

The W7DRA/0 2007 OCDX Photo Story
(Or, how to have fun in Nebraska, USA)



Here we are at the Dxpdition location (daughter's home) holding on to the end of the 80 meter long wire. The bedroom window just above my head in the picture is the "Radio Operations Area". Spencer, a future ham of Nebraska, is supervising me.



One of the important facets of successful contest operating is food (see CQ-Contest archive for August 2007). Here we are making “ham radio cookies” in preparation of the big event.



Not wanting to take anything for granted, I am discussing contest strategy with the second operator. Notice in the background separate antenna tuners for each band of operation. This leads to less middle of the night tuning/operator errors in the heat of battle. I usually take off the cover of the HW16 for contests for better air circulation. As seen in the photo, the balanced antennas (the 40 meter vertical dipole and 20 meter vertical dipole) are fed with twisted pair plastic covered bell wire. The posted QSLs are the results of previous radio conquests.



Here I am banging away on 40cw about 5 am Saturday morning. My goal was to enter the SOSB 40 category, but with 35 watts to a vertical dipole with the bottom 20 feet dragging on the ground, a inoperative street light cycling with horrendous noise for 20 seconds every 90 seconds (giving 70 seconds of useful receiving) in the middle of a Midwest lightning storm, I felt lucky to have worked 8 stations on 40, one on 80 and two on 20. To keep up the contest excitement, I logged SWL style the stations I worked and ones that I could hear but could not hear me. Participating as an SWL is a receiving art in itself. You do not hear stations you are not working in the same light, and it took a suppressing number of tries to get a complete SWL report for the stations reported.



You say no propagation on 20 meters? It was more productive to sit watching Spounge Bob with the grandkids than being on the air.



Six hours after the contest ended I was running the annual 5 mile Henery Dorley Omaha Zoo Run with my family.



Eight hours after the contest the only one left standing was the second operator. So ends my 35 watt sojourn into the world of Oceania DX contesting from the center of the United States.