

NCDXC

THE DXer

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DX CLUB, INC., P O BOX 608, MENLO PARK, CA 94025

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MEETING NOTICE

PLACE: CABANA HOTEL, Los Altos, across from Dinah's on the El Camino

DATE: FRIDAY, 7 APRIL 1978

TIME: 6:30 PM Cocktails, 7:30 PM SHARP is Chow Time

MENU: Entree is Breast Capon Madeira without feathers. Price: \$8.00

AGENDA: Usual business meeting followed by a

BIG ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION OF
VISALIA DXPELITION STRATEGY, AND
CLIPPERTON POST MORTEM

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HILITES OF THE MARCH MEETING

We had over 80 people at the Holiday Inn in Belmont. Guests included; W6LII, W6TJF, WA6GQC, K6XO, W6UR, WA6RRM, W3QHN, K6HXY, WB6RZA, W6SUJ, K7SA, K7CAD, WA6TKT, WA6IVM, WA6IVN, plus numerous YLs and XYLs.

Secretary Pete, WB6OOL had over 10 Membership Applications to announce, and the 2nd readings produced 2 new Members; W6OYE and K7SA/6. Welcome, gents!

Treasurer Maury, W6KJG gave his concise report on our more-than-solvent treas.

Bob, K6SSJ with Roy, W6FOJ distributed beautiful brochures of the NCDXC Japan Tour scheduled for November. They are anxious to sign up those who definitely plan to go, so please contact Bob or Roy for the details.

Bob, K6SSJ, DXer of the Year Award Chairman announced needs for nominations for DXer of the Year Award. Nominations will be closed on April 1st, because the plaque has to be made for presentation at the DX Convention April 15th.

Jim, W6CF gave a brief sales pitch for the almost-full Galloping Greyhound Bus which will be heading in the general direction of Visalia April 15th. Those wishing to travel in that relaxed style should contact Jim, post haste.

Bill, W6MUR stated that the Club QSL cards are still \$23.66 per 1000 but will have to be done 4 orders at a time to keep this price as is. Those wishing to order cards, please contact Bill for delivery time estimates.

Hal, W6FQF gave a brief demonstration on fiberglass rods for quad spreaders, showing how they can be bent more than 180 degrees and still survive. Lengths available for 40 M quads, too, and with good prices and local sources.

(there's more - over)

Armond, N6WR, on behalf of Charlie Signer, WA9INK gave us all an update on the Clipperton DXpedition. Charlie has departed South to rendezvous with the French contingent. All elements are GO, and he mentioned that Charlie will be listening for the words "near San Francisco" when he's operating SSB - a tip-off for NCDXC Members.

It was proposed by Rich, N6GG that NCDXC could help the Clipperton effort by relaying the announcements from the yacht (F5II/MM) to the rest of the world as to the band/freq/mode, using the 2M repeater to coordinate this effort on both phone and CW. After discussing the pros and cons, the idea seemed a little premature, since so little is known about just how the logistics of the operation will take place. Bob, W6RGG volunteered some help with using W6TI as a relay because of its renown bulletin broadcasts. The feeling seemed that; yes - the Club wants to help, but we'll have to play it by ear 'til we have more info.

Merle, K6DC mentioned that some Members who were not at the last meeting were questioning the \$600 donation to the Clipperton DXpedition. Pres. Rich, N6GG explained that since taking over the Editorship and Publishership of the DXer, using the Club's mimeo, he was saving the Club over \$80 per issue - since July 1977. (8 times \$80 = \$640 and that's also \$960 per year savings. ED.) It was pointed out that since the Club had that as surplus, why not donate it to a group that could give most of the Members and the rest of the world a new one?

Lloyd, W6KG made a motion that any expenditure over \$200 be first approved by the Board of Directors and approved by 2/3 majority present at the next regular Club meeting. After talking that over, it was then decided to take that up at the next BOD meeting since it would require a by-laws amendment.

There was no other new business, so the meeting was turned over to Hiller, N6HR who gave us an excellent slide presentation of his very recent DXpedition to Ascension Island, as ZD8HR. He operated one weekend (Feb 18-19th) of the ARRL DX Contest and scored over 1.2 million points, single op, with only a TS-520 at 180 watts. He operated from the same spot as Jim, W6BHY (N6TJ) who made the World Record as ZD8Z a few years back. A fantastic radio location, but very rugged terrain.

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 11 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Final call - International DX Convention at the Holiday Inn in Visalia, the weekend of April 15-16th. The SCDXC invitations have arrived, and a few new items are noted. Jim, N6RJ will chair the DX forum and Larry, N6AR the Contest forum. Registration starts at 11 AM Saturday. Activities will start Friday afternoon with a convention station, operating from the Tri-Ex Tower suite. (Come see the tower in the suite! Ed.) A champagne brunch Sunday promises a full program. Pre-registration prize is a 51 foot self-supporting Tri-Ex tower. Pre-registration is \$18 which includes dinner and brunch, and for those on diets (no food) it's \$3. See ya there!

ARRL DX Contest logs - be be sure send your logs before your income tax. Very important. Also, send a copy of your Summary sheet(s) to Gary, WB6EXW, or to Adam, N6QR so that the Club score can be compiled and claimed. All entries must be postmarked no later than April 17, 1978.

Clipperton QSLs go to Clipperton DX Club, 2120 28th Street, Sacramento, Ca
Green stamps would be appreciated, along with your SASE. 95818

Our California Award Manager Phil, K6ZM reports that during 1977 the following California Awards have been issued:

#264	CP1EU		
265	YU4EBL	#272	JA1FDU
266	OH2BAD	273	TI2WX
267	DL1JW	274	JA2CPD
268	DL6EN	275	OH5NJ
269	DJ1NY	276	JA2AJA
270	JA2KLT	277	DL1CF
271	SP2AJO	278	DJ6TK
		279	JH1EIG

Those 16 deserve a lot of credit for their diligence and patience. The "sixes" are not especially known for answering routine DX QSLs. But the California Award helps "sixes" in pile-ups and DX contests because of just such operators as the above, who wish to try for the Award. Helping them, in effect, helps us too - in addition to the international goodwill it promotes. Let's all try to be as diligent as these 16, and faithfully answer those cards we get from our DX friends. It's easier now than ever with the ARRL Outgoing QSL Bureau. And speaking of credit, Phil deserves a bunch for his diligence, too.

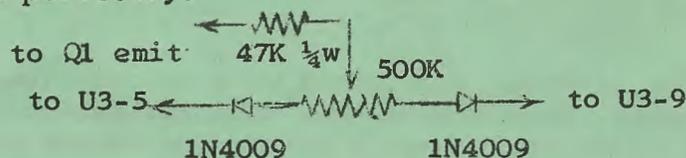


CLIMBING THE DX LADDER is a contributor's column devoted to recipes for reaching that next rung on the Ladder. If you have a current idea that has the potential to decrease resistance, send it along. We all want to keep current. So - for a happier homes law:

$$I_{DX} = E/R$$

WEIGHTED KEYING

In the February issue of QST (page 36) N4GG (no relation) came up with a neat scheme for changing the weighting (ratio of the length of dots and dashes) for the Accu-keyer. Unfortunately, the drawing was incomplete but the correction in the March issue (page 15) fixed that. I promptly installed it in my Accu-keyer and it worked perfectly.



Even though the clocking speed is not changed, the longer dots and shorter dashes cause the sending speed to increase. This could be a real advantage in a pile-up for those with a lot of dashes in their call, in as much as you can send it quicker - slipping it in at the proper moment. (wacht!) The fact that it sounds different (sort of urgent) is the other obvious advantage. The heavier dots should cut through the static crashes better, too, which would be an advantage on the low bands.

(more on the next page)

It takes some getting used to, so I suggest some practice with slowly decreasing the dot-dash ratio as you gain expertise. On the other side of the weighting pot the dashes become very long compared to the dots, and that is rather pleasant to listen to for rag chewing. It sounds sort of relaxed. It is also slower is speed. All in all it makes for an interesting and different sound to your sig.

As for the actual installation, I hung the 2 diodes and the 47 K $\frac{1}{2}$ watt resistor right on the pot terminals, using very short leads. Then I soldered 3 color-coded wires to these parts and slipped spaghetti over each part to protect the joints, and ran the twisted wires to the appropriate spots under the PC board and soldered them in place. Lead lengths are not critical. Pot is mounted in a 3/8 inch hole on top of the box.

de N6GG

WHICH TIMES FOR WHAT PATHS?

Here's a handy chart for the Suffering Sixes that Jim, K6LM sent in. It gives the most probable propagation paths to various parts of the world on a seasonal basis. It's from an article by W5UA in the Dec '66 QST, page 54.

W6 DX CHART

SEASON	LONG PATH	SHORT PATH
FEB - MAY	So. Africa & Indian Ocean 1400 - 1600 Z	Near East 2300 - 0300 Z India 1500 & 0300 Malaysia 1400 Oceania 0300 - 0700
MAY - AUG	Same as above, but Malaysia & Oceania better, India worse	
NOV	As above, but India stronger. Malaysia shifts to 2300 gradually. Oceania 2300 - 0100 Z	
NOV - FEB	Europe & No. Africa 1400 - 1600 Z India, Near East & Far East from opening to 1600 Z Oceania from 2100 - 2300 Z	Europe & No. Africa 1600 - 1800 Z So. Africa 1900 - 2300 Malaysia 1400 & 0100 Oceania 1400 - 1500 (better LP)

KNOBS - KNOBS - KNOBS!

There certainly are a lot of knobs to contend with on our rigs these days, especially on transceivers. In addition, the miniaturization of components and solid state devices on printed circuit boards has shrunk everything down, including knobs, and the size of the box. Big knobs, a luxury of past years rigs, are being replaced with thimble-sized ones, not much bigger than the shaft it's fitted on, in order to fit all the required controls on the front panel. Even labeling has become miniaturized and if the trend continues we'll eventually need magnifying glasses and tweezers to operate our tiny rigs. This amazing progression of technology has created a need to rebel at this dilemma of front panel confusion, so here are some thoughts for the rebellious ones.

(oops - bottom of page - pse QSY to next one)

Since each knob has its priority, the most important ones can be made to stand out by several different methods: change its color, size, shape, or even put on a short shaft extension to space it out from the panel.

Color coding of knobs is a logical way to help avoid confusion. Perhaps the manufacturers of our rigs could standardize on a color code of knobs, such as: GREEN for audio or receiver adjustments, RED for transmitter tuning, BLUE for occasional low priority tweaking, and BLACK for all the rest. Switch paddles and push button could be similarly treated. It's a part of Human Engineering that can be improved upon with some simple ingenuity and that should add to the pleasure and ease of operation.

A quick and easy approach for those who seem to get 2 or 3 knobs confused with each other is to put a red dot (XYL's fingernail polish) on the most critical knob. Another way is to stick on the face of a knob a small ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch) round gummed label and color code it with a felt pen.

The subject of knobs would not be complete without mentioning the RIT knob. Using a transceiver in contest work, both on phone and CW, the RIT is used exclusively when running JAs and Europeans. Since most of us write right-handed, and the pencil never leaves our hand, it would be MOST convenient to have the RIT knob on the LEFT side of the VFO knob so that it could be easily operated with the left hand. Unfortunately, many manufacturers place it on the right side, causing some awkward maneuvers with the left hand to avoid bumping the VFO knob. In addition, that knob should be larger than the rest and give it some venier, like the plate tuning. Then the range of the RIT could be easily increased to \approx 10 or 15 KHz for superb split frequency operation with XIT (Transmit Incremental Tuning).

de N6GG

NETS

Still looking for KG6S, or maybe KM6 or KJ6, or that 8R1? If there's a country out there you need that is active, there's a fair chance that someone from there checks into a net from time to time. Some news are strictly for working DX, like the Pacific DX Net or the Africana Net. But some good DX checks into the non-DX nets. Like the YL Net, Micronesia Net, nearly any net that operates on a band at a time that there's propagation to somewhere outside of the country.

Most nets are for some sort of traffic handling. Do you have a phone patch? If so, a new country and QSL are virtually certain. Maybe a phone patch would be a good investment. No phone patch? Well, it's not the end. If you hear a station you need, wait 'til the net closes and call him. Or, better yet, after the net closes, or before it opens, get hold of the net control and explain your situation. Often they'll be glad to help. And they often are full of useful information on callsigns and times and activity of the countries in their area.

de WB6RIU

GOOD GRIEF!

SAM: Say, Rubin - help me trouble-shoot this linear.

RUBIN: Sure, Sam. Waddaya want me to do?

SAM: Grab one of those 2 wires over there. OK - now, do ya feel anything?

RUBIN: Nope.

SAM: Good. Don't touch that other one - its got 5 KV on it.

