



Long Path



Volume 30 Issue 4

SEMDXA NEWSLETTER

April 2020



From the Editor's DESK

What a difference one month makes! March 1st we were out and about shopping, visiting friends, going to restaurants, having ham meetings. Poof! All gone in a blink of an eye. This epic time frame we are experiencing is totally foreign to most of us. Sacrificing mobility and freedom to go as we please is totally alien in this part of the world. There are parts of this world where this in fact is normal life. We are so fortunate to have the freedoms that our fathers and forefathers so valiantly fought for. Let us not forget what they endured.

But now, we must all temporarily sacrifice our freedoms to overcome this present enemy - Covid-19. Self-sheltering and giving up our desires to visit family and friends are very important at this time. For your own health and longevity, please self-isolate.

Soooooo. I've taken this opportunity personally to rebuild the Collins 30S1 which I purchased from Bob, K8VFFV's estate. Progress is slow, but going well. Had some surprises along the way. I have a bit of an exposé later in the newsletter. Hope you find it an enjoyable read.

We also have the third and final installment of Keith, KB1SF's, "Working DXCC on Vacation".

Ham Radio activity seems to have picked up in recent weeks. I have noticed quite a bit of 20M activity from the North Americas to the South Americas. Mind you, this is the time of the year—being the equinox season— but there seems to be more activity than normal. Even some 10M opens going south have been reported. So join in.

All DXpeditions that were scheduled for this half of the year have been

...continues—next page

Calendar

NEXT Meeting:

2nd THURSDAY

June 11, 2020

Maybe

Gino's Restaurant

1999 Cass Lake Rd,
Keego Harbor, MI 48320

Directions: [Gino's Pizza](#)

Gathering starts at **5:30 pm (dinner on you) and meeting begins at 7 pm** followed by the presentation.

PRESENTATION

TBA

SEMDXA OFFICERS

President: Robert Mueller, **K8RGM**

Vice-president: Al Bailey, **K8SIX**

Treasurer: Brad Nowak, **N8SNM**

Secretary: Doug Basberg, **N8VY**

Program Director: Gerry Treas, **K8GT**
and Steve Culp, **K8QKY**

Directors: Ted, **K8NA**, and Lee, **N8LJ**

Club Appointees:

Web Site Editor: Larry Gauthier, **K8UT**

LP Publisher: Chet Latawiec, **VE3CFK**

ARRL and CQ Appointees:

DXCC Checker: Stan Arnett, **AC8W**

DXCC Checker: Bill Jones, **N8KF**

DXCC Checker: Less Butler, **W8MSP**

VUCC Checker: Al Bailey, **K8SIX**

VUCC Checker: Jim Sanford, **K8ZZU**

CQ Checker: Mike Rudzki, **N8MR**

CQ Checker: Al Bailey, **K8SIX**

From the Editor's Desk (cont'd)

cancelled, so you might as well enjoy the propagation that we do have. Maybe it's time to start your DXCC all over again?

Reminder. No SEMDXA meetings in April or May.

Stay safe.

Stay home.

Stay healthy.

Good DX

73,

Chet VE3CFK

SEMDXA March 2020 Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Al Bailey, K8SIX Vice President

Meeting called to order by VP K8SIX at 7:00 and member introduction was taken.

Those in attendance were N8LJ, K8PGJ, KB8TXZ, K8SIX, N8SNM, K8NWD, LZ4GU, W1SKU, WB8SBI, KB5OO and one other unknown for a total of 11.

Since there were so few in attendance, and no projector, it was decided we would close early.

Lee made a motion that we cancel the April meeting due to the Corona Virus if Glenn, W0GJ, decided it was not going to be worth the risk. It was left at that and Brad was to send an email to the group to let them know of our plans (Glenn was contacted and agreed to reschedule for later this year).

At that point Brad gave the Treasurer report and a motion was made to accept which was approved.

At about 8:15 a motion was made to dismiss and was approved.

CANCELLATIONS

Seems just about everything is cancelled for at least the next 3 months, April to end of June. On that list include:

- SEMDXA Meetings
- Hamvention in Xenia, including Contest University. More on this in later pages.
- Flea markets and swaps (at least till end of June)
- DXpeditions around the world
- Other club meetings and gatherings.
- Visalia International DX Convention
- W9DXCC in Chicago

**NOT
Cancelled
Yet**

Some things to look forward to:

- Poor propagation (I really wish they'd cancel this!)
- Sun spot Cycle 25
- 2021 Hamvention
- My birthday and your birthday

W9DXCC

Cancelled.

NCJ & QEX MAGAZINES

ARRL says it will be putting NCJ and QEX magazines online for members sometime soon.

The magazines will be free to all members online, and paper issues will remain available by separate subscription. Details are in the May issue of QST, which will be online as of April 8.

Thanks Wes, AC8JF

SunRISE

A new NASA mission is studying how the sun generates storm particles into space. Called "SunRISE," it is an array of six "CubeSats" operating as a radio telescope. It will launch in 2023.

<https://www.nasa.gov/press-release/nasa-selects-mission-to-study-causes-of-giant-solar-particle-storms> .

New Q Codes

QWH - Did you wash your hands? I washed mine.

QKB 57 11 - I have "57" knobs and buttons on radio, but only know how to use "11"

SOUTH ORKNEY



South Orkney 2020
VP8PJ

The Annual Intrepid Spirit Award

The VP8PJ team has been given this year's award from the Intrepid DX Group for their South Orkney operation. The organization noted the expedition was well planned and executed from a remote, cold and harsh place. "The award is to recognize the entire team's collective effort to activate these challenging and much needed entities." On the team were K3EL, W2LK, K5GS, W7XU, DJ9RR, HA0NAR, UT6UD, N6XG, N7QT, W1SRD, WA6O, NG2H, HB9BXE and VK6CQ. The award is in memory of T6AF, James McLaughlin, killed in Afghanistan in April, 2011.

Contest University

This year's Contest University in Dayton was canceled. Now CTU will go ahead online using Zoom teleconferencing.

There are no details yet. K3LR says details will be posted on the CTU website "soon."

Thanks Wes, AC8JF

K3LR, Tim Duffy gives us details for the refund procedure for [Contest University](#), [Dayton Contest Dinner](#) , [Dayton Top Band Dinner](#) . Each have their own procedures. "Hope to see everyone in 2021", says Tim.

DXCC News

With DXCC and ARRL staffers working from home presently, plaque orders are delayed until the office reopens. Other DXCC applications are being held up too. LoTW continues to operate, apparently as normal. N8RR, Charlie, is sitting at 2,999 in his DXCC Challenge and is understandably eager to add the two more he has ready to go, to pass that 3,000 mark!

Thanks "The Daily DX"

SIX METERS

WT8V and W3LPL note a six meter opening to the south on Saturday. It's time to put that 6M antenna and rotator up! WT8V says he had his pointed south, monitoring 50.313 FT8. First he saw the Caymans and Cuba coming through, for several hours. W3LPL says "Yep, the first hints of one-hop sporadic-E this season. It will become more and more common as we go through April. Not much chance of double hop until May."

Thanks "The Daily DX"

CY0-Sable Island

WA4DAN, Murray Adams, is seeking support for a CY0C expedition planned for October 17-26, 2020. Sable is now the number 56 most needed at Club Log worldwide and ranked even higher on CW and digital modes, number 41 in Europe on CW and number 16 on digital. In Asia, Sable is ranked number nine on CW and number two on digital. The operation has a goal of as many as 50,000 QSOs on all bands, 160-10 meters. They also plan an EME station with WW2DX operating it. The group includes WA4DAN, K4UEE, K5YY, AA4NC, N8AA, N2IEN, WW2DX, W4DKS and N2TU. They will be geared up with Elecraft K3s, Icom 7300s and Elecraft KPA500 amplifiers to Hy-Gain monoband Yagis for 20-10, verticals and wires for 160-30.

CQ MAGAZINE

"You can get two free digital issues of CQ (March and April) just by sending a request to <FreeIssues@cq-amateur-radio.com> (See note below). Plus, you can take advantage our spring subscription special to sign up or renew at a big discount at <<https://tinyurl.com/tadwavy>>.

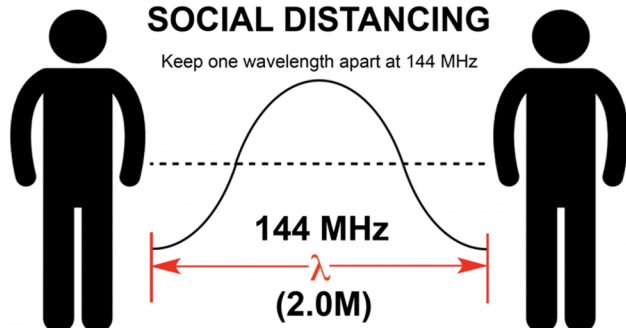
Note about our free issue offer: Please be patient, as requests are being processed manually by limited staff working from home; and if you've already put in a request, please don't send a repeat as that slows the process for everyone. Thanks & 73. "[End of the CQ blog quote.]

CQ WPX Contest, CW

May 30—31

Amateur radio enthusiast guide to SOCIAL DISTANCING

Keep one wavelength apart at 144 MHz



VE3CFK's COVID SELF ISOLATION

Funny thing this lock down!

Since lock down (self-isolation) I've discovered that my recent life was essentially locked down anyway.

The only things I'm doing different are:

- no ham breakfast Sunday mornings
- no ham lunch Wednesday
- no breakfast Thursday with my brother in law and cousin (might delete this after self-isolation)
- no Thursday evening for wings
- not going stateside for gas and post office

Of all these non activities now, the only one I truly miss is the last one - going stateside!

Let me explain.

I've spent the last 6 weeks working on restoring my Collins 30S1. Not full time, but in my spare time when I'm not doing stuff for my family or travelling back and forth to my son's farm. I've made great progress as I'm working through the power supply (bottom part of the amp). Earlier this week, I brought up the high voltage power supply. We got 3000 VDC with NO SMOKE ! This was, I figured monumental, as some components had not seen voltage for 20+ years.

However, all was not good news.

The step-start relay did not energize to disconnect the 100 watt 8.2 ohm resistors inline with the primary feeds to the main transformer. This would explain why the OLD 8.2 ohm resistors exhibited severe thermal stress and probably why the amplifier was initially decommissioned and sold off. It's former life was merchant marine service. The previous 2 owners (after marine service) were in the process of restoring the amp before I finally acquired it. My perception at this point is that this amplifier had a hard life before I acquired it.

So, for the 3rd time, I removed the control deck within the power supply section, and discovered that the step start relay coil was "OPEN". Why I didn't check this a month ago I don't know, but I didn't. I had to assume some stuff was still good. Couldn't I make that assumption? Well Noooooo. Good news is that there are very few components outside the RF deck that have not been checked at this point.

The bad news is where to find a 115VDC DPDT relay?!

Well I went searching on the internet. First MOUSER. Then the original manufacturer of the relay. I went here because I know they would ship to Canada for \$30+ dollars. (oh the price one pays to restore equipment).

In desperation I went to eBay.

WHAAAAAAAAAAT! I found an exact replacement ! I mean identical ! NOS even! And price was \$12.50 USA buy it now. So I bought it. BUT. WTFish. It's going to my post office box in the USA !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

In the old days, it would have meant hopping in my truck and going to the USA, buying some gas to offset the cost of the bridge toll, going to the post office and picking up my cherished radio parts. It was that simple. No thought given to the process. Easy peasy.

But we live in difficult times now. Some store shelves are bare. This morning my XYL exhibited visible signs of worry that we did not have enough rye bread to go with the fresh ham we're having with dinner. I told her to use non rye, close your eyes and pretend. You won't notice the difference **MUCH**.

So. Gotta think outside the box. So I got out of the box (but still self-isolating). I thought outside the box. Here is my solution.

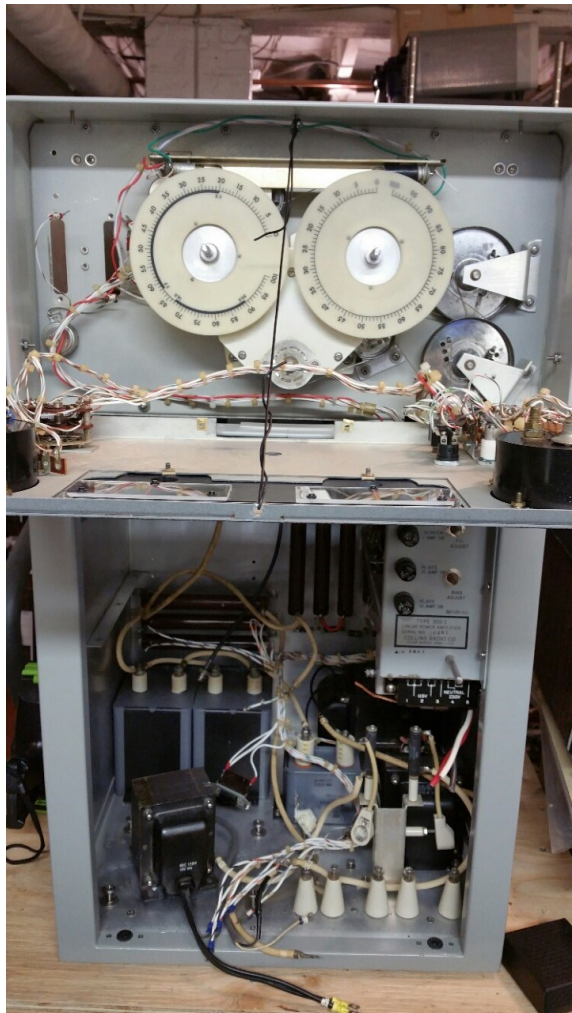
I found an understanding soul in Port Huron, who understood my plight. I have mailed him my Post Office key (hope the intra border police don't confiscate the key). He has agreed to clean out my mail box, repack the packages and mail it to me in Canada. The price he stipulated made me gag.. But, it's in the name of HAM RADIO.

It is the price we pay for the hobby. Some have given their lives to the hobby. Some risk high seas and extreme cold (wonder if and when that Polish team is ever going to make it to Bouvet?).

So far in my post office box are (or will be) a 4PDT switch, 5K variable resistor and now a 115VDC relay. Only problem is, it will be 3+ weeks before I see them.

So now you know the rest of the story. Not going out to eat is saving money, but somehow I'm spending it elsewhere!

Here's a photo of the amplifier being refurbished:



So what am I up to today? Today I'm tackling the Collins 30S1 screen voltage supply.

GAAAAAD! There are parts in there I haven't checked that were replaced by the previous 2 owners. What the heck. What else could go wrong? I should have a 225VAC transformer to check out the screen supply. But the best I could do was a 180-0-180 VAC transformer,

So. Stay tuned for "THE REST OF THE STORY"



I found a couple of 866 rectifier tubes in my junk box, so I stuck them in the amplifier. OH that blue glow! Reminds me of the first amplifier I built in 1969 that had a couple of these rectifiers in the power supply. That amplifier allowed me to work Gus Browning on Rodriguez Island on 40M. I had a 15 minute QSO with him, as I was his first QSO on 40M! After I sent my 73, the din I heard from around the world sending their calls to Gus was just astounding and unforgettable.

Hamvention-Ohio

W8CI, Michael Kalter, says a “Hamvention QSO Party” will be held on May 17 to celebrate the many years at “the Great Gathering,” and remembering W8ILC, Ron Moorefield, who never missed a Hamvention and contributed to the sponsoring club until his recent death, “Let’s light up the airwaves with our remembrances of Hamventions of the past.” Another promoter of the 12-hour event is longtime Hamvention forum emcee and Contest University host, K3LR, Tim Duffy. They are promoting interest in this event on the air, 8 AM to 8 PM EDST Sunday, May 17, 2020, CW and SSB on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters. The exchange will be signal report and the first year you attended the Hamvention. If you have never attended, send “2020.” Within five days after the event send your total number of QSOs to 3830scores.com. You can print a certificate for yourself online via www.HVQP.org. More details will be released on the website that is being set up now. A special bonus is W8BI, the Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA) callsign, which will be on the air from club members’ home stations. Add 10 points (QSOs) for each band mode you work W8BI on, a total of 12 band modes, so you can earn 120 bonus points, which is like 120 additional QSOs, by contacting W8BI.

Z6-KOSOVO

A team from Germany (DM2AUJ, DL2AWG, DL2AMD, DL9GFB, DJ9KH and DL3APO) plan to operate from Prystina as Z66DX from October 15-28. Plans are to operate on SSB, CW, FT8 and RTTY on 160, 80, 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, 12 and 10 meters. QSLs will be handled by DL2AWG who will be using OQRS via Club Log for direct or bureau requests. Logs will be uploaded to Club Log and LoTW. They have a website.

Google z66dx.de

The VP2VB Experience

W1YL/7, Ellen White, remembers her early days working at ARRL, when then Communications Manager W1BDI called her into his office to share a letter. “It was from a young Brit named Danny Weil, planning ocean sailing, inquiring about how to become a ham.” He was referred to RSGB. Says Ellen, “It was the beginning of the VP2VB saga.”

OH2BH, back home in Helsinki after the VP2VB commemorative DXpedition, says digging into the past was a rich experience, spending time at Danny Weil’s home in Road Town on Tortola, British Virgin Islands, learning more about the “first multi-hopping DXpeditioner,” a “blend of history in its original setting.” He notes the Austrian DocuFunk archives headed by OE1YPP, Paulina, and OE1WHC, Wolf, and meeting with VP2VK and VP2VQ and local telecom authorities, it was like “going straight back to where it all once began.” Martti says they collected historical materials and found this, the only existing interview with Danny: <https://www.qrz.com/db/VP2VB>. Martti thanks webmaster W7/UA6JD. The FT8 backup file for the VP2VB operation is being examined for more QSOs and the QSL card is being designed, a 4-page, full color card. And the LoTW upload will follow soon. Says Martti, “Regards and let’s keep our planet together for more DX.” Martti is in 14-day self-imposed quarantine in Finland now.

Ham Radio - Social Distancing for Over 100 Years



Upcoming DX

Credit to DX World



FEATURED DXPEDITIONS TIMELINE

Last update: April 2, 2020



Edited by MM0NDX

APRIL

© IK8LOV Max Laconca

HAMFESTS

Dayton Contest University

CANCELLED

CANCELLED

See previous notes about Dayton Contest University.

Working DXCC on Vacation – Part Three

By: Keith Baker, KB1SF / VA3KSF

(Portions of this article first appeared as “Working DXCC While On Vacation” in the June, 2014 Edition of The Spectrum Monitor Magazine. Thank You TSM!)

In this third (and final) installment of my ongoing feature article which have appeared in previous editions of Long Path, I'll share some tips on how to work the DX using just “light tackle”. I'll also share with you how well I did in attempting to work DXCC while on vacation.

Before You Transmit

As with most other aspects of the amateur radio hobby, DXing carries with it a common set of "rules of the road". So, before you ever begin transmitting, you need to know a few things.

First, you need to hear the DX station and know where the DX station is transmitting. For this task, I use any number of online "DX spotting" networks that have sprung up on the Internet in the last decade. My favorite is called "DX Summit" (<http://www.dxsummit.fi/>) as it lists posts by amateurs from all over the world regarding DX stations that are on the air as well as what frequencies they are transmitting on. The DX Summit site also allows you to narrow your search by band, and even allows you to send a "DX spot" yourself if you happen to stumble on a "rare one".

Of course, you can't use this operating aid if your rental property does not have an Internet connection, which is why my XYL and I always include "Wi-Fi Internet" as one of the "must haves" in our rental property search.

Working The DX

But, even using a fantastic online DX operating aid like DX Summit, you still need to always follow one of the other cardinal rules of DXing in your operation. That is, you need to LISTEN, LISTEN...and then LISTEN some more.

For example, if DX Summit is showing a post by an amateur in India about a station in Australia, the chances are you probably won't be able to hear either station in North America. On the other hand, if DX Summit is showing a DX spot from an amateur in Kansas about a rare DX station in Africa, the chances are pretty good that you might just be able to also hear the African station. And, as is the rule for most any amateur radio operation, you "can't work 'em if you can't hear 'em."

Now, assuming you can hear the DX station, you must then determine where the DX station is listening. Is he (or she) working in "split" mode...that is, transmitting on one frequency and listening on another...or



Working DXCC on Vacation (cont'd)

are they working "simplex" (both listening and transmitting on the same frequency)? Once you have answers to these questions, you've begun to set the scene for your own contact. But you aren't finished listening yet.

If the station is operating in "split" mode, you then need to configure your transceiver to operate in the same fashion, except in reverse. This is where reading your transceiver's instruction manual on how to do this becomes critically important. Another big DXing "no-no" is transmitting on the DX station's calling frequency. Doing so will NOT make you a popular camper among the rest of the DX community.

So, your next chore is to determine where the DX is listening. Usually, DX stations working in split mode will announce they are "listening up" (or down), or "up one" or "up 5 to 10" KHz. It's then your job to listen across that specified range of frequencies (up or down) to see who is actually answering the DX. I do this by carefully tuning one of my receiver VFOs across the specified range to see who is answering the DX station. I then park my transmit frequency on (or near) that one...and wait for their next call.

You also need to listen for patterns. Is the DX station answering stations in an upward movement or downward movement in frequency over their specified listening range? Over the years, I've had great success by parking my transmit frequency just above (or below) the transmit frequency of a station the DX just answered. I'll then wait (patiently) for the "pileup" to clear from the DX station's next call for a contact (usually a "QRZ?" from them of some sort) and then (quickly) transmit my call sign on what appears to be the DX's listening frequency. More often than not, using these simple techniques, I've been rewarded with many a DX contact, even though I have not been using a large beam antenna and/or lots of transmit power. And, needless to say, these simple techniques become particularly useful when I'm on vacation and "fishing with light tackle" such as with a G5RV strung over a tree and 100 watts.



There are any number of printed publications that can assist you in learning the "tricks of the trade" in DXing. One that I've found particularly helpful is a book called *The Complete DXer* written by Bob Locher W9KNI. Another is Locher's book *A Year of DX*. Both books are available online from Amazon.com and other retailers.

So, How Did I Do?

Using my simple station set up in one of the spare bedrooms of our South Carolina rental cottage in February 2014, I was able to snag contacts from over 115 different entities, including some "all time new ones" for me at that time such as Burkina Faso, Zambia, Juan Fernandez Island, Guam, Angola, Easter Island,

Working DXCC on Vacation (cont'd)

and the then DXpedition to (rare) Amsterdam Island located in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

In the case of the Amsterdam Island contact, I also (patiently!) waited a few weeks for the HUGE pile-ups chasing after that particularly popular DXpedition to subside before I even attempted making a contact. I then waited for the right band and mode conditions (40m CW) where I could hear them well enough to work them. And, would you believe that when I finally dropped my call sign into the fray, they answered me on my very first call!

So, working the world (and DXCC!) with "light tackle" from a vacation location CAN be done. Over the years, I've found that it's mostly a matter of finding the right rental home or cottage with a suitable Internet connection, enough nearby trees to string antennas from, and then employing the right set of on-air operating techniques (not necessarily "brute force") that gets the job done.



Upcoming DX

Credit to: NG3K Amateur Radio
Contest/DX Page

Start Date	End Date	DXCC Entity	Call	QSL via	Reported by
2020					
March					
2020 Mar08	2020 Apr09	Barbados	8P6DR [spots]	LoTW	TDDX 20200106
CQ WPX Contest, SSB (Mar 28-29, 2020) Check here for pericontest activity too.					
April					
2020 Apr14	2020 May15	Ghana	9G5GS	LoTW	TDDX 20200331
May					
2020 May01	2020 May22	Botswana	A25VR	VE7VR	TDDX 20200130
2020 May04	2020 May12	Maldives	8Q7KB	LoTW	TDDX 20190912
2020 May09	2020 May15	Haiti	4V5H	LoTW	DXW.Net 20200121
2020 May20	2020 May27	St Vincent	J8	KD7WPJ	KD7WPJ 20200106
2020 May25	2020 Jun07	Martinique	FM	ON4RU Di- rect	ON4RU 20200304
CQ WPX Contest, CW (May 30-31, 2020) Check here for pericontest activity too.					
June					
2020 Jun10	2020 Jun17	Cayman Is	ZF2FD	LoTW	DXNews 20191211
2020 Jun11	2020 Jul02	St Kitts & Nevis	V47JA	LoTW	W5JON 20191120
2020 Jun30	2020 Jul14	St Pierre & Mi- quelon	FP	LoTW	TDDX 20191126
July					
2020 Jul08	2020 Jul15	Aruba	P4	ND7J	ND7J 20190722

Editors NOTE:

I've intentionally left a wide margin here for your notes on band and mode fills re-

Upcoming DX

Credit to: NG3K Amateur Radio
Contest/DX Page

August					
2020 Aug02	2020 Aug08	Aruba	P4	LoTW	TDDX 20200106
2020 Aug10	2020 Aug17	St Pierre & Mi- quelon	TO5T	LoTW	VO1CH 20200201
September					
2020 Sep06	2020 Sep17	Albania	ZA	OE6TQG	TDDX 20200218
2020 Sep15	2020 Sep23	Faroe Is	OY	LoTW	TDDX 2019123
2020 Sep15	2020 Sep30	Easter I	XROYSP	LoTW	SP6EQZ 20200314
2020 Sep15	2020 Oct15	Malawi	7Q7AO	LoTW	DXW.Net 20200208
2020 Sep23	2020 Oct06	Swains I	W8S	PG5M	PA3EWP 20190922
CQ WW DX Contest, RTTY (Sep 26-27, 2020) Check here for pericontest activity					
2020 Sep29	2020 Oct12	Chad	TT8RR	Web OQRS	I2YSB 20191210
October					
2020 Oct01	2020 Oct14	Midway I	KH4	Club Log OQRS	DXW.Net 20190731
2020 Oct07	2020 Oct15	Palau	T88UW	LoTW	DXNews 20200214
2020 Oct11	2020 Nov08	Timor Leste	4W	TBA	DXW.Net 20200302
2020 Oct19	2020 Oct28	Kosovo	Z66DX	LoTW	DL2AWG 20191213
2020 Oct19	2020 Oct28	Sable I	CY0	Club Log OQRS	WA4DAN 20190513
CQ WW DX Contest, SSB (Oct 24-25, 2020) Check here for pericontest activity too.					
November					
2020 Nov23	2020 Dec07	Burkina Faso	XT2MAX	LoTW	TDDX 20200224
CQ WW DX Contest, CW (Nov 28-29, 2020) Check here for pericontest activity					