



The Carolina DX Association

The Pileup

Fall Edition

Tom Skelton Editor

Don't forget the CDXA barbeque at K4BUQ's QTH on October 14.
More information in the PILEUP

President's Message.....

It is with great pleasure and appreciation that we note the fact that the PILEUP is alive and well again after a gap of not having a formal Editor. With this issue, that part of history is complete. Please make welcome our new Editor, Tom, WB4IUX! Tom will put the PILEUP issues together and email that issue to Bill, KD4IL, to print. The copies then go to Bill, W4UNP, who attaches postage and puts them in the mail. Please make contact with these men to say THANK YOU! Remember, it is all volunteer, so lets show our appreciation and support. If you have an article to submit, please send it to Tom. I believe he prefers email, but US "snail" probably is OK with him also. Be a part of our CDXA by your input! We all benefit from group support.

A word to you tower climbers... This is the time of the year when we try to wrap up our outside work in preparation for the winter DX season of contests and dxpeditions. Please be careful! Even experienced folks can experience a accident, and we sure don't want to have any more lumps on anyone's head!

As I write this, the rain is coming down here in Charlotte. We had planned to put up the DXWIN NetRom at Wingate today, but the weather is not cooperating. Be watching for news of DXWIN coming on the air on the PacketCluster. If you would like to work or just watch this event (350 tower), let me know by Packet email.

There is hardly a day that goes by that someone in the club is not helping someone else to further the collective enjoyment of our hobby. I commend each of you for your selfless giving of your time and talents. Keep up the good work!

See you on the 14th of October! Don't miss this fun time together!

73 Joe WD4R

Your editor: WB4iUX



It was right after moving into our new house in Clemson in July, and logging into the Packetcluster for the first time in a week, that I saw a note requesting a volunteer to edit the Pileup. I had been one of those CDXA members that paid their dues every month, never came to a meeting (except to meet ON4UN last year), and just quietly read their Pileup every few weeks. I knew a lot of CDXA members due to meetings at the Charlotte and Atlanta hamfests, real-life pileups and Packetcluster. I felt it was time, even though I am 130 miles away, to step up and volunteer to do something to help the CDXA. So, here I am -- your guest editor of The Pileup!

I have always enjoyed reading The Pileup and finding out what was going on in the Charlotte area. Now, I hope I will be able to provide some enjoyment and important DX - related information to the members of the CDXA. I really wish I lived closer and could attend most of the meetings, but I do plan to be at the bar-buque in October. I hope to meet many of you that I don't know, shake hands with those I do, and let everyone laugh at how much grayer my beard has gotten! If there are articles or information you'd like to see in The Pileup, PLEASE let me know. You reach me via US mail at 230 Camelot Road, Clemson, SC 29631, or via email at Tom.Skelton@ClemsonSC.ATTGIS.COM. If you want to call, please leave a message at my office when the rates are low and I'll return your call: 803 - 843 - 1724. Of course, you may also send a packet message to me.

Thanks for taking the time to read this issue, and please take a minute or two to let me know what you think!

73 and Good DX'ing to us all. Tom WB4IUX

Tower Maintenance

I would be remiss if I didn't remind everyone it's time for some PM: Preventive Maintenance. With the fall winds, ice, snow (maybe?) and cold coming, you should check your towers and antennas NOW. Besides the usual checks (clamps, pre-forms, guys, anchors, rust, cables, rotors, thrust bearings, inc.), take just a minute to stand back and look at how the trees have grown this summer. Have pine bore/beetles gotten to your pines, rendering them dead and dangerous? Have your oaks grown to the point that the weight from ice could send them crashing down into the guy wires, causing a catastrophic failure?

Fall 1995 Hamfests

Just because fall is here, the summer heat has relented, and the children are asking about snow doesn't mean we can forget about one of the more relaxing and fun aspects of our hobby: hamfests. The fall calendar (from John Covington, WN4BBJ) looks like this:

Oct 7 (Sat): Rock Hill SC Hamfest

Oct 8 (Sun): Maysville Hamfest

Oct 14 (Sat): Augusta GA Hamfest

Oct 21 (Sat): Tri-Cities Hamfest, Gray TN Oct 21 (Sat): Sumter SC Hamfest

Oct 22 (Sun): Monroe Hamfest & Barbecue

Oct 28-29 (Sat-Sun): Chattanooga TN Hamfest Nov 4 (Sat): Sanford Hamfest

Nov 5 (Sun): Concord Hamfest

Nov 11 (Sat): Myrtle Beach SC Hamfest

Nov 19 (Sun): Benson Hamfest

Dec 2 (Sat): Greensboro Hamfest

If you have email capability and want to receive John's hamfest calendar on a regular basis, send a message to him at: NCHamfest@aol.com and request that he add you to his list.

Changes to CQWW

The following was posted to the CQ-Contest Internet Reflector on July 16, 1995.

"To all Contesters from the CQ WW Committee:

The CQ WW Committee has voted to clarify the country status of IG and IH, African Italy. Starting with the 1995 contests, IG/IH will count as a country multiplier in the CQ WW. The country of African Italy.

Cu in the contests
73 Bob K3EST"

Then, this was posted by Fabio/I4UFH on September 5, 1995:

"Hello Guys,

We are ready to announce the follow activities for the incoming WWDX Contest, from the NEW CQWW Country, AFRICAN ITALY. From 1995 these Country has been added to the WWDX Country list, Italy has been splitted in two country : EUROPEAN ITALY and AFRICAN ITALY. This Country include the Pelagie is. (IG9) & Pantelleria is. (IH9) in the most southern part of Italy.

Country : AFRICAN ITALY - Continent: AFRICA - CQ Zone: 33 - ITU Zone: 37

Callsign:

IG9R Single Op. 20m.	SSB	October	op.	Fabio I4UFH
IG9T Single Op. 80m.	SSB	October	op.	Albert IV3TAN
IG9W Single Op. 160m.	SSB	October	op.	Frank IV3SHF
IG9A Single Op. 40m.	SSB	October	op.	Fabio IT9GSF
IG9R Single Op. 20m.	CW	November	op.	Giorgio I2VXJ

The islands are not very easy to approaching, in the last 3 month most of the antenna as been landed and installed, all the equipments and antenna will be tested during the WAE SSB in the second weekend of Semptember with the IG9R callsign. Almost will be ready for the October season !!!

The QSL Manager for all the callsigns and Contest is IV3TAN.

Please spread out this info, your help is appreciated to obtain a results in this new adventure !!!!

73 de Fabio I4UFH

So, update your CQWW logging program to get ready to handle IG9 and IH9 prefixes!

Some Beverage tips

Nope, this isn't about how to make your favorite winter toddy (but you knew that). If you've turned on your radio and listened throughout the HF bands in the last two years, you realize the places to be are sunrise and sunset on 160, 80 and 40 meters. Yes, 20 meters has been Ole Faithful and 15 meters has shown some flashes, but the real excitement has been below 10 MHz. I never realized this until I got the courage up to actually try DX'ing the gray line this past winter and use a Beverage antenna.

The gray line is that point on the globe, simply stated, between dark and light. Propagation enhancement occurs on this path, and sometimes quite dramatically. However, to be able to hear the DX through the QRM or QRN usually requires some sort of directional antenna. As not all of us can swing those wonderful 2 and 3 element yagis on 80 M, or half squares on 160 M, a Beverage is your best bet to increase your ability to hear. Even if you aren't trying to work Southeast Asia on 160 or 80 meters, the Beverage is everything everybody says and more.

There have been numerous articles published on the Beverage in QST and ON4UN's Low Band DX'ing, so I won't repeat the basics of the design and construction. Rather, I want to share some tips that I have learned in my own experience, and from some data shared by Frank Donovan / W3LPL.

In my own case, the only way I could string a Beverage was down the property line behind my house and two others. I used a wooden fence that had been erected after the construction of college student townhouses (supposedly for residents' privacy? Hah!). The wire was about 300 feet long, and I fed it through a homebrew 9:1 unun (unbalanced-to-unbalanced) toroid and about 75 feet of RG-8X coax. The far end (East) was initially terminated in a 600 ohm resistor.

My results? Very pleasing. . On nights when the QRN was low my quarter - wave sloper could hear just fine. However, with distant thunderstorms approaching and 20 dB over 9 QRN, the Beverage continued to pull the African, Indian Ocean and Asian DX in. T2, 9Q5, VQ9, and 9M2 are just a few of the new ones I bagged on 80 meters that were not copiable (or were terribly marginal) on the sloper. With the Beverage, 9M2AX came out of the noise on 80M CW two or three minutes before I could even tell he was there on the sloper. When he peaked S5 on the sloper he was virtually the same strength on the Beverage. However, I could copy him for several minutes on the Beverage and only for a minute or two on the sloper.

Regarding termination, I started with a terminated Beverage to improve my ability to hear to the East. I later removed the resistor, and had hoped to get the promised bi-directional effect. I can't say why, but I did NOT see the improvement in receiving from the West that I did from the East. And, I did not see a terrible degradation of performance in receiving signals from the East. The next paragraph may shed some light on this, but I have more work to do.

Propagation

In spite of the great conditions that we are already seeing on the low bands (VK6ACY is coming in long path on 80 M in the afternoon), I'm sure we're all looking forward to a little break from the QRN For Breakfast Bunch and have some 10,12 and 15 meter openings.

The following was reported by NA5N and is quoted from the "425 DX News" (an electronic publication of the 425 DX Group in Italy):

"NEW SOLAR CYCLE! -> As reported by Paul, NA5N, from National Radio Astronomy Observatory of Socorro (New Mexico), the Cycle 23 has begun last 12 August 1995, when a solar spot was photographed from the scientists in the Sun Observatory of the California Institute of Technology in Big Bear City; that sunspot was at 21 degrees latitude north, with an opposite magnetic polarity respect of those viewed from 1984, the start date of Cycle 22. The position and polarity difference are useful to identify the end of a cycle and the begin of another. Paul believes that an improvement of HF conditions is expected for the next spring/summer, depending on the speed of the Sun activity increasing."

Well, don't take down your 160 and 80 meter antennas yet or mortgage the retirement for a 200 foot rotating tower and 6 stacked 8 element 10 Meter yagis. Long - time DX'er and contesting Lee Wical KH6BZF wrote that he feels it will be two years, not one, before we see some real improvement. The bottom of the current cycle will not be until 1996, and the fall of 1997 will be the time to make sure the 10, 12 and 15 Meter yagis are ready to perform. Well, at least that's what Lee's Crystal Ball says!

The Low Band Monitor

At the urging of AA6TT, I have subscribed this summer to an amateur periodical called "The Low Band Monitor." This is published monthly by Lance Johnson, K0CS, and focuses entirely on DX for 160, 80 and 40 meters. Subscription rates are \$24.00 US Third Class, \$28.00 US First Class, \$29.00 Canada, and \$36.00 DX Air Mail. You can reach the editor K0CS at The Low Band Monitor, P. O. Box 1047, Elizabeth, CO 80107, or by email at lance356@aol.com.

What does The Low Band Monitor offer the subscriber? Is this just another DX - oriented magazine with redundant information? I don't think so. Each issue has DX- expedition information which you'll see elsewhere, but also included are articles of particular importance to low band DX'ers. The first really clear description I saw of how to build a beverage antenna system was a copy of an article published in The Low Band Monitor that W0UN sent to me. The only pictorial or schematic of the Battle Creek Special antenna I've seen was in a Low Band Monitor article. This month (August 1995) had a design by K9AY of an antenna for 160/80 meter expedition use (The Expedition 160/80). There are "Power Spots" for the three bands, and this month's contributors included W8TN, KY0A, K9FD, WA0GFS, NI6T, K3ND, KC7V, K1ZM and KD7SO. I am certain that many of these calls are familiar to you.

Each year, K0CS does a survey of the subscriber's antenna systems and in-shack hardware. It is very revealing to see what it takes from different parts of the country to knock out WAC, WAZ, or DXCC on the low bands. There is also a Low Band Monitor "Season" in which awards are given for the first stations to work 160M WAC, DXCC on 80M and 150 countries on 40M. This period runs from September 1, 1995 to March 31, 1996.

With the continuing sunspot doldrums, I would urge those DX'ers who haven't ventured below 20 meters to at least send a letter to K0CS and request a sample copy. If you want your DXCC and WAZ totals to increase, this is the best ticket I know!

That's it for this installment of the Pileup. If you have information or articles you want researched, please let me know. Regardless, let me hear from you! 73 and good DX'ing this fall.

Tom Skelton, WB4iUX