

The Eastern Iowa DXer

The Official Newsletter of the
Eastern Iowa DX Association



An affiliated club of the American Radio Relay League



April 2002

Page 1

Club Officers

President: Heinz Blankenhagen, NRØX
Vice President: Rick Heinrich, NØYY
Secretary Treasurer: George Carsner, WØPPF

Repeater Committee: Al Groff KØVM
Joe Finkstein WØMJN

Membership Committee: Jim Spencer WØSR
Tom Vavra WB8ZRL

PacketCluster

147.51, 144.91, 223.40, CRNETROM

WB8ZRL

Repeater:

144.59/145.19

NØDX/R

From the President

Heinz Blankenhagen, NRØX

This has certainly been a busy and exciting winter for DXers. There have been lots of Dxpeditions, including the first Ducie Island operation, providing an all time new one for everyone. Then we received the very good news that P5/4L4FN QSLs will be accepted for DXCC credit. About the time you read this Mellish Reef should be active.

I was on vacation in Texas during February and March. The temperatures there were below normal most of the time while Iowa was running above normal. This also had a negative effect on the fishing, however it did improve in latter weeks of March, and we came home with a freezer full of fish. I worked a little DX with the mobile. Ducie on 10 and 15 meters and the Falklands and Argentina on 6 meters, plus some run of the mill DX.

It was good to get back to my home station. I worked the SSB WPX contest, which began the day after arriving home. Conditions were poor on Saturday but improved on Sunday. Beat my last years score by about 400k, with a final score of 3.7 million. It's a good contest for a weird call like NRØX, because it gives almost everyone a multiplier. The only club member I worked in the contest was George, WØPPF. While on the subject of contesting, congratulations to all who participated in the ARRL phone and CW contests in February and March. Most noteworthy was the multi-single effort by NØDY, NØYY and WØOF which yielded a very impressive 4.3 million in the CW side. In addition I have seen nice results turned in by KØGT, AKØM and KØVM. I think more coverage can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Rod Blocksome and Tom Vinson are presently operating as WØCXX/MM as they help with the search for Amelia Earhart's airplane which was lost in the South Pacific back in 1937. They have been active mostly on 10M in the

evenings. They will still be there when we meet next. I have a promise from them to make a presentation about their adventure at the fall meeting of the EIDX.

The program for the April 19th meeting will be presented by Dave Anderson, KØRX. The subject is the development of a TNC using a micro controller which has some APRS applications. I first heard about this project a year ago when Dave emailed me some of his drawings. It looks like a very professionally done project, and I am looking forward to his presentation. Hope to see you all there.

73

Heinz

The Editor's Corner

By Rick NØYY

Well I've heard the collective sigh as most of the seasons contests have come and gone. Sounds like we've had some stellar levels of participation and scores for the ARRL DX contests and the CQWW WPX Phone weekend. Good job all!

The NØYY station is nearing completion and is making a reasonable showing in the pileups. Finally!

I've also made some progress on the club web design. Had to learn the software first and then brute force some of things I wanted to accomplish. If all goes as planned I will demo the shell of the site at the April meeting. What I hope to accomplish by showing the prototype system is to get some feedback as to what features you want. I'll agree to be the webmaster, but I want to find an assistant so that we don't have a single thread failure problem. Think about who might be interested.

I had the opportunity to work with Jeff NØDY in his effort for the ARRL CW DX Contest in February. Jeff continues to amaze me with the performance he wrings out of a single tower system. Since we have the same tower, (and he's close enough that I can steal his ideas by watching with a pair of binoculars) its fun to use Jeff's station as the test bed for new ideas. But a capable station with reasonably good band conditions really stresses the operators to find out how really good they are! From my perspective it was indeed the operators that were the weakest link as the equipment worked flawlessly! (More on the NØDY effort later in this issue.)

The Contest Committee will also unveil a club award that has been designed to stimulate some friendly competition among all of us. Again stay tuned for some lively discussion at the April meeting.

The Soapbox – Insurance Contacts

Our patience has been rewarded with several new entities being activated in the past month or so. Ducie, St Felix, the now valid P5, and others. With new countries being activated for the first time and others with a long list of anxious DXers it is hard to identify the right policy for insurance contacts.

Recently I tried to play by the rules on the Ducie DXpedition. I worked them clear as a bell on 15 CW. Now I don't show up in the computerized logs. They had asked to avoid insurance contacts. They announced through their pilots that they had about 8% duplicate QSOs. To me it was clear that they wanted to ensure that everyone with any capability could work them at least once.

Yes I tried to work them on different modes and bands, but that is not really the issue here. How do we establish the balance between “work ‘em once” and maximize the number of amateurs that can work them as the pile dwindles and the big guns that work them every day as if they were testing the propagation.

I haven't given up and will send a card and plead my case, but there ought to be perspective of how insurance contacts are allowed.

Any ideas?

The ARRL CW DX Contest – NØDY Style

As mentioned earlier in the newsletter, I had the opportunity to operate as part of a Multi-Single team at Jeff, NØDY's station for the February weekend of the ARRL CW DX Contest. What a sense of satisfaction when it was all said and done. We outperformed our expectations and beat our pre-contest goals.

The team consisted of Jeff – NØDY, Bill – WØOF, and me (Rick – NØYY). Each of us brought a set of skills that we felt would allow us to compete in the battle. While I was originally to be part of Toni's (NØNI) team, I had travel and family commitments that made that a difficulty.

It all started about a month before the contest when Jeff and I sat around talking about the status of his station and some of his goals. We dragged out the previous year's results and started looking at the competition. From the Midwest we found that WN9O had the best score in the Multi-Single category. We knew that it was unlikely that we could do a credible job in the Multi-Two category trying to compete against multi-

tower stations like NØNI. So with my travel plans and Jeff's station we started to “design” a winning effort.

Most of that was easy. Jeff has one of the best single tower stations I have ever had the pleasure of using. His compliment of rotatable antennas for 40-10M and the Delta Loop on 80M were all outstanding, proven performers. Jeff had done some upgrades on his antenna switching and even found a defective chunk of coax that fixed some of his performance challenges.

But the best capabilities were his beverages for the low bands. THEY HEAR. We pulled together two very capable stations. One for running and one for mults. We ordered some of the Dunestar band selectable filters and had the station up and running with minimal issues a couple of weeks before the contest. (Remember in the last newsletter – don't leave things to the last minute.)

The rest is history. We beat all of our pre-contest goals by a wide margin. We even hoped that we could remain in the top five, but because NØNI slid back to Multi-single we wound up 6th. By far a personal best for all involved. I've got a couple of pictures to give you a view as well...

(Well so much for the best laid plans. Here I sit in Europe trying to get the newsletter done and mailed electronically, and I don't have the picture file on my computer. I'll bring the collection to the April meeting! – NØYY)

Free to a good home – I have a monoband 20M kilowatt amp built by one of our local RF engineers. I had intended on modifying it for 160M, but I now have another solution.

Interested?

Give me a call. Best way is via n0yy@arrl.net. Other alternative is at home (319) 373-5403.

Meeting Notice

The next meeting of the Eastern Iowa DX Association will be on Friday, April 19, 2002 at 7:30 in Room 219C Linn Hall on the Kirkwood Community College campus. Doors open at 6:30 pm for eyeball QSOs. Monitor 145.19 for directions if needed. See you there



Rick Heinrich NØYY
2062 Hindman Road
Marion, IA 52302