

The 144 MHz EME NewsLetter

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SV9/DK5EW QRV From Crete (KM15WL)

Unless you live in a country with many never activated grid squares such as the USA with KA6U's activities - the past nearly two years were not easy for those planning for DXpeditions. Even few days before departure there could still be the need to cancel everything altogether, due to COVID.



The roof garden made setting up the two yagis very easy.

Erwin DK5EW had planned to activate a wanted Caribbean DXCC this year but due to many uncertainties he had to cancel this. Instead he started planning for a combined holiday and ham radio activity stay in the Aegean sea. At his first choice Santorin island (KM26) he did not find a suitable holiday house so he decided to travel to Crete, SV9. In the very sought after square KM15 in the far West of this island and DXCC, he booked a well situated house for two weeks in October 2021. It not only offered an unobstructed shot at the moon but also had an excellent take-off across the sea to central Europe. So DK5EW could use the moonless times for some meteor scatter activities.

During summer the odds looked good this journey would indeed become reality. So flights were booked in August. Erwin set up the entire station fieldday style then, only to check everything was working ok which it did. Then he packed the equipment into boxes and hence could be sure no necessary parts were left behind. And he hoped that there would not be any developments beyond his influence. Luckily there weren't any. On October 12th the travel started. Everyone arrived in Crete safe and sound, including the equipment (IC9700, LNA, SSPA with EME power, two 8/8 ele IOJXX xpols). Early the following day Erwin started to build antennas on the roof garden and set up the station. To Erwin's delight there was zero man-made noise when he switched the transceiver on. SWR was measured to 1:1.08 – everything was nearly perfect. So he looked forward to his first EME tries. However, when it got dark the situation changed substantially, making him very disappointed: With the sun setting S9 noise popped up – no way to try moon bouncing. After some investigation the reason was clear: the many 42 V LED lamps around the house which automatically were switched on at dusk.



SV9/DK5EW's shack in KM15WF (Photos: DK5EW)

The next day DK5EW spoke to the landlord, the lamps were switched off and Erwin could start EME at last. He would not even be willing to imagine that such lamps could have been installed on a neighbouring property without having a chance to get them switched off. Starting October 14th his log finally filled with EME QSOs, 34 ones during the first moon pass. Since this was a holiday stay Erwin of course did not work full moon passes. The following day brought some more DXCCs and continents so everything kept working as it was meant to. Until October 18th. All of a sudden the display of the sspa went black and the amp shut off. When investigating for the cause it looked like the p/s was defective. So Erwin contacted the manufacturer and discussed what to do. On his own cost they sent him a spare p/s which arrived three days later and was installed immediately. Only, the amp still showed error. Consequently that was the end of all EME activity. The 100 watts out of the IC9700 were still ok for meteor scatter but too little for EME. No surprise this was a sad situation given all the effort Erwin had put into becoming QRV via EME.

However, back home DK5EW is busy planning for 2022. He's again trying to find a location in KM26 as this is a really wanted square also via meteor scatter. However, it could also be Crete again. On the positive side: His setup worked well and is now awaiting further use. And the problem with the sspa will sure be permanently rectified next time.

Time Table

18/19 Dec ARRL EME Contest
3 Jan January Issue of the 144 MHz EME Newsletter ready for download

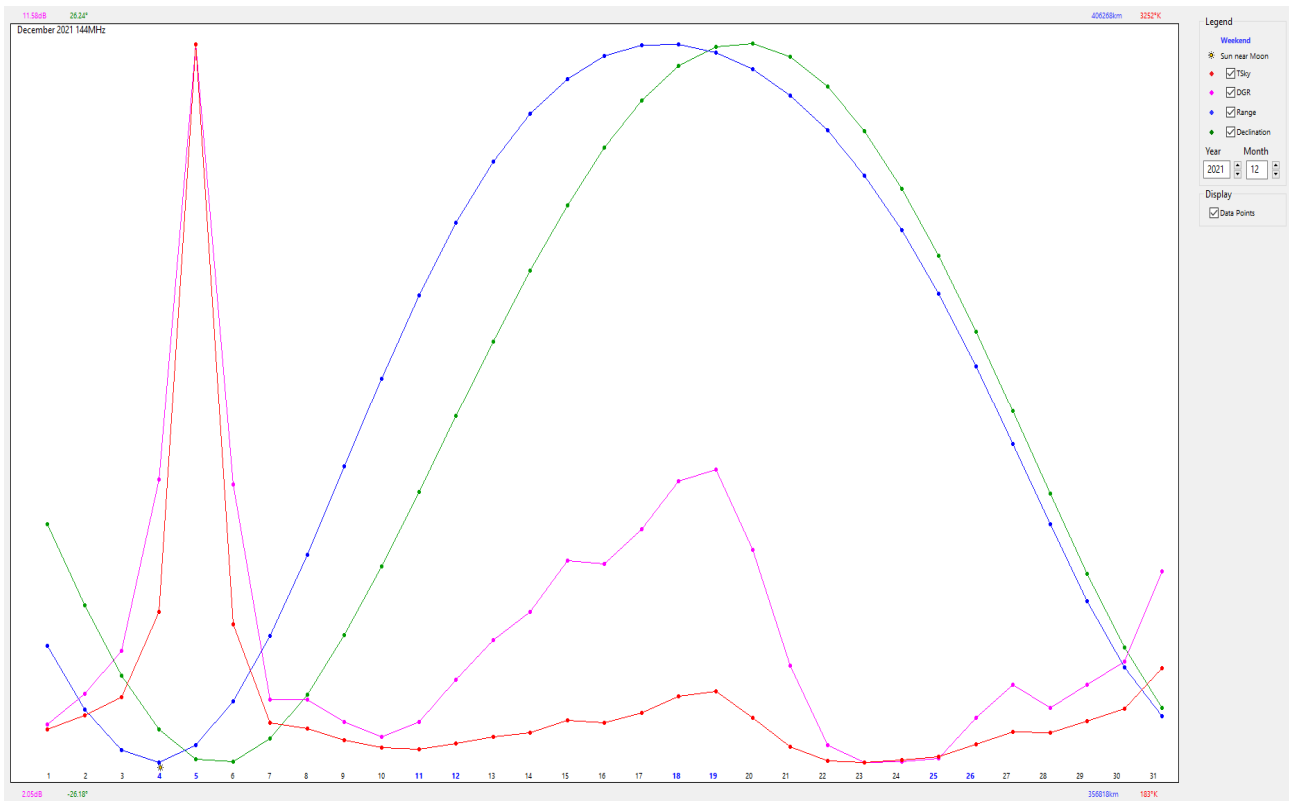
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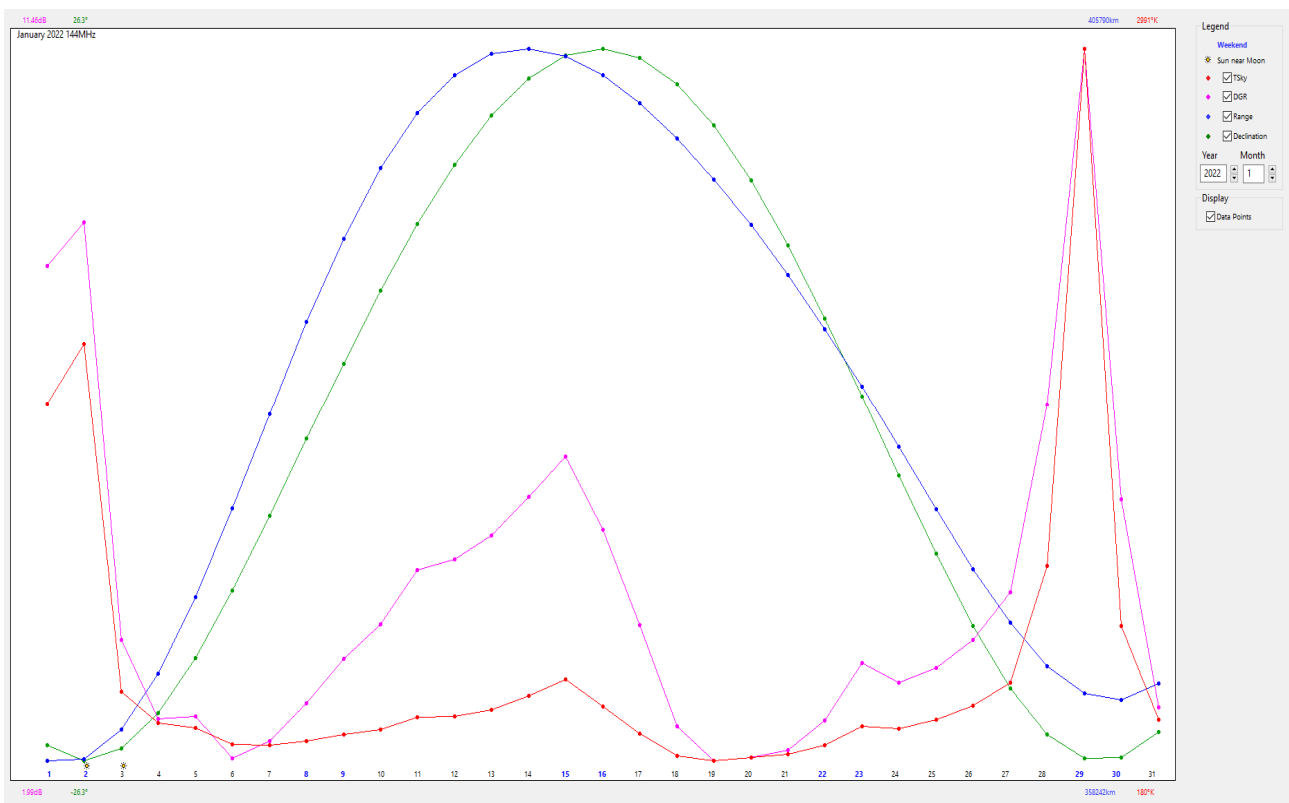
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Moon Conditions



Moon Graph December 2021



Moon Graph January 2022

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