

# SOUTH AFRICAN DXPEDITION: SEEFONTEIN 2

Western Cape Province, South Africa July 25-28, 2005

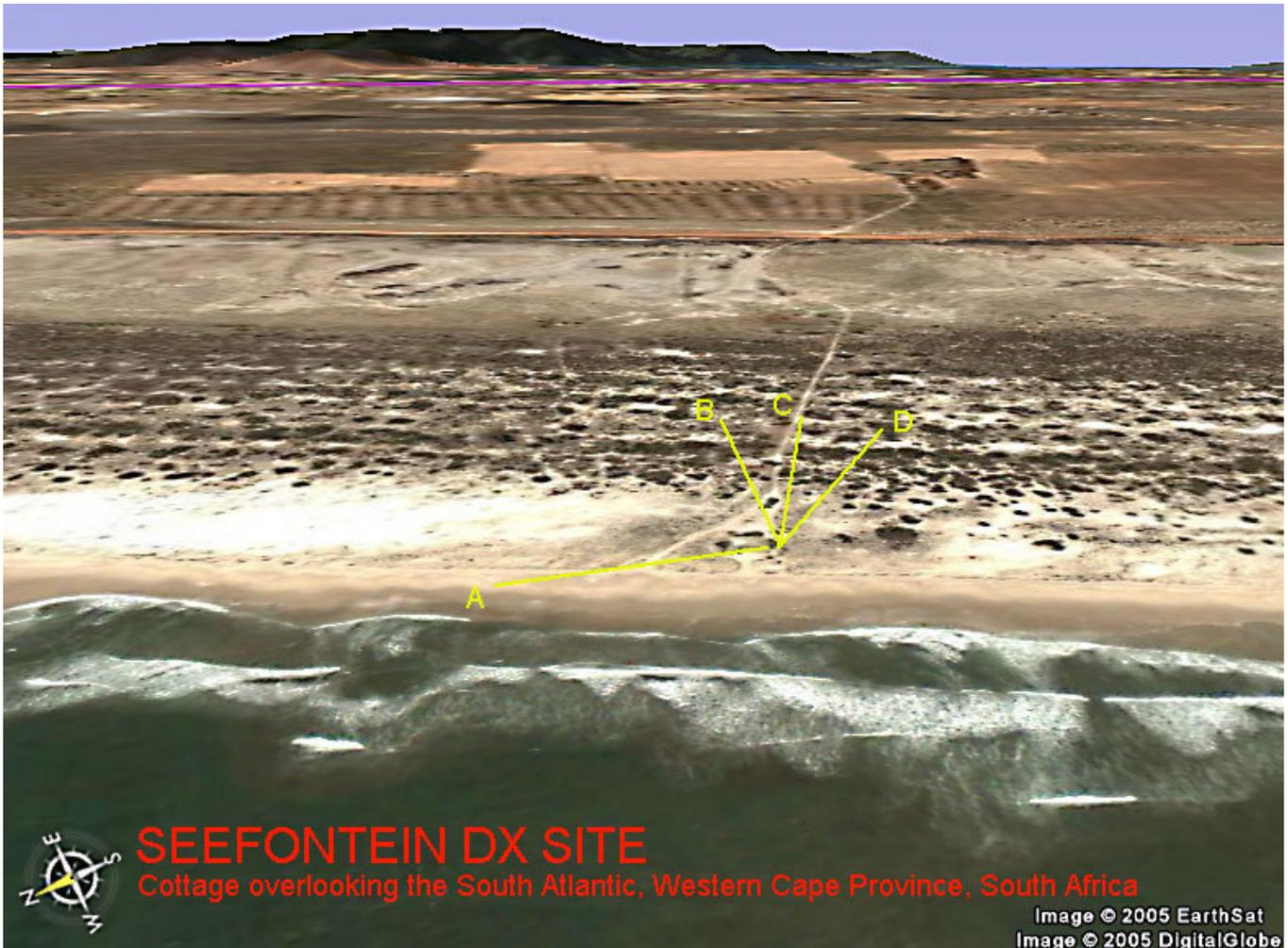
Participating: John Plimmer, Vince Stevens, Gary Deacon

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Narrative by Vince Stevens

John Plimmer recently discovered the site Seefontein, 180km north of Cape Town on the West Coast of South Africa. He immediately noted its favourable location, right on the coast, and relatively isolated, which seemed to make it an ideal DXpedition spot. Having already made one trip up there to do some listening, John suggested Seefontein for our 2005 DXpedition. Last year we did the South Coast so for some variation it was decided to try the West Coast as it's more suited for North American & Caribbean MW reception.



A: Northern short wire on beach, 80m long.  
B: Asian & Central American Beverage of 250m

C: John P's North American & Asian beverage of 350 m  
D: Aussie and North American beverage of 300m

Seefontein is a private farm, with its own stretch of pristine beach, and loads of space to string up beverage antennas. There is no electricity, and no other houses nearby, so we hoped for minimal interference from electrical appliances, and people alike.

Those in attendance this year were the same as Jongensgat last year, namely John Plimmer, Gary Deacon and myself, Vince Stevens. Until we find some more budding DXers in SA we are likely to be the only ones doing this down in the Western Cape for now. My wife and John's wife, Dawn declined the role of camp cooks and washers, but Gary's wife Sandy came with their 5-year-old daughter.



Seefontein DX Cottage

Over to John Plimmer: Quote: “The trip got off to a bad start for me as despite my hectic efforts to get the ThinkPad laptop working off a car battery, the 12 volt to 220 volt inverter loaned to me by a Robertson ham blew up on Sunday, too late for me to do anything about it, so the laptop could not be made to work off the normal car batteries. The hired deep cycle battery I got on Friday, despite assurances, turned out to be under charged, so it had to go on charge for nine hours before it became fully charged up

The Toyota Condor was packed up to the hilt on Monday morning with tables, gas lamps and heaters and all kinds of gear,

clothing and food and kitchen utensils. I eventually got away at 8.30 a.m. and first stop was Robertson to drop off the PC where I had arranged for the dealer to upgrade it from my Win98 operating system to the newer WinXP and also add some RAM and a DVD read/write player. That done, the route proceeded to Worcester, Wolseley, Gouda, Porterville, Piketberg and Velddrif and then on past Dwarskersbos to the Seefontein cottage. The 290km/180m trip took four hours with a stop for coffee at Piketberg. The coffee reminded me of the bitter W.W.II chicory ersatz stuff they used to dish up - it was awful. I arrived at the farmhouse at 12.30 p.m. and got the keys for the cottage which is two kilometers away on the beach and proceeded there, having found that I had got there before Vince. I unpacked the mountain of gear - the cottage is self catering (without mains power) and you have to take along a lot of your own gear and Vince then pitched up in his Land-Rover, also with a mountain of stuff. I got out a beer and had the sarmies that dear Dawn had prepared and contemplated how I was going to erect my radio apparatus. After lunch I erected the Kiwa in it's position about six foot off the deck and looking through one of the wooden windows and through a gap in the dune that separates the cottage from the beach. Then the small Datong active for the Tropical Bands was erected outside on a pole supporting a water tank and I was now ready to run out the 1000ft/300m beverage wire.” Unquote



Vince Stevens Gary Deacon John Plimmer

Back to Vince: As usual I strung up some beverage antennas as soon as I arrived on the Monday. One 300m-antenna pointing at Australia, a bearing of 126 deg, then a second of 250m, at 96 deg, aimed at SE Asia. These ran behind the house into the ‘sandveld’ (Afrikaans for the typical West Coast ecology of the area – sandy soil plus hardy low scrubby bushes – ‘fynbos’). So for our intended DX areas of North America and the Caribbean we would be listening ‘over the shoulder’. The beverages were intentionally unterminated so they would be effective in both directions. According to John I am very meticulous about this and to his amazement even bring a whole bundle of bamboo sticks to keep the antenna's dead straight and five foot above ground!

The last antenna I rigged up was something of an experiment. It ran from the front of the house on a bearing of magnetic north more or less (which is about 336 deg in the Southern Cape) towards the sea, and actually stopped just short of the high water tidal mark – or so I thought!! This antenna was probably only about 100m long. At least that's what it started out as, until Mother Nature & King Neptune formed an anti-DXer alliance resulting in my aerial being swept down the coast, with 4 or 5 cane poles missing in action. Turns out the tide was low when I set up the antenna, and of course it came in later on and swept all my hard work away. To make matters worse, the extra 100m that I couldn't string out was still on the plastic reel so the nasty water promptly unravelled the lot and turned it into a bizarre new form of aquatic creature. The ball of wire resembled a crazy kind of afro-wig, containing shells and bits of seaweed for decoration. Fortunately I managed to rescue all the bits and pieces, including the poles, which were washed ashore. The wire was cut at about the 80m-point and moved much higher up the beach, I'd guess at a bearing of true north. (The afro-wig-plankton-catcher-copper-wire-and-seaweed monstrosity was hauled ashore and fortunately it survived its dunking without too many ill effects and has since been rewound on a new reel - I use 0.8mm enamelled copper wire, which is amazingly strong and has been on loads of trips and is still in pristine condition). While I sheepishly made my way back to the house, John had finished his set-up and was ready for some DXing. He had discovered that the track leading to the cottage was straight and the bearing was pointed at central U.S., so he ran a 350m wire along the track. This was much easier than traipsing through the bush. As he walked back from the end, he hung it on the bushes next to the road to keep it on average about four feet off the ground.



Back to John, Quote: *“Ready to fire up now and I switch on with anticipation of problems, as I nearly always discover I have some fault that prevents proper operation. This time everything fires up beautifully first time and all three antenna systems are working fine - hallelujah!!”*

*Gary and family have not arrived yet, so I discuss with Vince who is going to take what rooms. There are two main rooms in the house and one tiny outside room with a bed and nothing else. I want that, to be away from the crowd, but Vince makes a strong play for it. Only later did I realise that I had given up on that room too easily and that Vince cannily knew all about keeping away from the rest of us. The drill was that we DXed all night and tried to catch up on shuteye during the day.*

*In practice Vince and Gary dossed down immediately after the DX session ended at about 8.30 a.m. I can't sleep in the mornings, so opted to sleep, as is my norm, in the afternoon, but then everyone was wide awake and trampling around on the wooden floor and talking at the top of their voices, so I couldn't sleep a wink in the afternoon and became very weary as the three day session wore on”. Unquote.*

The grayline effect was very pronounced here at Seefontein and signals from the Far East started coming in already an hour before sunset. This boded well for the DXpedition. Gary and family arrived only at 6.30 p.m. just before darkness had set in. We DXed the night away with a short nap in the wee hours and continued until well after sunrise when the signals finally faded.



Gary thinks its a good sign!

During the day we all had baths. But the single small gas geyser couldn't cope, so a very large kettle was placed on the gas cooker to heat up supplementary water to make the bathing a reasonable experience. The water is brown and brackish, pumped out of a well adjacent to the cottage. The farmer also provides a 25 litre container of fresh drinking water. Eventually I discovered that the second bathroom is much closer to the geyser and the water is much hotter, so I probably overdid the filling of the bath, so much so that the water ran out on the Wednesday! The next day John went into Velddrif 20 km away to buy lunch and get a newspaper, some paraffin for the lamps, and extra candles. Gary and I started getting a barbecue ('braai') fire ready. John couldn't join us, as he is a diabetic and should not eat later than 1PM. The braai is finished at 3...

An hour later, Gary fires up his FRG-7 and declares various Far East signals booming in. This is quite amazing as sunset is still two hours away and the sun is still high in the sky. We all have a good session of Far East reception. I eventually go to bed at 11PM and Gary sits on 1548, hoping to hear St.Helena for the first time in many a year. Soon he does get some audio from them and listens to adverts for a competition they are running. We last heard this old favourite in the 80's. Throughout the DXpedition we were also trying for Ascension on 1602 but that frequency is quite messy with lots of burbling but nothing definite. Eventually I get an ID from R.Vitoria in Spain, but at no point did we even get a whiff of Ascension.

John's version of the evening's events: Quote: *"By 9PM I am exhausted and can't go on for another minute on the radio, so head for the sack. This time I realise I desperately need my sleep more than I need to DX the radio, so I do not set the alarm and go into a deep and satisfying sleep. I awake naturally at 5AM feeling alive and refreshed. Soon in short order I catch Nashville Tennessee, Orlando Florida and Fort Worth Texas on MW. It's always a thrill to get far distant stations, knowing that years of experience and good technical arrangements like your antenna's and radio are pulling in things to be heard that the normal mortal could not think of achieving. A string of stations follow with exotic far distant names – Bonaire, Anguilla, Buffalo NY, St Kitts in the Caribbean, Pearl Harbour Hawaii where the Armed forces Network is booming in on the higher frequencies. Great fun!"* Unquote.

At sunrise Wednesday, John notices his Kiwa Loop has stopped functioning, even though the power light is on. He finds that the deep cycle battery has run down to only 10V, so guesses this to be the cause of the problem. He takes the battery over to the farm owners, 2km away, for a charge-up. They are not outside the farm and the gate is locked and their vicious dogs are barking. He eventually gives a toot on his car hooter and the farmer's wife comes out. She proceeds to give him a lecture about how she does not like hooting, as she hears her dogs barking, and will come out regardless!! The evening session on the radio is fruitful and we are soon listening to the Maldives, then China and some endearing Indian music from a station in Mauritius. It is quite interesting to note that Australia is far less easy to DX from the West Coast, yet the Far East seems to propagate well, even though the signals from both areas have to travel over the Southern African land mass. Only 2 or 3 Aussie stations were noted. Of course another factor could be that these stations are generally quite low powered compared to some of the Asian powerhouses. The West coast is distinctly different from the South East coast of SA due to the shape of the land and the consequent water/land paths that signals have to take to reach us. On the West coast Brazil makes a very early appearance at around 19h30 UTC (9:30 PM local time) and Europe also fades in much earlier due to their sunset transmitter enhancement at around the same time. Capital Gold from London on 1548 was heard before 10PM; the earliest I've ever noted them.

## COASTAL EFFECT EXPERIMENT

That evening we also do an experiment to try and determine the effects of coastal enhancement – the improvement of MW signals close to the sea. We head down to the beach with John's portable Drake SW8 kitted out with an amplified and tunable ferrite rod antenna. Take some measurements, then drive 1km inland, take some more readings and finally finish 2km inland for a final set of measurements. The area was very flat and the soil sandy and somewhat dry. "S" meter readings were taken and the audibility generally conformed to the "S" meter.

	Beach	1 km	2 km
1530 VOA Sao Tome	S9+20	S9+20	S9+20
1575 R. Farda UAE	S9	S9	S9
1170 Swaziland	S9+10	S9	S9
846 Komga, E. Cape	S9+20	S9+20	S9+10
1557 France, Nice	S9	*	S9

\*=No reading taken

Draw your own conclusions...!??

Here's John's views of events: Quote: *"We could have invested more time and effort into the experiment, but we were tired, the winter's night was cold and blustery and the dirt track was isolated, dark and unfriendly. Believe me, 1557 France Nice and 1575 R. Farda UAE are both very weak far-away stations that I would rank as faint DX (those stations are 8,500 km's/5,500 miles away - that's DX!). We couldn't go further inland as the major iron ore rail line and its attendant high voltage power system are there about a mile further on. But we did take the readings carefully and measured out the distances on the car's odometer, so I am satisfied that the results are generally accurate.*

*The "S" meter on the Drake SW8, which is actually an electronic bar graph, was checked back home carefully against the analogue "S" meter of the Icom and was found to be generally accurate. The readings were taken in AM mode at a 6 Khz filter setting. The "S" meter readings are slightly elevated by the amplification circuit of the portable ferrite rod antenna, but I am sure that the overall conclusion we came to by listening to audibility as well, was that there is hardly any difference between the reception on the beach and the reception 2 km's/1.25 miles inland"* Unquote

This is something I'd like to try again, perhaps with the car radio tuned to a weak station. I'm sure the coastal effect will be noticeable on certain stations, at specific locations. It's no coincidence that our best DX has been on the coast. Watch this space...

The last morning is a slight anti-climax as far as conditions go, signals are present but nothing extraordinary pops up. Even the X-band seems a little subdued.

With the water having run out, John goes off to the farmer again. Begrudgingly he finally comes thru later but moans at John about us using so much water. He feels the tankful he left us with should have lasted several days. He explains that this is a dry arid area and is experiencing a drought and that the well has nearly run dry and does not produce much water. We're all naturally unimpressed with this. If they want the cottage to be commercially viable then visitors should have their basic needs catered for.

Then comes the worst bit, packing and taking down antennas!! John leaves around 10:30 as he has a 4-hour trip home. The rest of us clean up. It takes me an hour to sweep all the sand out of the house. I like to leave holiday accommodation cleaner and neater than I found it. Of course when I return the keys to the farmer she moans at me for having left later than I said I would!! You can't win with some people!! (It's only 12:30 PM). I charm a smile out of her and head on my way. Best to stay on good terms with these people if we want to go back again, which we most definitely do. I finally arrive home 2 hours later.

Looking back on the DXpedition I am fairly satisfied but not overwhelmed. I think this goes for all of us. The radio side was good but not record breaking. We have heard most of the stations received before at some time or other. There were one or 2 surprises and some old favourites, but not as many as I'd have hoped. But I will look forward to going back soon though. John and Dawn are going on their own in September over the equinox - who knows what he will catch then?

## OVERVIEW OF THE DXPEDITION

courtesy of the third member of our crew: Gary Deacon



The second part of the annual DXpedition/family holiday began with our arrival at dusk with Vince and John already behind their receivers. After a welcome chat and a brief discussion about Vince's new "King Neptune seaweed antenna", I set up the old FRG7 and connected up to the more reliable beverage antenna which Vince had kindly set up.

The various regions/countries appeared in the following order:

### **The Far East:**

Family Radio, Taiwan on 1503 was usually the first Far East station to fade in at around 4:40 pm local time - at least an hour and a half before sunset! It's always quite surprising to hear how well some of the Far East stations propagate under favourable conditions during our local evening greyline period. China (1134, 1188, 1323 and 1593), Taiwan (1503), Vietnam (1242) and Philippines (1530) were really strong at times!

### **Africa:**

Some relatively low power (1kw) Angolan stations were heard with surprising strength. Maldives on 1449 produced an English discussion - enough for a report so will try for a QSL. Also managed to receive Libya on 1251 with English news.

### **Australia:**

The only Australian stations heard on this occasion were 6WF (720), 6GN (828) and 4QD (1548). My guess is that the prevailing ionospheric conditions simply did not favour good reception from this part of the world.

### **Brazil:**

Seefontein does favour South America, especially Brazil - Many stations from this part of the globe are received regularly here in the Cape Province - so much so that one tends to ignore them in favour of the Caribbean and the USA! The strength of some of the Brazilians was truly awesome - I set about recording a few strong id's and managed to log a 250 watt Brazilian in the process! (Radio Jornal, Leopoldina on 1560).

### St. Helena:

Another highlight for me was the reception of St. Helena on 1548 - To the best of my knowledge, the 100 watt station was last received by yours truly and a few SA DXers, including Vince & John, during the excellent reception conditions of the middle/late 80's. The local announcements brought back some great DX memories! Thanks to the directional beverage, the low power signal managed to appear with, and over Capitol Gold (UK), both on top of a subdued local 10KW Radio Islam which normally dominates on this frequency.

### Netherlands:

Another surprise was tuning in for the first time to the recently launched 20KW Radio London International, from the Netherlands. The rock music format and cool retro id jingles provided a refreshing change from most of the music aired today - It was great to hear 70's rock classics from groups such as Santana and Deep Purple!

### The Caribbean:

WDHP American Virgin Islands on 1620 and ZNS1 Bahamas on 1540 were really strong, especially during the dawn/greyline period. Although both stations are regularly heard here, it was a pleasure just to sit back and listen to the local programme content for a while - some interesting advertisements, discussions and good music! I noted the country music title "There Goes Happiness And In Comes Loneliness" - This reminded me of the joke: What happens when you play a country song backwards? You get your happiness back, you get your wife back, you get your money back, you get your house back, etc.!

### The USA:

The opening to the USA was not as good as experienced in the 70's and 80's although there were some stations received here for the first time. As usual, most of the activity was confined to the X-Band. I restricted most of my dawn/greyline DXing to this region and was fortunate to receive quite a few id's during the peaks - the highlights for me were positive id's from: WRDW Augusta (1630), KWHN Fort Smith (1650), KCNZ Cedar Falls (1650), WMWR Dry Branch (1670) and WWAA Avondale Estates (1690).

### Conclusion:

It was a real pleasure to DX from the West Coast again after a long absence from this part of the world. The strength and clarity of the DX received was impressive! Thanks to John for discovering this great site and to Vince for organising the accommodation and antenna logistics! Definitely worthy of a return visit!

## **SEEFONTEIN 2 DX LOGGINGS JULY 25-28, 2005**

162 0247 28/07/05 FRANCE France Inter, Allouis. In FF (JP)

198 0230 26/07/05 ALGERIA RTA Quargla in AA (JP)

530 0517 27/07/05 TURKS & CAICOS. R.Vision Christiana. In SS w gospel, good. (VS)

555 0401 27/07/05 ST KITTS ZIZ Basseterre. YL ID & ann in EE and reggae music, very poor with splatter from 567 Cape Talk. Signal later improved but was relaying BBC WS. (all)

630 1643 27/07/05 MADAGASCAR. RNM 1, Antananarivo. ID x2 at 1801 in FF, poor. Never heard on this freq before, despite relative close proximity. (VS)

640 0533 27/07/05 BRAZIL Radio Globo Natal, Natal in PP w id, very good. (GD)

650 0526 26/07/05 COLOMBIA. RCN Ant2, Bogota. SS 'Musica del Mundo'. Briefly poor-fair (VS)

666 1640 27/07/05 REUNION RFO St Pierre, in FF w mx, fair (JP)

684 1800 27/07/05 UNIDENTIFIED w Book review in EE. Possibly Mauritius or China, p-f (VS)

684 2000 27/07/05 SPAIN RNE1, Sevilla ID in SS & nx, fair (VS)

720 1640 26/07/05 INDIA AIR Chennai w ragas, fair/good (GD&JP)

720 1933 25/07/05 AUSTRALIA ABC Perth. Phone-in prog, poor-fair. (all)

720 0459 27/07/05 BRAZIL Radio Tupi in PP w id jingle and romantic music, very good (GD)

740 0500 27/07/05 BRAZIL Radio Soc da Bahia Salvador in PP w ann and id, very good (GD)

750 0517 26/07/05 USA WSB Atlanta GA in EE w ad for "Chevrolet" poor (GD)

760 0540 27/07/05 USA WJR Detroit MI (presumed) in EE w anns, poor - heard briefly (GD)  
770 0531 27/07/05 BRAZIL Radio Atalaia de Sergipe, Aracaju (presumed) in PP w ann - fair (GD)  
780 0531 26/07/05 BRAZIL Radio Jornal do Comercio Recife in PP w ann, excellent steady sig (GD)  
790 0442 27/07/05 BARBADOS Starcom Network Bridgetown. EE relig px "Unshackled" fair (GD)

800 0320 28/07/05 NETHERLANDS ANTILLES TWR Bonaire in EE w religious pr "Insight For Living" -also id at 0327 hours as "We're delighted that you found this spot on your radio dial - You're listening to Trans World Radio, Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles." - followed by px "Cross Heart" good (all)  
800 0605 27/07/05 BRAZIL Radio MEC Rio de Janeiro w anns - fair (GD)  
810 0346 26/07/05 COLOMBIA. Caracol, Bogota. Id's and ad for 'Banco. Fair w QRM (VS)  
819 1636 27/07/05 MAURITIUS RM2 Malherbes. Lovely Indian music in VV (JP)  
820 0430 27/07/05 USA WBAP Fort Worth TX in EE w wx and id, fair (GD&JP)  
828 1640 26/07/05 AUSTRALIA 6GN Geraldton (JP)  
840 1930 26/07/05 BRAZIL Unknown station but possible ID for R.Bahia, in PP. poor-fair (VS)

936 1645 26/07/05 INDIA AIR Tiruchirapalli w ragas, fair w QRM (GD)  
999 1710 26/07/05 SAUDI ARABIA. BSKSA Tabuk. AA //1512, poor. (VS)

1030 2100 27/07/05 BRAZIL Radio Olinda, Olinda in PP w id, good (GD)  
1044 1609 26/07/05 INDIA AIR Mumbai. EE nx, good (VS)  
1053 2355 27/07/05 UNITED KINGDOM Talksport. Many txers. In EE w discussion - poor/fair (GD)  
1060 0554 27/07/05 USA KYW Philadelphia (presumed) w ann poor - heard briefly (GD)  
1062 1549 26/07/05 PHILLIPINES DZEC (presumed) w discussion, fair (GD)

1130 0555 27/07/05 BRAZIL Radio Nacional Rio de Janeiro in PP w anns, fair (GD)  
1134 1700 26/07/05 CHINA CNR1 w id and ann, very good (GD&VS)  
1140 0514 26/07/05 USA WRVA Richmond VA (presumed) in EE w discussion, poor (GD&VS)  
1140 0330 27/07/05 USA WRMQ Orlando, FL w "News radio WRM" nighttime power 245 watts. Tx lobe favours West (JP)  
1188 1516 26/07/05 CHINA CRI in EE w news, fair (GD)  
1190 0515 26/07/05 USA WOWO Fort Wayne IN (presumed) in EE w phone-in, poor (GD)  
1196.7 1712 26/07/05 ANGOLA EP do Malanje in PP (tentative). Move from 1188? - Heard during a brief break in transmission from Family Radio, Lesotho on 1197, good (1kw) (GD&VS)  
1197 1520 27/07/05 INDIA AIR Tirunelveli w ann, poor (GD)

1215 0025 28/07/05 UNITED KINGDOM Virgin AM, Moorside Edge in EE w pops incl "Good Vibrations" by the Beach Boys, very poor under QRM (GD)  
1242 1512 27/07/05 VIETNAM Voice of Vienam Hanoi in EE w news, fair (GD)  
1251 0152 27/07/05 LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA Voice of Africa, Tripoli in EE w news and id, then into FF. fair (GD)

1323 1625 27/07/05 CHINA CRI. EE World nx, good. (all) 100  
1359 1540 26/6/05 TAIWAN Family Radio Fangaio w religious pr - fair peak (GD)  
1377 1510 27/07/05 CHINA Huayi BC fading in w anns - poor/fair (GD)  
1395 0147 27/07/05 NETHERLANDS Radio London in EE w rock classics presented by female announcer. Also id jingle at 0335: "Music - that's our middle name - Wonderful music B-I-G-L" followed by "Evil Ways " by Santana - fair (GD&VS)

1400 0146 27/07/05 GRENADA The Harbour Light Of The Windwards, St. George's in EE w religious pr, poor but clear (GD)  
1440 1805 27/07/05 ANGOLA Radio Nacional, Dundo in PP w ID. fair (GD)  
1449 1612 27/07/05 MALDIVES Voice of Maldives, Male in EE w interview about teenage social problems. Back to local Dhivehi language at 1630, good steady signal (all)

1458 1455 27/07/05 MAYOTTE Radio Mayotte in FF at fade-in - eventually producing a strong consistent signal (all)  
 1458 2317 25/07/05 UNITED KINGDOM Sunrise Radio London in w ads, poor (GD)  
 1460 0500 28/07/05 USA WTKT Harrisburg PA. No ID but many slogans of 'The Ticket' which I subsequently checked on the web and it seems to be WTKT. Sport format. Poor (VS)  
 1467 1532 27/07/05 INDIA AIR Jeypore in EE w news // 1566, poor/fair (GD)  
 1484.5 1735 25/07/05 ANGOLA EP do Kuanza-Sul in PP w ann, fair peak (1kw) (GD&VS)

1503 1442 27/07/05 TAIWAN Family Radio Fanglaio w religious px at fade in - the first to fade in - eventually producing a very good signal - the best and most consistent from the Far East (GD)  
 1510 0604 26/07/05 USA WLAC Nashville TN in EE w id, fair (all)  
 1510 0356 26/07/05 USA WWZN Boston, MA. appeared momentarily under WLAC (JP)  
 1520 0440 27/07/05 USA WWKB Buffalo, w ID as 'KB Radio'. (JP)  
 1530 1600 26/07/05 PHILLIPINES DXME Quezon City w id and religious px, very good peak (GD)  
 1530 1800 27/07/05 SAO TOME E PRINCIPE VOA Relay in PP w id, excellent (GD)  
 1540 0404 27/07/05 BAHAMAS ZNS1 Nassau in EE w id as " This is AM 15-40 - The National Voice of the Bahamas" followed by discussion px "Immediate Response" - also at 0507 hours w ads including: "Richie Real Estate" and "KFC" good steady signal with excellent peaks (all)  
 1539 1538 26/07/05 INDIA AIR Panaji w ragas, fair (GD)  
 1548 1652 26/07/05 AUSTRALIA 4QD Emerald in EE w phone-in, poor under local Radio Islam (GD&VS)  
 1548 2015 26/07/05 ST. HELENA Radio St. Helena Jamestown in EE w station id by male announcer followed by pop music. Also heard at 2144 hours with local announcements by female presenter including: " ... The radio quiz on Radio St. Helena continues this week and the winner will receive ten pounds ... " Also heard on 28/7 at 0000 hours with BBC news relay, poor with occasional fair peaks sharing with Capitol Gold, London - only slight intermittent QRM from Radio Islam at this time (GD)  
 1548 0001 28/07/05 UNITED KINGDOM, Capital Gold London in EE w time check and id: " ... From Leicester Square this is 15-48 AM - Capital Gold, London..." fair peak (all)  
 1557 1455 27/07/05 TAIWAN Family Radio, Fanglaio w religious programme at fading in w fair peaks (GD)  
 1557 1825 27/07/05 FRANCE France Info, Nice. In FF, good (all)  
 1560 0558 27/07/05 BRAZIL Radio Jornal, Leopoldina in PP w id - poor w fair peaks (250 watts)(GD)  
 1566 1530 27/07/05 INDIA AIR Nagpur in EE w news incl a report of a major fire on a train platform, fair (all)  
 1566 1532 27/07/05 KOREA HLAZ, Jeju w religious pr - poor (GD&JP)  
 1570 0618 28/07/05 MEXICO XERF Ciudad Acuna . in SS w nx - good peak before fade out (GD)  
 1575 1710 25/07/05 MAURITIUS BBC relay in EE, good (GD)  
 1575 1533 26/07/05 THAILAND VOA relay Ayutthaya w VOA nx in special English, fair (all)  
 1575 1810 27/07/05 UAE Radio Farda in AA w id, very good and consistent (all)  
 1580 0438 28/07/05 USA KMIK Phoenix AZ. (TENT) w Radio Disney slogan. Only one with this format on this fqy, poor. (VS)  
 1593 1605 27/07/05 CHINA CNR1 w anns, very good (all)

1600 0525 27/07/05 USA WWRL Woodside NY in EE w nutritional advice, fair peak (GD)  
 1600 0256 28/07/05 BRAZIL Radio Nove de Julho, Sao Paulo in PP w id ann, very good (GD)  
 1602 0336 27/07/05 SPAIN Radio Vitoria, Vitoria-Gasteiz in SS w id jingle - poor w fair peaks (GD&VS)  
 1610 0255 28/07/05 ANGUILLA Caribbean Beacon in EE w religious px - fair (all)  
 1620 0208 27/07/05 US VIRGIN ISLANDS WDHP Frederiksted in EE w wx rpt and ads including: " ... The biggest country show and dance ever on St. Croix - John Hogan and Ellen Stone ... " A sample of the country music to be performed included, "There Goes Happiness And In Comes Loneliness"! Very good (all)  
 1620 0059 28/07/05 USA WTAW Collage Road TX in EE w ann, very poor under Virgin Islands (GD)  
 1630 0425 28/07/05 USA WRDW Augusta GA in EE w id as "news talk radio 16-30 WRDW." Also heard on 26/7 at 0200 w ABC news - poor (GD&JP). I also heard 2 stations here, one with Gospel (VS)  
 1640 0502 26/07/05 USA WTNI Biloxi MS in EE w news, v poor (GD)  
 1650 0305 27/07/05 USA KWHN Fort Smith AR w id and wx " ... Now - Newstalk 16-50 KWHN Oklahoma weather - Good evening - Your official 'K-WHN' forecast ... " fair peak (GD)  
 1650 0315 27/07/05 USA KCNZ Cedar Falls IA in EE w id as "16-50 The Fan KCNZ" weak (GD)

1660 0454 26/07/05 USA WWRU NJ. Id in EE at 0200, later in Korean.poor-fair (all)  
1660 0405 28/07/05 USA WCNZ Marco Island FL in EE w religious pr, 'Relevant Radio' slogan, poor (GD&VS)  
1660 0025 26/07/05 PUERTO RICO WGIT Canóvanas. In SS – 'El Gigante' (all) 1  
1670 0229 27/07/05 USA WMWR Dry Branch GA in EE w ann and id: " ... Listen to the 'Radio Factor' with Bill O'Riley - every day from noon 'till two - Talk Radio 16-70 WMWR ... " poor (GD&VS)  
1680 0558 26/07/05 USA WDSS Ada MI (tentative) w pops, very poor - (GD)  
1690 0259 27/07/05 USA WWAA Avondale Estates in EE w "the 16-90 AM forecast" wx rpt and id, poor (GD&VS)  
1700 0402 26/07/05 USA KVNS Brownsville TX in EE w CBS news, fair with good peaks (GD&VS)  
6350 0539 27/07/05 HAWAII AFN Pearl Harbour. V Clear - 18,500 KM'S away. (JP)  
6532 1609 26/07/05 HAWAII SAN FRANCISCO AIRADIO Honolulu working various aircraft (JP)

"Official" sunrise at Seefontein was 0541UTC and sunset 1605 UTC.

Seefontein position S32 deg 39 min 6.7 sec, E18 deg 15 min 59.7 sec

Propagation average: Solar flux 85,sunspot 23, A index 15, K index 3. (Tnx to Jan Alvestad's website)

Receivers: Drake R8A (VS) Yaesu FRG-7 (GD) Icom IC-756 PRO III modified for MW reception (JP)

## **Test: KIWA MW LOOP vs. 1000FT/300M beverage** **by John Plimmer**

This time I took much more trouble to compare my Kiwa against the beverage. Most of the time the Kiwa was better to much better than the beverage, which was well set, nice and straight and elevated on average about four foot above ground. The beverage was aligned to Australia and "over the shoulder" to central U.S.A., whilst the Kiwa favoured an alignment pointing to Florida.

Although the Kiwa was overall better, there were some notable exceptions when the beverage was spectacularly better. It was possible with the scope on the Icom 756 to analyse why the Kiwa was better. A notable example analysed was 555 St. Kitts, Virgin Islands. This weak station was badly affected by splatter from a local station, 567 Cape Talk R. Vince's Drake R8A was badly affected by this splatter over the weak St. Kitts, but my Icom was not. Analysis on the Icom spectrum scope showed that the fault was with the 567 TX splatter coming in on the beverage antenna, but when the Kiwa was switched in and the regenerative circuit optimised, then the splatter was greatly reduced and St. Kitt's much more readable as a result.



Another experiment was listening to the low power TX from Mauritius relaying BBC on 1575. It was much clearer on the Kiwa as the scope showed the ability of the Kiwa to reduce the static coming in on the beverage, which was making the signal barely readable. The Kiwa was able to reduce the static and the regenerative circuit was able to enhance the signal to an acceptable readability. "No!" said Vince and Gary, the Kiwa is able to optimise the direction better than the beverage, so to satisfy them I set the Kiwa on the same bearing as the beverage and the Kiwa was still hands down more readable and better.