

The 144 MHz EME NewsLetter

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Moon Bounce from the End of the World – Falkland Islands!

The world still contains many DXCC entities that have never before been activated on 2 m EME. One of them are – or were – the Falkland Islands far in the South Atlantic. Further South is only Antarctica, which by the way is no terra incognita on 2 m EME for many years now. Marshall K5QE, Arliss W7XU and Holly N0QJM were recently QRV in VP8 (GD18BH) from 16 – 26 March 2015. The equipment consisted of 4 x 9 ele yagis (hpol), IC7000, SSPA and a WA2ODO preamp. Call sign was VP8DQE



The QTH was very close to the harbour.

After a long trip from Texas to Santiago de Chile, from there to Punta Arenas, the Southern-most Chilean town at the Magellan Street and then to Port Stanley they finally arrived on the Falklands on 14 March. Then the team moved on to their host Neil VP8AWU who kindly provided them with a Yaesu G5400 AZ/EL rotor which has been most helpful. Due to the weight they had not brought it from home. Neil even had already erected a mast for them with the rotator on the top. That was a huge big deal and saved a lot of time.



The EME shack at VP8DQE

The following two days setting up the station was on the agenda. It soon became obvious that VP8DQE could not start working right at moon rise: There was a big home very near to them. As long as the moon was north of 85 deg they could not start transmitting. Moreover, there was another home with a big metal roof to the west of their QTH. That one only blocked the last 10 deg of the moon pass. Anyway, the set-up was completed on schedule and VP8DQE could start on 17 March. As soon as the moon was clear from the building the pile-up was there and the first EME contacts from the Falklands could be completed. However, after some time into the pass the team realised they had a problem with the antenna: it was mounted too low. Therefore they could not elevate above about 18 deg when then the rear of the antennas hit the building. So after about one hour into the QSOs they had to stop and wait several hours before the moon had turned enough that they could elevate the antennas properly. Together with Bob VP8LP and Mike VP8NO they fixed the elevation problem by raising the antenna mast about 1 m.



The blockage to the East and to the West of the QTH

The following days everything was in DXpedition mode: waiting for moon rise, making QSOs until the moon was lost behind the neighbouring building. Sadly, there were some bad surprises though every now and then. Some of them were propagation-related: Faraday. On some days for very long periods they were just frozen out – no traces at all. When they then started a QSO, they often would have to wait a very long time for Faraday to change twice so that they could get all the information across.



Left: The shack was inside a portable building located on Bebe Street in Port Stanley, right behind VP8AWU's home. (All pictures courtesy K5QE.)

Another day all of a sudden there was S9+ noise. The reason was a chap with a gasoline weed eater right across the street. When it was running all the traces were just wiped out. Finally, when the gardener finished all his lawn mowing, the dxp team had peace and a quiet band again.

The short distance to the harbour was probably reason for another rx problem on 23 March: That day suddenly there was a very large collection of birdies from 144.134 to way above 144.150 MHz.

Apparently a new ship had docked in the harbour and these birdies might have been from them. Who knows? VP8DQE changed working frequency out of that birdie sub band.

26 March marked the end of that very successful DXpedition, with a total of 340 QSOs, 329 initials, 47 DXCCs and 200 grid squares. Not bad from the end of the world with all that obstacles. Many EME hams sure will be very happy and grateful for their once in a life-time chance to work VP8 on 2 m EME.

Upcoming DXpeditions

For more information on current and upcoming DXpeditions please have a look at www.mmmonvhf.de from where most of the information here was gathered.

C6ATA and C6ANS from the Bahamas

After many years the Bahamas finally will become QRV again on 2 m EME. AA7A (chief EME op), K2KW and W4KXY are planning on arriving in C6A on 6 June and will depart on 16 June. Start of activity is scheduled for MR on 8 June.

Primary activity will be the participation in the ARRL June VHF contest over the weekend 13/14 June. However, for EME on 2 m they will be QRV earlier. The 2 m antenna will consist of four xpol yagis with full elevation. So everyone should have a fair chance to work that DXCC.

The call sign C6ANS will be used during the week on 2 m EME. The call sign C6ATA will be used only during the ARRL June VHF Contest. As Non-US/VE contacts do not count in the ARRL Contest score the team will REPLY whoever calls on EME but with some preference to the North American callers. Most callers should have worked C6ANS anyway by the contest weekend.

C6ANS logs will be uploaded to LoTW upon return. C6ATA QSLs via instructions on QRZ.com. The team will try to upload the EME worked list to the C6ANS page on QRZ.com page daily.

KB7Q qrv EME from Wyoming (DN54UX)

Gene is planning for a trip to Wyoming on 2 m EME to help folks complete their W.A.S. award. Location is DN54UX, Horseshoe Bend Campground on Big Horn Lake, WY. Gene will run 900 watts to two 9 ele M2s. He will using the "W7GJ" operating technique. This means if you copy his signal you should call not with call signs only but with call signs plus OOO. KB7Q will then reply with both call signs and OOO and then the QSO procedure will go as usual. The advantage of this procedure is that the caller can also indicate if due to QSB he does not copy any more so that the DX station can move on to the next caller without losing time. KB7Q will always run tx 1st on 144,140 MHz.

OJ0 Market Reef

One of the most wanted European DXCCs is OJ0 Market Reef, a tiny island in the Baltic Sea located between Finland and Sweden. Different from other rare DXCCs in Europe such as Mount Athos it is "dexpeditionable": From 9 to 15 June Sami OH9GDT and Jussi OH6ZZ will be QRV from Market Reef

(KP00AB) as OH6ZZ/0, running meteor scatter and EME. Equipment will be SSPA and 2x11H/2x10V yagis. The boat transfer to Market reef is scheduled for the early morning of the 9 June and station set-up will start right after arrival. If all goes as planned they should be ready at moon rise.

A working frequency will be decided upon arrival. A short info about Market Reef lighthouse is available at <http://www.majakkaseura.fi/eng/market/>

VK5APN is travelling to PF97

Wayne is once again travelling for Work, this time to Pt Augusta which is located in PF87, from where Wayne has been QRV before. However, as it is close PF97 Wayne will be QRV in that grid.

There will be two moon passes whilst he is there, but as it is winter in the Southern hemisphere and as he operates outside, it could be wet, windy and cold. Hence, there is a second day to be QRV in case the weather should not be kind on first day. Moon conditions will not be the best and work is during daytime, therefore Wayne can only be QRV at moon set after evening meal. Frequency will be 144,130 MHz 1st.

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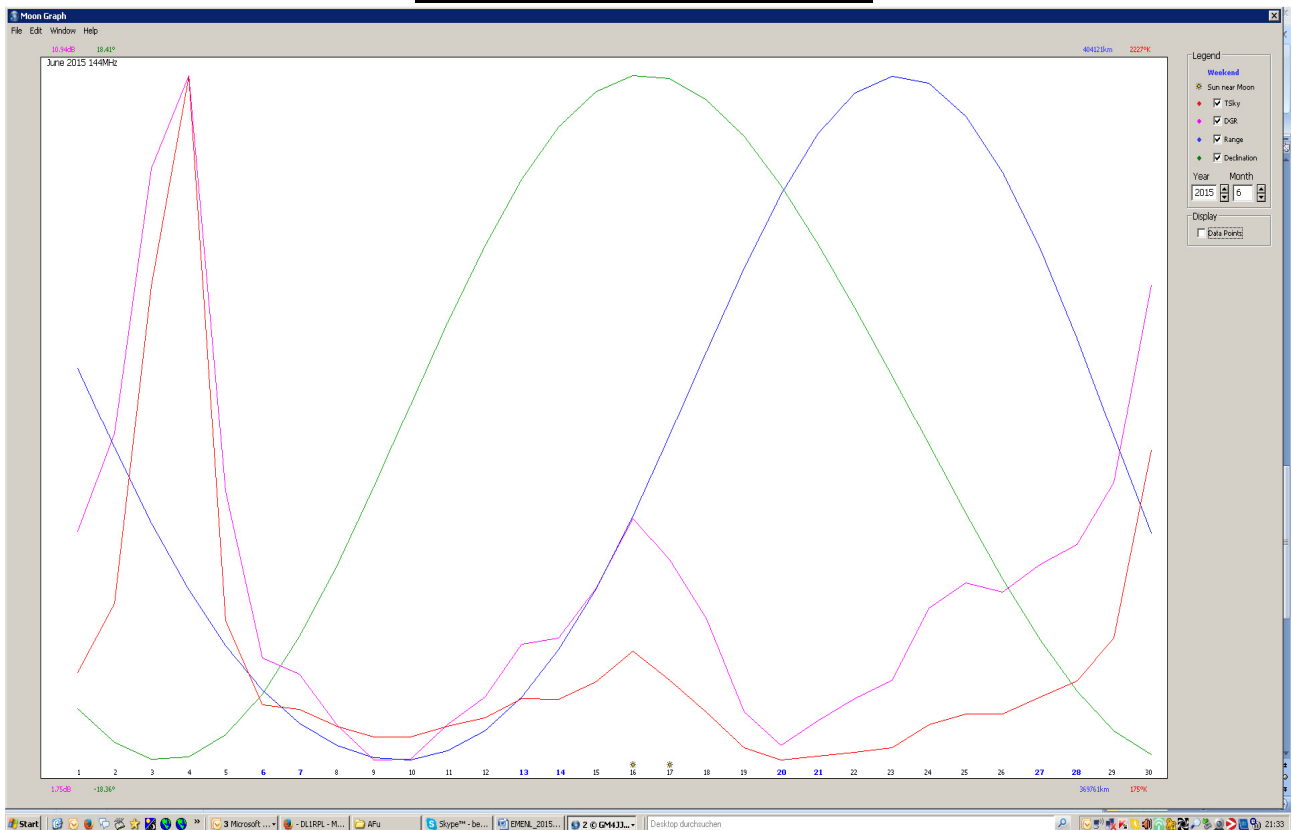
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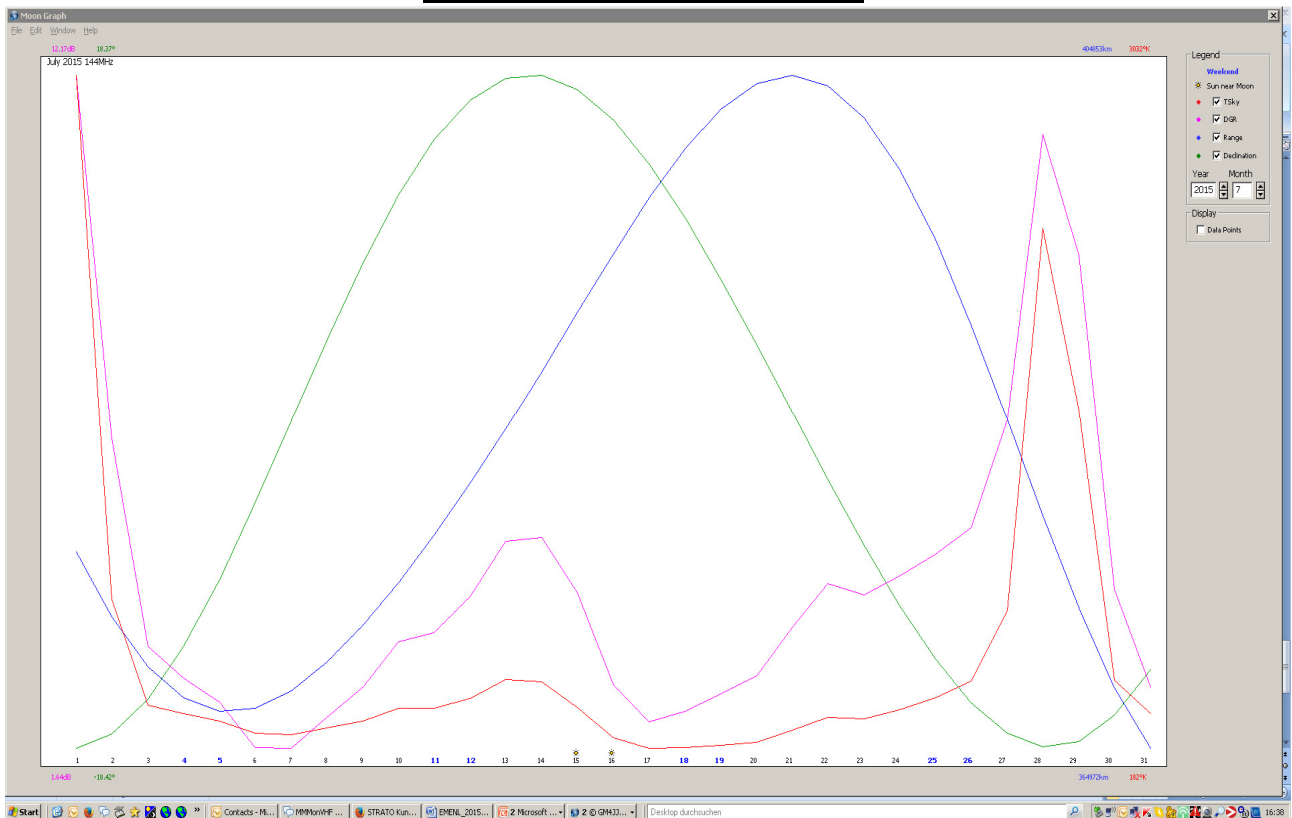
Time Table

13 Jun 2015	0200 - 0500 1030 - 1330	144 MHz CW EME Activity Event 1 st leg 144 MHz CW EME Activity Event 2 nd leg
6 Jul 2015		July Issue of the 144 MHz EME NewsLetter ready for download at http://df2zc.darc.de/
8 Aug 2015 9 Aug 2015	0000 - - 2400	DUBUS Digital EME Championship 144 MHz

Moon Graph June 2015



Moon Graph July 2015



(Courtesy of David GM4JJJ (www.gm4jjj.co.uk/MoonSked/moonsked.htm))