

DX0DX DXpedition plans for 160 meter operation

K1LZ asked me to join him on this one on October 6th while I was at his 55th birthday party. I knew about it taking place of course and knew they needed a few more ops due to cancellations, but I personally did not think I should go.....until Krassy told me he was going and that he wanted to stay on for the CQ 160M CW contest at the end of January. I said "You're going on this one?" He said "Yep, if you come I will get us a 4sq for the contest – so you should come.....it will be fun...we will have the same team we had on Coast Guard Beach on Cape Cod last January -but it will be a more difficult location..." After a few nanoseconds thought, I decided to go...

Since that time, and working with Chris VK3FY, the Team Leader, Dave Collingham K3LP and Clive Penna, GM3POI, plans for Top-band have been refined and thanks to Dave and Clive, we should be prepared now to give Top-band a really good go.

What's Planned:

We have moved the 160M primary xmit site to the SE "knee" of the island where it will command an all water shot to EU (330), to Asia/Western NA (010) and to the North American East Coast via long path (145) degrees. Here we will have twin top-loaded phased verticals firing North and South with some of their radials terminating in salt water. The patterns on these things will be broad as a barn - to allow for skewing - which should put us in good stead.

For listening, we have beverages planned for the principal directions with more capable of being added should we find we need them. Additionally we have access to two of the new K7 160m Rx 4 squares - and, when fully set up, we will have quite a few things to listen on.

Radios are IC7600's courtesy of ICOM with KW amps - so we should poke out a decent signal.

While we will arrive on the island sometime on the 5th of January, the initial teams 1 and 2 have a huge amount of antennas to erect and set up - so it may take a few days for us to finally get QRV on Top-band. Even when we do, it may be with a very basic setup to work some of the closer in stuff – and then after daylight each morning, Clive, Bjorn and I and some of the others interested in Top-band will start filling in as soon as we can with some of the better listening antennas.

I would hope that by around the 10-11th of January, we should have most of what we really want to have working and finalized, subject only to local noise, intermod and the other things that often get in the way of hearing down to your noise floor.

Whatever we learn when we get there will determine what we can really do - but, rest assured, we will do our best to be LOUD and to be able to HEAR well.....

The announced 160M CW FREQ is 1824 - but watch packet and the chat room for what we are doing each day. We may do some xmitting down low (like 1800.5) listening up 2-3 at North American long path times. For those on the East Coast of NA, you will have your best chance to work us starting about 30 mins after our local sunset. We will be xmitting at these times on a SE heading over the long path - and you should listen S/SW for us - and just wait for us to come out of the noise. The peak may very well be BEFORE your own local sunrise - so come on down early and don't rely on local sunrise ---or you could miss the best prop.

For those in the New England and Maritime Canada region, we will be taking standbys quite regularly each day for NA as we near OUR LOCAL SUNRISE – and again, we may be xmitting way down low listening up for EUROPE somewhere above 1810 and up 2-3 for USA/VE callers (meaning 1803-1804.) GM3POI has listened in EU and at his QTH 1800.5 seems like a good spot for us. We can be heard in Europe on that QRG - although the navigation garbage is quite annoying all over the lower end of 160M - but this is as good as anywhere else is down there in Europe.

Europeans will find us daily in the hours before our local sunrise, and we expect this will be a regular, reliable path absent solar storms.

North American westerly stations should find us peaking up as they near their local sunrises - and here we expect to have more reliable propagation than we expect we will find to the East Coast. Based on daily LP activity out of XU7ACY, it should be possible to work the East Coast after our sunset from Florida into the Maritimes - as these routes were workable during most of October, into November and N4IS reports hearing XU7ACY just this past week from Florida.

Later in the month, K1LZ arrives with N8BO and NU5Y and we then will be trying to erect a bastardized 4sq from atop a 90 ft concrete bunker - with a spider mast atop it. This antenna will be something like 300 feet inland - so I am not at all sure how it will perform at extreme low angles - (Clive and I have told Krassy that we think the pair of verticals on the beach will clean the 4-SQ's clock on the long path into NA - but you never know for sure until you try it.)

At the end of the month, most of the dx'pedition team members will depart leaving VK3FY and his son and the rest of the CQ 160m contest team on the island by ourselves. We will be setting up a M/S station with two radios and two amps (with an interlock) - and will use both the 4sq and the phased verticals to see what we can do from out in the middle of nowhere! Here again, watch packet - if you want to work us in the contest - as we may be spending some time way down low in the band - rather than fighting it out higher up where we may not be easily found. We all know what 160M sounds like in the contest - wall to wall bedlam! So we will probably go down low to avoid it - listening up.

Internet:

Just this past week we learned we will have SOME access to the internet. I do not know how good it will be, but if it is viable, we may put out some reports of changes to the above and what we are hearing/working as the dx'pedition proceeds. Hopefully, there will be capability for on-line log uploads etc. We will see how all that goes.

Supporting DX0DX:

If you want to help VK3FY out with some of the additional expenses that flying in is now costing him, please go to the following site <http://www.dx0dx.net>

From the homepage, click on SUPPORT DX0DX - and this will take you to a page where there is a PAYPAL link. Anything folks want to do would be appreciated, but it is certainly not required - thanks...

QSL's go to Bob N200

I think that's the lot folks...rest assured, that we all will be doing our best to work all of you we can hear - and we expect to be putting multiple sets of ears on the band at key times. If we are able, we will try to do some recording - so folks can hear what it sounded like out there at interesting times - no hard promises on this one - if we can do it, we will...as it would be nice to preserve what this was all about.

Finally, I should thank Chris VK3FY and Dave Collingham K3LP for working with us to re-jig things for Top-band. While it meant some extra work for them to accommodate what we thought we really needed, they came through when it counted and we think we now have a really good plan for 160M. So thanks again guys.....it is much appreciated!

73 for now and hope to CU in the pileups!

Jeff K1ZM
Clive GM3POI
Krassy K1LZ