcome **Guy Titman**, W4NUS, of Charlotte, NC to the Carolina DX Association. Guy visited us at lunch earlier this spring to announce the upcoming Southeast VHF Society conference held recently in Charlotte. We look forward to seeing you at lunch in the next year, Guy.

A big welcome also to **James H. Brown**, N4ZY, of Vale, NC. CDXA now has two members in Vale displaying the CDXA banner. Be sure to stop in at Shoney's for lunch on Wednesday's, Jim, if you're in Charlotte on any Wednesday.

Ten and Twenty Years Ago. . . .

Twenty Years Ago:

Jacque Calvo relates his visit to Chad operating as TT8CW. Things started well, but it appeared that Ole Sol was playing his games around the sunspot minimum era. . . A gent name Gopal was making preparations to go to the Andaman Islands, and all seemed to be in order. . . . The FCC proposed allowing the VECs to maintain and update the Amateur Radio question pool. . . . FT8XC and FT8XB had just gone QRT after giving many a shot at working Kergulen Island.

Ten Years Ago:

Joe Simpkins, then WD4R, was President of CDXA. There had been a long search for an editor for the Pileup and Tom Skelton stepped up to the role. . . .Fabio (I4UFH) reported that starting with 1995's CQWW contest, African Italy (IH9) will be allowed to count as a country multiplier.

The Toolbox

By Don Daso, K4ZA

(Reprinted with permission of the author and the editor of the Potomac Valley Radio Club *newsletter, where this article originally appeared. The Editor)*

"What do you think about using sheet metal screws in antenna elements?" my client asked. (This was a turnkey job—I was doing everything, building literally from the ground up.)

"They work, usually well. I use rivets, too."

"Why not use bolts?"

"A bolt would be sort of silly, since the parts themselves are so thin."

"Yeah, but better, right?"

"Not really. Remember, the pieces being fastened together are thin, especially relative to the fasteners themselves. As you tighten sheet metal screws, the deep threads grip the sides of the hole and draw the piece together."

"Okay, how do you know what size hole to drill in the boom, then?"

"Easy. The drill size equals the unthreaded screw shank. Remember how slow I went with the drill? The trick is not to wallow or float around with the drill bit. The idea is to have as much surface for the screw to grab on to as possible."

"Okay. What about these funny looking nuts all over the place?"

"You mean these? They're elastic stop nuts. Well, let's back up and start at the beginning." (I love clients like this, who seem genuinely interested in learning something. Besides, I view teaching and construction both, as billable hours.) "There are a number of ways to keep nuts in place. Special washers, locking nuts, plastic collars, even liquids designed to hold fasteners are some. Let's start with washers. Everybody knows what a "lock washer" is, right? They provide a point of friction between the nut and the surface of the work. When using them on softer material, like this aluminum, you've noticed that I put a flat washer under the lock washer. What you may not have noticed is that I always put the chamfer side of the washer up, and the flat side down—toward the surface of the work. Sometimes, of course, and we see them used in electronics a lot, we'll use external and internal lock washers. These "star" style washers don't use as much torque, and work well on very thin surfaces."

"Amazing, there's really a right way to install a lock washer?"

"Absolutely. Now, those funny looking nuts, are simply elastic stop nuts. The plastic or nylon provides friction, once tightened, that prevents loosening. On your tower's guying hardware, for instance, you can see some palnuts—those very thin, stamped metal nuts—which are designed to jam against the threads and hold the regular nut in place. And by the way, you install them with the open end away from the nut, tightening them finger tight and then just a half turn more with a wrench."

"Wow, how'd you learn all this stuff, anyhow? I thought you worked in film or television? What's that got to do with all this hardware stuff?"

"I've always been curious how things work. I've always liked to putter around with stuff. And tower work just sort of came naturally, especially when I wanted a tower of my own and had no one else to turn to—so I sort of learned it as I went along."

"Yeah, but these explanations seems pretty serious. It's not something you just watched someone else do, and then copied. Or is it?"

"Sure, sometimes. And sometimes it's something I've read, researched or asked someone else about—someone who I believed to be an expert or knowledgeable, and so forth. As a former academic, I do some-

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times get a bit wordy with explanations. Plus, I've been doing this a long time."

"That's true." I stand up and start back toward his antenna, and he obviously thinks about his last remark. "Not that there's anything wrong with that…not that you're…."

"Hey, it's okay. I'm a certifiable old fart, all right. I'm even in the Old-Old Timers Club. Com'on. Let me tell you why we're replacing all the original bolts with stainless on these boom-to-element clamps." --K4ZA

Dayton 2005—Still a "Good Show"

Not too cold, not too sunny, only a little rain, and most would agree that this year's Hamvention at Dayton was a little more "user friendly" than recent years. The ARRL chose this year to have the Annual Convention at Dayton. Accordingly, many staff members from Newington were present to give Hamvention attendees face to face contact with the people they've usually only talked to on the telephone. ARRL was provided by Hamvention organizers a larger space at the Hara Arena so they could spread out a bit, and the results were worthwhile.

The forums were up to their usual high quality. The DXing, Antenna, and Contesting forums were all on the same day this year, but the Antenna and Contesting forums were held downtown at the Crowne Plaza. Logistically this presented a few wrinkles for those who shared a vehicle but not the same interests in forums!

The DXing forum treated us to a recap of the recent Andaman Island DXpedition via a talk by Barathi Prasad. The standing ovation given to Barathi by the assemblage was not lost on the Minister of Communications of India who came to Dayton to see what this "ham stuff" was all about. The President of the National Institute for Amateur Radio (NIAR) was also present. NIAR was a facilitator for Barathi in getting all the equipment together on short notice, once the approval to go to the Andamans had been received. Barathi recounted the events leading up to the morning of the tsunami and explained how the team made the rapid transition to emergency communications mode.

The Kergulen Island DXpedition team (FT5XO) spoke at the DX Dinner about their expedition. There were many pictures shown of activities enroute and while on the island. The team still has not met their financial goals to defray the cost of the trip. So, if you wish to include a little something "extra" with your QSL card, it will be gratefully received.

A forum on the recent struggle with BPL offered an interesting grass roots approach that appears to be quite successful. This approach is based on expanding the bases of those who have a stake in the decision to deploy BPL. The team did their homework and identified all of the radio services which can suffer radio interference from BPL. Then, the local agencies that use those services were contacted and given audible demonstrations of the impact of BPL on radio communications. Then, instead of 600,000 amateur radio operators shouting in the wilderness, our numbers are multiplied tenfold. Something to think about….

The antenna forum, held at the Crowne Plaza was of its usual high quality. John Devoldere (ON4UN) provided a detailed presentation on developing phased arrays without the usual attention paid to feed line phasing length. While the presentation was scholarly, when all was said and done, it seemed to this observer that careful pruning of a feedline with a set of diagonal cutters is a far more cost-effective, quicker, and technically "cleaner" way to accomplish the goal. (Sorry, John!)

An interesting presentation on a detailed structural analysis of the wind loading on a full antenna system—tower, mast, and beam—was performed by a registered professional engineer using tools he employs in his job as an airframe structural engineer. His method can tell you all you ever wanted to know about stress, strain, and deflections in his antenna structure.

Dean Straw, editor of The Antenna Handbook, explained how the tables in the present issue of the Handbook can be far more useful to most hams than trying to analyze the copious data one is faced with when using some of the PC-based propagation programs. The Antenna Book's approach collapses the many degrees of freedom into a simple predictive methodology.

An approach to a simple tool to measure earth conductivity under your antenna farm was presented. Most hams defer to governmental agencies for documenting ground conductivity, but a particular piece of property can vary widely from averages. The presented tech-

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nique might be just the thing you need, and your antenna analyzer is your tool. Take a look at the web page cited below for details.

One of the more interesting things in the Contesting forum was a discussion of some of the contest simulators available to test your mettle when faced by a pileup. These are PC programs which throw real-life contest situations at you in a simulated environment and then score how you perform. There are even competitions wherein the software captures your score and sends it to a secured server for comparison with others. Some of the simulators mentioned were: RUFZ, CW Freak, CT-MODOKI, Morse Runner, and Pile Mania. A search using Google will probably turn these up for you. The PowerPoint presentation on contest simulators and many of the other presentations in the Contest and Antenna forums can be seen at: www.k3lr.com. If you didn't make Dayton, you owe yourself a visit to this website.

(Editor's note: The August issue of QST had a review of MorseRunner *so I downloaded and played with this freeware. It's like being on the air, including background noise and the like. Check boxes in the software let you enable QRN, QRM, and yes, even LIDS! If you want to bone up on your CW skills, I highly recommend getting your own copy of* MorseRunner.*)*

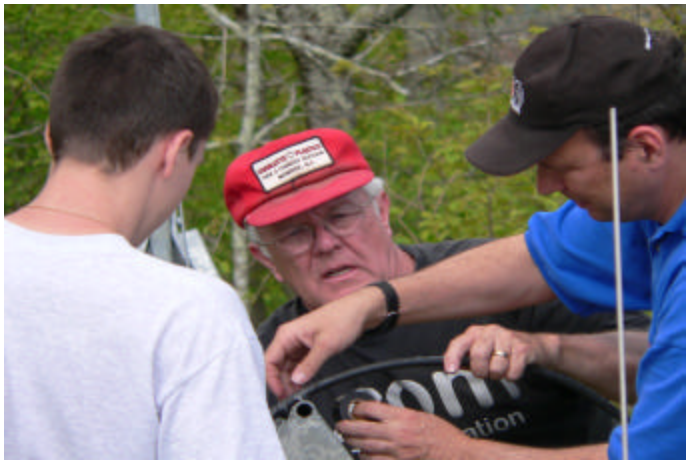
June VHF Contest—A "Whish" Come True

By John Scott, K8YC

On the afternoon and early evening of June 12, 2005, VHFers in the ARRL June VHF Contest were treated to a marvelous display of auroral scatter. This phenomenon provided access to many grid squares that would otherwise be inaccessible through conventional propagation I had been invited to participate in the contest with the AA4ZZ "Mountaintoppers". The old hands at AA4ZZ had seen reports of coronal mass ejections (CME) in the days preceding the contest. Expectations were high for some auroral scattering. About mid-day on Sunday, the "buzz" was that some stations to the north of us were making auroral contacts. Soon, our 6 meter station started to hear the muffled "whish" of CW signals when our beams were turned to the north. Not long after that, our 2 meter station also began working auroral scatter, soon followed by the 222 MHz station.

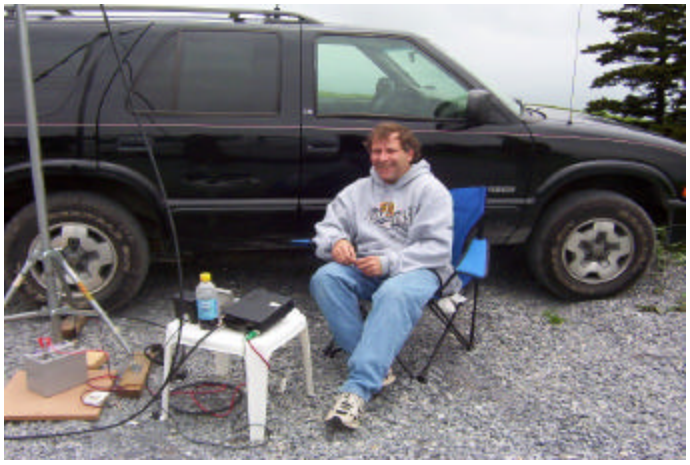
For this newbie to VHF contesting, it was a marvel to behold. Gary Dixon (K4MQG), Ron Bailey (AA4S) and Ken Boyd (K4DXA) worked the 6 meter station in turns. Roger Webb (W4MW), an accomplished moon-bounce (EME) aficionado, moved to the seat of the 2 meter station with the same excitement of a child on Christmas morning. Paul Trotter (AA4ZZ) held forth on the 222 MHz and 432 MHz stations. Through our contest network, "passes" were moving back and forth as the team harvested all the contacts they could. I stayed out of the way and brought snacks to the operators from the kitchen while Bill Fisher (W4GRW) periodically applied a cold Coke can to Roger Webb's shoulders to help relieve the stress/excitement of the run.

When aurora is found, stations turn their antennas to the north where the auroral cloud acts like a giant, high-altitude reflector. Because it is a distributed reflector—unlike a mirror—the auroral cloud apparently provides a multitude of path lengths to both reflect and absorb a signal with the result that the received signals are broadened. CW signals are reduced to a soft "whish" discernable above atmospheric noise, and SSB signals appear watery if they can be heard at all. All of our contacts were via CW. W4MW noticed that the aurora cloud seemed to have a "sweet spot" from which signals were markedly better. This sweet spot oscillated east and west from north throughout the opening. At times the cloud provided openings into two different geographical areas that could hear W4MW but not each other. This caused QRM while the condition existed. By about 8:30 PM the opening had run its course, and it was back to "digging 'em out".



Josh Fisher (W4WJF), Gary Dixon (K4MQG), and Paul Trotter (AA4ZZ) make some changes to the antenna setup in June's VHF Contest.

There was another highlight to the event that was remarkable albeit overshadowed by the auroral opening. For this contest, two H-Double Bay antennas were installed for the 6 meter station. (The H-Double Bay concept was discussed at length in the January 2003 and February 2003 issues of the **PILEUP** by Ron Bailey.) The antennas were set up to radiate in directions 90 degrees from each other and an antenna switch permitted choosing the direction of the major lobe. A characteristic of the H-Double Bay is that it has very deep nulls in the plane of the antenna yet produces upwards of 9 dB gain broadside to the antenna. In the first hour of the contest, Roger Webb noticed that an instant improvement of signal reception could be achieved by choice of the correct H-Double Bay to use for a contact. In the time it would normally take to swing a beam, Roger was able to work several stations, and even then it was not clear that the 6 meter beam provided significant reception improvement. The well-liked omnidirectional "Big Wheel" didn't seem to hear as well as the H-Double Bay in many instances, but there were still times when the Big Wheel was the star performer. All this shows is that you can't have too many antennas!



Ed Swiderski, KU4BP, could hear AA4ZZ well while atop Whitetop Mountain in Virginia. But, with AA4ZZ's 18dB gain antenna pointed toward the Northeast metroplex, directly in line with Whitetop and driven by a kilowatt, it makes hearing others difficult!

Calls from many members of CDXA were heard from atop the mountain. I personally heard at least ten familiar callsigns. Upon checking the logs, I found at least 30 callsigns from CDXA members as well as XYLs of members. Many of these same callsigns provided us QSOs on more than one band. A special mention goes to the rovers/portables—AD4IE, W4WNT, W4VHF, KU4BP—who duked it out with the contest stations on the mountaintops. To all of you, thanks for the contacts. *(See the companion article below about roving the VHF contests.)*

This is being written on Tuesday after the contest. Our claimed score should be close to 370,000 points. This is a respectable score for being as far removed from the northeast metroplex as we are in North Carolina. By the time you read this, some of the contest reflectors may give us a hunch on how well we fared. We're quite certain that those north of us enjoyed the auroral scatter for a longer period of time than we did. Being able to hear my first auroral propagation and marveling at the technological improvement of the H-Double Bay made this contest both fun and very satisfying. After all, isn't that what it is all about?

You Meet the Nicest People While Roving

We all know that Ted Goldthorpe (W4VHF) loves to operate as a rover along with XYL Itice (K4LVV). As Ted and Itice were plying the Blue Ridge Parkway in June's VHF contest, Ted worked a fellow ham, also roving southward on the Blue Ridge. They agreed to look for each other. While busily "running' others, Ted almost missed the collection of aluminum tubing driving toward him a short time later. Delayed reaction times allowed the two to pass each other before both realized they had met on the road. What to do? Turn around and go meet each other.

So here they are in the middle of the contest, taking a moment to share in the fun of "roving and hamming."

Despite taking the time to share the joy, Ted managed to operate 4 bands, collect 359 QSOs and score nearly 42,000 points.

The Back Page

Here we are back at the publishing business after a month off. There was lots of material this month because Dayton and the VHF contest came after the last issue was published. Traditionally the summer months are very lean as regards newsy material. Here's your chance to be "published". If you want to be an **associate editor**, send me your prepared material, and your name will be on the byline. If you have some "bragging rights" that I've somehow missed, send that to me so we can give you some recognition.

July 16-17 brings a return to the **July CQ WW VHF Contest**. Contest begins at 1800Z on July 16. Ted and Itice Goldthorpe will be defending their well-earned Rover title once again. Bill Fisher (W4GRW) is planning on being atop the mountains around Boone to work the contest, and Gary Dixon is supposed to be nearby vacationing. We haven't heard if Gary is going to work the contest or just enjoy spending the time with Carol, sans radio. This is a two band contest (6m and 2m) lasting only 27 hours. All CDXAers actively participating encourage your QSOs and those of your XYLs if they're licensed. Be sure to look for them. We'll get an email out just before the contest as to who is participating and where they'll be.

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First Class Mail

See something wrong with your address label? Notify K4SQR at once, please.