

The 144 MHz EME NewsLetter

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Issue 2/2024 4 Feb 2024

DG5CST Running EME From 4W8X Timor-Leste (PI21VC)



The antenna farm at 4W8X: 23 HF antennas altogether of which 11 were on towers. (Photo 4W8X)

Planned for 2020 but stopped out by COVID-19, the Lagunaria DX Group went to Timor-Leste in November 2023. In April 2023, a three men scouting trip had already checked the prospected location and worked >43000 HF-QSOs as 4W1A from there. The hopes were high in the EME community that also 144 MHz EME would be activated. So it was: Sebastian "Seb", DG5CST, was a member of the DXpedition team which counted 20 operators from Germany, Austria and Poland. He brought his well-tries equipment from the OJ0EME DXpedition last summer for 2 m, 70 cm and 23 cm. On 144 MHz he ran with 2 x 12 ele IOJXX (plus 2 x 7 ele as backup) and 750 W out. Moon data for the DXpedition period is available here: <http://www.timor-leste-dx.de/operating/eme.php>

After a very tiring journey which lasted >30 hours Seb finally arrived in Timor-Leste late on November 12th. After only a little rest he started setting up the equipment which had been shipped earlier by overseas containers. This was no easy task as the extremely hot local weather plus heavy rain at times did not make things easy, let alone that Seb came straight from European winter and had to cope with jet lag due to eight hours time difference. On Nov 14th he was ready to go and started his first CQs on 144,140 MHz at 0418 UTC. Though the degradation was around -5 dB then 4W8X was being well copied and first QSOs were completed with JA, ZL and RA9.



The amps were situated close to the antennas and safe from the rain.

However, the activity level picked up substantially with European moonrise where many hams were impatiently waiting for the first sigs from Timor-Leste to pop up. At 0655 Seb worked LZ1KU for the – no surprise – Bulgaria’s country first with Timor-Leste. He was copied amazing -15 max and LZ1KU’s sig peaked -16 dB. No bad values given the high degradation. (*My personal experience is that you should not be daunted by high degradation values even if they are -10 dB if you run WSJT modes -DF2ZC*) Sebastian then continued calling, only being interrupted every now and then by rain and calls to support the others with antenna setting up work when additional hands were needed. The replying stations popped up one after the other, following their local moon rise. Roland, DK4RC,

celebrated the country first from Germany at 0828 UTC and DF2ZC was very happy for his DXCC 226 at 0853 UTC. *(I'm particularly grateful to Seb that he hurried to set up the 2 m station though moon conds were theoretically rather bad: I had to leave home on 19th for attending WRC-23 until Dec 15th in Dubai – DF2ZC)* At 1018 UTC 4W8X had to stop because of moonset. Many more stations were copied but not yet worked – but there were two weeks time, so no reason to become nervous.



Seb, DG5CST, in operating position at 4W8X (Photos DG5CST)

Also the next days Seb stayed on 144 MHz and made the best of the still bad or at least not optimum EME condx which prevailed for the first days of the DXpedition. Sometimes it was a big surprise how high the signal levels were though, and sometimes it was hard to complete due to pol shifts etc. The lookback feature of René PA9RX's LiveCQ gives a good impression of the exchange: <https://www.livecq.eu/lookback/searchl.asp?req=4W8X> Even on Nov 16th with degr. peaking -12 dB QSOs could be made.

Though he also ran EME on 6 m, 70 cm and 23 cm until the end of the DXpedition on Nov 28th Seb managed to complete with 201 stations on 144 MHz – plus 44 on 6 m, 40 on 70 cm and 111 on 23 cm. What an achievement for a single operator! His last post from 4W8X on the NOUK logger on Nov 28th 1124 UTC ran: “tnx guys hope to see you all from another country gl sk” It sound like a promise for more rare DXCCs to come...

Best VHF DX-DXpedition 2023 Survey

After the COVID time-out in DXP activities the VHF DX Platform Make More Miles on VHF (www.mmmonvhf.de) has resumed their annual survey “Best VHF DX-DXpedition” . Registered users can vote for their favourite activity there. The polls close at 2359 UTC on Feb 29th.



Bernd DF2ZC, member of the German delegation, and Joel W5ZN, IARU Secretary and also EME enthusiast, meeting in Dubai at WRC-23. Back in 2006 Joel - then ARRL president – had signed Bernd's 144 MHz DXCC. (Photo ITU)

Time Table

4 Mar 24 The March issue of the 144 MHz EME Newsletter ready for download.

Upcoming DXpeditions

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

Robinson Crusoe Island expedition (FF06OI)

From February 10th to 24th a seven heads strong team will activate Robinson Crusoe Island, on HF, running as CBOZEW. In early communications it was announced that also EME on 6 m and 2 m would be part of the activity. Recently there was no mention of 2 m EME anymore. On the other side it was not explicitly ruled out. So best is to stay alert in case CBOEZA pops up – though in my personal view – this is very unlikely.

Please check www.grz.com/db/CBOZA and the dedicated DXpedition website <https://cb0za.com/> for latest news.

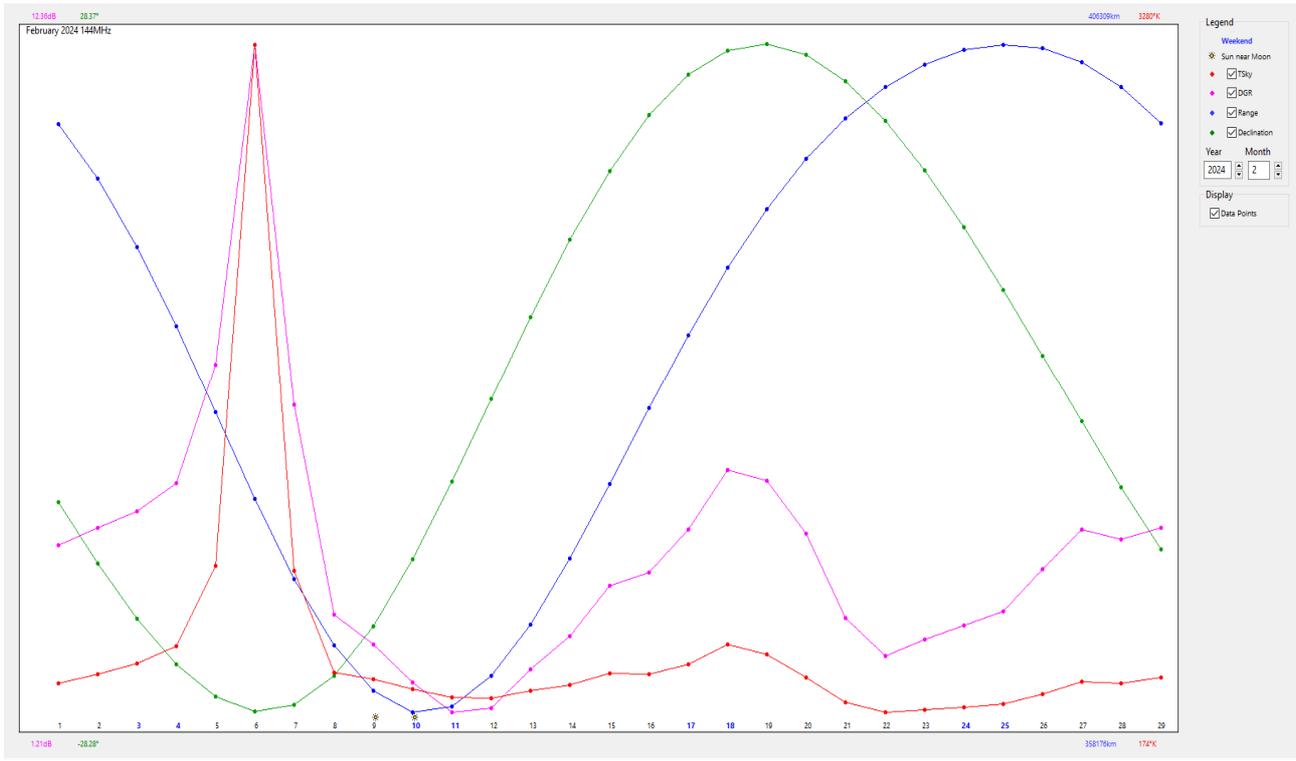
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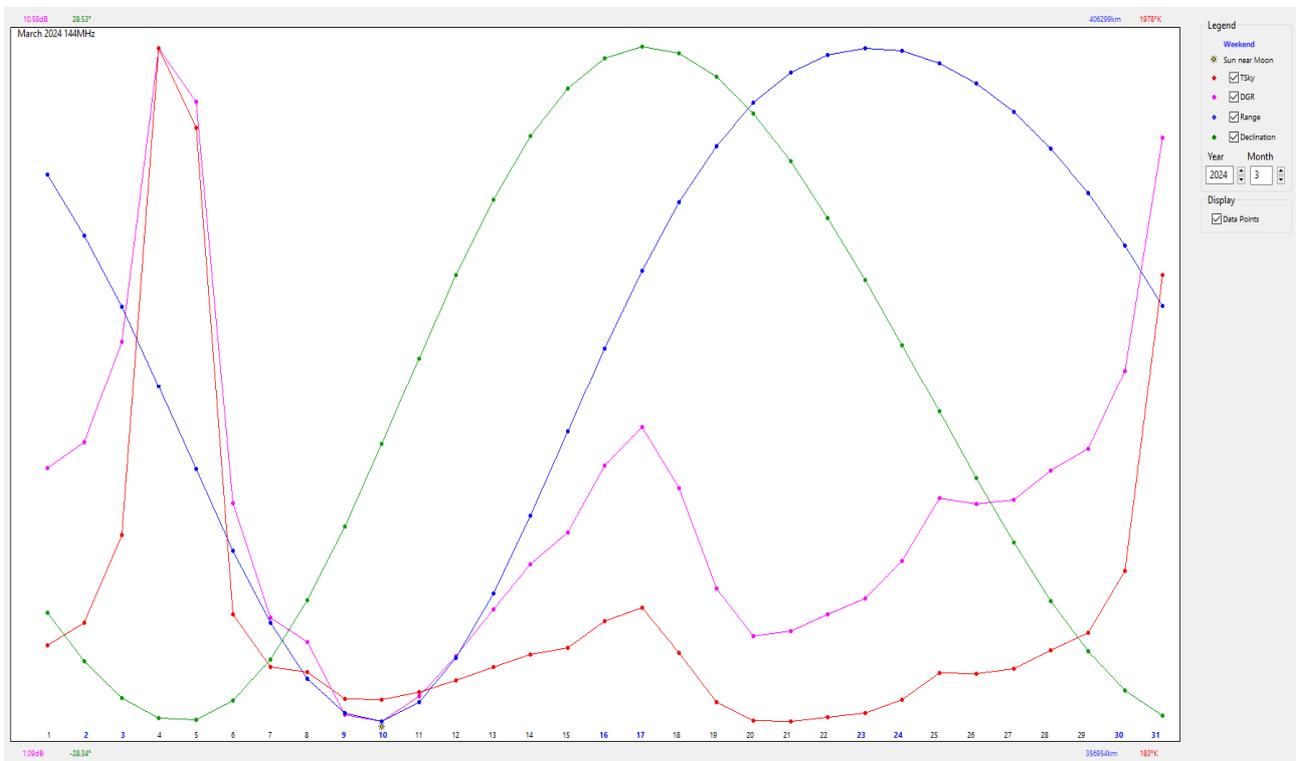
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Moon Conditions



Moon Graph February 2024



Moon Graph March 2024

(Courtesy of David GM4JJJ (sk 2019) www.gm4jjj.co.uk/MoonSked/moonsked.htm)