



Eastern Iowa DX Association

An ARRL affiliated club - Established 1975

In this issue
January 2024

President's Message

Club News

Member Spotlight

DX News

- Cycle 25 Update

Featured Articles

- Sheep Farmer Visit
- A little nostalgia
- Clipperton Memories

Member News

- Old Friends
- More Old Friends

Logbook

CQ Test

- CQWW by WØIY
- Parks on the Air
- M5 Solar Flare during

From the President's Pen

Greetings to all EIDXa!

I hope 2023 was a safe and healthy year for you and yours. With good solar activity on the rise, it has been fun filling the log with lots of good DX and new band countries. Here are some new data ones for me: FT8WW, XU7GNY, 3YØJ and 3B7M, only one more data to go for honor roll. I now have a 5 element 6 meter beam up and VP8NO, 3D2AG and VK4KX all made it in my log on March 25th. There have been other openings but I need more gain. GRR.

Sounds like I'm making this a brag column but, it would be interesting if each of us sign in on our log sheet when we come to the meeting with our call and confirmed count. This club has a very high total of countries per member of any club. When we look at the cluster and there aren't any calls in color showing they are needed it can get pretty slow.

ARRL 10m

- RAC and COVID

QRM

Club Officers:

President:

Glen Kesselring, KØJGH

Vice President:

Gayle Lawson, KØFLY

Secretary:

George Cooley, NG7A

Treasurer:

Mike Nowack NA9Q

Repeater Committee:

Jason Joens NRØX

Membership Committee:

Jim Spencer WØSR

Nelson Moyer KUØA

Repeater: NØDX/R

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Facebook EIDXa

Maybe we need to look at Elemering more. W3ACO Rich introduced the idea of getting more YL's involved. Our physical bodies are sliding down, the hair is getting grayer and trying to remember which rotor turns which beam is a struggle. Also, I'm sorry to report that several of us have SK mates this past few years. We would all trade calls from the kitchen rather than from the radio.

I pulled out my old 2008 copy of our club newsletter when I was last president. The big buzz was getting Kosovo recognized. DXAC had some real fun with the rules at that time. We now have Z6 on the air quite often.

Many thanks to Gayle for his past leadership and continued participation. He has been very helpful to me in the transition to the office of President. He also has a nice slate of programs confirmed for 2024 meetings. I'd like to thank Craig for his continued posting of the DX bulletin and keeping the web site up and running. Bob WØGXA continues to provide great newsletters!

Looking forward to seeing you all at the January 12th meeting at Mercy in Cedar Rapids.

Happy New Year

Glen Kesselring KØJGH

Musings from the lunatic fringe

Bob WØGXA

I hope everyone had a nice holiday season. For some, it's back to work in a couple of days :-)

I thought I'd use my column to give you some tips if you're thinking about submitting content for the newsletter.

The first is don't put a lot of effort formatting your article in Word. I publish using Mailchimp, an email marketing tool. It can do a lot of things, but I have to move the material over manually and all of your hard work is lost.

Instead, just write your story, provide pictures and put a prompt in the text where you want each picture (and a caption). I'll take care of the rest.

Any text file will work, or just put the text in an email and attach the pictures.

Second, any topic you can think of around this hobby is fair game. Regular readers know we get all manner of material for the newsletter.

Finally, pictures of projects or activities are always good. You don't need a full article to put in pictures. Give me a caption and brief description and I'll refine and format it.

The newsletter is only as good as you make it so keep those cards and letters coming!

Club News and Administrative Items

Meeting minutes can be found on the EIDXА website.

NEXT MEETING

January 12, 2024

Social Hour 6:30 PM

Meeting & Program 7:30 PM

Meeting and location information [here](#)

Program: Six meter meteor scatter DXing
Bill Caldwell, NØLNO



Card Checkers

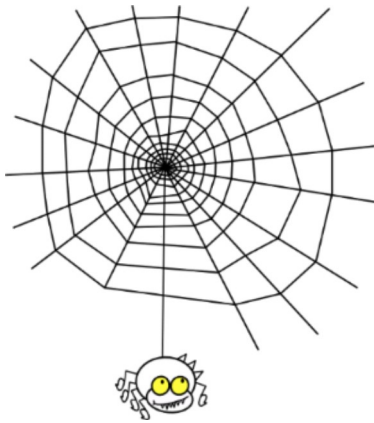
We have club members who can check your QSL cards

- Glenn, WØGJ
- Mike, NA9Q

Contact info can be found here:

<http://www.arrl.org/dxcc-card-checker-search>

Member Spotlight



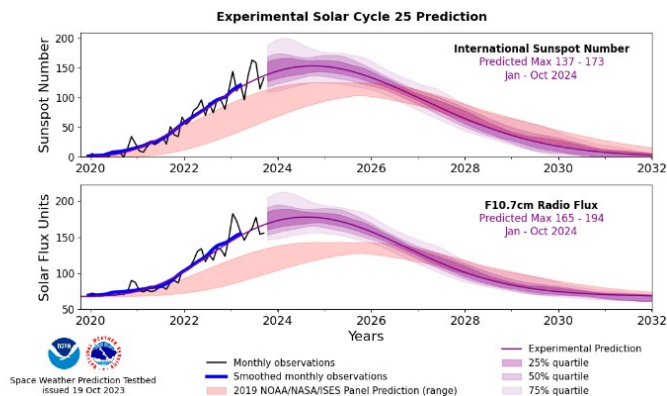
Nothing to report this month. If you haven't been featured in the newsletter, let me know. We'd love to do a story.

DX News

Cycle 25 Update

NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC) issued a revised prediction for solar activity during Solar Cycle 25 that concludes solar activity will increase more quickly and peak at a higher level than that predicted by an expert panel in December 2019. The updated prediction now calls for Solar Cycle 25 to peak between January and October of 2024, with a maximum sunspot number between 137 and 173.

The full article can be found [here](#).



Feature Articles

Sheep Farm Visit

Bob WØGXA

I used a two week trip to DC as an excuse to rent a car and drive out and see Rick NØYY and Dee Heinrich. Except for a 5.5 hour drive each way, it was an enjoyable trip.

Located in far SW Virginia, it's a nice area near Galax VA.



A very nice house that they've spent several years putting blood sweat and tears into remodeling the entire interior. Rick can now turn more attention to radios!



Shack is progressing nicely.



The Hy-Tower is up but still needs a feedline. There is a second tower on it's side to the right of the house in the first picture. Concrete base is poured.



View from my guest room.

Knowing that Rick is methodical and persistent, I expect to be hearing him on the air next year.

Bob WØGXA

Late breaking news: He rigged up a few coat hangars to operate in the ARRL 160 contest. A few of us worked him.

A LIITLE NOSTALGIA.....

Mike NA9Q

I sat down at the station last night to catch up on some QSLing chores and to keep an eye on the cluster for first signs of the VK9 Christmas Island operation. All kinds of DX spots were coming across the screen, TX7L, 4W8X, 7O8AD, ZL7A, TJ9MD among the 'rarer ones'. All were attracting the attention of DXers around the world. Even 160M was showing signs of life as I spied a ZL4AS spot on the cluster and snagged him on FT8 to fill a top band slot need. How convenient it all seemed as within 15 minutes the 160M New Zealand confirmation popped up in my LoTW account. Wow, a nice touch, that guy's on the ball. On that note, I happily finished my OQRS requests for my A25R and TJ9MD QSO's and OK'd the PAYPAL debits for the confirmations with a little extra to help fund each operation. I was confident that the confirmations would be in my LoTW account within weeks if not days.

I sat back savoring the new top band confirmation and memories of how things used to began drifting into my mind. Memories that pointed out how much DXing had changed in the 50 plus years I've been chasing the rare ones. My interest in DX started with my first taste when, as a Novice, I worked YV5CIT on 40M CW with 75W and a dipole 15 feet high. A friend with a Flying Horse DX Callbook looked up the operators address for me and I sent my QSL card off along with a two IRC's (22 cents each) and waited. One IRC would have been enough to get a surface reply, but two would get me my first DX QSL by return air mail. When that card came in the mail some weeks later, I was hooked. In the interim I had upgraded to Advanced Class and that started the chase in earnest. But in the early 1970's, working the rare ones was a battle for information, inside tips and developing listening skills. Success required a bit of luck and spending hours tuning the bands in search of rare DX. The internet and the information age were off in the distant future and existed then only in Al Gore's mind. There was no internet, no packetcluster, no cell phones and no texting. The personal computer was 20 years into the future. For DXers, it was a time of one ringers and 2 Meter FM simplex alerts and reading anything DX related. For years, The West Coast DX Bulletin was the CNN News of the DX world. Other bulletins competed with Hugh Cassidy's publication but it remained the standard. Each week it brought the latest information on upcoming DX, who was heard where, QSL routes, mailing addresses, solar activity and sage wisdom for the little guns. One of the only electronic means of distributing DX information was the weekly ARRL DX Bulletin sent by RTTY from W1AW each Friday. But not many hams had Model 19 teletype machines with which to copy it. Those who did were either not married or had their shack in an unattached garage. Again, there was no computer decoding.

Without the internet, sharing information among DXing friends was very important. I shared my weekly issue of The DX Bulletin with Steve, KØSVW and he let me read his latest West Coast Bulletin. The

2M FM radio was always on, listening for unexpected announcements that might mean a new one. Record keeping was a manual paper chore. Chasing a DXCC award meant keeping a list of countries worked and which were confirmed. Going for 5BDXCC required keeping paper records for each band. Then there was WAZ, WPX and various other awards, all meaning more paper work. Other important information we now have at our finger tips by electronic means came with difficulty. Antenna pointing data based on your QTH, time differential to other parts of the world, return postage rates for each foreign country (i.e. how many IRC's or green stamps to send with your QSL card), WAZ zone lists, etc. N6RJ's "Fully Computerized Second Op" sold by Ham Radio Magazine attempted to roll all this information and more into a 12 inch diameter two-sided cardboard wheel. The term "Computerized" had a much different meaning than what comes to my mind in today's world. In the 1970's the PC hadn't yet come into existence. No one had one on their desk. IBM could have sold me a model 360 but it would take up my whole home and cost my life savings. And in order to use it I would need to learn 360 assembly language since Bill Gates was still learning his ABC's and DOS was yet to be written. And Windows were something the XYL wanted me to wash. I still have my Second OP in the desk drawer, as out dated as it is. It's fun to occasionally pull it out and remember how convenient it was, all that information in one place. In its' day, it was essential to have one on the station desk.

Yes, I thought as I closed the station down for the night, DXing has changed. Some things changed for the better and some to the detriment of the hobby. With cell phones, powerful PC's, the internet, texting and instant news coverage of events anywhere in the world, some of the mystique is gone. But DXing remains. Changed for the better with the introduction of the LoTW, OQRS, QRZ, Club Log and ever more powerful solid state radios with digital modes, DSP, SDR, auto tuners, and amplifiers with instant warm up and automatic band change capability. Unfortunately, thanks to the clusters, pile ups appear almost instantly. But, I thought, any piece of information I might need is likely only a mouse click away on the internet. Callbooks, DX Newsletters, real time solar and propagation information, all for the scanning. Many DXpeditions run live stream so i know in moments if I'm indeed in the log.

In spite of all these changes however, for me, the on air challenge to add a rare station to a mode count or to fill a band slot on 160M or for 5BWAZ remains. There is still the thrill of hearing my call come back from the DX station through the pile up. That is what keeps me in the hunt. The challenge. Hugh Cassidy often quoted the Old Timer in the WCDXB. Proudly he proclaimed, "DX Is!" And so it shall always be! At least I hope so.

Before turning in, I set the alarm on my IPAD for just before sunrise so I could open it and check the cluster APP to see if anything is happening. How convenient I thought, I won't even need to get out of bed, open the station and then tune the bands to see if 160 is open. I

guess some things have changed.

Good DX, Mike NA9Q

Clipperton Memories

Jim WØNB/8

With many of the deserving around the world anticipating the first transmission from Clipperton in Years, I am remembering conversations I had with Bob Denniston, who put together the All-Iowa ham team which brought the world the FIRST operation from Clipperton as FO8AJ in April of 1954.

I have a few notes from my conversations with Denniston, then WØNWX/later WØDX, who captained that original FO8AJ team, and some clippings from The Des Moines Register.

There were four hams from Newton: Gene O'Leary WØVDQ, Tom Partridge, Vern Hedman and Bob Denniston WØNWX, and one from Des Moines: Leo Olney WØNUC.

Transportation was aboard the chartered Mexican sailing yacht "Barco de Oro" with an experienced blue-water sailing skipper. Navigation gear included the compass, a sextant, and an attempt at "ADF" using a Hallicrafters SX-88, the expedition receiver-of-choice after a request for Collins radios was unsuccessful. Antennas were 1/4 wave wires. Unknown is the source for the 100-watt transmitters. No high power. Bob said there were "a couple J-38 Straight keys, my own Vibroplex bug and one microphone". That is the bug I now use at my station.

That original Clipperton team was gone from Iowa almost two months on the trip originally planned to take less than 3 weeks, due to "weather and difficulty locating tiny Clipperton" said Denniston.


On April 24, 1954, Joseph J. Myers, a Des Moines ham working the DX team aboard the 70 foot sailboat said new squalls had pushed the team back 30 miles when they were just 11 miles off Clipperton, preparing for their landing. The storm had ripped apart the ship's mainsail. Shipboard provisions by then were canned foods and pancakes".

I was 13 years old when that FO8AJ expedition happened. My grandfather and an uncle in Newton brought me to the home-of Denniston in the middle of a Newton golf club.

FO8AJ
the CLIPPERTON ISLAND DXpedition

109° 13' W 10° 18' N

RADIO WØEHF CONFIRMING QSO OF 4/24 1954
 AT 1:24 ^{AM}/_{PM} CST UR 14.0 MC 57 SIGS RST 57
 RCVR TWO HALLICRAFTERS SX-88 PSE QSL TNX
 XMTR TWO HALLICRAFTERS HT-20 73
 VFO HALLICRAFTERS HT-18



BOB DENNISTON WØNWX LEO OLNEY WØNOC
 GENE O'LEARY WØVDQ VERN HEDMAN TOM PARTRIDGE

Clipperton Island was discovered by Captain Clipperton in 1708. Awarded to France in 1930, it is a small, low atoll two miles square in area lying 685 miles west of Acapulco, Mexico and inhabited solely by wild pigs. Our first landing attempt was aboard the "Sea-Rider"—we lost our sextant. Second try aboard the "Barce De Oro II"—lost diesel, sails and food. Landed successfully 1:15 PM Pacific Time, April 23, 1954. Worked 1108 contacts from the island.

FO8AJ 1954 Clipperton Island
 This was the second Hallicrafters DXpedition
 See the first Hallicrafters [DXpedition QSL](#).
 Courtesy of J. Rosenquist
 Operator: WØEHF

More about Bob...



VP2VI at the key. Rig is a Meisner Signal Shifter running 10 watts driving a home brew 150-watt amp on 20m CW. Variac to convert 95 VAC island power to 110 VAC for radios.

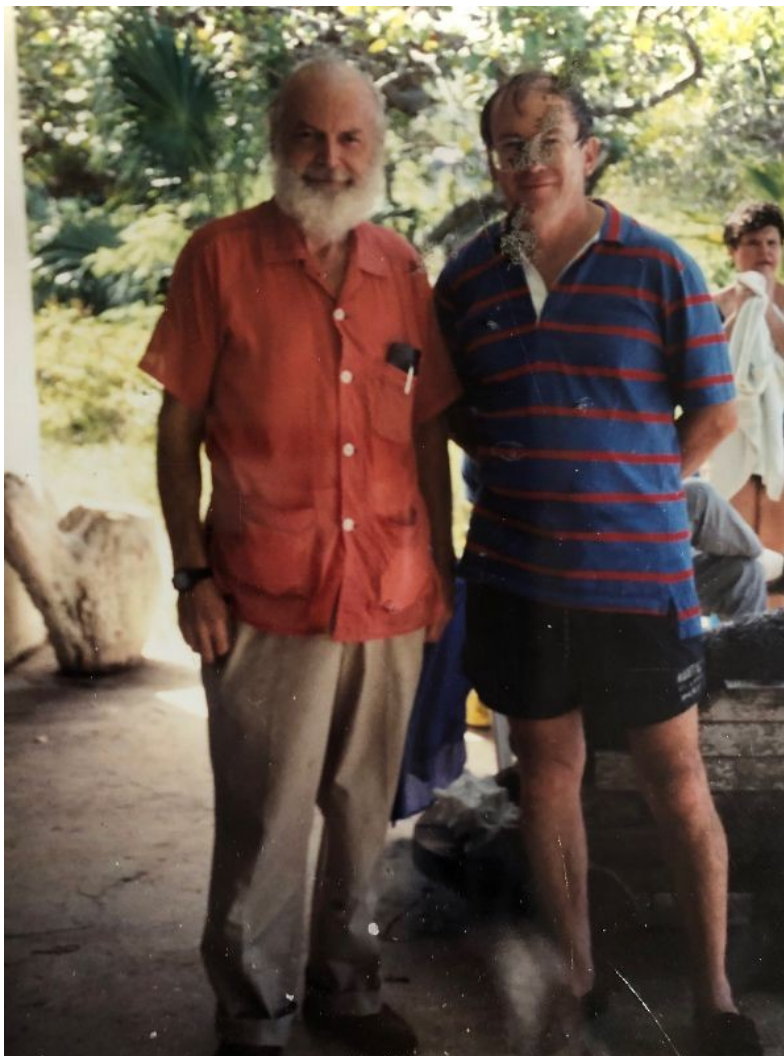
WØNWX was often net control of the nightly Iowa Tall Corn traffic net on 3560kc which he later suggested I join. During high school I

occasionally was a substitute net-control.

After retiring, Mary and I lived in KP2-land, and Bob Denniston was also retired and in good health on the neighboring island as VP2VI.

For several years we attended every monthly meeting of the VIARC together on St. Thomas, and often visited each others homes. We put together field-day teams, and his "Gone Wacky" DXpeditions for several years.

How many hams are lucky enough to have that connection with your Elmer, for so many years?



Bob, VP2VI with WØNB

I recently celebrated 81 healthy years, and have at least one CW QSO every day from the the retirement shack here in Ohio, with Bob's Vibroplex.



73, Jim-WØNB/8

Member News

Old Friends

Glen KØJGH

I just returned from this trip to Morocco and Switzerland. Met up with these long time friends. HB9AFI was on Heard Is back a few years.



F6BKD Bernard from Maurin France. Sandy (YL)-> KØJGH Glen. HB9AFI Kurt from Renens Switzerland. HB9BOI Michel from Grandcour Switzerland.

We had an overnight in Geneva so called all these old friends for dinner and memories. Great time... great guys.!

More Old Friends

Tom, NYØV

I met up with these V5 hams at a place called Old Wheelers restaurant

and car museum in Windhoek, Namibia. We're here visiting our eldest daughter and her family.



V51JP, V51OB, V51SH, and V51DR
Werner, Olaf, Stephan, and Edwin



Also had brunch with V51MA, Mike, along with his xyl Sonja.



It's fun to rub shoulders with fellow hams wherever you are.

Afterwards we head off to Etosha National Park to find the big 5 wildlife.

Logbook

Glenn reports good conditions on 6m - Ed.

Six meters has really performed nicely!!!!

So far in the first 10 days of

November: 3B7, 3B8, 7Q, A2, ZD7, ZS, FK, ZL

I've also worked tons of: HC, PY, LU, CX, CE & CP in South America

I'm up to an unbelievable 107 countries now on 6M. This is my 4th year on 6M. Until last year I used the 6M tuning on the SteppIR beams. Now I have a pair of M2 6M7's at 27' & 52' on the rotating tower.

73, Glenn WØGJ

A few of the DX I picked up last couple of months - A25R, TX7L, 7Q6M, 4W8X, 7O8AD, 7O8AE, T2C, 5W1SA, TO8FH, ZD9W, W8S(80 meters) TX6D, 5W0LM, 3D2USU, V85A, E51D (80meters)

73 Rich W3ACO

Here is a list of some of my DX logged lately:

6M: V51WW, ZD7CTO, ZD7MY, ZL1RS, A25R, LU1WFU, HC5VF, CE6UFF, FG8OJ, 9Z4Y, V26OC, 8P2K

HF: ZD9W, T22T, TO8FH, E6AM, 3A2MW, E51JAN, V51MA, V6SX, PYØFR, PTØR, YJØTT, H44RH, H44WA, 3W9A, A25R, 4W8X, XW4DX, Z62NS, XX9ET, VR2VAZ, 7O8AD, 7O8AE, 7O73T, XU7GNY, TJ9MD (160), TX7L, ZL7A, FW2CW, VK9XY, VK9CY, KG4NE, 9L5M, V51WH

73 Tom, NYØV

KØAFN - Highlights from the past three months -

SSB: (20 mtrs) TJ9MD, 4W8X, 7O8AE; (17 mtrs) A25R, TX7L; (15 mtrs) 7O8AE, TX7L, XW4DX, FW1JG; (12 mtrs) 7O8AD; (10 mtrs) EA9KB, 4W8X, CN3A, TX7L, VK9DX

CW: (40 mtrs) TG9MD, A25R, CT9/TF3CW; (30 mtrs) TX7L, CE9ABV; (20 mtrs) 9N7AA, 3B9/MØCFW, CN3A, D4C, S77HQ, TX7L, A25R; (17 mtrs) A25R, TX7L, OX5DM; (15 mtrs) A25R, TX7L, 4W8X, H44WA; (12 mtrs) 7O8AD; (10 mtrs) EA9KB, 4W8X, CN3A, TX7L, VK9DX

FT8/4: (40 mtrs) 4X1UF, CT3MD; (30 mtrs) E51JAN, 7O73T, TX7L, CE9ABV; (20 mtrs) 7O8AD, VU7A, 7Q6M, T32TT, EM1U, A25R, FR4OS, TJ9MD; (17 mtrs) CT3IQ, TX6D, BD7OXR, A25R, H44WA, RMØF, VU7A, E6AM; (15 mtrs) VK9LAA, ZD9W, TX6D, E6AM, E51JAN, YB2CPO, T2C, BH3BBJ, YF9UBD, YJØTT, BH7FFR, 7O8AD, H44WA, A25R, T32TT, V6EU (12 mtrs) E51JAN, 7O8AD; (10 mtrs) 5H3PV, VP8WA, 7O73T, ZD9W, E51JAN, 3D2AG, EA8BFK, Z35T, A25R, YJØTT, BA4LL, BD1IJ, TJ9MD, TX7L, XT2AW, T32TT

73, Sam, KØAFN

CQ Test

CQWW Report

Barry WØIY

"I was very pleased with great conditions to Europe and North Africa Saturday October 28 at 1700 UTC on 10 meters SSB. Happily working stations when I saw a spot for Vanuatu. I tuned to the frequency and easily worked him. I didn't even change change the beam.

Sunday morning had the same conditions and there is a spot for Reunion Island. One call and in the log.

Neither sounded like long path. Both strong signals in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

"Just seems like odd propagation."

I ran some paths with W6ELprop software, and to Reunion from WØIY the best time for 10 meters on this 10,000 mile path would be 1630-1800 UTC, with possible openings also from 1530-1900 UTC.

Parks on the Air

Bob WØGXA

I enjoyed doing the IA QSO party this year after going a few years without HF in my car. I decided to give this POTA thing a try. Reading the posts in a facebook group made me realize very quickly that I'd be working the greenest of green hams. A 35wpm contest it is not!

POTA has a very good web page that makes planning activations and operating extremely easy. The hunters take no action. Awards are all based on the logs uploaded by the activator. I didn't realize I had so many awards already!

I chose a "park" about 15 min SW of Swisher on the north side of the Iowa River. It is nothing more than a small'ish parking area but it suited me fine for an early Saturday morning.

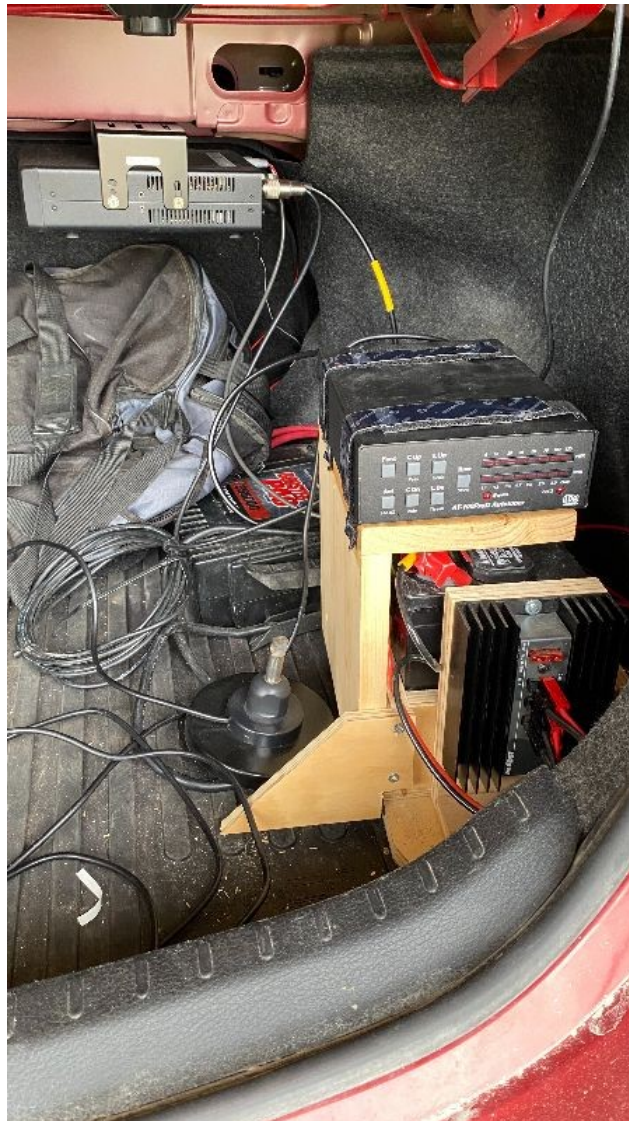
I started at 08:00 on 40m working about one ham per minute. Self spotting via the app is common practice. At the bottom of the hour I switched to 20m with similar results. By 9:15 I went back to 40 but it wasn't as productive so I finished my two hour operation on 20.

I used my laptop to log contacts but did all the sending by hand. Like the IAQP, I was trying to minimize what I haul along for an operation.

All told I made 114 contacts, and it was a relaxing operation.



A sleepy little parking lot east of Amana along the Iowa River



Installation in the trunk. The radio is powered from the battery in the wooden box via an ISO Power unit. The tuner is connected with the

ICOM tuner cable, making it a one button push to tune from the remote head.

I use hamsticks on the mag mount when I'm stopped.



Not wanting to damage my key schlepping it out to the car, I procured this case with pluck block foam.

M5-class solar flare and the ARRL 10m contest

Carl K9LA

This was published to the Society of Midwest Contestors reflector immediately before the ARRL 10m contest a few weeks ago. Reprinted here with permission. - Ed.

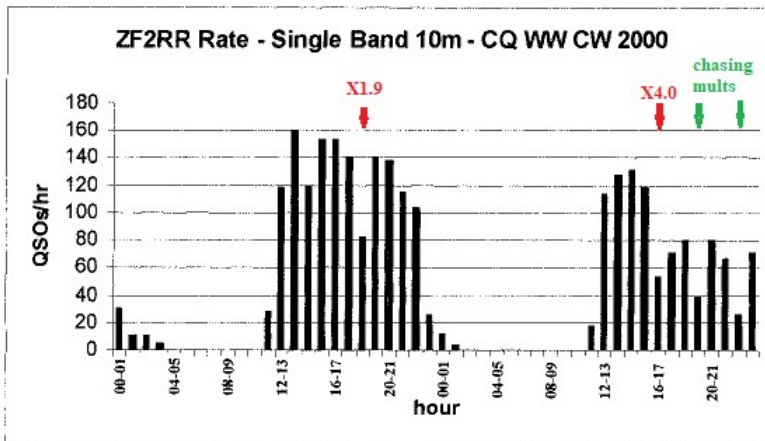
From spaceweather.com:

SOLAR FLARE AND RADIO BLACKOUT (UPDATED): Sunspot AR3511 erupted on Dec. 8th (2307 UT), producing an M5-class solar flare and a shortwave radio blackout over the South Pacific ocean.

First-look images from SOHO coronagraphs suggest that the flare did NOT produce a significant CME despite the intensity of the explosion.

As noted by spaceweather.com, the effect of the electromagnetic radiation at EUV wavelengths from the flare late yesterday caused a radio blackout over the South Pacific Ocean (the daylight side of the Earth). Let's look back to the year 2000 to see the effect of flares on 10m contest results.

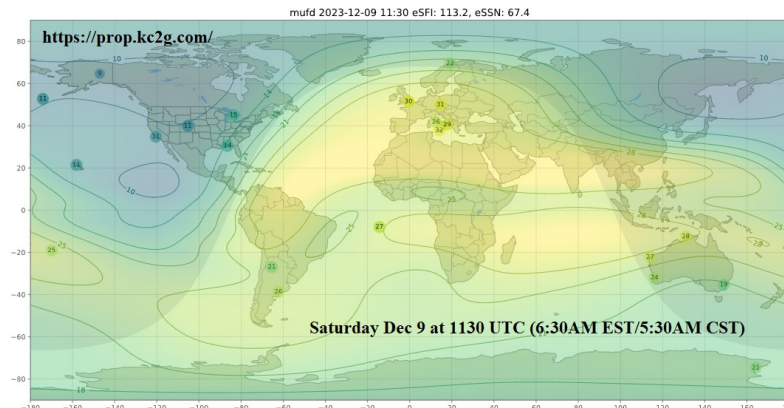
In the CQ WW DX CW weekend in 2000 at the Cayman ARS station, John K6AM was doing a 15m effort, Dan N9XX was doing a 10m effort and I was doing a 40m effort. Two flares occurred on the Sunday of the contest. Here's Dan's run rate for the entire contest.



The X1.9 flare and the X4.0 flare reduced Dan's run rate, but for less than an hour. The other two significant run-rate reductions late on Sunday were due to Dan chasing mults. These two flares would have impacted John's 15-meter effort more, as ionospheric absorption is inversely proportional to the square of the frequency (the lower the frequency, the more the absorption).

Now back to 2023 - the M4.5 flare would affect run rates to a lesser degree than X-class flares. The impact of the M4.5 flare should be over as there was no concurrent CME that could affect us later today or tomorrow.

As for what to expect today and possibly even tomorrow, here are worldwide MUFs from prop.kc2g.com early this morning



The MUFs over Europe at 6:30AM EST/5:30AM CST showed that decent 10-meter propagation was likely occurring. As Earth rotates and North America enters daylight, we should have decent openings. But just remember that Cycle 25 isn't too much bigger than Cycle 24 right now (and it may struggle to get up to an average cycle similar to Cycle 23). And of course another big flare could impact the ionosphere for a short period of time on 10-meters propagation.

Carl K9LA

RAC and COVID

Bob WØGXA

I had planned on a 10m single band operation during the RAC Winter contest. I managed to do it in spite of getting COVID two days before. Fortunately it wasn't serious (the illness, nor my operation). I managed 142 Qs in short stints. Overall, it is nice to have 10m back. Propagation to Europe was hot and I managed loud signals from all parts of CA except Manitoba (always difficult to hear).

QRM

Here's a newsletter from the SW Ohio DX Association that you might find interesting.



Click [here](#).



Ready for winter? (ChatGPT)

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