



SOUTHEASTERN DX CLUB W4NT

THE
SOUTH'S
PREMIER
DX CLUB

September 1996

NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION

Tuesday, September 17th, 7:30 PM, Old Hickory House in the Days Inn, Roswell Rd., just inside I-285.

MARTY STERA,
KM4MG, SR
8/28/96

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

-Steve Schmidt, KR4DL, President

I was wandering around 20 meters during one of my first international DX phone contests, looking for some new countries, when I stumbled onto a conversation that went something like this (names and calls changed):

"CQ CQ, this is K5DOG calling CQ and standing by."

"K5DOG, this is N4CAT, name is Joe and you're 5 by 9 in Spartanburg, SC"

"N4CAD, thanks for the call; you're 5 and 9 here in Houston. So what are you doing this fine evening?"

"Ahh, it's N4CAT, and I'm just trying to stay out of the way of all these contesters."

"Oh, is there a contest on today? No offense, but I'm gonna have to pull the plug. I have no use for contests. Anybody who can't enjoy ham radio without entering contests needs to pack their radio in the box and send it back to the manufacturer. Contests need to be banned, and ham radio used for what was intended; communication! Anyway, thanks for the call...uh, did you tell me your name? And what state were you in?"

"Sure, the name was Joe and I'm in South Carolina."

"OK, real nice talkin' with 'ya. My name is Bob. Say, Jim, I have a daughter going to school in Florida! Small world, isn't it? Anyway, thanks again for the call. I'm sorry, but I just can't stand contests so I'm gonna turn the rig off for the weekend. 73, and I hope I'll see you down the log.

N4CAD from K5DOG signing off and clear."

"OK Bob, 73. N4CAT."

I swear I didn't make this up. I thought it was pretty funny. Kinda broke the pressure of my first intense contest experience.

Clearly, not everyone likes contests. Sometimes I don't like 'em either. There are a few things, in my limited experience, that I've learned about contests that people like "Bob" need to know. I also want to pass along a couple few observations from the ground level to those who are more experienced and miss that fresh-out-of-the-hole groundhog perspective.

First, for "Bob"; contests are rarely on Phone, CW and digital modes at the same time. If you just can't deal with contesting and the phone contest has taken out your favorite frequency, your ham radio weekend isn't really shot. It's a great time to brush up on your code, or you can explore the phone portions of the WARC bands, which are rarely (if ever) included in contests. Alternatively, you might find an opportunity to learn about RTTY, AMTOR or Packet. You don't have to stomp out of the shack and mow the lawn.

Here's another thought: Try it! You don't have to tell anybody; you don't even have to turn in your score (I'll probably catch some flack for this). Contesting has some benefits of which you may not have been aware. I have observed that it sharpens your radio skills.

I've always enjoyed sailing. I can point to one thing that has improved my sailing skills more than any other—racing! Racing is to sailboats what contesting is to ham radio. I've seen recreational sailors get disgruntled with serious racers when they had to alter course to avoid interfering with the event. Sound familiar? "Bob" is that recreational sailor. In racing, or contesting, you have to pay attention. Think faster, copy that call sign correctly, read the wind sooner, copy that code faster. Learn to communicate more effectively, even efficiently. Contesting improves your listening skills and your "radio skills." In the very few contests in which I've participated, I was not particularly proud of my scores; but I made huge gains with my code and operating skills. Try it, you might like it. Even if you don't, you'll come away with a new respect for (continued p2)

(continued from p1) good, serious and courteous testers.

There are other reasons for contesting. I spoke with one fellow who had tired of chasing countries and states for awards. He's an avid tester now because he "gets to start over" chasing countries or states for multipliers in every contest he plays in. For many people, contesting is simply a new way to play with the radio privileges they've been granted.

Here's a couple groundhog level observations for you serious testers:

First, be courteous. I doubt there is a higher percentage of testers that transmit on a frequency without first checking to see if it's in use, but they sure present a high profile. Watch for segments that have been allocated in "band plans" for users like slow scan television and others. Also try to be considerate of your peers, fellow testers. I was CQing at low power on a frequency recently and had a fellow come along and work me. He then started CQing right on my frequency, obviously at full legal power (maybe higher). That may be a common tactic in contesting, but it's not one I admire.

Second, be encouraging. Remember, it's the scores of "little guns" and part-time testers who enable you to beef up your score and set those world records. By encouraging and assisting new testers, you ensure that your particular niche in the hobby has a broad base of talent and participation that will keep it intact. Many part-time testers do it for the new country, or state to add to their QSL collection. As irksome as it may occasionally be, try to QSL all those requests. My interest in contesting was initially kindled by chasing QSL cards; I'm certainly not unique. Many top-notch testers win the plaques without treading on toes. Those are the truly great contest operators.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

73, Steve KR4DL.

FROM THE VP

-Sonny Marsh, KE4LDJ, VP

I'm proud to say I'm back on the air full bore thanks to the help of the ARRL Field Representatives. The spectrum analyzer was brought in for the second time enabling Neal, AE6E, to climb the tower, shake a few cables and find the problem! After more than a year of interfering with my neighbor's televisions, telephones, and stereos, we found the problem was a simple loose connection at the feedpoint of the beam!

Our speaker for the next meeting will be Bob Allphin, K4UEE, discussing his recent DXpedition to Juan Fernandez, CE0Z. Bob will include slides, video and commentary. He will also spend some time previewing the upcoming Heard Island DXpedition.

Hope to see you at the meeting.

-73, Sonny, KE4LDJ

MARTY STERN, KM4MG, SK

-Dick, K2UFT

Mensa Guru...

That's the "kidding" set of phonetics I used with Marty - he didn't mind since he invented them. Mental Giant was an alternative. KM4MG - He certainly qualified for MENSA, although he never joined.

He was an attorney, but he didn't practice. He was an entrepreneur - that he didn't need to practice, he was an expert at it. Marty came across as a pretty casual guy - his business ethic, drive and determination were well hidden - he wouldn't let those traits interfere with his personal relationships. Can you provide some sodas for an office party? The answer would be something like "cold or hot, how many, when and would you like chips to go with them?" What do we owe you? "I'll include it in my next bill" - which somehow never arrived.

As I mused one day about not having an amp for the upcoming 160 meter test, he offered his AL80 as a loan, and in fact he even delivered it! It was pretty hard to even buy Marty a lunch to try to even up the trades. His sons Mark and David told me of their amazement at the number of people, previously unknown to the family, who called with condolences.

Marty touched many lives, giving willingly of his time and talents and accepting little else but praise in return. What else can we say but that we'll miss you for a while - hopefully we'll catch up with you in some other incarnation - then we'll do Chinese and the tab's on us.

73, K2UFT

The SEDXC Newsletter is published monthly by the Southeastern DX Club. All opinions expressed by the contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, officers, or club. We welcome your opinion.

BEEPS DE K2UFT

-Dick Bentley, K2UFT, Activities Director

Assuming the membership's approval of the extension of Steve's term for one more year, we can look forward to carrying our programs through 1997 with KR4DL at the helm. Among the activities I'd like to see happen this year is at minimum a DX Dinner or ideally a DXPO '97 in connection with the Atlanta Ham Festival, which will be held June 21 and 22, 1997 at City Hall East. Anyone out there willing to help make this a reality?

As was mentioned at last meeting, one of the duties of the Activities Manager is to keep track of the scores submitted to the various contests by members to be sure we receive Club credit where due and that individual efforts are also recognized. So, please send in those summaries, preferably on the Internet at dickb@akorn.net or via mail if necessary, to 1507 Thornhill Court, Dunwoody, GA 30338.

We've already started talking up participation in the CQWW 160 Tests this winter. Plans are afoot for at least two off-shore operations and one additional off-shore operation would help us edge closer to beating out Frankford again. Remember a few years back when everyone was complaining about the wall of RF coming from Georgia and surrounding states and wondering whether there was anyone on from other states?

If you aren't operating on 160 due to lack of antennas, there are many effective "compact" designs and club members who would be willing to help you get something together for your station. Let your need be known since we need your points to compete effectively.

See you at the next meeting.

73 Dick, K2UFT Activities Manager

DALE, N4REE MOVES TO LONDON

I'll be there for at least four years (that's when my daughter graduates from high school). I'm looking forward to starting from scratch again on DXCC and WAS (maybe I'll try to do it QRP this time)! I also hope to provide a needed multiplier for CQWW 160 SSB and CW, if I can find a place with enough room for a decent antenna. Watch for my spot on the DX PacketCluster (G/N4REE)!

-73. Dale, N4REE

TREASURER'S REPORT

-Nancy Draheim, NK4U

Balance 7/31/96 (Checkbook)	<u>\$2966.18</u>
Income:	<u>\$120.00</u>
Expenses:	
June Newsletter	88.40
July Newsletter	89.22
Cluster	41.95
Bank Charges	10.00
Total Expenses	229.57
Balance Checking 8/31/96	<u>\$2856.61</u>

Packet Cluster funds are not from general funds but are donated for that purpose. Please come to the next meeting and help elect your new officers. My condolences to the family of Marty, KM4MG, I will miss him. May those sun spots hurry up and increase!

73, Nancy NK4U

DX TIDBITS

-Rick, N4XMX

The first time I saw Marty I had just showed up to take my Novice test. He was with a few others waiting for the church to be opened. I wandered over, impressed by the blue ARC jacket he had on. He said hi and I mentioned why I was there. He said, "Don't worry! You'll pass it easily!" Such encouragement was very welcome! That's the kind of guy Marty was. Always easy to get along with, always helped, and just a great guy. I'll miss him...

I just received my 5A1A card from John, N4AA! It has been awhile since a card has been so long in waiting and eagerly awaited! Since I started DX'ing in 1990, I did not have the benefit of the earlier, more tolerant government in that country. It was easier to work 5A1A than Mt. Athos (which I still need). Makes you wonder...

Guess I need to send off my card for W4O, the official station for something that happened in Atlanta this summer. Wonder what to put on my N400XMX cards.... CU in the pileups... -Rick, N4XMX