



Long Path



Volume 30 Issue 9

SEMDXA NEWSLETTER

September 2020



ARRL

From the Editor's DESK

September! The month when kids go back to school. Time when we start collapsing our gardens. Time to test all our antennas, so we don't have to work on them in the snowy throws of January!

September! The month when SEMDXA meetings begin after the heat of the summer. BUT! There will be **NO** physical meeting in September, or the foreseeable future (at least for 2020), for numerous reasons. One being the inability to find a meeting room where we can practise social distancing.

The SEMDXA executive have discussed the possibility of virtual meetings using Go-to-Meeting or ZOOM. If you would like our club to reconvene with virtual meetings, send the editor (Chet VE3CFK) an email with a yeah or neigh. Just responding to this email is the easiest. The club may have to pay a subscription for this service of about \$15 per month. Let me know in your email if this is acceptable.

The votes are in. Well. Actually they are not. The SEMDXA member STAY-at-HOME contest ended August 31st. So send me, your editor, an extract of your log showing the STAY-at-HOME stations you worked along with dates, time, frequency and mode. I'll collate the entries and announce the top 3 winners at the next meeting or the next newsletter. Which ever comes first.

So. Till next time.

Stay safe. Stay home. Play radio.

Good DX

73, Chet VE3CFK

Calendar

NEXT Meeting
2nd THURSDAY
September 10, 2020
Hopefully

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**

August Meeting Minutes

This is getting old. So I won't say it.

4U - United Nations Headquarters

Over the past two days 4U1UN has been QRV on 60 meters (5357 KHz), 5 MHz. Two nights ago around 400 QSOs in about 30 DXCC Entities were made on FT8 on 5 MHz. "Pending unforeseen events such as equipment failure or difficulties accessing the station" there will be continuing activity on 60 meters in the coming days, says KO8SCA, Adrian. 4U1UN is running about 35 watts on 60 meters FT8. 4U1UN may also be QRV on CW on 5 MHz, on 5373 KHz. Activity could start around 2300Z. QSL via HB9BOU.

USPS Status

Here's a link to "[USPS International Service disruptions list](#)" as of September 1st

On a side note, your editor ordered a replacement part for his Emotator rotator in early May of this year. It was mailed by regular post from Australia. It arrived 3 months and 2 weeks later at my QTH!

Now that's **S L O W !**

USA - FCC Fee Increase!

The US Federal Communications Commission has proposed a \$50 for a 10-year amateur radio license. Bad.news.website.org

CANCELLATIONS

- SEMDXA September meeting cancelled.
- All future cancellations are cancelled, since there is nothing left to cancel!

NOT Cancelled Yet

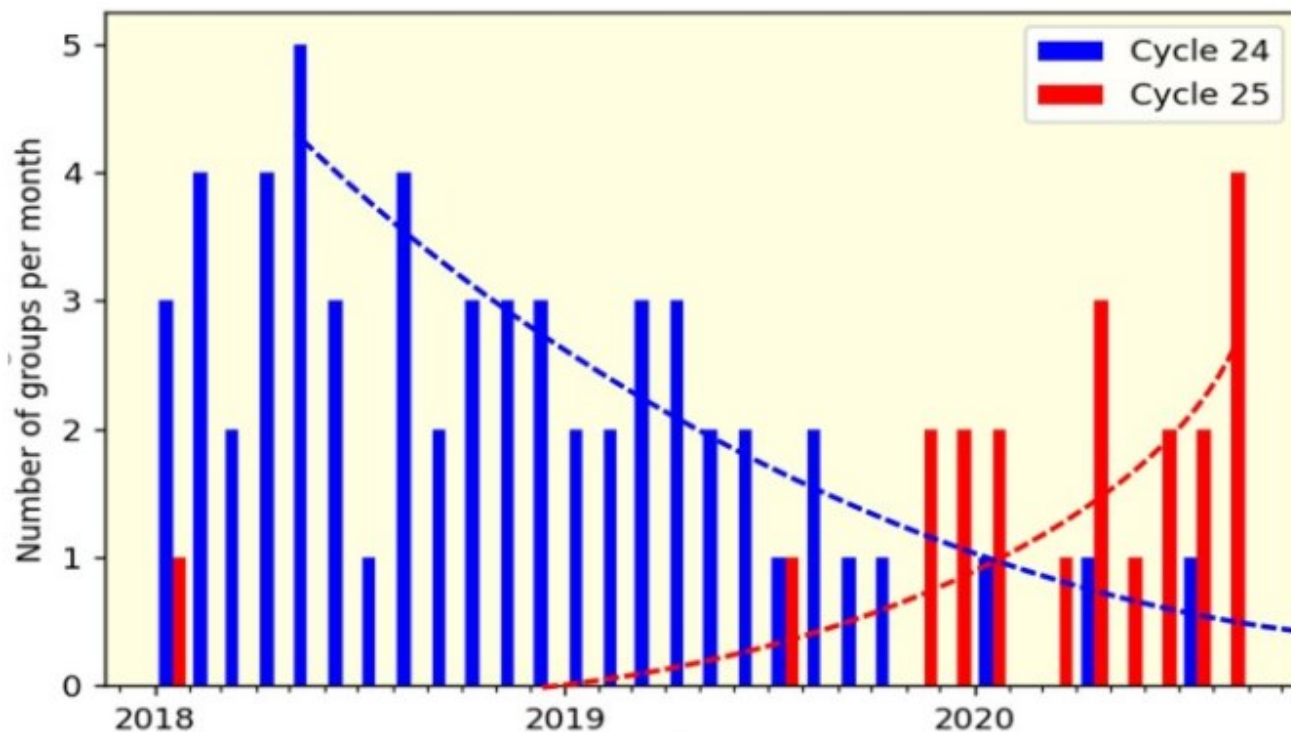
Some things to look forward to:

- Your inability to come to Canada by any means other than flying in
- Sun spot Cycle 25 and 26
- 2021 Hamvention
- ARRL and CQ upcoming contests
- October issue of The Long Path

SEMDXA CONTEST

Your excerpted log is due September 1st to be forwarded to Chet VE3CFK at VE3CFK@gmail.com. Top 3 scores get to share some incredible prizes - food vouchers at Gino's (if and when we meet there again) and a SEMDXA Club membership for a year. Good luck!

Goodbye SOLAR CYCLE 24



W3LPL, Frank Donovan, tells us Sunspot Index and Long-term Solar Observations (SILSO) is saying "In January 2020, the 13-month smoothed sunspot number rose for the first time since the maximum of cycle 24 (April 2014). According to SILSO -- the World Data Center for the production, preservation and dissemination of the international sunspot number -- "most probably, this indicates that the minimum between cycles 24 and 25 was passed in December 2019."

CQ WW Rule Changes

Contest Director K1AR says effective with this fall's contests some changes have been approved.

First, category name changes. Like other contests, multi-single, multi-two and multi-multi will now be the standard names.

Amplifiers will now be included in the 500-meter diameter circle of the station location.

Paper logs will no longer be accepted. Logs must be uploaded online.

Full versions of the rules tweaks are here: cqww.com/rules.htm

The Future of Propagation Predictions

Carl Luetzelschwab K9LA September 2020

The following is a reproduction of a paper that Carl published on his Website. Thought you might be interested in what he has to say.

I've been working on a project that got me thinking about what's in the future for propagation predictions. I've broken my thoughts into two issues: the ionospheric model in our propagation predictions and how propagation predictions will be used.

Model Issues

The F2 region model

Much effort is currently underway to better understand the day-to-day variability of the F2 region. Our present understanding of this short-term variability is statistical in nature, and that's why our propagation predictions give us monthly median values (usually MUF and signal strength) versus a smoothed solar index (either smoothed sunspot number or smoothed 10.7 cm solar flux).

The problem is that this short-term variability depends on more than just solar radiation. Yes, solar radiation instigates ionization, but geomagnetic field activity can modify the amount of ionization at any given point on Earth. But that's still not the whole story. The third variable is events at ground level and in the lower atmosphere that can couple up to the ionosphere to possibly further modify the amount of ionization at a given location.

As research into this third variable continues, parameters to define these events need to be defined. Then a model relating these parameters to the effects on the ionosphere needs to be developed. Eventually this will lead to daily propagation predictions – in other words, what is the ionosphere really doing right now.

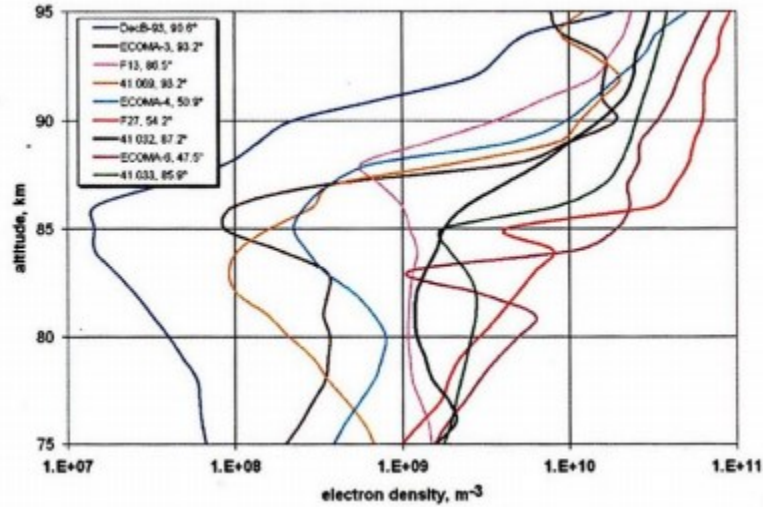
Assimilation of ionosonde/TEC data

Until events at ground level and in the lower atmosphere are well understood and characterized, assimilative models of the ionosphere will be further developed. Real-time ionosonde data and/or real-time TEC (total electron content) data will be used to make our monthly median predictions closer to real-time conditions.

The Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the International Union of Radio Science (URSI) is working towards this goal with the International Reference Ionosphere (IRI). It is called the IRI Real-Time model. For more information on this, see reference 1.

The D region model

The part of the ionosphere that we know the least about with respect to short-term variability is the D region. The model of it in our prediction programs is based on a limited number of rocket flights, a limited amount of incoherent scatter radar data and theoretical considerations. The model assumes a smooth electron density profile versus D region height. In the following figure, compare that smooth model to what the D region can look like in the real world from actual measurements.

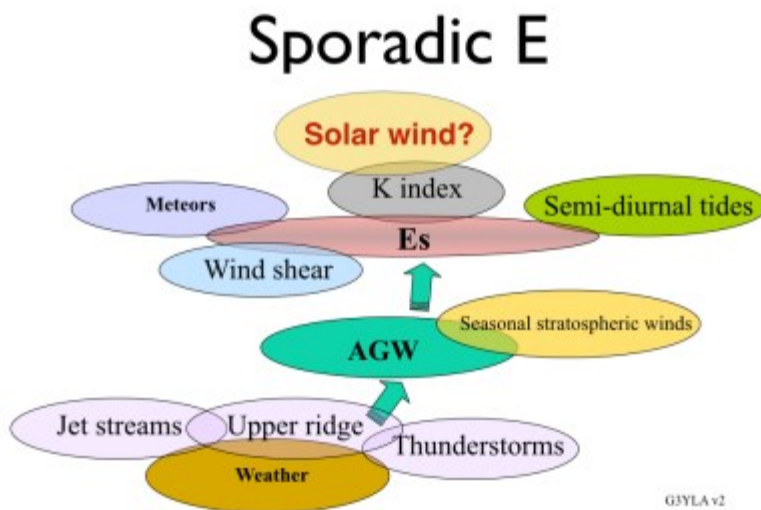


Experimental and theoretical research into the lower atmosphere and lower ionosphere is needed to give us a better understanding of the region that is most important on our lower HF bands (due to ionospheric absorption).

Sporadic E

Our understanding of sporadic E still isn't complete. We know the basic drivers of sporadic E, and experimental data (most recently from occultation data from GPS frequencies) has given us the most likely times and locations for sporadic E. But we can't predict exactly when and where it will occur. It would be nice to have this in our propagation predictions.

Jim Bacon, G3YLA, a professional meteorologist in the United Kingdom, is investigating the tie between sporadic E and underlying "weather" phenomena per the following sketch [reference 2].



G3YLA v2

How propagation predictions will be used

The current SDR radios, and even some analog radios (like my Ten-Tec OMNI 7), have screens that could be used to display propagation predictions and related information.

The particulars of your station could be input to the prediction software. This could include antenna gains (from antenna modeling software such as EZNEC or 4nec2), your man-made noise environment, transmit powers and even receiver MDS (minimum discernible signal) for analysis on the higher HF bands and 6-Meters where man-made noise may not be the limiting factor.

With assimilative ionospheric models, turning on the radio could display a worldwide MUF (maximum usable frequency) map that represents near real-time conditions. With a full model that includes the three variables, current space weather data and current terrestrial “weather” data could be downloaded to give the same information. Sporadic E predictions could also be included.

For DX chasers, your DXCC status could be input to the software. Propagation predictions to your needed entities (by band and even by mode) could be displayed – not only predictions for right now, but also when the best time might be. And if the time is right now to work a new entity on one of our bands, the prediction software could change your radio to the right band, turn on the amplifier and turn your antenna to the DXCC entity.

For contesters, the predictions could display the best band to be on right now to maximize your score per the contest rules. These predictions would include your station specifics so you’re not getting predictions for legal limit power when you’re QRP.

I’m sure there are other innovations coming. We’ll just have to wait to see what happens.

Summary

One thing I haven’t discussed is a fully-automated station. That can be done now with the digital modes, and advancing technology will allow it to happen with the other modes (if it already hasn’t!).

References

1) Bilitza, D., D. Altadill, V. Truhlik, V. Shubin, I. Galkin, B. Reinisch, and X. Huang (2017), International Reference Ionosphere 2016: From ionospheric climate to real-time weather predictions, Space Weather, 15, 418-429, doi:10.1002/2016SW001593.

2) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wn5as91ndG4>

Here’s a link to [Carls Website](#)

Thank you Carl for your paper on **The Future of Propagation Predictions**

DX IS!

The signs were there and we should have paid more attention. One of the local QRPers was up the hill last week and that bright, beady-eyed smile should have been a warning. "I am here to help you" he advised us. "I am here to clear the confusion on what is DX and to dispel what you have long referred to as the Mysteries of the Ages." At this point he had all our attention though our desire to know was tempered slightly by that beady-eyed smile. "Tell us," we asked a bit anxiously but the QRPer was not letting things out without the preliminary warm-up. Intoning gravely, he spoke at length. "All of the mystique of DX, all of the hidden or recondite meanings, all of the abstruse overtones, all of the knowledge remote from experience and so deep and abstract to be almost beyond understanding. All of these things about DX can be summed up in one simple phrase. One simple phrase!" We were jumpy with suppressed impatience but the QRPer held up his hand to forestall any questions. "DX IS!" he proclaimed. "DX IS! And that explains everything... everything!" We had to think this over for a bit because we had fallen about three sentences behind him. "DX is what?" we finally had to ask. The look of scorn we got was no lighter than the lash felt the time we sent the QSL Bureau an envelope one-half inch below requirements in one dimension. "DX IS!" he repeated emphatically. "DX IS...and that is the whole thing. Certainly you, of all people, can understand that!" Son of a Gun! What could we say to something like this when it was evident that this QRPer was thinking far into the fourth dimension while we were still having trouble with just three. DX IS! Understand that and you understand everything...Maybe!

What's SEMDXA?

By Rick Dorsch, NE8Z

What's SEMDXA? Gary, KR8V sent me an email message asking that I write a few lines in *The Long Path* and suggested that it should be titled "What's SEMDXA?"

Some of you may already know the story about how the phrase "What's SEMDXA" came about...and some may not. Gary asked that I talk about unusual experiences on past DX-peditions in these mini articles, so, I will start with a short story on how the phrase began.


Ten years ago I was invited to spend a couple weeks with Carlos, TI2CC, in Costa Rica. The plan was to operate in the CQ WPX Phone Contest on different bands with separate callsigns. I was issued the callsign **TIIT**. I can still see the secretary giggling as she typed out the license. The government official was Warren, TI5WM. As he handed me the license he smiled and asked me if I knew what the call sign spelled out and if I **STILL WANTED IT!!!** I sure did! The call drew lots of attention and big pileups during the contest. I did have to put up with lots of funny comments though!

*Somewhere in this story is a couple of people who asked Rick and Carlos what SEMDXA meant, as Rick was wearing a SEMDXA tee shirt. This is where the story falls apart, because the issue of **The Long Path** that I have from November 1997 is unlegible at this point. Next time you see Rick, you might want to ask him "What's SEMDXA?"*

*Your editor has been flipping through some old issues of **The Long Path**. There are many articles from the past that may show up here in the pages of **The Long Path** as we try to keep your interest since there are so few DXpeditions in the works to write about. If you have any interesting tales you would like to share, please send them off to me for reprint in **The Long Path**.*

Upcoming DX

Credit to DX World



FEATURED DXPEDITIONS TIMELINE

Last update: July 26, 2020

THERE
REALLY
IS NOT
MUCH
HAPPENING
KEEP IT
DX-WORLD.NET
FOR UPDATES
& BREAKING NEWS
+ IOTA INFO

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Edited by MM0NDX **September** © IK8LOV Max Laconca

Hamfests !

Still on the calendar:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 9/12/20 GRARA Trunk Swap | Grand Rapids, MI |
| 10/24/20 Hazard | Hazard, KY |
| 11/1/20 Massillon | Massillon, OH |
| 12/5/20 Fulton County Winterfest, | Delta, OH |

3D2 - Fiji Is.

Starting next month 3D2AG, Antoine, the season begins to work US stations on 160 meters. The best time to work the US East Coast is typically during their sunrise period. When he is QRV he can also be found on the [ON4KST Low Band Chat page](#). W3ICM, Fred, says FK8IK, Mic, who is “in the same area” is frequently QRV on 160 meters “during the winter months”.

DID YOU Know?

Can you guess whose call sign is “UA1LO”?

It belonged to Yuri Gagarin, the first human in space!

Thank you to Bernie, W3UR, The Daily DX, The Weekly DX and ARRL for their contributions to this newsletter

Upcoming DX

Credit to: NG3K Amateur Radio
Contest/DX Page

Start Date	End Date	DXCC Entity	Call	QSL via	Reported by
2020					
July					
RSGB IOTA Contest (Jul 25-26, 2020) Check here for pericontest activity					
August					
2020 Aug06	2020 Sep14	Corsica	TK [spots]	LoTW	425DXN 20200801
2020 Aug08	2020 Sep15	Ghana	9G5GS [spots]	LoTW	DXNews 20200713
2020 Aug20	2020 Sep30	South Sudan	Z81D [spots]	LoTW	OPDX 20200823
2020 Aug21	2020 Oct18	Iceland	TF [spots]	LoTW	TDDX 20200819
2020 Aug24	2020 Sep20	Greenland	OX3LX [spots]	LoTW	DXW.Net 20200816
September					
2020 Sep04	2020 Sep18	Malta	9H3TI	DL2AAZ	TDDX 20200713
2020 Sep06	2020 Sep17	Albania	ZA	OE6TQG	TDDX 20200218
2020 Sep08	2020 Oct02	Liechtenstein	HB0	Home Call	TDDX 20200713
2020 Sep11	2020 Sep13	Monaco	3A	IW1RBI	425DXN 20200828
2020 Sep15	2020 Sep23	Faroe Is	OY	LoTW	TDDX 2019123
2020 Sep24	2020 Sep27	Svalbard	JW	LoTW	DXNews 20200710
CQ WW DX Contest, RTTY (Sep 26-27, 2020) Check here for pericontest					
October					
2020 Oct03	2020 Oct06	Ogasawara	JD1BLY	J15RPT	J15RPT 20200804
2020 Oct07	2020 Oct15	Palau	T88UW	LoTW	DXNews 20200214
2020 Oct14	2020 Oct27	St Kitts & Nevis	V47JA	LoTW	W5JON 20200527

Editors NOTE:

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

Upcoming DX

Credit to: NG3K Amateur Radio
Contest/DX Page

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](#)

November

2020 Nov11	2020 Nov25	Surinam	PZ5GE	LoTW	DXW.Net 20200705
2020 Nov16	2020 Nov19	Surinam	PZ5W	LoTW	DXW.Net 20200705
2020 Nov23	2020 Dec01	St Vincent	J88PI	GW4DV B Direct	TDDX 20200803

[CQ WW DX Contest, CW \(Nov 28-29, 2020\) Check here for pericontest](#)

2021**January**

2021 Jan01	2021 Jan31	Guinea	3XY	TBA	F5NQL 20200608
2021 Jan03	2021 Jan09	Costa Rica	TI	LoTW	TDDX 20200622

February

2021 Feb27	2021 Mar27	Sint Maarten	PJ7AA	LoTW	DXW.Net 20200612
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April

2021 Apr28	2021 May24	Botswana	A25VR	VE7VR	TDDX 20200130
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June

2021 Jun29	2021 Jul13	St Pierre & Miquelon	FP	LoTW	DXW.Net 20191126
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July

2021 Jul07	2021 Jul14	Aruba	P4	ND7J	ND7J 20190722
2021 Jul23	2021 Aug03	St Vincent	J88PI	GW4DV B Direct	DXW.Net 20200727

August

2021 Aug08	2021 Aug16	St Pierre & Miquelon	TO5T	LoTW	DXNews 20200804
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Upcoming DX

Credit to: NG3K Amateur Radio
Contest/DX Page

September					
2021 Sep15	2021 Oct05	Jan Mayen	JX0X	LoTW	DXW.Net 20200624
October					
2021 Oct01	2021 Oct30	Sable I	CY0C	TBA	DXW.Net 20200718