

The 144 MHz EME NewsLetter

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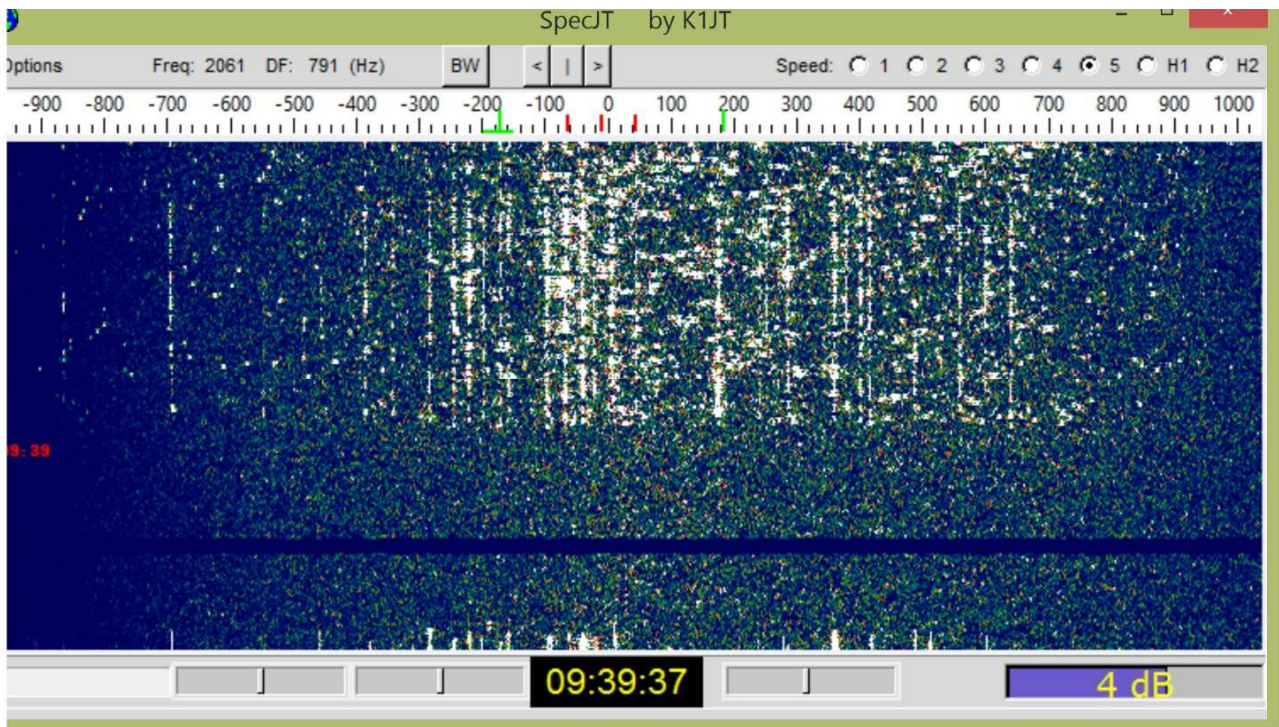
TX7EME – A Dream Came True



View at the pacific: Giulio TX7EME/IW3HVB with his two x-pols.

Nearly all eme hams share one common dream: being QRV from the other side of the pile-up. One of them was Giulio IW3HVB. Being a professional tour operator, focused on the Pacific ocean area (www.kiaoraviaggi.it) he always wanted to bring eme gear with one of his trips and be at the dx-side of the pile-up. His dream became true past September when he combined work and hobby when travelling to French Polynesia. From September 3rd to September 10th he worked 198 complete QSOs from Moorea (BH52CM), with 2 x 9 ele x-pols (I3DLI) FT857 and Italab sspa.

Intense preparation and test setups at home in Northern Italy all showed positive results. So the long journey to the other side of the world could begin. On August 20th Giulio arrived in Tahiti. All the luggage was with him, safe and sound. All the trolleys and bags containing the ham gear had been opened for inspection but no harm was done (luckily very much unlike DK2ZF's and DK7ZB's experience in Chile in 2010 when their equipment was severely harmed during customs check). From Tahiti Giulio had some more island hopping to do until he finally arrived a Moorea on September 3rd and could start setting up the station. Right at moon rise that day everything was ready to go and the excitement started when the moon rose over the horizon.



What a nice screen: roughly 30 callers 15 minutes after moon rise.

Right after the first CQ TX7EME copied a bunch of stations and with no surprise Franko I2FAK being the strongest: Everything was working perfect, and within the first 45 minutes ten QSOs were completed, with good signals, all audible: I2FAK -17, OH2BC -17, DF2ZC -19, RK3FG -18, IK1UWL -17, HB9Q -15, PA0JMV -19, I1ANP -21, I3MEK -17 and PA5MS -19. Nearly everyone was there but this was no surprise as the window to Europe was rather short. At the end of the moon pass at 6 am local time 55 QSOs were in the log, not bad. However, Giulio could not fall asleep then though he had been up for 24 hours in a row. Probably there was still much adrenaline in the blood or the feeling of joy and happiness that everything worked out so fine. So instead of going to bed he went to town with his family who had joined him on the trip and returned home only two hours before the next moon rise for a quick power nap. When the moon rose it was a repeated scenario, a big pile-up from Europe. Now even some single yagi stations were worked. Finally fatigue took its toll, Giulio had to make a two hours break from 4 to 6 am local time until he resumed operations straight until moon-set. The final eight QSOs were even completed though one of the yagis was obstructed by a tree.

When rearranging the switching matrix for cw just one hour before the third moon rise Giulio made a painful mistake and fried the preamplifier. Luckily he had brought a couple of spares so this paid off now. All was set again at moonrise and he was ready for the pile-up. Only, this time there was

strong Faraday on the propagation path: TX7EME copied lots of stations but only few answered his OOs which was rather frustrating. On his side polarisation rotated very fast with Giulio having to switch almost every period on rx. Only another 24 QSOs (23 inits) were in the log after moon-set, disappointing, so he writes.



The TX7EME shack where Giulio spent many hours. (All photos IW3HVB)

The next moons went in a similar way with Faraday stronger and weaker from day to day. And new lessons were learnt: Even if one thinks one brought every possible spare part the one that will break will not be in the box. Spare LNAs had already paid off as this was quite predictable, but a spare clamp for the antennas was not in Giulio's "bring along list". Since one of the clamps at the antennas broke he had to improvise. And though this looked odd it was successful, a combination of cable ties and duct tape.

When the final moon pass of his stay was over he summed up 198 QSOs, including also a CW contact with OZ1HNE. That is a result Giulio is very satisfied with, considering the tough one man operation and the simple fact that being in the middle of the pacific makes everything more difficult, with short windows, unpredictable propagation and a whole lot of hours calling without response. Most importantly, Giulio is particularly grateful to wife who endured sleepless nights caused by the PA fans spinning loud. So is the EME community for the rare DXCC...

Iowa DXpedition by KB7Q



Not everybody gets their own EME array in the front yard.(Photo KB7Q)

After his activity from Wyoming in June Gene now was QRV from EN42FA in Iowa for two consecutive moon paths in September. Since he had to travel from Montana to Iowa for family reasons Gene thought about bringing his ham gear because that state was wanted by a fair number of hams for their WAS, let alone that the EN42 grid square was rather rare. After a long camper tour they arrived at their destination on September 28th at mid-afternoon and in about two hours he had the station ready to go thanks to NOYY's help. Four stations made their 50th State for the WAS award during the first moon pass. Conditions were generally pretty good, but Mr. Faraday was spinning wildly at times. The lunar eclipse that day was an extra special treat. The "blood moon" was clearly visible and – surprise surprise – the world didn't end, not even Gene's amp blew up. 54 QSOs were completed that first moon pass.

The second day conditions seemed even better. However, clouds moved in early, then the rain started and Gene had to use his azimuth circle and angle meter to stay on the moon. This second and final session for that trip ended up with a total of 93 contacts. When he had no more callers Gene went QRT at 2 am local time.

It was great fun being able to put Iowa on the air – the station ran flawlessly and folks were great at spreading out so he could work them quickly. Special thanks go to Rick, NOYY and his xyl for hosting.

New plans are already made: Gene and xyl Joyce will travel to Hawaii in February. They have rented a house on the main island (BK29) and KB7Q will bring his 2 m and 70 cm gear to operate from KH6, with 800 watts out and 2 x 9 ele M2, just like from Iowa.

EI9E Working EME in Perseids Meteor Shower

For the last 5 years the team at EI9E has done a DXpedition in August to rare squares on the west coast of Ireland, activating IO41, 42, 43 and 55 squares, mostly working data modes on 6 m, 4 m and 2 m during the Perseids meteor shower. In 2014 the group took a single yagi antenna and made more than a dozen EME QSOs on 23 cm as well as some on 2 m around moonrise.



The EI9E team with the 2m group. (Photo G4CLA)

PE1L, I1ANP, OH7PI, OH4LA, RW3AC, ZS4TX, OK1UGA, JP3EXR, EA2AGZ, DG0OPK, PA3FPQ, I3MEK, F8DO, ON4KHG, HA8CE, SM5CFS, DK5YA, ES3RF, OH3KLJ, F5AQX, PA3DOL, DL2FCN, LZ4OC, YT1AR, UT6UG, UX5UL, ES6RQ, EA4CYQ, NJ2R, NT0V, 9A1CMS, KB8RQ, YU7XL, AH6LE, F4DJK, M0BKL, GU8FBO and DK3BU.

As they had a pile up on 2 m at moonrise in 2014 from IO41 square the team decided to make a better effort for 2 m in 2015. Billy EI7FJ produced a lattice tower to bolt on to the A frame of one of the trailers. This tower then carried an H frame with four 9 element LFAs for 2 m for the 2015 outing.

Unfortunately the local noise from the broadcast transmitting station where they were located meant that the receiving capability was severely degraded. However at moonrise EI9E was able to copy callers and completed a total of 55 EME 2 m JT65b QSOs.

This was a first trial of the special bolt-on EME tower. It was a resounding success for the EI9E team. They got reports of up to -15dB in JT65b which meant they were sending very well. However because the local broadcast signals were desensing the preamplifier. It had to be mounted at the radio after a bandpass filter. This meant EI9E was operating well below optimum receive sensitivity. The team sends apologies to all who heard them and maybe called but could not be copied.

EI9E completed 2 m JT65b EME QSOs with: I2FAK, HB9Q, HA6NQ, RK3FG, RX1AS, PA0JMV, LA8KV, SM2A, F6HKV, OH3AWW, GM6VXB, OE6IWG, DK3WG, DL1VPL, EB5EEO, ZS6OB, UN9L,

The tower will now have a few small modifications made and will then be galvanised. Next year the EI9E team plans to visit IO44 and now that they know they have quite a good system for portable operation they will as far as possible site the EME antenna to the south of any potential interference source so that EI9E can operate for a full moon pass.

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.

W1E QRV from Connecticut (FN32QA)

W1E will be QRV from FN32QA in Connecticut November 18th to November 22nd. The station consists of 2 x 14 element LFA yagis (H pol), 1 kW and a WA2ODO LNA. Operating frequency is 144,144 MHz.

DL1RPL QRV from Mayotte (FH) and Reunion (FR)

Peter DL1RPL together with his son Soeren DL3RKS will activate both Mayotte and Reunion in November. From November 19th to 25th they will be QRV from LH27 grid square, running on 144,134 MHz with a Tajfun sspa and 2 x 8 element cross yagis.

Then they move on to Reunion from where they will be QRV in grid square LG79, from November 27th until December 3rd. From both sites also 70 cm EME is planned. For more information and a daily update of the logs please see Peter's website www.dl1rpl.de.

EME Activity from HK0A San Andres Island by DL2NUD and DL9MS

Hermann DL2NUD and Joe DL9MS will be QRV multi band from San Andres Island (EK92DN) from November 19th to 29th. Setup for 2 m is 14/14-ele xpol yagi (DF7KF design) and 850 W out. While Hermann will concentrate on the GHz bands, Joe will be in charge of 2 m and 70 cm. Call sign used will always be HK0A/DL2NUD though the operator for both bands is exclusively DL9MS.

Time Table

7 Dec 2015	December issue of the 144 MHz EME NewsLetter ready for download at http://www.df2zc.de
28 Nov 2015	0000Z - ARRL EME Contest
29 Nov 2015	- 2400Z

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Latest DXpedition Info:
www.mmmonvhf.de

Eltje PA3CEE Silent Key!

During the night from October 2nd to 3rd our well-known ham friend and dedicated EME DXpeditioner Eltje passed away. Eltje had got an aortic dissection on July 15th and had four operations since then. Sadly his constitution did not improve and finally his body gave up.

Together with René PE1L Eltje had formed the famous Atletico Team which we all know as some kind of “DXCC delivery man” when it comes to Africa. Since he had asked René to join an EME DXpedition back in 2009, both had from then on activated one African country every year, sometimes together with a third person: 5Z4EME 2009, 3B8EME 2010, C56EME 2011, 5X1EME 2012, 9G5EME 2013, 6W/PE1L 2014 and 7Q7EME only in May this year.

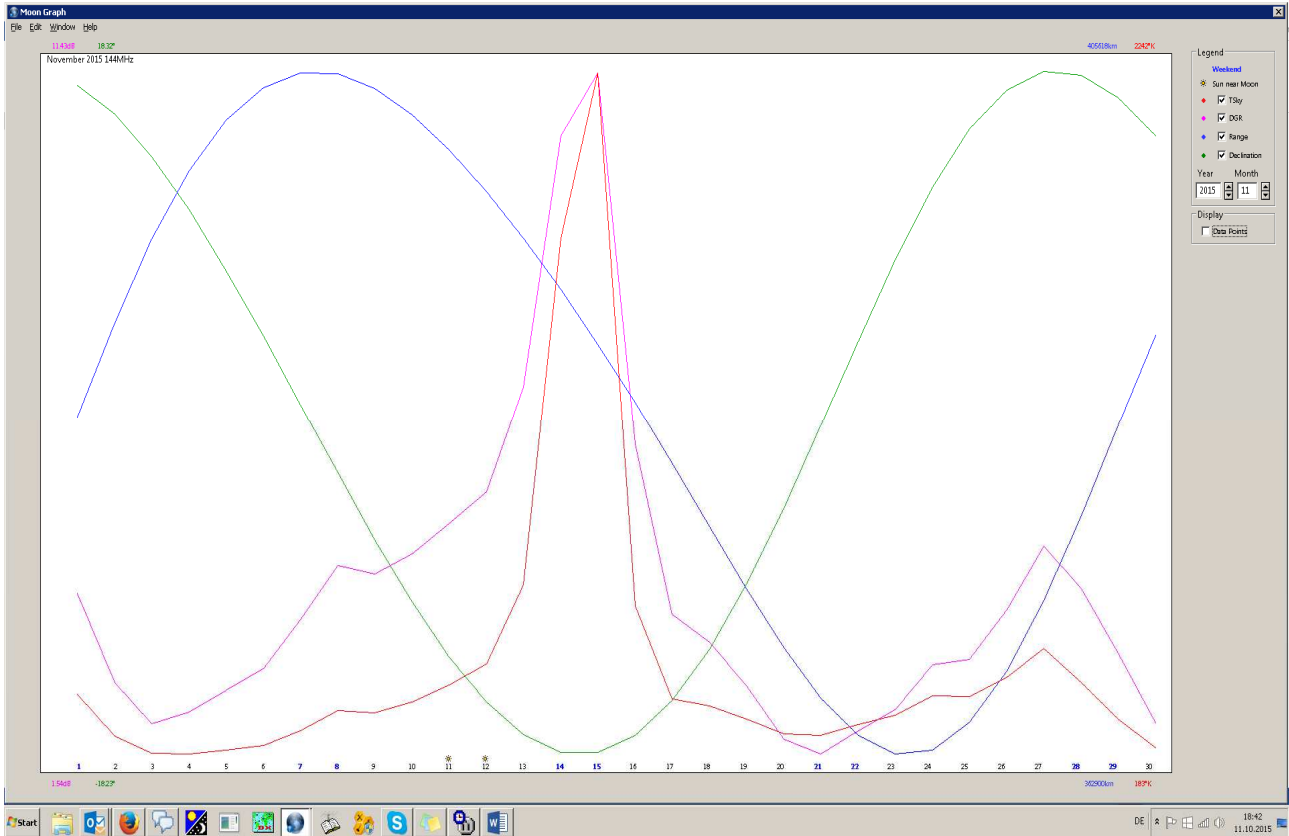
With Eltje we all lose a fine operator and ham friend, in his fifties only. How much he meant to the ham community can be seen on <http://www.emelogger.com/pa3cee/> where René has added all condolence messages received from all over the world.

Rest in Peace, Eltje!

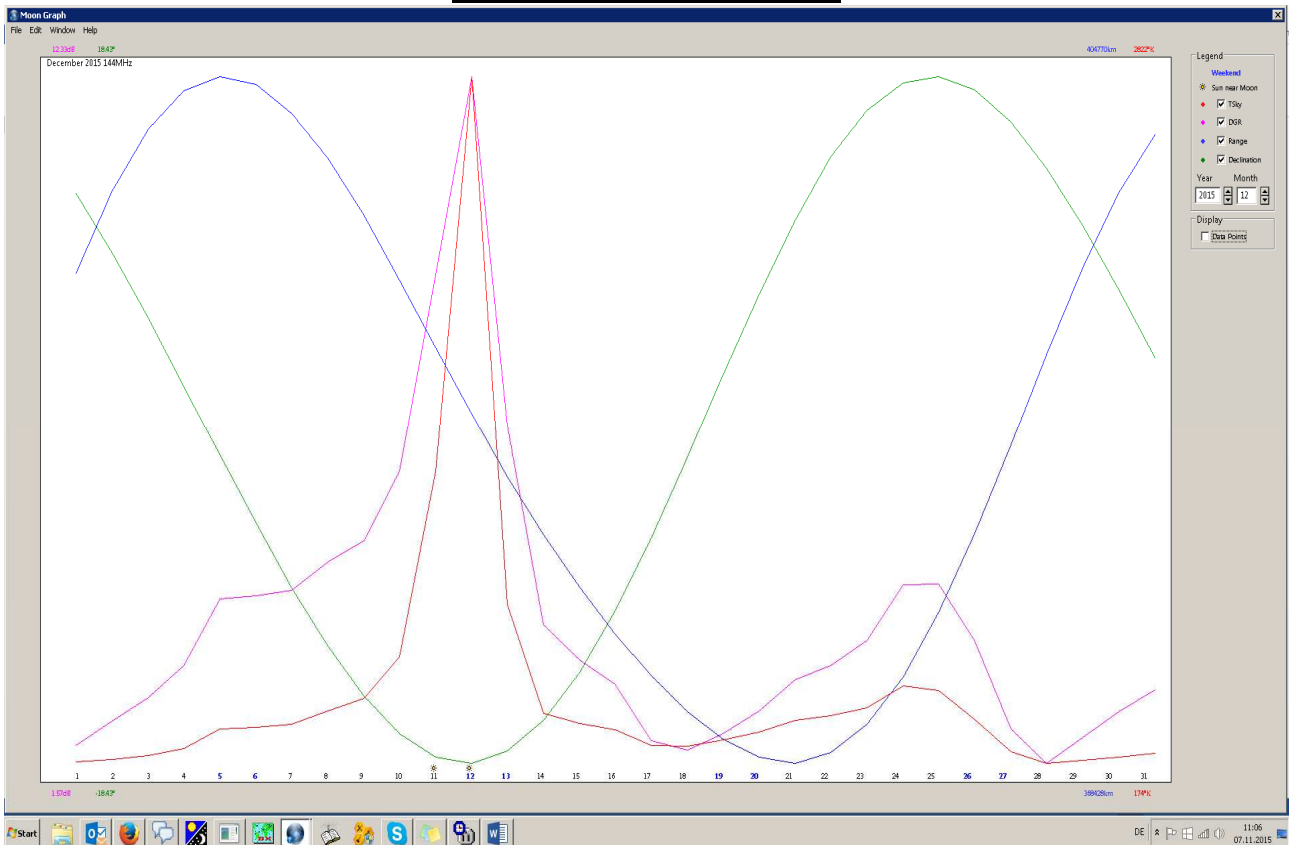


Eltje PA3CEE in Malawi in May 2015. Sadly it was meant to be his final trip to Africa. (Photo PE1L)

Moon Graph November 2015:



Moon Graph December 2015:



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