

APRIL 2004

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER of the SANTA CRUZ COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

SHORT SKIP



Secrets of DXers

by AA6ZG, Leon Fletcher

When I went on a DXpedition to T32, Christmas Island, some 1,000 miles south of Hawaii, my goal was specific: I wanted to learn operating techniques that would make me more effective in getting my call picked up by DX stations when I operated from my modest, no amplifier, no giant antenna, ham station in obscure Ben Lomond.

Well, I learned nothing new. But the experience of working from a remote, highly desirable DX island did confirm what every good ham knows--the key to effective hamming is but one word:

Listen!

Sure, you've read that--you've heard that--repeatedly. But still, the fact is that very few hams do bother to listen sufficiently, correctly, analytically. Consider:

Many hams turn on their rigs, hear a station they'd like to work, and call. But many highly successful DXers do not call immediately: they listen for 10 or more minutes before calling a station they need.

Reason: they wait to learn the routine followed by the DXer.

Patterns

Some DXers reply to the loudest signal. Others respond to clear and distinct voices. Some DXers pick up singular voices--often those are women or children.

Many DXers take a beat or two after completing a contact, pausing to let the crowd quiet, and then selecting a late caller who's been patient and wise in avoiding the initial rush for a contact.

I tried to avoid falling into a routine in selecting calls I'd answer. But I soon became a creature of habit. Nearly all DXers do. You can verify that by listening to a dozen of them operating.

And of course many DXers reply to the first signal they hear. That often leads to:

Tail-Gating

That's calling the DX station by speaking over the top of the closing transmission of the previous contact.

But many DXers (including me!) refuse to reply to tail-gaters.

Reason: we consider tail-gating rude, confusing, disruptive, inappropriate. Most important: tail-gating often blocks the transmission of the previous signal report, necessitating repeated, delaying exchanges.

Tail-gating is often not successful.

Working Split

When the pile-up is really large--say 20 or more stations calling--many DXers work split. They listen on one frequency, transmit on another.

To inform listening stations about that, DXers will often announce, "Up ten" or "Down ten." That of course means they're listening ten kilocycles higher or lower on the band. The purpose of working split: is to move calling stations off the frequency the DXer is using to transmit his reports. Obviously, doing that helps the DXer transmit without being interrupted by calling stations.

Often DXers operating split really listening up ten plus another ten or more frequencies higher, or ten lower. There they scan along that band, listening for callers who are in the clear.

Still, one thing I did learn on that DXpedition was that being the station that sometimes hundreds of other hams are calling is indeed more fun than being just another tiny voice calling in a pile-up.

EX-VP Says Farwell

It is with mixed emotion that I say "so long and farewell to the SCCARC".

My memories will hold all of the great times...field days...barbeques...and fun meetings every 3rd Friday of the month. My thanks go to so many...too many to list. The SCCARC was my first amateur radio club of membership, and the beginning of my ham radio career. I depart with fond memories.

My wife and I have purchased a home in Florence, Oregon and the "Mayflower Van" arrives 4/21. I will stay in contact with the finest club on the westcoast, down the coax (HF). With this I say "Happy Trails to some very wonderful people". Good health and successful DXing to all!

—de: James (NF6Z) Welty

Where in the world is Mauritania?

You might think that after so many years working HF DX I would have a better idea than "somewhere in Africa I think". Just before going to bed last night I thought of checking 40 meters and was lucky to work 5T0EU for a new country. The following morning I punched into Google to satisfy my latent curiosity. I discovered that it is a sub-Saharan country -about 3X the size of New Mexico on the Western Coast of Africa. The population of 2.9 million is 100% Muslim and the median life expectancy is only 52 years. A few other statistics that I found include 26,500 telephones, 35,000 cell phones, 5 ISPs and 7,500 internet users. The country exports products worth \$355 million and imports \$360 million-at least they have their balance of trade right.

IMO conducting a little research into the places we work adds quite a lot to the hobby.

—Ron, W6WO

CLUB MEETING FRIDAY APRIL 16, 7:30 P.M.



Published 12 times per year.
Free to members.

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We just got the ARES van back out of the County maintenance garage. They performed the routine service and put on a new exhaust system, a new master cylinder, adjusted all the brakes and bled the lines, changed the engine oil and filter and air filter, etc. And they washed the whole Van for us! Very nice! The Van is in-service and available now, but is soon to have some new radio gear added and may be indisposed for periods while that gear is installed.

We need to update the County's old list, so if you're interested in being listed as being able to be a driver of the Van, please let me know. The more the merrier, as long as you're a good driver. Thanks! It only requires a regular Class C driver's license. The biggest difference is it's much taller than a car.

Santa Cruz County operational area ARES activities now have a new website address and domain name of their own:
ares.santa-cruz.ca.us

We hope this is an easy name to remember. It's nice to have our own official domain name too, without having to tag along on anybody else's, as we had been doing. The hope is that with continuing feedback from everybody, and eventually linking other local stuff here too (like the SILVARES web stuff, etc.), the new domain will evolve into a more useful adjunct for volunteer emergency communicators throughout our county.

—73, Cap KE6AFE

The humble electrical outlet is getting an upgrade.

Excerpted from Mercury News.

If a growing number of electric utilities get their way, people will soon view the ubiquitous wall jack as their high-speed gateway to the Internet. Power companies from San Francisco to North Carolina are exploring how to carry broadband Internet signals over their power lines.

Some utilities -- such as Pacific Gas and Electric -- see an opportunity to steal customers from cable and telephone companies, which provide most broadband hookups. "You have to at least demonstrate a significant cost-savings over DSL, and I think we can do that," said Toby Tyler, director of telecommunications business development for PG&E. "We're taking a very hard look at it." A trial could start this year. If PG&E moves ahead, it would probably sell the service through an Internet provider such as EarthLink, instead of directly to its customers. Other utilities see possible profits in the hundreds of thousands of U.S. homes not served by either cable broadband or DSL -- some in the Bay Area. PG&E has logged speeds as fast as 54 megabits a second in tests, more than 15 times faster than the speediest cable modem service.

Short Skip Membership Directory

This issue of Shortskip was sent to all current 2004 SCCARC members, because it contains our annual membership roster. Congratulations and thanks, we show you as paid up for 2004!

Many of you have NOT opted to receive Shortskip in the postal mail for the duration of your 2004 membership. This will save the club some mailing costs.

If you do NOT receive further issues of Shortskip in the postal mail, but decide you WOULD still like to receive your mailed copy each month, please contact the club secretary, Cap KE6AFE.

If you find you ARE still receiving a copy in the postal mail after this month, but are content and willing to only read it at www.k6bj.org instead, again please contact secretary Cap KE6AFE

Californians will have to wait, if they get BPL at all. PG&E is in the early stages of testing and still has not yet

Many analysts are dismissive of the technology, which they say does not offer distinct advantages over cable or DSL.

Amateur radio operators -- typically hobbyists who use short-wave radios to talk to each other -- are particularly critical of the technology, which they say interferes with their transmissions. In February, the Federal Communications Commission promised to investigate the issue.



If you have an interesting QSL card, send me a PDF of it and I will (space permitting) run it in Short Skip. — K6EXT



By Art Lee WF6P

CHATTER

The other morning on the Baja Net we had a maritime mobile check in, asking for some help. KF6ZAD was on the sailboat Wandering Star, ten miles off the coast of Mexico near Cabo. He had no wind so was motoring but his engine was almost out of oil. Tommy, KA6OAM, one of our net controllers, came up to offer advice, as the boat was in no immediate danger. Most sailboats have only a small engine for getting in or out of harbors or traveling short distances. Tommy told him to work in closer to land and gave him the name of a nearby port. She suggested he call on Marine VHF to raise someone who would come out and sell him some oil. Boy, when the wind quits and you are on a sailboat, you ain't moving! If you are in a hurry to get somewhere, a boat with two big diesels is the thing to have. (Yes, the next day he was able to procure the needed oil.)

Where are they now? I chanced to meet Lloyd Cabral, AA6T, in the main post office. He is retiring from the telephone company and is in the process of shipping his belongings to his new QTH on the big island, Hilo, Hawaii. He has purchased property there and putting up a couple of towers. I suspect they will be BIG. Lloyd is a Dxr from way back. He already has a car there plus some radio gear, furniture and antennas. In all the years I have known him, I don't believe I have ever worked him on HF. Maybe now I will get the chance. Lloyd is originally from Niles, CA.

I am happy that Leon Fletcher, AA6ZG, is writing for Short Skip again. Leon has much to write about and his many interesting contacts over the years led to a couple of walls full of QST cards. He worked me from W1AW when he was back east. We exchanged QSL cards. He had to do some advanced planning to be scheduled as an Op. Propagation was good then and we had a short QSO on 20 meters.

For the past couple of months I have been plagued with an inop mike switch on my Kenwood 930S. Had to resort to a slide

switch on the side of the mike. This was tough when someone was calling me on frequency and it took a while to grab the mike, locate the tiny switch, etc. I finally tore into the mike base, gave the three switches a couple of shots of contact cleaner. Cleared the problem right up. I fought the problem for months and it only took twenty minutes to fix. Oh well.

On March 6th, we lost another club member, Henry Henderson. He was 85. He often attended our club meetings but in the past few years was living at Oak Tree Villa in Scotts Valley. According to the Santa Cruz Sentinel, Hank's interest in ham radio began 1939 when he started as a Short Wave Listener (SWR). He joined the Merchant Marines in 1937 and was inducted into the US Naval Service in 1944 where he served until 1946 as a telegraph operator. He was a student in my radio class at Cabrillo College and a member of our club until 1998.

We had another great club meeting on the 20th. Ron Skelton, W6WO, gave us an informative and interesting presentation of computer modeling of the vertical antenna he constructed. Believe it or not, he even handed out a 20 question quiz at the end of the evening! Nice job, Ron.

The 2004 West Coast Space Symposium

Presented by Project OSCAR
and The College of San Mateo
April 24, 2004 - College of San Mateo,
San Mateo, CA

Topics Include

Antenna Range Demonstration
An Introduction to Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Satellites
Precision Time and Frequency Measurement
Satellite Tracking
Amateur Nanosatellites
Cal Poly Cubesats (Students and Mentors)
Project Eagle CanBus and Sensors
Small Satellites, History and Future Directions
Antenna Measurement Roundup
"Ask the Experts" Roundtable

Donation: \$10 Students: \$5 includes lunch and parking. Project OSCAR is a 501(c) non-profit corporation.

Antenna Range Demonstration Begins at 8:00am. Presentations start promptly at 10:00am

Additional information:

<http://www.ProjectOSCAR.net//>

Wireless Community & Mobile User Conference

There is a very interesting conference scheduled June 2-4 at Cal State U Monterey Bay (CSUMB), called Wireless Community & Mobile User Conference

Check out: http://wetec.csUMB.edu/Wetec_conference-reg.htm

For the ham radio operator, it offers a great horizon opening learning experience. Now you can open up those ham band WI FI networks with confidence and ease.

(There are calls for presentations on the WETEC website)

Perhaps there are others within the ham community who could be presenters...

There is a lot offered of value to the technically minded ham operator, and those wanting to diversify their skillset in today's challenging employment environment.

Registration discounts if done before May 21. Group Registration discounts for non profit groups (maybe ham clubs) --Check with Conf Registration folks.

73, DX, de Pat, AA6EG

aa6eg@hotmail.com (831) 601-8617

TRANSISTOR—ONE



SCCARC Board - 2004

President	Vic Linderholm	AE6ID	476-5567
Vice President	Scott King	AH6KL	688-2296
Secretary	Cap Pennell	KE6AFE	429-1290
Treasurer	Elaine Pennell	KE6FRA	429-1290
Board	Richard Trebbien	KG6AXD	426-0169
	Chris Angelos	KG6DOZ	688-3562
	Mike Doern	KM6IKE	477-1161
	David Shoaf	KG6IRV	462-4605
	Rich Wadsworth	KF6QKI	722-7005
K6BJ Trustee	Royce Krilanovich	AC6Z	475-4798

MONTEREY BAY ACTIVITY

SCCARC Repeaters: K6BJ 146.790- PL 94.8 Santa Cruz (linked w/Watsonville full time)
KI6EH 147.945- PL 94.8 Watsonville (linked w/Santa Cruz full time)
K6BJ 440.925+ PL 123.0 Santa Cruz
• SCCARC Net Monday 7:30 PM 146.79- /147.945- /440.925+ linked
• SCCARC 10 Meter Net 28.308 MHz USB Monday 7:00 PM
• SCARES Net Monday 8:30 PM 146.835-(PL 94.8)

SLVARC Repeater WR6AOK 147.120+ PL 94.8 Ben Lomond
• SLVARC Net Thursday 7:30 PM

SLVARES N6IYA 146.745- PL 94.8 Felton
• SLVRC Net Thursday 7:30 PM
• ARES Net Monday 7:30 PM

NPSARC K6LY 146.97- PL 94.8 / 444.700+ PL 123 (linked) Monterey
• Monterey ARES Net Wednesday 7:30 PM
• NPSARC Net Wednesday 8:00 PM
• Newslite (Ham News) Broadcast Wednesday 8:30 PM

6 Meter Local Net 52.8 MHz (PL-114.8) Sunday 8:00 PM
Mont. Bay Chapter 191 QCWA :Tuesday, 7:30PM, NS6G repeater, 146.700- PL 151.4

FOR MORE INFO SEE: <http://www.k6bj.org/freq.html>

SCCARC Calendar of Events

SCCARC Board Meeting 6:30	Friday	APR 16
SCCARC Meeting	Friday	APR 16
County Wide Ares Meeting	Thursday	APR 22
Short Skip Deadline	Monday	MAY 10
SCCARC Meeting	Friday	MAY 21

MONTHLY MEETINGS.

The SCCARC Meets at 7:30 PM, on the **THIRD FRIDAY** of the each month (except December). Meetings are at Dominican Hospital, 1555 Soquel Drive, Santa Cruz.

Visit the SCCARC Website at -

www.k6bj.org

NET CONTROL SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

4/12	Phil KE6UWH
4/19	Tom K6TG
4/26	Allen WB6RWU
5/3	Joseph KG6NRI
5/10	Ron W6WO
5/17	Jeff KF6BKG



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. BOX 238
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Meeting: April 16, 7:30PM

First Class