



Caribbean Contesting Consortium  
Signal Point PJ2T

# 2004 Station Manager Report

Jeff Maass K8ND





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### PJ2T Station Status Overview

In general, the PJ2T station is in much better shape than at this time last year.

Building and maintaining a World-Class contest station is a difficult task, and it's made much more difficult when that station is 2000 miles away! CCC as a team has undertaken that task, and we keep getting better at it!

The Signal Point PJ2T station has had the advantages of having had good decisions made in the initial stages of design and construction, a good preventative maintenance plan, and our continuing efforts as a team to make the resources available to make changes where needed to make the station even better.

This past year, a total of \$6916.03 from the station fund was spent on the station maintenance and improvements. Focus this year was on building a comfortable stock of spare parts (especially amplifier tubes and rotors), and improving station efficiency and operability. Expenses for spares should be substantially lower in the coming year, as we have nearly all we need on the shelves.

Certainly, station support fees and membership dues have provided much of the money for the things done, but we have also had excellent response to "targeted donation appeals" (asking for financial or material support for specific projects) and other donations. The upgrade to LCD displays this year was an effective use of these appeals. We don't want to do this too often, but an occasional appeal may be made in the future when we think it will serve the membership by fulfilling an immediate need. Donations are always welcomed!

A major challenge of our situation is the mix of people operating at our station. Some are Amateurs very familiar with our station and it's equipment; some are first-time visitors to our station but who are very experienced with operating similar equipment at other contest stations; and some are what I would describe as "casual Amateurs", who are easily overwhelmed by the range and complexity of a 4-station contest installation, and who may be easily confused when something doesn't work as simply as expected.

Everyone is served when the stations are made easier to use and more reliable, and that will be a key goal for ongoing station maintenance and modifications.

Companies trumpet the concept of "Continuous Improvement". This should be our slogan as well. **If we are not changing and improving our station, we are preparing to lose. No matter how many contests we've won in the past, someone somewhere is working now to improve their hardware and techniques to beat us. We need to keep improving our station facilities, lest we be left in the dust!**



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### PJ2T Station Improvements and Status

1. This year has proven that the switch to Yaesu FT-1000MP family transceivers has much reduced the radio failure rate and the (expensive) need to shuttle transceivers back-and-forth to the USA for repair. They continue to provide World-Class performance in a reliable package.
2. 500Hz CW filters have been put in all FT-1000MP sub-receivers.
3. The stock of useful spare parts, especially 1) tubes for the amplifiers; 2) environmentally-toughened rotors; and 3) reliable full-power amplifiers has been increased to a comfortable level to minimize travel/transit delays in fixing failures.
4. Operating efficiency and “fool proofing” has been improved by adding automatic bandpass filtering for contest bands to Station #2.
5. Operating efficiency has been improved by installing the Idiom Press Rotor-EZ modifications to the three rotor control boxes.
6. Six Meter capabilities were improved greatly by the donation of two transceivers capable of operating on the band with 100 Watt output. The donated IC706 and FT100 transceivers (Thanks AE9B and WB9Z!) also make possible future mobile or portable operation from the island.
7. The 3-element 80 Meter Delta Loop array for Europe has been properly tuned, soldered, and made switchable for CW or SSB from ground level.
8. Lowband receive antennas are split and routed to Stations #1 and #3, with switches and preamplifiers at each station.
9. The European Beverage was completed, and the feedline has been buried between the road and the cliff, with the old on-ground feedline left in place as a decoy.
10. Tower maintenance is up to date, with tower/guy wire painting required a bit more often than originally planned.
11. With standardization on the Anderson PowerPole DC connectors for 12 VDC accessories, RigRunners have been installed at each station.



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### PJ2T Station Improvements and Status (Cont'd)

12. The 2-meter Ringo Ranger packet antenna was replaced after the one in place corroded and fell over.
13. The tower painting is up-to-date, with the last of the problem "rust blooms" on European and USA towers painted by WB9Z in December. Some rust is always starting to peek through, but after each painting the affected area is getting smaller.
14. All four stations now have LCD flat-screen monitors, reducing heat generation and releasing desktop space for other accessories. The best 17-inch CRTs have been retained as spares, and the others donated to local residents and Amateurs.
15. There have been only a few computer-related issues. Two (used) Compaq computers were purchased for Stations #1 and #2 to standardize hardware and use newer, more robust computers in the key spots.
16. Added CD-R CD Burner drive at Station #3.
17. Added Canon BJ2100 printer at Station #3 (Thanks WB9Z and Lori).
18. The annoying problem of operation on the low-bands causing the modem link to hang up was solved through prudent application of ferrite.
19. Old, obsolete and non-functional PC hardware was either donated to local residents and Amateurs, or thrown out to increase storage space.







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### Purchases 2003-04

1. Spare parts for rotors and rotor control boxes
  - a. 1 female (cable end) quick disconnect plug
  - b. Mast bracket and U bolts, in good condition
  - c. Miscellaneous hardware and one gear ring
  - d. Ham IV/T2X motor start capacitor P/N 5151501 (3 each)
  - e. Ham IV/T2X 500 ohm potentiometer, P/N 5023100 (2 each)
  - f. 1/8 3AG fuses, (10 each).
2. Bandpass Filtering For Station 2 (~ \$1000)
  - a. WX0B FM-6 Matrix Switcher
  - b. W3NQN Bandpass Filters (6)
  - c. Cable Set (12)
  - d. WX0B IBS-1 Band Decoder Box
3. W3NQN WARC Bandpass Filters (3 filters, 8/03, \$263);
4. W3NQN 40M Bandpass Filter (replacement, \$100);
5. Alpha 76CA (9/03: \$1250);
6. 3CX1200A7 Tube (Replacement for AL-1200, 8/03: \$415);
7. 3CX1200A7 Tube (Spare for AL-1200, 9/03: \$300 – Tested Dead);
8. 3CX1200A7 Tube (Spare for AL-1200, 2/04: \$325);
9. 8874 Tubes, 3 (Spares for Alphas, 2/04: \$365);
10. GU-91B Tube, (Spare for Titan II, \$180: 5/03. Tested OK, not great);
11. 3CX800A7 Tube (Spare for LK-800A, 5/03: \$290);
12. WX0B StackMatch Board Replacement (10/03, \$85);
13. Two Bencher YA-1 Lowpass Filters (one replacement + one spare (2/04);
14. 500-foot RG-214 feedline for 10m stack and raw stock needs;



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### Purchases 2003-04 (Cont'd)

15. Two (used) Compaq computers;
16. Tailtwister Rotor (used from W9JUV, 7/03, \$200);

### Repairs / Rebuilds 2003-04

1. Rotor Control Boxes (3) modified with Rotor-EZ (thanks to N8NR for doing the modifications, and exchanging his boxes for ours);
2. Alpha 78 rebuilt by Alpha (Thanks W8TK!);
3. 80 Loop Array: SSB/CW switching installed, and cut to proper lengths;
4. European Beverage Feedline: replacement buried;
5. W3NQN 40M Filter Repaired (\$10!);
6. Donated (K8NZ) HAM-II Rotor rebuilt to HAM-IV;
7. Newly purchased Tailtwister refurbished;
8. HAM-IV from WARC Tower repaired and refurbished;
9. Newly purchased HAM-IV refurbished;
10. Donated Ham-IV (from N8MC) refurbished;





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### Donations 2003-04

Donations of equipment and parts are appreciated, but check before taking down to Signal Point – might not need them there, and storage space is limited!

See web site for details on donations made by members. This list is thought to be accurate, but may have omissions or may include items donated in the previous year. No slights are intended!

AE9B - IC-706MK2 Transceiver

WB9Z - FT-100D Transceiver  
Canon BJ-2100 Printer  
Tower rigging supplies and chemicals

K9SG - IC-228A 2 Meter Radio

N8BJQ - 400-feet new RG-213 Feedline  
CD Drive

N1ZZ - Four (4) RigRunners

N8NR - Installed Rotor EZ, Exchanged Rotor boxes with us

W1MD - Collection of new-in-box PC boards  
Hand Tools

W9EFL - Power Transfer Relay

NW0L - CD Burner

W8TK - Dummy Load  
Cost of Factory Rebuild of Alpha 78  
Pair of spare 8874  
INRAD IF Modification Kits for FT-1000MPs  
Variety of items sold at hamfests, with proceeds >\$700 donated



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### Donations 2003-04 (Continued)

- K4LT - Network Switch  
Misc Network cables  
SWR Meter  
Carrying Cases  
Outlet Strips  
Surge Supressors  
Network cards  
CD-ROM Drive
- K8ND - 15-inch LCD Monitor (NEC LCD1550V)  
1500 feet of Dacron rope  
Two 500-hz CW filters for FT-1000MP Subreceivers  
WX0B IBS-1 Band Decoder  
88 feet fiberglass mast sections, guy rings  
Two Pennant receiving antennas (transformers, terminations, wire)  
Elbert County Preamp for 80/160 Receiving  
RG-8X feedline  
K1FZ Hybrid splitter  
Digital Multimeter  
Latest Edition ON4UN's "Low Band Dxing"  
Miscellaneous "stuff"

