SWOT BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
SIDEWINDERS-ON-TWO RADIO CLUB

PROMOTING SSB, CW & DIGITAL OPERATIONS ON 144Mhz AND UP
VISIT US ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB AT:

The SWOT Homepage: *www.swotrc.net*

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sidewindersontwo

BULLETIN # 302 **SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2004**

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S.W.O.T. GENERAL INFORMATION

- Send renewals and new applications for membership to Howard Hallman WD5DJT (See address above). Please make all checks payable to SIDEWINDERS ON TWO. Include your SWOT # for your renewals.
- Send your SWOT "Members Worked" from your log to, SWOT Awards manager, Wade Massey, 1016 Weiss Ave, Princeton TX., 75407 $1.00 fee for certificate and your certificate number would be appreciated, also SASE.
- E-Mail all articles and reports to the Editors' Web addresses listed above or you can mail them to Art Jackson KA5DWI, 6516 Simmons Rd., North Richland Hills, Texas 76180-4243.
- MERCHANDISE:
  Decals and listings available for $1.00 each for shipping and handling from the Secretary/Treasurer.
  SWOT Patches are available at a price of $4.00 Each + $.50 for mailing
  Badges are available from "The Sign Man", Rick Pourciau NV5A, http://www.thesignman.com/menu.html

In this issue:

The Chairman's Corner

By Art Jackson, KA5DWI

I am sure glad that this summer is over.

I finally took some time off from the rigors of the schoolbooks. I was hoping that I would be entertained with a plethora (a bunch) of VHF DX and maybe even a little HF activity. Wrong!! As soon as I tried to sit back and smell the roses, the family decided to take what time I had left before the next school session, plus a little extra blood.

This season's DX results were less than spectacular. I can't seem to blame it on one thing, but I sure can blame it on a lot of things. First of all, a downed rotor didn't help, but I still could "arm-strong" it when needed. I will get that fixed later this fall.

Second, I am happy to announce that we have a few new 2 Meter operators here in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Unfortunately, a couple of them have "20 Meter High Power Contest" mentalities. I don't mind it when anyone puts up a first class station, but I do mind when they all seem to think (AT THE SAME TIME) that being on 144.200 yelling CQ in unison is accomplishing any good. I experienced a couple of openings where I wished I lived in the middle of North Dakota (Are there any big guns out there?). Talk about bad manners. Lots of great DX got wiped out. No one seemed to want to move off of 200. QST's to do so were being QRM'd by the clutter. I only worked two DX stations this season by announcing on "200" that I was listening on another frequency. In 2003, I worked about two-dozen DX stations using that method.

Third, this was not one of the best years for propagation. I guess we should blame it on the sun. (Sounds like another good excuse.) You have good years, and you have bad ones. On the other hand, we had probably the best single opening in at least 7 years and for some 12 and 15 years. Where was I? Taking care of some family matters. That was one more "OSIMA" (oh shoot I missed again)!

So as you can tell, I have come out of this summer not real happy and cheerful, but I believe things usually get better in the long run. The glass is half full.

Then I get this from forwarded Howard (WD5DJT) ……

From charter member John Moody, WR5L:

THIS WORLD IS CONSTANTLY PROVING THAT IF SOMETHING AINT BROKE ---DON'T FIX IT. IT SEEMS THAT THERE ARE SOME FOLKS THAT SIMPLY DO NOT GIVE IN TO THE REAL FACTS. THERE ARE SOME FOLKS THAT STILL THINK THAT AL GORE WON THE ELECTION AND THERE ARE MANY THAT FEEL OTHERWISE. OH WELL, SO MUCH FOR POLITICS….RIGHT

I AM SORRY THAT ART'S HF RADIO IS BROKEN AND HIS EDUCATIONAL EFFORT HAS BEEN PUT OFF. THAT MAY BE THE EXCUSE FOR TRYING TO CHANGE THE DIRECTION OF SWOT. HE NEEDS TO SIMPLY SIT BACK IN HIS CHAIR AND TAKE A REAL DEEP BREATH, GET HIS HF RIG REPAIRED AND PUT FORTH SOME EFFORT TO ENJOY LIFE. "LIFE IS TOO SHORT FOR QRP".

I HAVE BEEN IN THE SWOT ORGANIZATION SINCE IT'S INCEPTION AND I AM A CHARTER MEMBER. I HAVE PROBABLY SPENT AS MUCH TIME PROMOTING THE ORGANIZATION AS OTHERS HAVE. I DID HELP ORGANIZE THE FIRST ANNUAL SWOT CONVENTION THAT WE HAD IN FORT WORTH. THIS WAS DONE BEFORE THE EXISTENCE OF HAM COM AND THERE WERE MANY DOOR PRIZES GIVEN AWAY AT THAT MEETING THAT COST A LOT OF DOLLARS. I THINK THAT THE HAM SHACK IN GRAND PRAIRIE DONATED GOODIES TOTALLING $800.00. THAT WAS A LOT OF MONEY FOR THE 1970'S TO COME FROM ONE DONOR. ICOM EAST, ELECTRONIC CENTER AND TUCKER ELECTRONICS (TECO) ALL DONATED DOOR PRIZES FOR THIS EVENT.

I DID CALL THE EARLY BIRD SWOT NET FOR 7 YEARS. EVERY SATURDAY MORNING) WITHOUT MISSING A SINGLE DAY. I HAVE THE LOGBOOKS (YEAH LOG BOOKS) TO PROVE THIS FACT.

PLEASE LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE.

RESPECTFULLY,
JOHN L. MOODY
WR5L ex KC5IO, ex WB5NLB, ex KN5AIJ
SWOT #6, SMIRK #857, KADDIDDLE HOPPER #534

My Reply:
I truly believe that everyone should express their peace of mind. Trying to organize and keep a club running is fairly tough when interruptions and other priorities are in place. The work that needs to done, can only be accomplished with the help and support of its members. Many of you contribute your time, your energy and your money to this organization. It is most appreciated.

I have never believed that sitting idle does any good. I am one that thinks survival of this club will only exist as long as we keep plugging for ways of maintaining the paid membership and finding a few new ones.

As long as no one else wants this job, I will do everything I can to keep it going forward and will try anything to get to that point. I do believe in trying and if it doesn't work, we will try something else.

If we all sit idle, THIS CLUB WILL BECOME HISTORY and so will any decent weak signal activity on 2 Meters as a result. We need to promote it and sell it to a Ham community that has many other choices and interests. We all need to do our share keeping this thing going.

I like smelling the roses too, but they eventually wilt and die out. If you like smelling them, you have to prune and fertilize the rosebush to grow more roses.

So everyone, if you think I need to let up, let me know. You can do the next Bulletin for me. Any volunteers?

P.S. the HF Rig is fixed

Recap
Thanks John KM5ES and Don, KA0JLF for your contributors this go round. I really do appreciate it.

The Side Winders On Two Radio Club Homepage

www.swotrc.net

If you have not taken the time to visit the site, you are really missing a treat. We are trying our best to making the site the center of 2-Meter activities.
So this is what we offer.

Links

Current Newsletter
Available to all paid members. To receive the ID and password, Email: ka5dwi@swotrc.net

2 Meter SSB mailing list
The mailing list is simpler, faster, commercial free and much less of a hassle than the Yahoo Group page.
Try it, you will like it.

Past Newsletters
At least one years worth of Newsletters for all to view. They are free to everyone. No password or ID required.

SWOT Yahoo
Still there and will not be removed. It has always helped bring in new members. Use it as you wish. We will be making changes to some of the restrictions as well.
The "SWOT Forum" link on the Homepage has been dropped due to a lack of activity.

OFFICERS
Want to express your views? The list of all the SWOT officers is here.

Members homepages
Be sure to email John at: km5es@km5es.net , if you would like your homepage linked.

SWOT Members Station Pictures
For showing off the shack or the clutter. Some vintage pictures would be nice as well. Send them in to John.

Northern California SWOT Chapter News
Our active California chapter events will be listed here.

Database
Looking for a SWOT member number for those awards? "Edit" and "Find" from the browser the call, name or number.

GUESTBOOK
We always appreciate your comments.

Membership Form
For news members and renewals to mail to WD5DJT.

SWOT Nets
Find your area SWOT Nets.

144 mhz Prop Logger
The most active site for logging 2 Meter DX openings.

Hepburn Tropo Forecast
For those weak on predicting 2 Meter Tropo opening possibilities.

RealTime Spaceweather Forecast
Links and Images of real time solar information.

Western States VHF Society

Central States VHF Society
Links to these active Weak Signal organizations.

VHF DX PAGE
The Europeans are excellent at promoting VHF. Great informational Website.

Ping Jockey Chat Page
Link for WSJT users.

Other:
Also displayed are the Solar X-Ray and Geomagnetic Field conditions, a ticker of the latest news and more Solar links for the Aurora operations.

Be sure you visit the site and remember to "Bookmark":
www.swotrc.net

The Call Frequency and You.

By John Petersen, KM5ES

A long time ago and by gentlemen's agreement, calling frequencies were set aside for hams to use on the weak signal frequencies, 144.200 for 2 meters and 50.125 for 6 meters. This was setup, as the ARRL would say, as Considerate Operator Frequencies. In other words, if you make a contact on these frequencies, then if possible, move off up or down the band as not to congest the calling frequency.

I have noticed in the past few years of running, especially on 2 meters, the problem of 144.200 being

tied up by either one or two high powered stations continually calling CQ or anywhere from 2 to 8 people tying it up rag-chewing about their recent surgeries or how their dog is doing. We need to sit back and think about a few things when we are using any calling frequency even if it is on VHF, UHF or wherever.

One is just being a tad courteous. Not everyone that is on the calling frequency is fortunate enough to own a KW. There are other people out there that might just want to try and work that station the KW station is hearing. They might not have as much power as the KW station does but maybe they have a good array up and can work them.

I have always enjoyed contesting on VHF. Recently we have had an influx of newer stations on the VHF bands that have possibly moved to VHF from HF to try out the weak signal as a new conquest for them. Don't take me wrong. We need more people on VHF and UHF, but we need to be more considerate of others.

I have in the past, just sitting and listening on 144.200 waiting for an E-Skip opening, you suddenly will hear a group of ragchewers on it. I had to tell the guys twice they were on top of some DX and the band was changing to open to other parts of the country. Needless to say they got mad, said a few bad things about me, then reluctantly moved off frequency. They got over it and everybody got to make a few contacts. When it is bad, is when you hear the DX station say, "well I heard those ragchewers down in (wherever) tying up the calling frequency".

I do by no means profess to be perfect and I have tied up the calling frequency a time or two. But, I have learned from experience that this is not the best thing to do.

What I normally do now is put out a couple of calls and move them at least 20 kHz away from the calling frequency, so that I don't splatter all over the guys on 200. There is only one thing worst that someone "hogging" the calling frequency and that is someone that is 2 or 3 or 5 kHz away running a KW and tearing up the call frequency so bad that even the bad dogs can't work them.

Ah… so is life on any band, let's all try and be a little more considerate to one another and give the other guy a chance at working that elusive DX grid out there.

73's John Petersen KM5ES
SWOT #3331 Vice Chairman

Great Plains Super Launch July 3, 2004

By Don Pfister - KA0JLF

GPSL has come and gone another year. The symposium was held this year in Hutchinson, KS. The launch was at the McPherson, KS airport. This was the third year HABITAT SkyLab has attended the launch. The first year, 2001, due to unforeseen events we only flew a 6M simplex repeater capsule on NSBG's balloon, but that is another story.

Our flight in 2002 was a multiple balloon flight. We flew two balloons, a 300-gram and a 600-gram. This was a test flight for multiple balloon envelopes. Our two small balloons obtained an altitude within about 1000-ft of the bigger 1200-gram balloons used by other groups. That flight proved to be a successful learning experience.

We missed 2003, but were back this year with a configuration of three balloons. We used a 300-gram and two 1200-gram balloons. We filled the first 1200 gram balloon with a full T tank (about 294 cu. Ft.) of helium. The second 1200-gram balloon we put less than that, about 214 cu. Ft. The little 300-gram balloon got about 25 cu. Ft.

My thinking here was; the full 1200-gram balloon would lift the payload. The less full, 1200 gram balloon would provide a extra lift for rapid ascent and then less but steady lift after the bigger balloon burst. The idea behind the small balloon was two fold. First if the large balloon burst, the lift of this small balloon should hold up the remains of the burst balloon, allowing the smaller 1200 balloon to continue providing positive lift in combination with the 300 balloon.

The combination of the two smaller balloons were also to prevent a floater. Where a balloon reaches neutral lift and just floats along.

In theory all this was great! In practice several unexpected things happened. The helium tanks didn't seem to contain the lift expected (perhaps the tanks were not as full as described or the gas may have been less pure than expected). Whatever the case was, we only got about 14 lbs. of lift out of the full tank, instead of the 18 lbs. expected. Another group experienced the same thing. They took some gas out of the second tank we used (with our approval). They too experienced 14 lbs. of lift instead of the expected 18. They took additional gas from the second tank to make up for that missing lift they needed.

We got about 12 lbs. of measured lift in our second balloon, but due to problems with our scale we were not

completely convinced of our readings. We weren't able to get a good reading of lift for the smallest balloon, but were satisfied. We attached the balloons to the load line, load line to the parachute and then the parachute shroud lines to the payload line, in turn connecting all four capsules.

Payload #1 was our secondary tracking system, made up of a Garmin Rino, support equipment and a locator beacon for RDFing if needed. Payload #2 was our primary tracking package, made up of a Pocket Tracker, Garmin GPS engine and antennas. Payload #3 was our camcorder package. Finally, Payload #4 was our SSTV capsule, made up of a Kenwood VC-H1 Visual Communicator feeding an Alinco DJ-190 2 meter HT at about 2W.

After pre-flight preparation, I instructed the team to keep in mind if the balloons got away just to let the payloads follow. This was a lesson we learned on our very first flight back in 1997. The balloon was launched unexpectedly and about the middle person in line tried to stop the balloon by holding the payload. This caused the line to snap and the balloon broke free, floating away while we held the rest of the things that should be attached to the balloon.

We walked the "Balloon Train" to the launch point. The other groups had already assembled there with their own flight packages. Was we walked up, I tried to find where Zack, the organizer, wanted our group among the groups ready to launch. It appeared the marker balloon had been released, and another flight was just lifting off.

Again unexpectedly our balloons started taking off. I still don't know what happened, but the group took heed of my words. A member at the end of the 'train' noticed this and yelled out to the rest of the group 'let it go, let it go!' As each piece of equipment lifted out of the hands of its holder all went well. Until, you knew it was coming right?, it got to the parachute shroud ring and Payload #1. Our team member holding those pieces, was also holding his camcorder – with it's strap around his hand, as the line lifted it ripped the camcorder out of his hand and just peeled the strap off his hand. Amazingly we got a picture just after this. Chris' bare hands are over his head and you can see his camcorder riding on the shroud ring. Another picture at recovery shows the force in this event; the shroud ring's outer ring is bent to a point. Somewhere between 20 and 50 feet into the air the camcorder decided to escape or the mission commander on board jettisoned the extra weight. The sudden stop, when meeting the concrete runway wasn't very kind to the camcorder. Sorry Chris!

Our launch was successful, our balloons were climbing, quickly overtaking the marker balloon and other balloons launched. We were getting good data and SSTV pictures from the capsules. Chris has also set up his telescope to view the flight. Unlike the previous flight, this didn't prove very successful. We gathered for a group photo. The photographer told us to look up and point at the balloon. Since we had three balloons we had to point three fingers. (A cute gag I thought.)

We divided into two groups for the chase. The first group started their chase, while group two stayed behind and packed up equipment and materials used for the launch. By the time group 2 was ready to leave all the other groups had begun their chase too. The airplane owners and pilots were rolling their planes back into the hanger we had just filled our balloons in front of.

Chase group two was several miles and minutes behind. The balloons had flown to the Southeast, climbing about 1000 feet per minute. We took a different route than group one. We ended up a few miles East of Moundridge, KS when we decided to stop and regroup. Looking at our maps and the balloon's location we noticed we were about 1 mile behind the balloon. We all looked to the sky searching. "There is one!" got our attention. "There's another one" followed shortly. I'm not sure how many DIFFERENT balloons we saw, I know we saw ours. It continued Eastward, then turned and flew back over us. WOW!

Our group, five vehicles I think, were watching the balloons, checking the data and pictures being received. I'm not sure if we mentally tuned out he radio or just didn't hear group one call us. We did get a cell call from them. Since we were basically under the balloons we were in the 'cone of silence' and couldn't copy the balloon radios. Group one confirmed they were still getting valid data from the balloon payloads. Since they were located in Newton about 5 to 10 miles southeast of us they must have been outside the "COS".

Group one informed us, someone observed one of our balloons had burst. We apparently were flying with the second (smaller) 1200 gram and the little 300 gram balloons. Our ascent rate seemed to have dropped and our climb rate was minimal. We were around 62000 feet, above controlled airspace, so there seemed to be no problem. Additionally we could find the balloon visually whenever we wanted, just a little searching of the sky above us, at times almost directly overhead. We continued to discuss and enjoy the flight together, there on the side of the road and on the phone with our other group (made up of 3 or 4 vehicles).

We were trying to get a view of the balloon with binoculars, but I don't know if that was ever successful. The farmer who owned the land next to us came up with his dog to check on us. After we informed him of what we were doing, he too looked at the balloons and got some enjoyment out of our days activities. He wished us luck and supported our activities.

Group one suggested moving closer to the balloon since it was several miles west of us and moving away from us between 20 and 30 mph. We agreed and turned around heading west. It had moved far enough west of us we again could copy the data and pictures. As is often the case chasing free balloons, they go in a diagonal and the roads go east, west and north, south. So we had to make a series of zig zags to get where we thought the balloon was.

Unfortunately, one of the other groups' balloons too had burst and their capsule started transmitting a lot more frequently. Our last good packet from our balloon was around 69,000 feet. Another situation common to back roads in the central US, is poor cell service. At this point I was not able to contact group one via cell phone. We had stopped near the last beacon we had received at 69,000 feet. We got out RDF equipment and got some bearing on the SSTV signal. It was still sending pictures every 3 minutes. It takes about 1 minute to send the picture in Robot 36, the default mode for auto transmit. Steve was able to get cell service, a different provider, and called group one. They too had stopped receiving the 144.34 MHz signal. Fortunately they were also tracking the secondary data source. They told us they had tracked the payload to the ground and gave us the location. We plotted a route to their location on our mapping programs and gave chase.

We got into radio range with them and found out a recovery crew had found the package after getting permission form the landowner. They were waiting for our arrival. It was hot and dry; they hadn't taken water with them. I loaded up with water bottles, took my camera and headed in to them. A couple other members decide to join me and we got an ok from the landowner to join our group already at touch down. After the weeds, barbed wire fences, cactus, briars and cows we made contact with the team at the landing site. They were very happy to have some refreshment from the ice water.

Chris, deciding late to join us, found us as we were taking recovery photos. We cut the lines to components, parachute, capsule 1, capsule 2 and so on. Each of us took a part and we headed out. Just after we started out, Chris noticed he has lost his radio. We tried to Audio Direction Find his radio but were unsuccessful at trying to hear it. This was a costly flight for poor Chris his camcorder got broken, and he lost a handheld radio.

After getting back to the vehicles a short recap of the flight followed. Getting late in the day, some members decided to head back to Kansas City, the rest of us headed to Hutchinson for a late lunch.

Our balloon traveled nearly 100 miles but landed about 18.25 miles from the launch site. Group one drove about 84 miles. I'm not sure group two drove more than 50 miles. The flight lasted over 3 hours, with a top speed of: during ascent 56.1 mph – during decent 62 mph; lowest speed of: ascent 2.7 mph, decent 0.0 mph at 53,592 feet. Duration of the balloon flight 3 hours 16 minutes. Duration of the event 6 hours and 34 minutes.

We have a lot of data, photos, video and logs to digest. We plan a meeting on 7/17/04 to recap the flight and plan our near future flights. We should have another flight either in July or August, or my hope, both.

We want to see how we can involve more hams and include more amateur modes. We could use your experience and interests in guiding our future flights and what equipment we should consider to make more modes of operation available to the ham community.

We are looking at SSB and PSK to add to our flight modes. Any positive suggestions would be appreciated.

We have formed a group on Yahoo Groups but have it very restrictive to prevent SPAM and virus spreading. It is open only to members, but welcome people to join. We don't allow attachments to email. There are two memberships, web and email list only. There are several options on the email; one way to keep down on the email you receive you can sign up for "Special Notices" only (these are flight notices and meeting type notices). You can sign up for no email being sent to you and you can just check the messages via the web. It is not listed in any of the directories to cut down email address harvesters.

On a sad note, we lost of our founding members and strongest supporters Bob Davis K0FPC. Bob was an amazing guy in many ways. He was the best high speed CW operator I have ever known. He won many competitions at hamfests and the like, amazing everyone. He also had such a grasp of mathematics and special geometry. He would look at the Lat/Long coordinates of the balloon and tell me where it was in reference to us of the top of his head. Bob and made a 'Balloon CD' with photos and stories of various balloon groups he had participated with or knew about. He wrote a program "BTRAKR" to predict the flight of a

balloon using NWS wind data and/or flight data from the balloon. He has worked on a real time tracking/prediction program to run on the on board computer in the balloon capsule and send out landing predictions from the capsule. Unfortunately that work has not been finished. I hope I can find enough of his work to at least test this. IF anyone would like a copy of Bob's 'Balloon CD" let me know, I'll see what we can do. I for one will miss Bob and his friendship, as I know others will too.

73 de Don KA0JLF SWOT member and Founder of HABITAT SkyLab (PFranc of KS)
Email: ka0jlf@arrl.net

Additional References:
http://habitatskylab.org our new domain, but currently points to our original web site.
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HABITAT_SkyLab our yahoo group – members past opening page
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GPSL yahoo group for GPSL
http://fmsstv.net/sp our SSTV photos captured by Guy AB0DP in Wichita, KS
http://www.byonics.com/pockettracker/ small radio transmit only TNC and 2M radio
http://www.rckara.org/project_traveler/gpsl/ GPSL 2004 web site – also Project Traveler

DX Reports July 10-August 31

By Art Jackson KA5DWI

It probably was not one of the best summers for DX, but a few good openings made it interesting

Aurora:
Still surprising how that during the downturn of the solar cycle, we continue to see aurora.
07/17: Midwest
07/26: **Major event**. Northern half of US. South into most of Oklahoma.
07/26-27: Second hit. Northwest, Midwest and Northeast, as far south as Oklahoma, Tennessee,
08/30: Northeast, Midwest and Northwest.
From: John Geiger, NE0P
I was surprised to hear aurora this far south, as I didn' t think that the solar flare was that large. When I moved here from Iowa, I figured I would get aurora once every 10 years or so, but I have had 4 aurora sessions in 3 years!
I worked K0GU DN70 for a new grid on 2. Heard N0LL(EM09) and W0EKZ (Em17) via AU, and K5CM (EM25) alternating between AU and direct. Also heard K5SM (EM03) and WQ5W (EM12) both direct with no AU on their signals. This was all on 2 meters.
Heard a couple of weak signals on 6, but nothing I could pull out. This is interesting, as I have never worked 6 meter AU from this location. Even when we have a strong AU on 2 meters, like last October, I hear little or nothing on 6. I would think that the AU would be stronger there. Anybody have a suggestion why 2 meters would be stronger for AU here? Higher gain antennas?
73s John NE0P EM04to
Meteors:
Several reports of scatter received during the Perseids showers, especially between 0500-0800 UTC 08/12.
From Jim McMasters, KM5PO
I ran through the Perseids and have this report to file.
16 contacts made, all on FSK441A
Highlights:
K2TXB FM29 1,349 miles Vincentown, NJ (5 minute QSO)
WJ6T DM05 1,285 miles Bakersfield, CA
W0TUP DN98 1,100 miles Minot, ND
The other stations worked were:

KD7ETC	DM54	N4IS	EL96
K2BLA	EL99	WD4KPD	FM15
K0AWU	EN37	WA3LTB	EN92
K0RI	DM78	WA0TAQ	EN61
W7OJT	DM26	XE2AT	DL81
W0AH	DM78	WE9Y	EN82
KE7NR	DM33	W8MD	EN90

I also did not complete with two stations that make a nice story.
1. KA7V, DN14kf, Ontario, Oregon. Barry and I have been trying to complete for 7 years. The attempts started when I lived in Texarkana (EM23wk). Over the years neither one of us have ever heard a ping until this year. We both had weak pings with partial calls/full calls. Each year we try to improve our stations in some way in order to see this path complete. It looks like the circuit actually exists now that we have heard something each way and so we look forward to the fall meteor showers this year as the possible end of our journey ! If you understand how satisfying this completion will be then you are probably a ping jockey... I managed to save one of the "both calls" pings:
http://www.qsl.net/km5po/aug2004perseids.html

I got my new AN Wireless free standing 70' tower up (17 yards of concrete!) and a single 2M18XXX on 100' of hardline installed the day before the shower... I' m building an H frame to hold 4 yagis now with EL and wiring the shack for 220 to support a Henry 3002A which I' m anxious to turn on.
Just for the record I also use an LNA Technology CAV144EME NB cavity preamp to a DCI 10 pole filter and a second stage DEM preamp on the IC-746.
http://www.qsl.net/km5po
Regards, Jim

From John Butrovich, W5UWB
FSK441A 0418utc 16 July N3FZ EN90xh 1328mi
Info: Jack, N3FZ runs 300w and a single yagi

Sporadic E/ FAI:
Not a very good year in total.
One of the few times that I recall that E season was over with by mid-July. Only one noteworthy opening occurred on July 11, between FN31 Connecticut and Mississippi and Tennessee, EM44 and EM55.

Europe had only 3 more openings after July 11. That is very poor for them. I still would like to know what they sprinkle in the ionosphere over there.

Tropo:
At least there is Tropo to liven up the band.
Many reports of local enhancement.
Some better openings:
7/14: S.TX to Northern Mexico
7/28: KS to IL
8/02: KS, OK to MS, IA to MI
8/12: MS to OH
8/26: East Coast (MA to NC)

Moon:
From John Butrovich, W5UWB
0035utc 17 July VK7MO QE57 EME JT65A
Info: Rex, VK7MO runs 400w and 4 x 10el yagi's
Myself, 1500w and 1-17el as usual.
73 - John W5UWB EL17ax
From Jerry Casey, N5OSK EM25

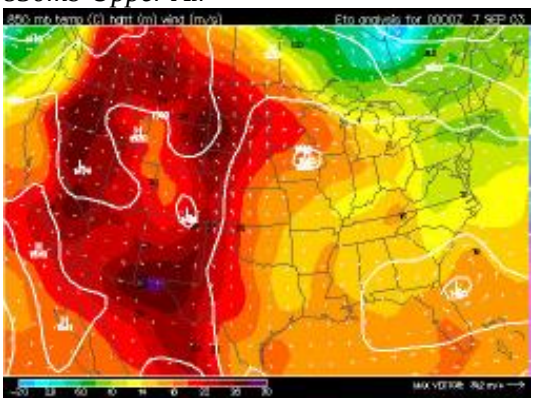
Jerry has a 13B2 mounted on a custom built mount that mounts to his hitch. It has a 14 ft mast fed with LMR-400. Radio is a TR-751 Kenwood mobile to a ARR SP144VDG inline preamp with a Mirage 25 watt in 160 out amplifier. It was tested 9/01 on 144.115 on WSJT FSK441a and completed with WB5APD Eric in EM84ak from KM5ES Location EM25di. Jerry is planning for contest weekend to activate EM24 from atop the Talimena Drive at the Queen Wilhelmena Hamfest Saturday September 11th. He will be running both WSJT and some SSB during the day Saturday.

What to expect September 1 -October 31

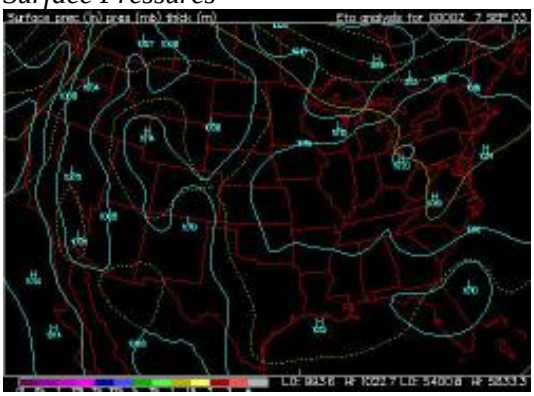
We are now almost totally dependent on Tropo for good DX. Still look for a surprise now and then with other modes.
Meteors:

Throughout September and October, we experience at least 26 minor and variable meteor showers. Random and scheduled WSJT modes should produce excellent results.

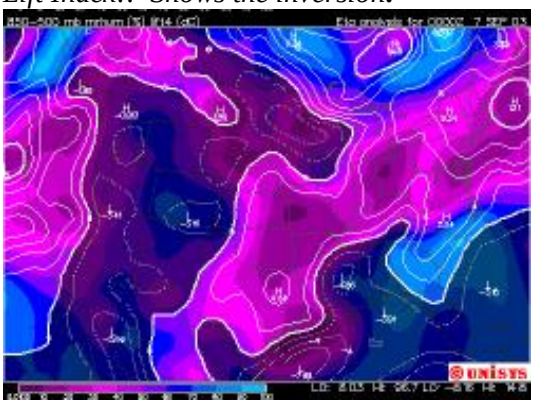
Only one major shower exists in the two months. That is the Orionids shower. It is projected to peak 01:30-03:00 UTC, October 21. The peak occurs quickly and may not be favorable for random operations. The shower is best between 1AM-11:00AM local time.
Aurora:
Yours truly keeps missing the boat on this one. I said that this type of propagation would be an afterthought. Wrong!!!
Stay abreast of solar conditions on sites, such as Spaceweather.com.
Tropo:
The absolute best Tropo conditions generally occur in the Fall.
Tropo is created by cool-cored weather systems moving in from Canada becoming warm-cored ones. This is a direct result of them stalling out once they reach the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.
One year ago!!! September 6-7, 2003
A Canadian frontal system stalled out at the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico.
850mb Upper Air



Surface Pressures



Lift Index!! Shows the inversion.



A large temperature inversion caused by a large ridge of Surface to Upper Air High Pressure from Texas to Maine was extremely prominent and highly rare. It was probably helped out by a hurricane over Bermuda. Many DX records were broken in two days of unbelievable activity.
What will 2004 offer???

E-Layer Propagation:
Nil until late November. If it does occur, it is triggered by minor solar disturbances.

Moon:
Good days: 9/10-9/17, 9/24-29, 10/08-14, 10/21-26,
Bad days: 9/21, 10/19
Good days are based on low sky noise and path loss readings (DEGR) less than 3dB, *Best* days at/or below 1dB. *Bad* days are those with a 10db plus reading.

Lunar, Solar and Astronomical Events

Lunar: Perigee – 9/22, 10/17
Apogee – 9/07, 10/05
Full Moon – 9/28, 10/28
New Moon – 9/14, 10/14
Highest Declination (Elevation): 9/08, 10/05-06
Lowest Declination (Elevation): 9/21-22, 10/19

Solar: Overhead:
9/01: 8.1°N, 10/01: 3.5°S, 11/01: 14.6°S
Fall Equinox: 9/22 16:20 UTC

USAF Predicted Solar Flux Average:
9/07-10/03: 104 (Down 8)
This is still running higher than expected.

Meteors:
9/01-9/30: 27 Showers active, 16 Peak
10/01-10/31: 26 Showers active, 21 Peak
Meteor info at:
http://comets.amsmeteors.org/meteors/calendar.html

Event & Contest Calender 2004

Month	Day	Event
September	11-12	ARRL VHF Sweepstakes
September	20	144 MHz Fall Sprint 7-11PM Local

Sponsored by the Southeastern VHF Society
For more information:
http://svhfs.org/fall_sprint_rules.htm.

September	28	222 MHz Fall Sprint 7-11PM Local
October	2	Ham Expo, Belton TX
October	6	432 MHz Fall Sprint 7-11PM Local
October	16	Microwave--902 MHz + Fall Sprint 6AM-1PM Local
October	23-24	50 MHz Fall Sprint 2300-0300 UTC

Send me dates that are important to you all.

SWOT Announcements and News

Eastern Oklahoma SWOT Net:
Keep your fingers crossed!!!
It hopes to return sometimes in the future.
It will probably be mid-evening on Thursday.

New SWOT Members:
SWOT #, Call, Name, State & Grid Square
3453 KL7IZW STEPHEN M. PLOCK TX EM13
3452 KB9WQJ MIKE CORNWALL IL EM58
3451 WA5TKU WES ATCHISON TX EM13
3439 WM5L JIM CLARK TX EM12
3440 NORQ DAVE DUNBAR TX EM13
3454 K5WPN WADE NORRIS OK EM14
3455 W5AK DICK BEERMAN TX EL29
Thank you all for joining.
In addition, thank you all for your renewals too.

SWOT Net Reports

Here are the net reports for July and August.

Northern California (Sunday)
July
Summer slows down the numbers... Vacations and Family outings..
Total of 14 different grids
19 Stations checked in all 4 times
24 checked in 3 times

28 checking in twice
and 28 checked in once

August
Summer is starting to become wan, doldrums are setting in, and anticipation of those cold winters storms are just on the horizon... So button up and sit by the fire and chase DX, Grid Squares or get up and chase the wife. But, do enjoy the rest of 2004 and VOTE!!!!
Our totals for August are as follows:
110 different stations checked in during the month
Checkins by the week are:
Week 1 had 67 different stations
Week 2 had 71 different stations
Week 3 had 70
Week 4 had 68 and
Week 5 had 78...

29 stations checked in all 5 weeks
25 stations checked in 4 times
12 checked in 3 times
24 checked in twice, and
20 checked in once...

Thanks to all that wondered by and said hi to the group... see ya at the SWAP MEET

73 Larry, W6OMF-Sue, K6SUE
CMSGT, USAF ret

Northeast Missouri (Monday) N0PB-NCS
Month of July and August:

Date	Check-ins/Grids/States
07/05	17/13/4
07/12	29/14/6
07/19	22/13/6
07/26	20/13/6
08/02	No Net
08/09	21/11/4
08/16	33/17/5

North Texas (Wednesday) W5FKN-NCS

Date	Check-ins/Grids/SWOT#'s
07/07	29/15/13
07/14	31/17/14
07/21	17/14/08
07/28	27/19/12
08/04	27/16/10
08/11	29/13/08
08/18	28/14/11
08/25	23/13/09

East Texas Pineywoods (Saturday) K5LOW-NCS

Date	Check ins/Grids
06/12	9/2 from DFW N5TIF NCS
07/10	15/09/10
07/17	11/09/09
07/24	16/10/10
07/31	18/09/13
08/07	13/07/08
08/14	12/06/08
08/21	14/08/10
08/28	No Net (Weather)

Southwest Oklahoma (Thursday)

Date	Check ins /Grids/States
07/15	3 all local
07/22	4 all local
07/29	8/ 4/ 2
08/05	8/ 5/ 2
08/12	No Net WX
08/19	No report

Thanks to Mike NH6CJ for the info

SIDEWINDERS ON TWO" ENROLLMENT OR RENEWAL FORM

NOTE: Though your membership and number are good for life you must renew annually to receive the newsletter and stay on the active list..
Enclosed find check/MO. to: New member---$12.00_____ Renewal----$12.00_____
Howard Hallman WD5DJT, Sec.Treas.
3230 Springfield Lancaster, TX 75134-1214
New Member. I have worked the following members:
Call: _____SWOT No._____ Call:_____SWOT No. _____
Renewing: My SWOT No. is _____
Name:_____Call_____Grid Square_____
Street address_____
City_____State_____Zip Code_____
Telephone Nos._____E-mail_____
Receive Newsletter By Email: YES_____ NO _____

SWOT and Selected 2-Meter Nets

Day	Local Time	Area	Net	Frequency	Net Control Station
SUN	**8:00P**	**VACAVILLE CA**	**NO. CALIFORNIA**	**144.250**	**W6OMF LARRY**
SUN	8:30A	TUCSON AZ	ARIZONA	144.250	N7SQN AL
SUN	8:30P	ZEBULON NC		144.220	N1GMV
SUN	9:30P	HOLLAND MI	MI SWAM	144.155	K8NFT
MON	7:30P	ALBUQUERQUE	NEW MEXICO	144.200	N5XZM BOBBY
MON	8:00P	COLORADO	ROCKY MT. VHF +	144.220	N0VSB W6OAL
MON	**8:00P**	**NE MISSOURI**	**NORTHEAST MISSOURI SWOT**	**144.250**	**N0PB PHIL**
MON	8:00P	SANDUSKY	E. MICHIGAN VHF	144.250	W8IDT BART
MON	9:00P	TIDEWATER VA		144.230	
TUE	**8:00P**	**CA.NO CTYS**	**NORCAL**	**144.250**	**KN6NG TONY**
TUE	8:00P	GREENSBORO NC		144.225	K4HC
WED	**9:00P**	**NO TEXAS**	**NORTH TEXAS SWOT**	**144.250**	**W5FKN BOB**
THU	**8:00P**	**CA SO CTYS**	**NORCAL**	**144.250**	**KA6CHJ PAUL**
THU	**7:30P**	**LAWTON/ DUNCAN OK**	**SOUTHWEST OKLAHOMA SWOT**	**144.250**	**ROTATING**
THU	9:00P	TENNESSE	UPPER CUMBERLAND	144.225	N2BR BOBBY
SAT	**7:00A**	**EAST TEXAS**	**PINEYWOODS SWOT**	**144.250**	**K5LOW DON**

SWOT Nets in Bold