



# SCARBOROUGH REEF: LESSONS for NEW DXers

by Steve Jones, N6SJ

# SCARBOROUGH: Background

- #1 Most needed DXCC entity in the world/solar system/universe...!
- Extremely difficult access
- Won't be visited again soon
- Several excellent DX operators
- Quite a few inexperienced DX operators

# SCARBOROUGH: The pile-ups

- Everyone calling continuously
- Few listening to directions
- Extremely slow QSO rate

# WELL-MANAGED Pile-up

(Example: Martti OH2BH)

- 4-5 per minute on SSB
- 3-4 per minute on CW
- ~ 200 QSOs per hour

# SCARBOROUGH Pile-ups

- 1 per minute on SSB
- 1 per minute+ on CW
- ~ 50 QSOs per hour
- What happened to the other 150 who didn't make it into the log that hour? ... They kept calling and calling and calling.
- How could you get into the log? ...By listening!

# SCARBOROUGH: Their pile-up management techniques

- Listening up, tuning up ( $\sim 1$  KHz at a time)
- Listening up, at sweet spot (chaos as the pileup just gets bigger)
- Listening up, tuning down
- Listening up, giving up (too often!)
  - eg. Started working NA on 40M SSB but gave up after 3 or 4 QSOs...it was just too hard for the BS7H operator to complete a QSO while everyone else continued to call.

# SCARBOROUGH: Your advantage

- Listen!
- When everyone else continues to call, they are NOT listening
- First, find the QSX (Use Web spots & your ears)
- Second, determine the answering pattern
- Listen momentarily between each of your calls
- STOP calling when DX answers someone else
- Use this opportunity to find the station he has just answered
- Remember, if you continue to call when the DX has answered someone else, you are only adding to the QRM and slowing down the QSO rate.

# SCARBOROUGH: My opportunities

(Examples of how I worked them with 100 Watts while everyone else continued to call)

- 20M SSB

- “Bravo Sierra 7 Hotel North America 205”
- “Bravo Sierra 7 Hotel North America 205”
- “Bravo Sierra 7 Hotel North America 205”
- “Bravo Sierra 7 Hotel North America 205-215”

...I called once at 14210 and worked him before anyone else

- 30M CW

- Listening up but tuning down 1 KHz per QSO
- ...most of the pack didn't recognize this pattern



# SCARBOROUGH: Missed opportunities (only those I heard myself)

- W6--
  - BS7H answered him on three different bands
  - W6-- just kept calling and calling...
- KB6---
  - BS7H answered “KB6---?”
  - KB6--- never responded to his answer, resumed calling later, never worked BS7H
  - Did KB6--- leave the station temporarily?
  - You must stay focused!
- DX Summit post: “Finally worked after 4 hours of calling!” This idiot probably *did* call non-stop for 4 hours! If you can hear the DX well and recognize their answering pattern, you should work them within 20-30 minutes.

# SCARBOROUGH: Lessons

- 45,000 QSOs could have been 65,000, if more callers had instead listened
- When you hear total chaos in the pile-up, an opportunity usually presents itself
- But first listen!
- Listen!!
- Listen!!!

# SCARBOROUGH: Conclusion

N6SJ's Theory of DXing:

"Technology can put your signal in his passband"

"Only operating technique can put your callsign in his log"

(Learn to listen!)