

The 144 MHz EME-NewsLetter

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Issue 2/2006

12 Feb 2006

CW – JT65 Opinion Poll

During the recent weeks the eternal battle between WSJT users and CW only users has again gained momentum. The focus point appears that some CW friends deny QSOs made by using the WSJT software the status of valid EME QSOs. As examples served decodes made with bad settings of the software leading to false decodes and consequently “proving” that WSJT was “nothing but a QSO machine”. Joe, K1JT, has perfectly explained the reasons for those wrong decodes which were based on lack of knowledge how to properly use the software. After that it appeared to me that at least some people understood and changed their mind re their previous judgements which were to the disadvantage of WSJT.

So given that QSOs made with WSJT are as much valid EME contacts as QSOs made on CW the next topic arises: Should WSJT contacts and CW contacts treated the same way – or in other words: are CW QSOs harder to make than WSJT QSOs? My personal experience is that (1) in JT65 one can work down to ERP levels not being possible on CW and (2) with well-equipped stations JT QSOs are much easier to make than CW QSOs. However, having said that I see no difference between struggling to decode very marginal signals in JT65 by using all options the software offers and struggling to decode a marginal CW signal. Yet, there is one: The decoding process at (1) is mainly made by the software whereas at (2) it is made by the operator only (of course also with the help of software such as Spectran or sometimes CW decoding programs). I understand not everybody uses these tools but one could as they are available. So the real question is not to differentiate between WSJT and CW but between software aided decode process QSOs and those with the OP and headphones only. So does this mean grid and DXCC counts should be separated by mode? For the DXCC there is already a mixed and a CW only category so this doesn't need to be the main point. For grid counting? Not easy to say.

So now we come to contests: Is there a difference working a contest in CW or in JT65? I believe very much yes: A cw only operation puts much more stress on the operator than a JT65 only operation. My own experience is that after some hours of CW EME operation it is much harder to concentrate on decoding weak signals than it is the case after some hours of WSJT contest operation. Therefore I believe this should at least reflect to some extent in the contest results, be that category-wise or at least by marking the CW only stations.

All the above is my personal view according to my weak signal modes experience since 1976. I'm neither in favour for this nor that but I'm very much in favour of a fair exchange of arguments which has not always been the case the recent months. All of the points mentioned and more will be part of an upcoming opinion poll I'm currently developing with the kind assistance from Leif, SM5BSZ. It will be out within the next weeks.

DXPeditions



Follow up: 3Y0X (Peter One)

The crew has set foot on Peter One on February 7th, 1845Z. Sadly the bad local weather conditions caused problems and delayed the process of becoming QRV. At the moment they finally have nearly all of the equipment on Peter One and all crew members. Now most of the stations are on air, yet no information is known on the EME status. It looks like the stations are not yet operative. Let's keep fingers crossed for the planned start of EME operations on February 13th. The picture above (courtesy www.peterone.com) shows the helicopter deck and the island in the background. The local weather doesn't look nice at all.

S7 (Seychelles)

Hermann DL2NUD, Stefan DL9GRE and Carsten DM1CG organised the first ever S7-EME-Expedition from 16th to 29th January 2006. They became QRV as S79HP, S79GRE and S79CG. Their plans were well-known by the EME community for quite a while but everybody kept fingers crossed that no unforeseen obstacles would turn up. And indeed, crew and equipment arrived on the Seychelles safe and sound. Way before schedule the first EME signals turned up already on 14 January, when Dit, DF7KF, made the first QSO of this expedition (and no wonder, also the first DL-S7 on 144 MHz). With only a single 2MXP28 and some 500 watts out more than 100 QSOs were completed with the following two weeks. All in JT65 mode, no CW call was noticed, no CW sked asked though the sigs at times were good audio copy. One of the highlights sure was a contact with Guy, DL8EBW, who also used just 500 watts to a single 12 elements M2.



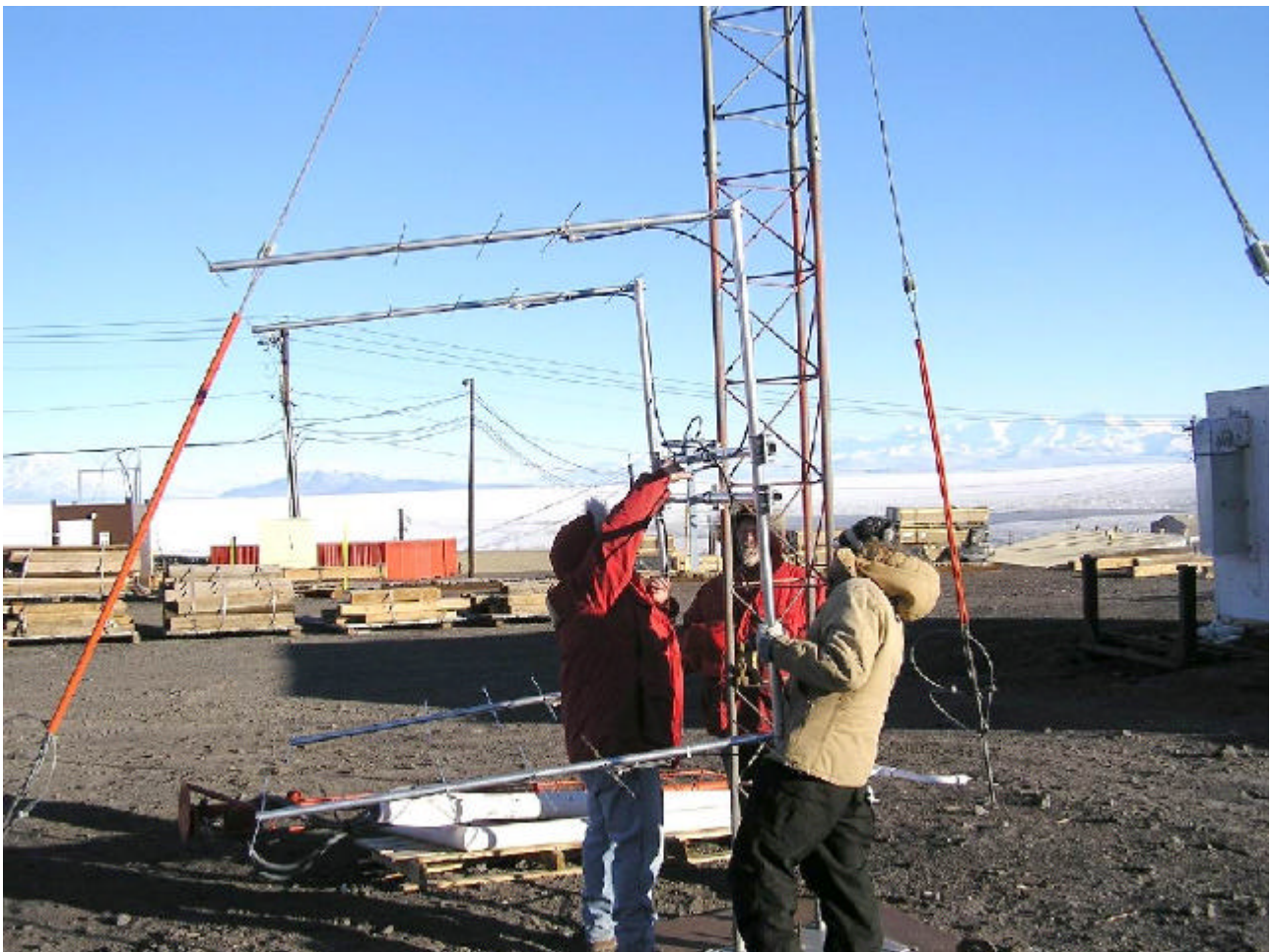
Hermann DL2NUD, Carsten DM1CG and Stefan DL9GRE in front of the EME - beam

HH (Haiti)

Chris, W3CMP is planning a tour to Haiti from 17th June to 28th June, 2006. He hopes to be QRV as HH4/W3CMP from 18th to 27th June. QTH will be in St Louis du Nord on the north coast, grid FK39. Chris will focus on 6m multiple hop E contacts, but he hopes to have 2m running as well with some 170 watts out to a single yagi. At this point he will NOT be trying EME but if this trip is successful Chris may consider reactivating his portable 2m EME array in the future. Maybe someone could yet talk him into trying some EME though? With his set-up many of the 4 yagi stations should be workable in JT65 via moon.

KC4 (Antarctica)

KC4/W1MRQ will be soon back at McMurdo Station (RB32HD) in Antarctica. Ernie writes: "I again find myself on the Antarctic for another thrilling winter on the ice. This year, I am running basically the same station, maybe a few more watts from a new amplifier. But I will have a new 4 x 6 element array, with rotors on both az/el. It will be up in March which should improve my signal.



Ernie, W1MRQ, and helpers installing the 4 x 5 elements yagis last year.

For February, I am going to use last year's antennas, still up since my departure in October. I hope to work a bunch of stations this winter from McMurdo Station. E-mail for skeds is at w1mrq@yahoo.com"

QSO Reports

PA3CMC (JO21)...

...reports his activity in from end of January and first days of February:

22 Jan	K9MRI	EN70	best -16	5 Feb	N5KDA	EM41	best -15
	K2AXX	FN12	best -23		KC7V	DM43	best -25
04 Feb	RA4AOR	LN29	best -21		JT3CTQ	PM74	best -27
	AF6O	DM14	best -20		HA5OV	JN97	best -26
	PA3FPQ	JO21	best -18				
	PE1BTX	JO22	best -16				
	W8WN	EM77	best -19				
	AA9MY	EN50	best -23				

Time Table

- 13 February 2006 **Start of 3Y0X EME operations**
- 4 March 2006 **DUBUS 2M CW EME ACTIVITY CONTEST ¹⁾**
- 1/2 April 2006 **ARI EME-Contest (Digital modes only)**
- 8/9 April 2006 **REF/DUBUS EME-Contest (CW only)**
- 9/10 September 2006 **ARI EME-Contest (CW only)**

1) 0800-1200Z and 1700-2030Z

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