



Northern California DX Foundation

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Spring/Summer 2008

YI9PT – A DXER’S DREAM STORY A new DXer’s perspective

Reidar “Radar” Larsen, K2PT

MY NAME IS REIDAR “RADAR” Larsen and I am a United States Marine serving in Iraq.

Growing up in an Amateur Radio family, I had been fascinated by the whole idea of radio and the long-range contacts my uncle WØTUF (SK) and cousin NØBLX (SK) made via Morse code but I never tried it myself. Finally, in 2001, I was licensed as KCØJSZ.

Moving to Rhode Island in 2002 to attend the Naval War College, I was restricted to VHF. That would change, however, when I received orders to Quantico, Virginia, in 2003. While stationed in northern Virginia, Tom Gregory, N4NW, encouraged me to participate in my first contest, the 2004 ARRL DX SSB. I worked some rare DX and really enjoyed the whole experience. Contesting and DXing became my focus and I joined the Potomac Valley Radio Club (PVRC), meeting a whole new group of Hams, the “contesters.” They were some of the most serious Hams I had ever met and I learned how to put up towers and big antennas, witnessing some of the most amazing stations in the PVRC. It was a great experience.

About this time, Lewis Cheek, K4HR, and N4NW started the Stafford DX Association (SDXA) and began a very informal DX club. The SDXA entered contests under the PVRC as a sub-team, having a blast working SOAB. Our informal group

alternated between station building, DXing and contesting.

I quickly found that the KCØJSZ call sign was somewhat of a disadvantage in the pileups and it was a lot to transmit in a contest exchange, so it was not long before I obtained my present call, K2PT. While I was in Virginia, N4NW started pronouncing my name Riedar (RY-der), as Radar and the nickname was picked up by other Hams. Then in 2007 I received orders for the U.S. Central Command in Tampa, Florida, and had to relocate.

Deployment

Soon after arriving in Tampa I became a member of the Florida Contest Group (FCG) and started to plan for the fall DX contests. Ham radio was put on hold a few months

later, however, when I received orders from my new command to deploy to Iraq. With orders in hand, life was re-focused.

I did not think I would be able to get on the air in Iraq and because of



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that, my last 30 to 45 days of pre-deployment training and preparation were totally focused on my family and my job.

Iraq

I arrived in Iraq on 9 January 2008, deploying with no radio or any other Amateur Radio gear. I did obtain an Iraqi Amateur Radio license application but did not send it to the Iraqi Amateur Radio Society (IARS) because of security concerns, fearing the very personal information required might not get to the “good guys.” Although I didn’t send my application in prior to my deployment, I had the necessary forms needed to apply.

Soon after arriving, I decided to find a way to get on the air — es-



Radar Larsen receives much awaited packages in Iraq.

pecially since my buddies from the SDXA, PVRC and FCG were hounding me. My search for another Ham or a MARS station led me to the radio officer where I work. He was agreeable and actively helped me. While talking to him, a representative from the Iraqi Communications Commission (like our FCC) came in. He understood my effort to obtain a license and was very helpful. Before I knew it, I handed him my application, feeling much better doing it in person.

Unbelievably, within 12 hours I had the YI9PT license! That has to



The YI9PT license!

Contributions

The **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DX FOUNDATION** relies heavily upon the generosity of its members to fund various projects. We urge each member to consider making an annual contribution of US\$50 or its equivalent in foreign currency. However, we do not wish to exclude anyone from the **FOUNDATION** for financial reasons. If \$50 is not within your budget, then please give what other amount you can. Naturally, we welcome contributions in excess of \$50! The **NCDXF** is an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and all contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law for U.S. taxpayers. Use the envelope supplied with the newsletter to send your contribution. If the envelope is missing, send your contribution to: **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DX FOUNDATION**, P.O. Box 1328, Los Altos, CA 94023-1328, USA. You may also contribute and order supplies online via our secure server, visit www.ncdxf.org.

be a record — especially in a country with so much going on.

Now, I was totally into the “make it happen” mode and called my XYL to have my Amateur Radio gear shipped over; I would figure out the rest. I even inquired about buying an antenna and how long it would take to have it shipped over here. Once N4NW, K4HR, Tom Harrell N4XP, and Donald Greenbaum N1DG, heard

what I was doing they immediately asked me to standby; they were working up a support plan.

So I went from nothing to everything in 48 hours. It was like a dream; never did I think I would get this type of help. All I was trying to do was get up a wire and put a radio on the air, now it had become a full production DXpedition with team members. It was fantastic and somewhat over-

whelming, since I had never done this before.

I thank the members of the SDXA (N4NW, K4HR, N4XP, N1DG, OK1KT and N4JOW) who have provided unending support, logistically as well as managerial, in making this happen. I also thank NCDXF, INDEXA, GDXF and those individuals who provided support with either equipment or funds to make this a success. 

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY From the perspective of SDXA

Tom Harrell, N4XP and Tom Gregory, N4NW

IN THE SUMMER OF 2007, Radar was assigned from Marine Corps Base Quantico to a new assignment in Tampa, Florida. Radar remained in frequent communication with N4NW and other SDXA members and in late 2007 received orders to deploy to Iraq. During conversations with N4NW it was discussed that once in Iraq, Radar should pursue authorization to operate. N4NW, having operated for eight years from various African DX locations in the '80s strongly encouraged Radar to consider the possibilities and opportunities of operating from a rare DX location.

License to operate

In his 15 January e-mail to family he wrote, “I handed in my Iraqi Amateur Radio request today. The Iraqi Communication Commission (like our FCC) happened to be on-deck here at our command and when the communications guys figured out I was a Ham and needed a license, they hooked me up and introduced me to the Iraqis. I was excited; they said it would take from 3 days to 3 weeks, so we shall see.”

In his e-mail to family on 16 January he exclaimed, “I cannot believe I got this in less than 24 hours, which is amazing, they beat the FCC at their own game!

73, YI9PT!”

All the while that Radar was pre-

paring to go to Iraq; talk among other members of the SDXA was how they could support him if he were able to get on the air. Once a license was in hand, serious thought was given to a station but Radar’s own equipment was still in Florida. N4NW asked N4XP, who has had both DXpedition experience and recent experience with the BS7H logistical support to assist in helping the SDXA get some lightweight equipment to Radar.

Getting on the air

Soon, N4XP had arranged for ICOM America to provide an IC-7000. Requests were also made to NCXDF,

INDEXA and the German DX Foundation (GDXF) to provide assistance toward the caliber of station Radar needed to activate YI in a big way.

By the third week of January, NCDXF provided funding for an antenna system that would allow Radar to consistently be heard around the

world. Soon, a two-element SteppIR was located and arrangements were made to forward the equipment to Radar. It was also SDXA’s desire to provide an amplifier and INDEXA led the way in funding to make that happen.

Another SDXA member, N1DG, was asked to put together a webpage with hosting donated by N4NW and Equity Commerce, a credit card processing organization as sponsors. At the same time K4HR, N4XP and N4NW were helping Radar with antenna types to be used until the SteppIR Yagi arrived. Also as N1DG built the website, a fund drive was initi-



L-R: SGT Arin USA, SSG Paulette USA, CDR Dave “Diamond” USN, LtCol Reidar “Radar” Larsen USMC, LTC Dan USA, PO1 Ryan USN and LTC David USAF.

ated and additional support started to come in.

It was at this point N4XP started to seek QSL support. OK1KT, newly inducted member of the SDXA, who works with Beda, OK1FXX of ELLI Print, arranged to have ELLI Print donate the QSL cards. YI9PT's support was now in full swing.

The IC-7000 was shipped and arrived before the end of January. On 27 January, Radar conveyed that a Codan Multi-wire Broadband Dipole Antenna and a 10M mast were loaned to him. For the initial operation, the Codan dipole was strung between two date palms.

On 31 January, both N4NW as the pilot and N4XP as the QSL manager advised major DX publications of the imminent activity from YI9PT. N1DG also launched the website, <http://Stafford-DX-Association.org>.

First QSO

On 1 February, the first QSO in the log was Per-Anders Andersson, SM7EHU on 80M. YI9PT was on the air with Radar at the microphone.

Initially, the station was in a temporary location, an old CONEX container located near Radar's work site. A more permanent location had been located and action was underway to secure that location. It was hoped this new location would become reality within several weeks; however, as things developed, that was not going to happen.

The amplifier forwarded by members of the SDXA arrived and knowing the addition of the amplifier would really improve the working conditions, Radar quickly made the amplifier operational. As each day passed, Radar was seeing his operation improve and he was really excited about the impending upsizing of the station, getting away from 100 watts and a dipole. Radar's operation continued as time allowed.

It wasn't long before the SteppIR arrived and Radar started to make plans for its installation. Unfortunately, the proposed site that he had hoped to become a more permanent location became unavailable. He

located another antenna and radio room (closet) that the command made available to him, and he began the process of making this radio room and antenna site operational. This allowed much more operating comfort than the CONEX container and allowed greater access and ease of operating. Also it provided a raised location for the erection of the SteppIR Yagi.

Radar and the Stafford DX Association want to thank those who helped, both the foundations, as well as those individuals who, without that assistance, this operation would not have turned out as successful as it is.

Thanks go to NCDXF, ICOM America, INDEXA, GDXF, ELLI Print and OK1KT for equipment and QSL card support. Thanks also go to WB5DNT, N4NW, W6OSP,



Radar Larsen in Baghdad underneath the NCDXF banner.

In addition to operating before and after work, Radar was now able to break away and operate the radio as time allowed. Even with low power and a wire antenna, QSOs continued to fill the log, although these QSOs were mainly to Europe; North America was not being heard except for a few very strong big gun stations. It was at this time N1DG established a log search for Radar's QSOs on the Stafford website for stations to make sure their QSOs were in the log.

During the third week of March, Radar, along with the assistance of his follow workers, raised the SteppIR to a height of about 30 feet. YI9PT was on the air with a gain antenna and an amplifier; what a difference it made. Now, not only was Europe easy to work, but North and South America are heard and worked almost every day.

N4XP, Dick Larsen, Ella Mae Larsen, W5BXX, N4PN, K4BVQ, KEØA, KCØMKD, KI4MLR, DJ9ZB, N4RZP, QRZ DX and The DX Magazine (N4AA), The Insurance Guys, Jackson Piano, Focus by Hopkins, and Equity Commerce who provided financial support.

As a DXer, Radar is now "living the dream" and experiencing what every DXer wants. 

NCDXF at Congreso URE 2007

Tom McShane, NW6P

390 EA RADIO AMATEURS attended the Spanish national Amateur Radio Society's (URE) congress in San Fernando near Cadiz in southwestern Spain from 7-9 December 2007. Family members and friends brought the total number of delegates to over 650.

The conference covered a wide range of Amateur Radio topics with Sunday devoted to DX. Speakers on DX included Manuel Alberto Conceicao Marques, CT1BWW; Joan Carles Barcelo Torta, EA3GHZ; Jose Manuel-Txema Macías Machio, EA5BWR; Luis del Castillo Espí, EA5KY; Tomas Orts Server, EA5YH; Paul Granger, F6EXV; Nigel Cawthorne, G3TXF; Alvidio Lopez, HQ2ALJ; Ole Garpestad, LA2RR, and NCDXF. The DX sessions were chaired by Juan Rosales, EA9IE.

NCDXF was asked to give the Spanish DXers a better understanding of what NCDXF was all about and to explain requirements for funding a grant request. Board members Tim Totten, N4GN; Rusty Epps, W6OAT, and myself attended the conference and presented the NCDXF story. Since everything needed to be in Spanish, my son, Steve, joined us since he spoke the language.

The presentation included the NCDXF video with Steve's narration, followed by Tim's PowerPoint presentation with additional information concerning NCDXF's activities, including the Beacon Project. Afterward, we all answered questions from the audience. The slide show and Q&A session were translated into Spanish by Juan Manuel Chazarra, EA5RS.

URE President Diego Trujillo, EA7MK, told us that the convention started 21 years ago with two days of Amateur Radio topics only; typical attendance was 125. The URE directors decided to try a new format — extending it three days, but



NCDXF receiving award of appreciation from URE. Pictured (from left) Juan Rosales, EA9IE; Tim Totten, N4GN; Tom McShane, NW6P; Juan Manuel Chazarra, EA5RS; Rusty Epps, W6OAT, and Steve McShane.

with a day's break in between, and holding the convention at a resort in early December during the time of a national holiday. Off-season hotel rates, and having the middle day scheduled for sightseeing and local events, resulted in many Hams bringing their families. Attendance went way up.

In 2007, the middle day was devoted to touring nearby Jerez de la Frontera where sherry wine originated. The city is home to the world famous Dancing Andalusian Horse Show, an equestrian ballet accompanied by local music and 18th-century style costumes, all put together using movements based upon classic dressage, "doma vaquera" and the daily chores of traditional equestrian work. All the URE attendees watched eight

unbelievably complex choreographies with the crowd of about 1,500 people cheering loudly.

After the show, we all went to the historic city of Puerto Santa Maria, from where Christopher Columbus set sail on his second expedition to the Americas, for an elaborate eight-course lunch. There was sherry tasting, delicious food, entertainment plus lots of wonderful Amateur Radio camaraderie.

URE 2007 was a fantastic experience for the NCDXF group. We are grateful for the hospitality of the organizers and thank them for inviting NCDXF to be a part of their convention.

To view the NCDXF video, visit www.ncdxf.org and click the link on the homepage. 

HEAVY HITTERS 2007

We sincerely thank these supporters of the **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DX FOUNDATION** for their generous contributions during the calendar year 2007.

\$10,250 — W6AQ

\$2,000 to \$3,000 — Northern Illinois DX Association, Central Arizona DX Association (K7UGA)

\$1,000 to \$1999 — Southern California DX Club, Southeastern DX & Contesting Organization, K6RIM, W6EUF, K2PLF

\$500 to \$999 — Northern California DX Club, AA6DY, KØGEO, K6ANP, MDØCCE, N6TQS, NC8B, ND2T, W8QID, LA7XB, Anonymous

\$250 to \$499 — Twin Cities DX Association, N4JJ, AJ6V, JA1EM, K5UIC, K6GFJ, K6MD, K6TA, K6UM, K9CT, KA8Q, KI6T, N6OX, NN6W, W1PNR, W6JZH, W6OSP, W6RS

Swains Island — N8S

Alan Eshleman, K6SRZ

THE MORNING OF 3 APRIL 2007, I found myself standing on the beach at Swains Island and it was very hot. Standing in place was enough to make me break a sweat. Our team of operators had fanned out along the beach to set up operating positions and antennas with the goal of putting N8S on the air before sundown.

As the expedition physician, one of my first orders of business was to check out the medical facilities. There was a clinic on the island staffed by Sasa Ale, a nurse, and in short order I met her and she directed me to the clinic building. She also informed me that she was leaving on the same ship that brought us to Swains. A few minutes later, I was the only medical professional on the island.

In short order, one of the local men sought me out to ask if I would examine a 10-month-old boy with some sort of “growth” on his scalp. For a moment, I was taken aback; I hadn’t seen any pediatric patients since medical school. I’m an internal medicine specialist; my patients are adults, but it quickly dawned on me that on this tiny island with a resident population of maybe 30, who else was there? There was only me, the DXpedition doctor.

Entity #337

Swains Island became the 337th



DXCC entity in July 2006, following a change in the DXCC rules.

In June 2006 the ARRL’s DXCC desk modified the DXCC rules by adding

Paragraph (c) under Section II, DX List Criteria, 1. Political Entities. The new language specified that...

“the Entity contains a permanent population, is administered by a local government and is located at least 800 km from its parent. To satisfy the ‘permanent population’ and ‘administered by a local government’ criteria of this subsection, an Entity must be listed on either (a) the US Department of State’s list of ‘Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty’ as



having a local ‘Administrative Center,’ or (b) the United Nations’ list of ‘Non-Self-Governing Territories.’”

This language reclassified American Samoa as a political entity for DXCC purposes. In short order, the DX Advisory Committee and the Awards Committee honored the request that Swains Island be added to the DXCC list as the first “separation entity” from American Samoa.

The second DXpedition to Swains Island — and the first since it became the 337th entity — took place in July 2006. KH8SI was a small-scale effort



THE N8S TEAM

Hrane Milosevic, YT1AD
David Collingham, K3LP
Krassy Petkov, K1LZ
Doug Faunt, N6TQS
Eugene Kuleshov, RK3AD
Igor Booklan, RA3AUU
Vangelis Gekas, SV2BFN
Roman Tkachenko, URØMC
Stevan Stepanov, YZ7AA
Vel Djerić, YZ1BX
Aleksiej Romanov, UA4HOX
Mladen Bogdanov, YU7NU
Viktor Vasiljenko, RU4SU
Markovic Milovan, YU1AU
Chak Choigonjav, JT1CO
Alan Eshleman, K6SRZ
Mome, Z32M
Uti Gandy, KS6FO

that whet the DX world's appetite for more activity from this small island.

N8S followed in April 2007. N8S was organized by co-leaders Hrane Milosevic, YT1AD, and David



Collingham, K3LP. The group consisted of 18 Hams and several support personnel. David and Hrane were seasoned veterans of several important DXpeditions, and masters at arranging licensure and dealing with Customs and immigration authorities. Only four of the 18 operators at N8S were U.S. citizens; others came from Serbia, Macedonia, Greece, Russia, Ukraine and Mongolia.

On 1 April, in the lobby of our hotel in American Samoa, eight members of the DXpedition team took and passed FCC Amateur Radio exams.

The island

Swains Island is an atoll in the Tokelau chain and the most north-westerly island administered by American Samoa. Culturally, Swains belongs to Tokelau, but politically, it is a U.S. territory. The island's only village, Olosega, is home to the entire population. The island's size is a mere .582 square miles, or 372.55 acres.

The atoll is an unbroken circle of land, completely surrounding a lagoon. Because the lagoon is closed off from the sea, the character of the water changes with the amount of rainfall. With no rain, it dries up. With some rain, it changes into a

small, saltwater lake. With heavy rains, it becomes a brackish lake. The lagoon, as we quickly learned, is a prime breeding ground for mosquitoes. Fortunately, there is no malaria on Swains.

In 1856 an American, Eli Hutchinson Jennings, started a community on Swains Island. Jennings

claimed that he received the ownership title from Captain Turnbull, an explorer who had previously claimed rights to the island.

The island has remained in the Jennings family ever since.

Alex Jennings, one of Eli's descendants, is the current owner and a representative to the American Samoa House of Representatives. Jennings is a pilot who has plans to establish an airstrip on Swains Island. Jennings and his wife, Rowena, helped our expedition with the necessary support and permissions.

Larry Gandy, AH8LG, President of the American Samoa ARC, and his wife, Uti, KS6FO, also provided essential logistical support for the expedition. Uti, her sister Helen, and Rowena Jennings were our expedition cooks. It was my pleasure to operate as KH8/K6SRZ from Larry's well-equipped station. The pileups were a great tune-up for Swains.

The expedition

We sailed from Pago Pago on 2 April and 22 hours later, in the grey dawn, we anchored off Swains Island and began the task of offloading our gear. We used small boats to cross the

reef and hand carried our supplies the final few yards to the beach.

By evening we had established three camps — SSB, digital and CW — spaced roughly a kilometer apart along the crushed coral beach. By late afternoon, we were on the air.

Each camp had two or three ICOM ProIII transceivers, ACOM amplifiers and Mosley Yagis. We used verticals on the low bands. The CW camp had an 80 Meter four-square.

N8S was one of the most successful DXpeditions ever. At the conclu-



sion of the operation, our 117,205 QSOs were a record for an expedition using generator power and tents for lodging. We managed QSOs in CW, SSB, RTTY, PSK, SSTV and EME. From the first day, we had a dedicated digital station, captained by Doug Faunt, N6TQS.

The guestbook on our website is filled with praise for the operation. Our friends from the other side of the pileups tell me that there was not as much bad behavior on our transmitting frequencies as, unfortunately, we have come to expect. The DX cops mostly stayed away. Credit goes to the operators of N8S who used their skill and experience to manage the pileups. Toward the end of the expedition, I began calling for anyone who had yet to work this new entity on any band or mode. This made lots of the little pistols and QRPers happy. In general, if you wanted to work N8S and were patient, success was almost guaranteed.

For more info, visit our website at www.yt1ad.info/n8s.

Burundi — the 9UØA story

Frank Rutter, DL7UFR

BURUNDI STOOD HIGH on the list of interesting countries for our next DXpedition. Our team consisted of Manfred Gronak, DK1BT; Wolf Kunicke, DL4WK; Sigi Presch, DL7DF and XYL Sabine; Jan Maerz, DL7UFN; Leszek Fabianski, SP3DOI, and myself, Frank Rutter, DL7UFR.

Preparation

We began preparing our equipment months before. For 160M we used the V80E with top-load, as we did at past DXpeditions. For 80M we built a phased vertical with the help of Spiderbeam with two 18-meter fiberglass masts. For 30M and 40M we had 4-square antennas. The two antenna couplers were built by Siegfried Blechschmidt, DM2AYO and DL7UFR. For the upper bands we used a HEX and a Spiderbeam. For 6M DL4WK built a 6-element Yagi.

We started on 26 September 2007 from Berlin and arrived in Bujumbura a day later. With the help of the friendly hotel crew, we found suitable rooms for our DXpedition and immediately began to build up the antennas.



Our QTH in Bujumbura was the Hotel Club du Lac Tanganyika located on the shore of Lake Tanganyika; a very commendable location offering big surfaces for the construction of antennas and an understanding hotel crew.

We arrived in Burundi during the rainy season and during the day we usually had sun and temperatures of 35° to 40° Celsius (95° to 104°F). At

night, however, we often got heavy thunderstorms that disturbed us during our radio activity.

We had four stations, three for the short-wave and one for 6M. For logging the QSOs we used CT by K1EA, MMTTY, MMSSTV, Digipan and WSJT by K1JT.

Set up & operations

The antennas were set up by noon and it didn't take long for the first QSOs. We enjoyed the pileups we made and it quickly became clear that we had a very good antenna and station concept because we could work all stations simultaneously without any trouble.

Unfortunately we had strong QRN on 80M and 160M and thunderstorms often forced us to stop for several hours. Experiments with diverse receiving antennas brought no better conditions but nevertheless, we were active each night on the low bands.

The operation of digital modes did not come easy. We operated in the CQ WW RTTY DX Contest. Also in PSK31 and SSTV approximately 400 QSOs were made. Because of the strong QRN on 80M, RTTY was not possible on that band.

Naturally we wanted to work on



The team: DL7UFR, DL7DF, SP3DOI, DL4WK, DK1BT and DL7UFN.



Antenna assembly. DL7DF and DL4WK work on the Spiderbeam while DL7UFR and LD7UFN lay out the coaxial cable for V8ØE.

6M as on past DXpeditions and during preparations we were somewhat skeptical since the conditions were very bad in the months before. We had made preparations for CW and SSB but also for WSJT65A.

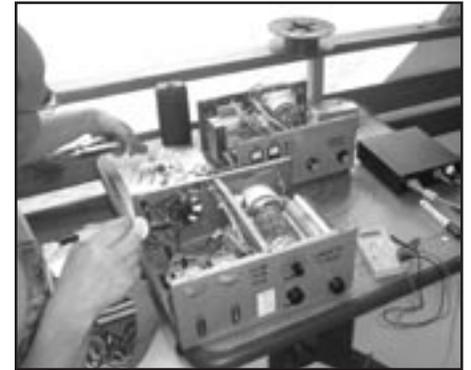
Shortly before the start of this DXpedition, we received an e-mail from Lance Collister, W7GJ, asking us to operate on 6M EME. In the case of very bad conditions on 6M, this kind of operation can be a chance to realize contacts on 6M. For this purpose we required a power amplifier with at least 500 watts and DL7DF built one. The problem arose in the transportation, because of our luggage allowance. We had a lot of other shortwave equipment and sponsoring helped us with the overweight baggage fee, allowing us to bring the power amplifier.

We ran a beacon beginning the first day on 50.110 MHz in order to analyze the conditions, but got no positive responses. We did have Internet access at the hotel, but it was very unreliable. We were able to inform by cluster-spots that we were QRV on 50.110 and on 50.209 in WSJT65A, but we could get no connections.

Operations on 6M EME was another story. We had no experience, but we had carefully read the 6M EME user handbook and W7GJ

answered our many questions. For the time synchronization we used a GPS mouse, arranging skeds on 50.190 with W7GJ. First, with the moonset we could receive and decode the

signals from W7GJ and K6MYC, but we could not get a QSO. Finally on 1 October, it was ready. We succeeded and our first QSO was with Johan Van de Velde, ON4IQ, at moonrise on the same day. Only hours later, W7GJ came into the log. Two days later, we heard from John McManus, W1JJ, and on 6 October, Gerard Van Den Berg, PE1BTX, made a good QSO. Then we tried skeds with ZL and JA. To the moonrise, we could decode the signals of three Japanese stations on



DL7UFN repairing a power amplifier.



Hippos at Ruzisi National Park.

50.034 and then from R.M. Macintosh, ZL3NW. Unfortunately, our answer-signal could not be decoded. Finally, on the third sked-day we got a QSO with Michio Miyamoto, JN1JFC.

A real adventure was 6M-EME for us with WSJT65A. We had hoped to get more European stations into the log, but unfortunately we didn't get

9UØA CONTINENT BREAKDOWN

	CW	SSB	RTTY	PSK31	SSTV	WSJT	All
N.America	20.9%	20.1%	13.3%	3.2%	0.0%	40.0%	19.8%
S. America	1.1%	0.7%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Europe	69.6%	74.7%	74.9%	84.5%	96.0%	40.0%	71.4%
Asia	7.6%	2.5%	9.8%	8.3%	4.0%	20.0%	6.7%
Africa	0.6%	1.6%	0.8%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Oceania	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%

9UØA BAND/MODE BREAKDOWN

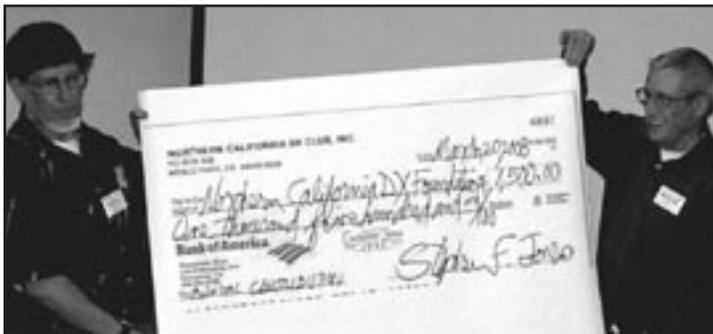
	CW	SSB	RTTY	PSK31	SSTV	WSJT	TOTALS
160M	127	0	0	0	0	0	127
80M	1,721	0	0	0	0	0	1,721
40M	2,546	0	0	0	0	0	2,546
30M	2,781	0	660	0	0	0	3,441
20M	4,586	3,464	970	149	0	0	9,169
17M	4,777	2,471	741	200	50	0	8,239
15M	4,161	1,081	925	0	0	0	6,167
12M	1,435	117	0	0	0	0	1,552
10M	475	62	0	0	0	0	537
6M	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
TOTALS	22,609	7,195	3,296	349	50	5	33,504

a sked partner. Our main problem was that our transmitting signal was too weak, but the DXpedition was on shortwave operation.

For the duration of the DXpedition two pilot stations were used, Bernd Koch, DF3CB, and Floyd Gerald, N5FG. DF3CB also updated the homepage and the online log during the DXpedition.

The last day of operation was 9 October 2007 and we made approximately 33,500 QSOs. 

NCDXC presents a check to NCDXF



Steve Jones, N6SJ, Treasurer of NCDXC presents a check to Rusty Epps, W6OAT, NCDXF board member.



Len Geraldi, K6ANP, President NCDXF (left) and Al Burnham, K6RIM, VP NCDXF (right) accept a check from Steve Jones, N6SJ, Treasurer of NCDXC.

New videos

In addition to the extensive video library listed on the NCDXF website, www.ncdxf.org (a portion of the list is on page 16 with guidelines for requesting videos), NCDXF has five additional videos available for your club's use.

- XT2DX — The Voodudes 2002 Expedition • 3X5A — Guinea West Africa CQWW DX Contest 2007
- Seven "DXpeditions of the Year" by Bob Allphin K4UEE • VP8THU — So. Sandwich Islands
- VP8GEO — So. Georgia Island DXpedition 2002, "The Unofficial Version"

Saint Brandon Island — 3B7C

Neville Cheadle, G3NUG

“137,500 QSOs with no sunspots” or “It all went to plan until there was a murder in Port Louis.”

When we were on Rodrigues, operating as 3B9C in March-April 2004, the conversation naturally turned to “Where next?” We liked the Indian Ocean for its ease of access, particularly from the UK, and we had developed some really great contacts in Mauritius, the most valuable being Captain Yves Goilot who had been an enormous help with 3B9C.

Ile du Sud became our target location. Yves made some investigations for us, learning that Ile du Sud was leased by a fishing company and that there were two lodges used for game fishing parties from Mauritius. There were accommodations on the island for 12 people, the rest would have to camp. The island itself looked ideal, being a long sandbar running east to west, about one kilometer long and 250 meters wide. It seemed perfect since all the main areas (North America, Europe and Asia) lay between the northwest and northeast from 3B7.

We used the very excellent Australian ASAPS program to determine how many operators would be needed at the bottom of the sunspot cycle. Its



suggestion of 170 hours-per-day of usable propagation justified a team of 20.

Challenges

Ile du Sud brought some new challenges for FSDXA. There was very limited power on the island so we would have to bring generators. We had never chartered a ship before but Bob Allphin, K4UEE, of 3YØX and many other operations gave us some very helpful draft contracts — the

charter cost £16,000 (approximately \$31,700). We needed a contract with the island leaseholders to house and feed 20 people and we also needed various permits from ICTA (license), Offshore Islands Development Corporation (access), Coast Guard, Prime Minister’s office, Customs and police.

We made two visits to Mauritius to explain to the various ministries what we were up to as well as discuss the ship charter and the island contacts. Eventually the license and landing permits duly arrived and we were in business!

Strategy

We planned on 12 stations sharing six linears with a switchover of linears between night and day. Monoband Yagis would be used for 6M to 30M. In addition, we had our four-square for 40M, two pairs of phased verticals for 80M (for CW and SSB), an 85-foot Titanex for 160M, simple computery (no network this time) and log upload by Iridium satellite.

Very early on we realized we would need two stations on both 20M and 80M if we were to make our 100,000 target. This was a real challenge for Tony, GØOPB, our RF king, but Tony designed some fantas-





tic filters so that we could have two stations on each of these bands at the same time; the filters were excellent.

Yaesu loaned us the RF equipment; it was outstanding. The power system comprised six Evopower HD 6000 SL diesel generators each weighing 175 kg. They were lightly loaded; in fact three or four of these generators could have run all the stations.

Our antenna farm was formidable, starting with 14 antennas; however, the number of antennas grew throughout the DXpedition as we experimented with verticals on 15M and 17M to give us second stations on those bands. We used two Beverages that worked very well on this particular island. We also experimented with K9AY loops and a special three-element phased-loop with mixed results.

By July 2007, all the permits were in place and we even had a license for 6M. The team was in place with

a doctor, Arnie Shatz, N6HC. The 625-line inventory was finalized and seven tons of kit had been shipped in a container to Mauritius. The generators were tested and shipped separately. Justin Snow, G4TSH, our antenna king, produced an antenna plan and the website, thanks to webmaster Mark Dumpleton, 2EØNCG, was fully operational and very popular. Features included an enhanced logbook search that gave an actual propagation guide from your own country based on contacts made. This was a world first thanks to Marios Nicolaou, 5B4WN.

The team

Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX; Falk Weinhold, DK7YY; Jens Sperling, DL7AKC; Paul O’Kane, EI5DI; Michel Brunelle, FM5CD; Tony Canning, GØOPB; Don Beattie, G3BJ (Joint Leader); Ivan Davies, G3IZD; Chris Lewis, G3NHL; Neville Cheadle, G3NUG (Joint Leader); Chris Duckling, G3SVL; Don Field, G3XTT; Gordon Rolland, G3USR; Justin Snow, G4TSH; Clive Penna, GM3POI; Eric Scace, K3NA; Bob Barden, MDØCCE; Arnie Shatz,



N6HC; Bob Grimmick, N6OX, and Pete Arnunge, SM5GMZ.

Setting up

We had a very tight schedule. The advance party arrived two days ahead of the main team. The container was unloaded and cleared by Customs in just two hours. Once the main team arrived, we embarked the *Sainte Rita*, eventually reaching Ile du Sud 30 hours later.

We erected the tents the first night

and had an early start the following morning. The fishing boats were unloaded and all the equipment was kitted up by Clive, GM3POI, and Gordon, G3USR, so that the three antenna teams could start their work while a fourth team built the stations, computery and the power set-up.

This all went like a dream. We were concerned about the strong winds so we brought 60 1½-meter heavy stakes. In front of most of these we dug-in boards as sand anchors. These worked really well and we had no problems keeping all the antennas up in the strong winds.

We commenced operation at 20:00 UTC on 7 September, exactly to plan. The pileups were awesome! In the first day we made 9,800 QSOs, but 6M was poor and 10M and 12M variable. We operated in four-hour shifts, all bands being staffed when they were open. As the operation developed, we added voluntary shifts; these were very popular with those trying to break the 10,000 QSO mark.

In reality even the predictions by ASAPS were over-optimistic so we were thankful that we had not over-staffed. We had some great openings into the West Coast USA including some on the long-path and we worked hard to exploit these. We also worked the West Coast on LF and two stations on 160M. LF static was lower than in D68 and 3B9 and HF conditions generated huge pileups, much greater and for longer periods than we had previously experienced.

The demand for RTTY was higher than ever and we decided not to do PSK so that we could try to give the RTTY enthusiasts a new one.

Eric, K3NA, looked after the technology and prepared daily charts showing propagation by the hour for each band; these, too, proved very valuable.

Propagation situation

160M exceeded 3B9C, 400+ North America (two West Coast; 276 QSOs on SSB).

80M ran two stations simultaneously on CW and SSB. 3,580 QSOs with North America (over 400 with



the West Coast). The two ends of 80M seemed like different bands as the propagation was so different.

40M was the real work horse, open for 16 hours each day.

30M hit a new DXpedition record.

20M operated on two stations, with the highest number of QSOs for any band.

17M was second only to 20M for volume. We tried a second station with a vertical with some success.

15M was patchy and we used a second vertical on occasions.

12M was great to Europe and Japan and a handful of North American QSOs.

10M had great openings similar to 12M.

6M was very disappointing. We tried hard but failed to make a QSO.

The real issues

The generator batteries were poor, some failed so we had to develop a workaround.

The satellite data upload was problematic. We worked out rather too late that this was caused by RF.

There were some nasty ticks and

some team members were afflicted; fortunately, they were disease free. Doc Arnie, N6HC, was kept busy.

The supply boat was late and we nearly ran out of beer. That would have been a real disaster; we had four cans left when the boat arrived.

The wind was strong but the long guy-stakes with sand anchors held well. The top of the 85-foot Titanex broke off one night, something many of us have experienced at home.

The positives

The reliability and performance of the Yaesu equipment was excellent.

The size of the pileups were enormous, even on the last day.

The support of the island staff and the ship's crew were outstanding.

The weather was wonderful with just a few heavy showers.

The team spirit was excellent; we had a great and willing team.

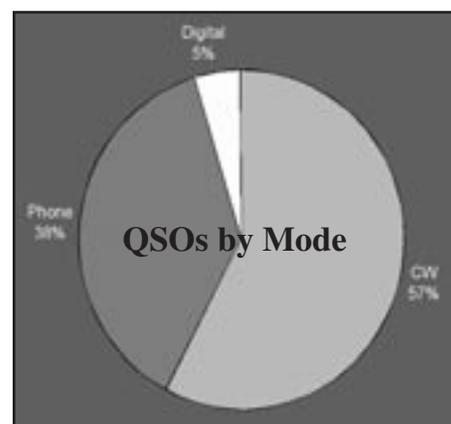
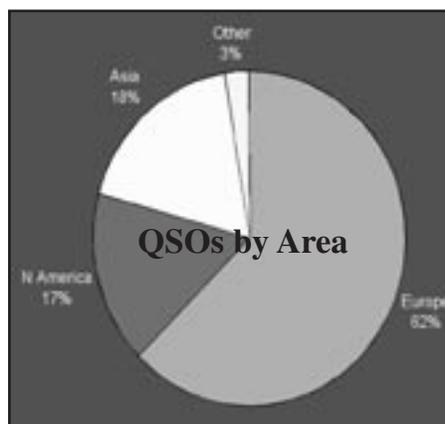
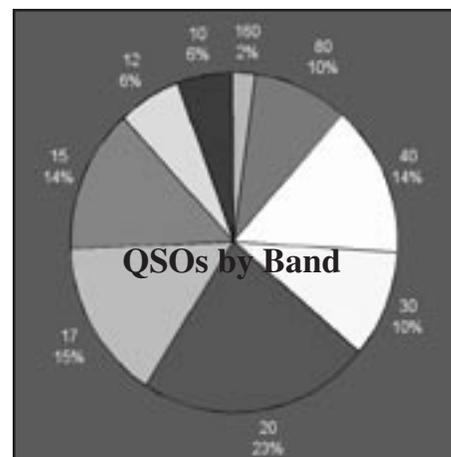
We had excellent and regular feedback from our pilot John, G3WGV.

Wrapping up

We finally closed down at 0400 UTC on Tuesday, 25 September, a day later than originally planned and loaded all the equipment onto the *Sainte Rita*. On Wednesday, after an early breakfast, we set sail at 0900.

We eventually arrived at Port Louis just after lunchtime on 27 September and there we hit a snag. We could not get permission to enter the fishing port because, apparently, two Indonesian sailors had been killed in a knife fight and the pilots had to move the boats to find the bodies. We finally got ashore around 1600 hours and the team went off to have a well-deserved shower. Don, G3XTT, Yves Goulot and I organized the packing of the container, using local labor, and then met up with the team for a final dinner and the goodbyes.

A really big thanks to all our sponsors, your support made 3B7C possible: Yaesu, Martin Lynch & Sons, Nevada Radio, ARRL Colvin Award and NCDXF, in addition to numerous corporate sponsors, club sponsors and individual sponsors.



Equatorial Guinea 2007 — 3C7Y

Elmo Bernabe Coll, EA5BYP

AFTER A YEAR of conversations with different Ministries of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to be able to carry out a Amateur Radio expedition to this African country, we were finally granted the indicative 3C7Y in August 2007.

The plan was to activate 3C with an expedition of various operators to take place in Malabo. In this way, the island of Bioko AF-010 would be activated and, after five years without any Ham Radio activity in this country, many operators could obtain a new one in the DXCC and a new island in the IOTA.

Preparations

Together with the Amateur Radio section of S. Vicente, we began to prepare our project.

On an April '07 visit with Fred Honnold, KH7Y, I mentioned the need for a CW operator to go to Africa. He didn't think twice before joining the group. Now our group was complete; four operators for a good expedition. Each operator had his own license in Equatorial Guinea, Luis Botella (EA5BRE), 3C7L; Vic Mira (EA5YN), 3C7V; Fred, 3C7Y and myself, 3C7A.

The date for the expedition was set for the middle of October, after the winter rains. We didn't know where our shack would be installed; this would be a surprise since the Ministry



itself had assigned us a place to carry out the DXpedition and we were assured that a 40-meter tower would be at our disposal to install our antennas.

On 1 October KH7Y arrived at Alicante and on 5 Oct we were en route to Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. We carried on our backpacks with a pair of transceivers, thread dipoles, coax, laptop, etc., saving money in shipping costs and time, assuring ourselves of having a station on the air in case of possible complications.

Welcome committee

We arrived in Malabo and were met with high humidity and a torrential downpour, along with repre-

sentatives from the Communications Ministry with all the necessary documentation for our stay in Equatorial Guinea. After waiting for our luggage, we learned that our boxes with the amplifiers, filters, tools, etc. were not going to arrive — and the next flight from Spain would not arrive for another three days.

The following day we proceeded to where the Ministry had arranged for us to mount our antennas and set up our shack. The place turned out to be a very humid warehouse, part of it almost in ruins, and hard to reach. We had to set up our antennas under a constant rain which didn't let up until the DXpedition ended, making work outdoors very difficult.

On the air

After examining the place, Luis and Elmo began to set up the Yagi for 10M, 15M and 20M. The idea was to have a station constantly active until we got the rest of our equipment. At 0742 GMT on 6 October, Fred made the first call in 20M CW, with the first station in our log being F2GC and, at 1759 GMT, Luis started his calls on 20M SSB, with YBØNFL being the first station to answer him. The pileups were enormous and, because





of the great demand there was for this entity of the DXCC, the whole group participated.

We had an active station until noon on Monday when the Ministry of Communications let us know that our heavy equipment had arrived and was waiting at Customs. Vicente and Elmo, our experts on navigating the bureaucracy, were in charge of getting the equipment. It took about three hours to complete all the police and Customs formalities and finally, in the afternoon, all the material was at the shack. From Tuesday on we had two, and sometimes three, stations in operation.

We finished setting up the rest of the antennas: a rigid dipole for 40M, two elements for 17M and 12M, another Yagi for 10M, 15M and 20M, and we used the 40-meter tower to hold the thread for the lower bands.

Propagation was difficult, even with Europe. We had constant QRN and, in some bands (10M and 12M), we barely had openings and on occasion our signals disappeared completely due to electrical outages that lasted up to three hours. We took advantage of all the time we could to be on the radio and although we missed propagation with Asia on the lower bands, openings with the U.S. West Coast were really good in the higher bands, as well as in the lower bands.



In the end we managed to realize a total of 13,500 QSOs in CW, SSB and RTTY.

Our resting shack was five kilometers away from our operating base and that didn't facilitate our work. We were also keenly aware that our trip to the resting shack during certain times at night was not a safe one.

For the duration of the DXpedition a technician designated by the Ministry of Communications was present on a daily basis to observe and report our transmissions to the Ministry.

Winding up

On 14 October, the last day of our

expedition, we were surprised by a strong storm that brought down and destroyed some of our antennas; that afternoon we concluded our DXpedition. At 1905 GMT, Fred realized his last contact on CW with JA8JO.

The following morning we picked up and packed everything into our boxes and by the afternoon we were at the airport en route to Spain.

Thank you to all the groups, associations and individuals who helped and supported this DXpedition: NCDXF, Colvin Grant ARRL, INDEXA, GDXF, EUDXF, Lynx DX Group, Clipperton DX, Mag-

nolia DN Assn., CDXC, Ocean Fone, URE, EA5AR-RCA, Nippon DX Assn, Proyecto4, Unión de Radioaficionados de S.Vicente, Big Island Six Meter Club, JR2KDN and W5BXX. 

DXPEDITION LENDING LIBRARY

The **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DX FOUNDATION** has a number of VHS/DVD videos and Microsoft® PowerPoint presentations on CD-ROM available for loan to organizations wishing to show them at their meetings. There is no charge to use the programs in the **FOUNDATION's** library, but clubs borrowing materials are responsible for postage in both directions. Please submit your request at least two weeks prior to your meeting and the program will be sent by First Class mail (CD/DVDs, \$2 each; VHS, \$3 each). Priority Mail rates start at \$5, depending on weight and destination.

In your request, please provide the name of the club, your meeting date and an alternate selection in case your first selection is not available. Please return all material promptly so that it will be available for others.

Submit your request in writing to Dick Wilson, K6LRN, via e-mail at k6lrn@ar1.net... or surface mail to PO Box 273, Somerset, CA 95684-0273, USA (*please allow an additional week if your request is sent via surface mail*).

The following is a very abbreviated listing of videos, DVDs and CD-ROMs; for a complete listing of programs available for your club's use, please visit our website, www.ncdxf.org, and click on "Videos."

For items 1-119, please visit

our website, www.ncdxf.org

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|---|--|--|
| 120. TN3B/TN3W Congo 2003 (PowerPoint) | 127. 5A7A Libya 2006 DXpedition by Rudi, DK7PE (VHS, DVD) | 134. BS7H Scarborough Reef 2007 by 9V1YC (58 min., DVD) |
| 121. Banaba T33C 2004 (VHS/DVD) | 128. J2ØMM Moucha Island DXpedition (off the coast of Djibouti) (VHS, DVD) | 135. ZL8R Kermadec 2006 (Raoul Island) by 9V1YC (46 min., DVD) |
| 122. TJ3FR/TJ3SP Cameroon (VHS/DVD) | 129. 3Y0X Peter I (VHS, DVD) | 136. 5L2MS Mercy Ship Liberia 2007 (34 min., DVD) |
| 123. FT5XO Kerguelen 2005 (DVD) | 130. WRTC 2006 Florianopolis (VHS, DVD) | 137. J5C Guinea Bissau 2008 (DVD) |
| 124. K7C Kure Atoll DXpedition 2005 (DVD) | 131. 1A4A Knights of Malta (60 min., DVD) | 138. Top 7 DXpeditions by Bob Allphin, K4UEE (DVD) |
| 125. 6OØN Somalia 2006 (PowerPoint) | 132. N8S Swains Island by K6SRZ (20 min., DVD) | 139. 3X5A Guinea (DVD) |
| 126. AH1A Howland Island Jan/Feb 1993 (DVD) | 133. 3B7C St. Brandon Island by 5 Star (60 min., DVD) | 140. FOØXA Clipperton Island 1978 by N6IC (DVD) |

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