

The Texas



DX Society

THE BULLSHEET

Newsletter of the

Texas DX Society

August 1995

Volume XIX The Texas DX Society, P.O. Box 540291 Houston, TX 77254-0291

Number 8

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Announcements

Meeting - The Texas DX Society Meets the second Friday of each month, except when the date is changed by the Board of Directors. The August meeting will be **Friday August 11, 1995 at the Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive**. This location is one block east of the Sam Houston Tollway (Beltway 8) between Richmond and Westpark. The meeting will begin promptly at 7 PM. Visitors are welcome to attend, and may obtain help in finding the location by checking in on 147.96/36 MHz.

From the Editor - de Dave, WB5N

Some of you may have got an electronic version of the *Bullsheet* this month. Its an experiment I've been thinking of trying for a while now. Let me know what you think of it. I am also thinking of FAX distribution. With a FAX modem its really simple, its just like printing the master copy for printing. If you would like to be on the FAX distribution list for next month either E-Mail me you local Houston FAX number or just call me with it.

While I'm not planning to stop mailing anyone the *Bullsheet* right now I'd like to consider it. I will not decide to do it on my own. If it does look like it will work after a few bug free months of these experiments I'll seek the approval of the general membership for those who would like to get the electronic versions only to voluntarily be removed from the *Bullsheet* mail distribution.

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The Prez Sez - de Bob, N5RP

FROM THE N5 RADIO PULPIT !!

There is not too much readily available from me just this moment so as to warrant a lot of text from me for this month's column. I have basically been trying to get myself back together after being gone for those very long two months in BY land.

Since my return to the good old USA, I have been working hard on my station trying to get it ready for this year's contest season and winter DX enjoyment of the low QRN time of year. Believe you me, my station needed a lot of work. I hope everyone else is finding some time to do

the same for their respective station. There is nothing like August to run wire and climb the tower. What Fun!

At last month's meeting, it was decided that we would, to some degree, participate in the Gulf Coast Ham Convention.

This month's meeting will be an update on the topic, and a final opportunity, for anyone interested, to stand up and be counted as to thoughts or actions on the matter.

From what we obtained from the membership at last month's meeting, the following activities are of consideration and are being investigated, or planned:

Chair person

1. Hospitality suite Yes NN50

2. Raffle Yes W5SJS

Raffle ticket Sales Yes KE5FI

3. Auction No **

4. Hamfest Seminars Yes WB5N

Thanks to the members who have stations on the air for giving out a few Q's to the TDXS team members in the NAQP CW Contest held this past weekend. As always, it is fun to work team members when in a contest. They always feel as though they are special contacts when they get logged into the score.

The recent Friday evening get together at The Commissary was attended by KB5YVT, NN50, KZ8E, AB5TV, KE5FI, N5RP, NJ1V (who?) This was a our second get together, and it was decided to try and make it a monthly occurrence, or whenever the urge might strike. Everyone had a good time, got to tell a few DX lies, and still go home at a reasonable hour. NJ1V showed us pictures of his most recent station..... VERY Impressive! I hope that you will make an attempt to introduce yourself to John, as you might have occasion to hear him on the repeater.

By the way, the W5 DX BASH at W5KFT is coming up in the month of October. October 14, 15, to be exact. For those who have never attended, give the event some thought, or talk to those of us who have gone in years prior. It is a really a wonderful event; wonderful in so very many ways that they are all too numerous to list.

N5RP, Bob

Houston, Texas

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DX Gleanings - de Sharp, K5DX

OY6A-This week, operators are N4XYA, ON4LZ, ON6QR, and ON7PC. To operate from several OY islands.

D2, ANGOLA. D2/YO3YX will be active through the end of 1995. Has been worked on 18150 kHz. Qsl YO3YU, PO Box 55-36, Bucharest, Romania.

EX, KRYGZXSTAN. EX/V31YM 20-10 meters CW, SSB, the WARC bands and 21/28 mHz satellite. Qsl only to Wilhelm Schommer, PO Box 71, Speicher 54658, Germany.

3V, TUNISIA. OE6EEG to operate first two weeks. Qsl JF2EFA.

VQ9, CHAGOS. N6SS to operate for four months. Qsl N6SS.

VK0, HEARD ISLAND. A full blown expedition from October 12 to November 1. More later.

V5, NAMIBIA. KY0A active through August 10 CW only as V52/ZS6YG or V52YG.

P5/OH2AM operation approved by the DXCC desk and will be added to the countries list.

OD, LEBANON. OK1EE/OD5 on CW through August 12.

JW, SVALBARD. JW0K (DL5EBE) until August 10th.

That's all!

Filter Survey - de Joe W5ASP

Boy, did I ever kick open the flood gates. I didn't expect the number of requests for this filter survey that have come in... I am posting it to the Reflector to save time... thanks for the response.

Here is a compilation of the comments I received to my question regarding the relative merits of the Dunestar and ICE multi-band switched band pass filters.

Dunestar Model 600 - Multi Band Remote Switched Bandpass Filter

PRO:

"... we've been using a couple of the Dunestar 600's with TopTen Devices decoders ... since last season. Once we got a few teething problems behind us, they seem to work very fb, indeed. We also use individual ICE's ... but the Dunestar is maximum convenience. ... you can get CT (or TR) to switch the bp filters for you. One less thing to worry about."

"It's simple, Dunestar delivers and they work. I talked to a local distributor of ICE and he cannot get any of the ICE autoswitch filters delivered to him... even though he has them on order for 6 months..."

CON

"I've got 2 of the Dunestar 600's. They work fine, but I don't recommend running 200 watts through them unless things are perfect. I've burned up caps in several sections on both of them running my FT1000 barefoot into SWR's higher than 2:1. WARNING! DO NOT USE a tuner between your radio and the filter (ie. a built-in tuner)! This exacerbates the problem. Of course, if you just use it on the transmit side or into an amp, you'll be fine."

"I like the Dunestar 600 I bought... , but we seem To fry a section every contest, largely due to operator error in not manually switching the band. It can be hooked to a bandswitching box to have it auto-track band changes, but we use different rigs each time, so have kept manual band switch. The problem is if you XMIT on wrong band, it usually fries one or two capacitors in the wrongly selected section. The filter is NOT SWR forgiving on any band,

correctly selected or not. It is represented to handle up to 2:1 SWR, which in my book is not very forgiving under contest conditions. This time when I returned it for repair, I asked for a set of baggies with replacement capacitors for each section so we can repair it ourselves."

"The earlier Dunestar seems limited in power handling capability, and I'd worry about the model 600 at 200 watts, but with a 100 watt exciter things are FB."

ICE Model 419 - Combination Bandpass Filter

PRO

"I have 2 of the ICE Model 419's and my overall impression with them is very good. On the plus side:

- * Very nicely constructed. Hefty cabinet and copper pc-board base.
- * Indicators and controls are big and nicely laid out.
- * Enough space inside to add the TopTen Band Decoder
- * Fairly easy to repair if needed."

"I've also used the ICE individual filters and think they're great. Did not buy Dunestar's, ... because he didn't rate them at 200W (I have an FT-1000). The ICE units are certainly more "robust", without question."

"I haven't used the ICE unit personally, but the one BIG advantage to it is that it has a manual control switch on the box! The Dunestars require an external switch box or auto band relay driver interface. This could be very inconvenient for DXpeditions, FD etc. Also, the ICE unit is less expensive."

"I have the ICE set and I bought two Dunestar 600s for my ICOM rigs. I don't have the equipment to objectively measure the differences. I would assume that the physical separation offered by the ICEs would make them "better" until you consider the effect of any automatic or manual switching arrangement. ... I wanted something more automatic, and with a Top-Ten box for each rig things are indeed automatic. The isolation seems OK, but I'm not able to objectively measure this. I suspect my antenna proximity is a more important factor. I have also purchased some ICE receiver front-end protectors (which are a couple of transformers and a light bulb in a box) to keep from blowing up my RX again."

"The ice is built much better - not only the housing but the guts, I have seen the D-Star multiband unit crap out, but not the ICE (yet, anyway). I like my ICE very much. We used the three ICE filters during our 3 TX multi-multi for the CQWPX, there was very little intrastation interference, we didn't use any stubs either...next phase will be to add stubs to the filters - I haven't got mine automatically following the rig as it changes bands as of yet , but that too is coming!"

CON

"On the minus side:

* ICE is slowwwwww to fill orders. If you want it for CQWW, order NOW!

* If I recall, they're only rated for 200w. Not a big deal for most folks, but if you accidentally load up 250w into the wrong filter...Poof!

* In the past they varied the pinouts on the rear DIN connector. This proved fatal to a friends FT-890. Get a schematic! They didn't include it!

If your going to control them via a band decoder, you need to tell them which one you're going to use. Some use positive activation, other use negative. The LEDs won't work if you mismatch."

"... I have a pair of the ICE filters. I ordered them a few weeks before SS last year and was told about 3 weeks delivery. After about a month I started

calling them, and each time they said my filters would be shipped within a week. Several months later I still had not received them. In February the charge for the filters showed up on my Visa statement, but still no filters delivered. They acknowledged they had charged me without shipping the merchandise and gave me the same line I had heard a dozen times before, that they'd ship that week. A month later still no filters, in spite of weekly promises that they'd be shipped pronto.

To make a long and frustrating story short, I finally received the filters some time in May. I checked them out and found they both had miswires that caused the band indicator LEDs to not function properly when using the remote programming connector. Additionally, one of the filters was not functioning on 20m. The paint finish on one of the cases was apparently applied over grease and rubbed off in a large area from my limited handling. I returned both filters for repair and received them back in good working order in June.

My experiences with ICE are similar to those of another local here who waited even longer for a preamp, and who also bought a TVI filter that was DOA. He waited over a month for the filter to be repaired.

From what I have seen of several ICE products, they appear to be reasonably well designed, but their quality control and customer service is abysmal. I would only buy from them as a last resort, and be prepared for the worst."