

October '24 IARU R1 432MHz & up contest – OR6T report

As usual, preparations for the contest started long time before the contest. In the past weeks, our R&S VH501 amplifiers were once again on the bench, repairing and adjusting the individual bias settings of all modules. We also swapped one of the power supply's, because the original sometimes blew a fuse.

After a few evenings of work, we tested the system, set the output power at a conservative 500W keydown, and believed that we were ready with the amplifiers. On checking the antenna's, we found out that the stack to England was not working properly. The culprit was something we had dealt with before: water accumulation in the 7/16 connector on the 1 ¼" coax cable. After drying the connector and reassembling it, the stack worked once again.

Our amplifiers sit in a remote shed, right beneath the mast. They are monitored by an IP camera, and a monitoring system that runs Node-Red on a raspberry pi. We noticed that nothing connected anymore, so no network to the shed. Apparently, our glassfibre link to the shed had a broken transceiver. A new one was installed, and everything worked again as it should.

On the Friday before the contest, all indoor systems were checked. PC updates, log updates, RX checking on the run and S&P station,... we were ready for the contest! Or so we thought...

Saturday noon, starting all systems, nothing unusual. First test on air, and immediately, our England PA sees a too high SWR. Once again, water in the connector. The fix was very fast, and we started testing again. Now the North-Germany PA does not give any power. Blown fuses in the power supply again. Minutes tick away... Upon replacement of the fuses, another test, but the fuses break down again. To top it off, a second amplifier breaks down too, and the contest had not even begun. with less than 15 minutes to the start of the contest, we decided to use only 2 of the 4 antenna systems. Bummer!

Upon the start of the contest, we quickly noticed that conditions were moderately good, and there was good activity. QSO's came in at a good rate. All of a sudden, an answer of EA2XR to our CQ. The QSO was made, and so was our ODX! 1033Km in SSB, thank you Juan!

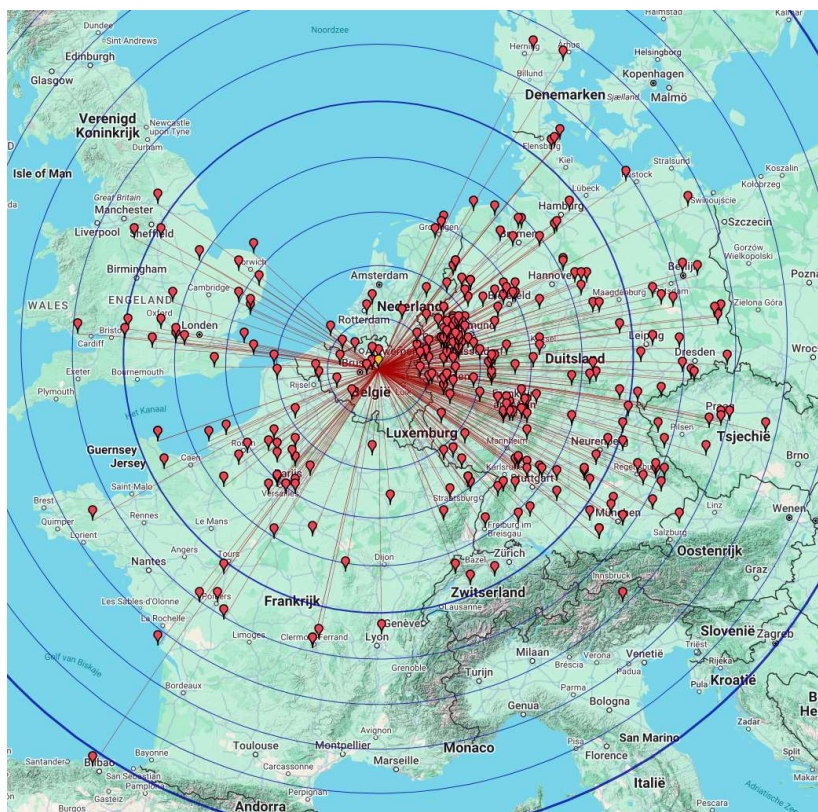
We heard from a few nearby stations that our transmitted signal was dirty. In the rush before the contest, the defective amplifiers were disconnected from the input power splitter...

Providing a 50 ohm load on these outputs fixed the problem immediately. Thanks for kindly informing us, this is appreciated !!

Skeds were made in KST, but no good conditions to our east. We missed several OM stations, and also OK2OAS... Running with only half of the antenna systems, we sometimes had to switch fast, so less time to wait for skeds.

If you are used to have a lot of options (antenna's & power), working with only half of them is a pain! Nevertheless, this was a good contest for us, we made 298 QSO's and with a claimed score of 101128 points, we ran our second best contest ever.

Thank you all for the activity and the patience in completing the QSO, we hope to hear you all again next contest season.



Best 73, the OR6T Contest team.

log start	05-Oct-2024, 14.00				
log end	06-Oct-2024, 13.58				
operating period	23 hours 58 min				
operating time	16 hours 2 min				
off time	7 hours 56 min				
Σ QSOs	300				
CW	19				
Phone	281				
	Band	QSO	CW	Phone	Digi
	70cm	300	19	281	0
Σ Gridsquares					64
Σ Gridfields					4
Σ Countries					12

1	DL		Deutschland	191
2	EA		Spain	1
3	F		France	47
4	G		England	21
5	GW		Wales	1
6	HB9		Switzerland	3
7	I		Italy	1
8	OE		Austria	1
9	OK		Czech Rep.	10
10	ON		Belgium	12
11	OZ		Denmark	2
12	PA		Netherlands	10

ODX (km)	Call	Loc
1033	EA2XR	IN83KI

