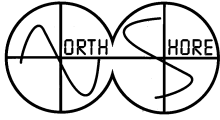


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Volume 8 , Number 1

February 2006

This Week in Amateur Radio

From: Steve VA3SPH

This Week In Amateur Radio (TWIAR) International has a new time on WBCQ!

This Week in Amateur Radio International can now be heard on WBCQ Short wave on Sundays at 5PM Eastern Time (2200 GMT) on 7.415 MHz. The program is still airing Saturdays at 4PM Eastern Time as well.

Details on WBCQ short wave broadcast station can be found here:

<http://www.wbcq.com/index.php>

The program is also available as an audio podcast via the Internet. The episodes are about 1 hour long (AKA fairly large files) so if you have broadband connection to the Internet you can download and play a MP3 broadcast by going to: <http://www.twiar.org/>

An RSS feed of the current and some of the current and past episodes here:

<http://twiar.org/twiarpodcast.xml>

If you use the iTunes program (Macintosh and Windows) you can subscribe and automatically download the episodes here: <http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.wa/wa/viewPodcast?id=74847280>

Seems like a great show and a nice way to hear latest worldwide HAM radio news!

Enjoy!

Steve - VA3SPH

+++++ Suit Sat:

From: Steve - VA3SPH and Margaret VE3BNN

I'm hoping that many of you took the chance to listen for Suit Sat.

Steve put together the information on the chart of the predicted times for close passes to our location in the Durham Region. Freq. 145.990 Mhz

Here is a legend to explaining terms of the prediction chart below.

LEGEND

=====

AOS = Acquisition of Signal (Beginning of the close pass to us)
MAX = Closest part of the pass or Max elevation over the horizon
(The high the
number the longer and stronger the signal will be)
LOS = Lost of Signal (End of the close pass to us)

TIME UTC = Coordinated Universal Time (also know as GMT) to get local our time
subtract 5 hours from this!

AZIM = Azimuth or degrees from North.
North is 0 degrees, East is 90 degrees, South is 180 degrees, West is 270 degrees, back around to North at 360 degrees
(to be honest this won't matter much as you will be able to receive the transmission using an omni directional 2 meter antenna)

Note once the space suit is ejected it will follow roughly the ISS orbit but be slightly different and become harder to predict as time goes by. So while these ISS (Internation Space station) predictions below are highly accurate, think of this is as a really good guess on space suits location. After 4 days it is expected the batteries will be deplete, perhaps sooner.
Nobody has done this before so lots to learn on this experiment.

PREDICTION CHART

=====

MacDopplerPRO: Satellite ISS
Starting on Saturday, February 4, 2006 at 1:00:00 AM UTC.
For Site: Toronto & Durham Region

Date Time UTC Azim Elev Local time + Notes

AOS: 2/4/06 7:24:46 AM	168.6	-1.8	
MAX: 2/4/06 7:28:46 AM	121.0	3.6	2:28 AM in the morning
LOS: 2/4/06 7:32:26 AM	81.0	-2.6	
AOS: 2/4/06 8:57:26 AM	221.9	-2.0	
MAX: 2/4/06 9:03:06 AM	126.9	40.6	4:03 AM in the morning
LOS: 2/4/06 9:08:26 AM	61.2	-2.2	
AOS: 2/4/06 10:32:46 AM	261.7	-1.8	
MAX: 2/4/06 10:38:26 AM	351.9	29.5	5:38 AM in the morning
LOS: 2/4/06 10:43:46 AM	57.9	-2.6	
AOS: 2/4/06 12:09:06 PM	291.3	-1.0	
MAX: 2/4/06 12:14:26 PM	10.8	16.9	7:14 AM in the morning
LOS: 2/4/06 12:19:26 PM	69.5	-2.8	
AOS: 2/4/06 1:44:46 PM	303.3	-0.9	
MAX: 2/4/06 1:50:06 PM	28.2	27.2	8:50 AM in the morning
LOS: 2/4/06 1:55:26 PM	96.3	-2.6	
AOS: 2/4/06 3:19:46 PM	299.4	-1.7	
MAX: 2/4/06 3:25:26 PM	197.9	47.9	10:25 AM in the morning
LOS: 2/4/06 3:30:46 PM	134.5	-2.5	
AOS: 2/4/06 4:55:46 PM	279.3	-1.9	
MAX: 2/4/06 5:00:06 PM	227.0	4.7	12:00 (Noon)
LOS: 2/4/06 5:03:46 PM	185.2	-2.3	

And Margaret found this good link showing the launch of Suit Sat:

<http://mdn.mainichi-msn.co.jp/videos/news/20060204p2g00m0dm007000c.html#>

+++++

Membership Cards.

Our Membership Secretary is asking that those members who haven't received the information on their membership cards please see him at the next meeting or drop him an email. :

Also our Membership Secretary is asking all Club members to email him with an updated emails address. We're getting a significant number of bounce-backs or returns. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Remember to update your your RAC number too.

+++++

From The Chair in the Shack:

In the last week I took delivery of Icom's latest wow-radio, the IC-7000. After playing with it for several days, I've realized something that we all should know but choose to ignore. Regardless of price, most of today's rigs perform beautifully and the latest and greatest will be hard put to improve on already remarkable performance.

Yup, this rig, like my IC-746 pro has lots of bells and whistles and it really is better than what I've had. All the same, I took my 706 to the cottage last summer in spite of having a "better" rig and it worked fine.

I don't ask any of you to believe that a new whiz-bang radio is an expensive, but not awfully cost effective way to enter the hobby. You have to experience it for yourself and then you may remember my musings. I've had the opportunity to work with radios from the early 1990's through the latest and almost all picked up stations equally well and got pretty much the same reports from the same antenna. Now the question is "What really makes these radios worth more?".

Size:

This can be important if you plan on moving the radio or using it mobile.

CW:

Full break-in operation can be easier with some of the newer rigs - but I don't use CW.

Filtering:

The latest rigs in my stable allow continuous width control over filters and dual pass-band shift. Cool, but the really expensive rigs use roofing filters that can make working a weak station only 3 kHz from a strong one really easy. Not quite so with variable filters, however good.

DSP inside the AGC loop:

Pretty good at notching heterodynes and reducing noise without pumping by strong neighboring signals. I like it but can often live without it. Keep in mind that digital signal processing often results in weird tone and sound while removing "noise".

They say a fool and his money are soon parted and this fool is a good example. I wouldn't miss the excitement of the newest rig for anything but then I'm a bit of a fool. Today's basic rigs in the \$700.00 range are spectacularly good for the money with features not found on expensive rigs of the early 90's. If you are looking for a second or even a first rig, don't just jump at the first used one you can afford, no matter how good its reputation. Even cheap modern rigs can make expensive classics look shabby. Bear in mind that some of the really admired rigs no longer have parts available and they are aging quickly.

Rigs have never been so cheap comparatively. I'm not giving up my new ones - they do have some neat features. Just the same, I like even the least expensive rigs found in the stores. Oh yes, I forgot, the IC-7000 is noticeably quieter (about one s unit) compared even to the IC-746. I guess it was worth it even if I don't usually work anyone I can "just" hear - you see, they are often using amps and couldn't hear me anyway.

73 de Pete, VA3PWH

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I just missed a QSO with Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I almost feel like the rig should be on whenever I'm in the house. The band was shutting down on 20M just as I was starting up. Go figure!!! I've been trying to spend time listening to CW trying to build my ear. A good friend sent me a link to a CW site that seems to work quite well. Here's the link: <http://www.w8kc.com/stream.asx>

This way you can bring CW with you right to the computer. Neat eh?

On the radio front, my shack is temporarily set up on the table saw (again). I've been trying to copy CW on HF. I'm getting better at it too. I'm seriously looking into a keyer for a bit of practice with my paddle before I key up the rig on CW. Any suggestions on makes and models would be gratefully received.

In the January / February TCA we're challenged to build something this year. I think it's a great idea. I've been looking for ideas for a shack that will be something other than a temporary setup on the table saw. I've seen some dynamite shacks belonging to Club Members. To say that I'm jealous would be an understatement. I'm thinking about a rolling cabinet that I can maneuver out of harm's way so that the other work can get done. If you have any ideas, I'd like to hear them.

Remember the Club commitments to community service this year. There are many opportunities for you to serve your Club, your community and have fun too.

Your humble scribe
Ken
VE3RMK

+++++

Improve Your Mediumwave Reception



The original Select-A-Tenna used for the past 28 years by hundreds of thousands of satisfied customers. Model 541 produces a signal gain of +30dB when used with most AM radio receivers which have internal ferrite rod antennas. This passive device requires no wires, no batteries, no plugs, etc.

It works by simply placing it next to your radio and tuning the knob to the same station frequency as your radio. The Select-A-Tenna functions by concentrating the radio station signal energy in the near proximity of the 541.

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MFJ-16C06 Six-Pack Ceramic Insulators



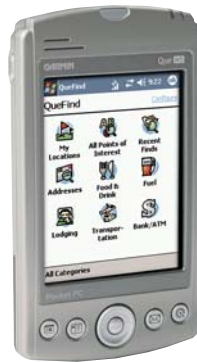
MFJ 16C06 6-pack ceramic insulators. Can be used as an end or centre insulator. These insulators will not arc over, even under full legal power. Molded ridges give extra-long voltage path to prevent high voltage breakdown. 2.5" length x 1" diameter. 1/4" holes.

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