

NR3I APE - After Action Report

APE QTH = Akridge Scout Reservation - BSA, Dover/Camden, DE

Part of DelMarVa BSA Council 091 <https://www.delmarvacouncil.org/>

Op's = Steve WB3LGC PODXS #2814 and co-Campmaster Fred KB3VBA

Date = 17-AUG-2023 to 20-AUG-2023

APE Grid Sq = FM29fd

Home QTH for WB3LGC/NR3I = Wilmington, DE FM29er

The distance between Grids, FM29er and FM29fd is 40.788 miles.

NR3I PODXS #2878 "QRP Group" club call and we used QRP to drive the amp...



The Akridge Scout Reservation Admin Building, Home for most of the weekend.

The "story" started a week before APE. Fred was asked and he asked me if I could also help with the Campmaster "duties" at Akridge for a large church group that was going to use all the campsites and pavilions for a long weekend. I said, yes.

I got thinking... This is August. APE, as I am always looking for a radio event or contest to "play" with during our Campmaster weekends. APE was perfect. I could make the event as long as I wanted. It was Summer (not COLD). AND, Akridge was more than 20 miles from home (like 45 miles). The Scout Camps also have a kitchen and hot showers, where we stay... I was all set, just pack, take leftovers out of the freezer, and load the 4x4. I was on my way...

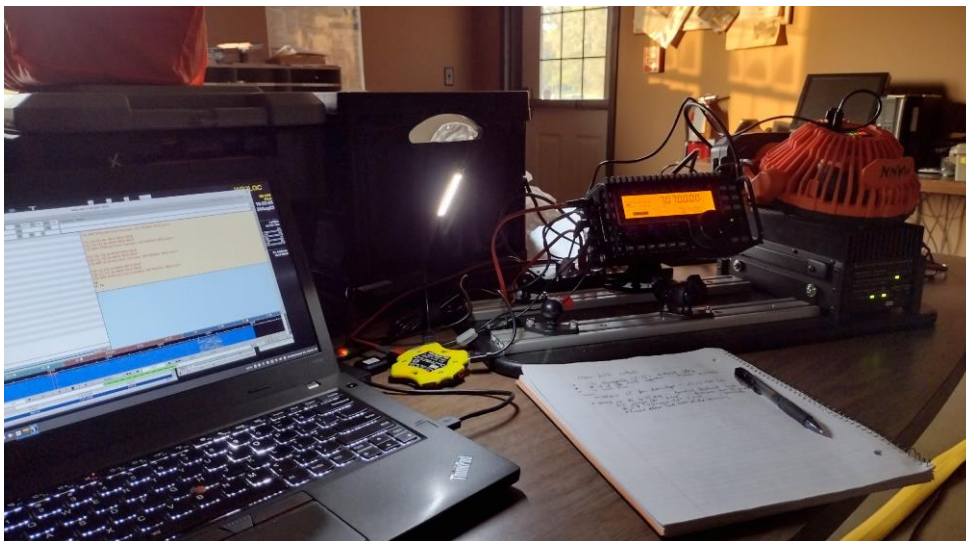
We arrived at Akridge on Thursday afternoon, the 17th.

Since the two air conditioned buildings are used for BSA Council staff during the day and there was going to be a staff meeting until 8pm, setting up "home" was delayed. Since the buildings would also be staffed on Friday, we picked the better building (?) until Friday afternoon when Camp becomes "ours"...

I was hoping I could get the QRP rig and the Raspberry Pi running fldigi so that I could start operating and be able to move to our final destination the next day. But, Thursday I could not get the RPi to display the RPi screen on the ThinkPad laptop by using VNC remote software. It worked at home... Friday morning I solved the display issue by going through a router and my own WiFi node, but I could NOT get audio between the KX3 rig and the RPi fldigi/flrig software...

- Fldigi - need to make sure all the settings are correct.
- Need a FAN for the amp. Without the fan, I can only run 50 Watts.
- Updated MACRO's – ongoing improvements.
- Noticed "it" was using USB not DATA (compression is OFF in DATA mode...)
- The charger for the laptop is causing noise pulses in the KX3.
 - I had the original supply and replaced the cheap knock-off China supply.
 - I also had DC-DC laptop supplies IF I operated "at Camp Portable with Solar" (yes, 2) they work in the 4x4.
- I was calling APE "portable" rather than PSK31.
- It is good that there is little to no wind, as I forgot the "dog" stake to hold down the antenna tripod.
- Next time – multi band antenna.
 - I did use the tapped coil to set taps at 20m, 30m, and 40m.
 - The balun on the BuddiPole is rated 100W, most likely SSB.
 - It was warm at 100W.
 - Make a dual core common mode choke with FT240-31 cores for the low end and a dual core FT240-43 for the high end.
 - A remote antenna tuner might be a better solution with the 40' fiberglass mast.
- The mount on the top of the BuddiPole tripod has a small Alan/set screw and it was loose. I found the wrench on Sunday when packing. Even better, I found a socket head cap screw with a finger "knob" that does not need a wrench...
- The fldigi audio output attenuation is getting changed. How ?? As long as I don't mess with "stuff" it is OK. Something to keep an eye on.

Sunday – 6:15am



Dawn breaks. With, nondescript spiral note pad and Pilot G-2 07 pen

- Restart fldigi and flrig. I noticed the RF gain was zero. The default (?) starting point of flrig. Fixed @ KX3.
- I worked ONE station first thing (6:15am) and then four (4) QSO's back to back at about 9am.
 - How late were stations on Saturday night ?

Sunday – 10am -- QRT

- KC3FL was my first APE QSO on 20M QRP (10 Watts) and my last APE QSO on 40M at 110 Watts.
- APE Summary:
 - The weather was GREAT.
 - The QSO's were FUN.
 - Once I got PSK working, it all worked.
 - It was great having a co-APE, even if Fred didn't work the radio, he was there for the fellowship, the "spare parts", and as a co-Campmaster.
 - The radio "test".
 - The food. Camp food is always good. "There is no cholesterol in the woods."
- Next TIME:
 - APE again – more bands.
 - I did try 30m – no activity.
 - The 10M antenna on the 4x4 did not have a good match?
 - Mouse rather than touch pad on laptop.
 - Small desk lamp for early morning. Thanks Fred. (he went back to sleep)
To be able to see the front controls on the KX3.
- Nice:
 - The Powerwerx.com SS-30DV power supply worked like a champ.
 - The Hardened Power Systems USB Multi-Tap provided 12V DC to USB 3A provided power to the USB fan on the KXPA100 amp and to the USB LED lamp used in the morning so Fred could go back to sleep and I did NOT need the overhead lights to be on.
 - Autek Research Rx Vector Analyzer VA1 – very helpful setting up the antenna loading coil - band taps.. VNA in the future?
 - Fldigi simple but effective logging program. I can tell when I have worked a station before.
 - The KX3-KXPA100-FAN combo will run 110 Watts "key down" with a good fan.
 - Internet
 - A/C
- Backup Items:
 - WB3LGC 20Ahr LiFePO4 13+ Volt battery system with 25 Watt solar panel.
 - WB3LGC 60Ahr LiFePO4 13+ Volt battery system with a REDARC DC-DC 25A charger (isolated charging while driving).
 - Run the Dometic CFX50W fridge-freezer that stayed in the 4x4.
 - More Pilot G2 pens...
 - A copy of my medical records, just in case. Fred knew where they were.
 - The buildings also have AED's (automated external defibrillators).

Sunday – 2:30pm

- We locked up the camp buildings, Heading Home
- RT-1 is bumper to bumper – this is the 65MPH toll road and we were doing 40MPH.

- Sunday beach traffic – we normally leave camp by 11am...
- Most do more than 65 ... there a few times when they could.
- I might have done just as well on RT-13 (free).
- I was home by 4pm, in time to go to church.
- My Support Staff, YL KB3FMT, made a great dinner and the “kids” (KB3LUF & KB3MEI) dropped by to partake in dinner, too.
 - It would be nice if the kids would be more “radio active”.
- Ice Cream “Sunday”
- BED

NR3I APE LOG - Akridge Scout Reservation - BSA, Dover/Camden, DE FM29fd

DATE_ON	ZULU	CALL	NAME	FREQ	MODE	RSTX	RSTR
20230818	223700	KC3FL	John	14.071180	PSK31	599	599
20230818	224600	N7WE		14.071180	PSK31	599	599
20230819	005500	UR4MLS		14.072000	PSK31	599	599
20230819	011400	KA0EGE		14.070805	PSK31	599	599
20230819	012500	VA1CM		14.070804	PSK31	599	599
20230819	122000	KC9UR		14.071480	PSK31	599	599
20230819	144600	W1VSV	Dave	14.071135	PSK31	599	599
20230819	150100	KA4UPI	Mark	14.071138	PSK31	599	599
20230819	152400	WA5AMM		14.071699	PSK31	599	599
20230819	154100	WO9B		14.071691	PSK31	599	599
20230819	160700	WA7YDM	Jay	14.071201	PSK31	599	579
20230819	165600	AB9CA	Dave	14.071704	PSK31	599	599
20230819	192500	VY2PLH	Bernie	14.071890	PSK31	599	599
20230819	193200	N5SLY	Lee	14.071385	PSK31	599	599
20230819	195200	DG1DPN	Rolani	14.071274	PSK31	599	599
20230819	204400	AA9UF		14.070998	PSK31	599	599
20230819	221600	KC9UR		7.072080	PSK31	599	599
20230819	222600	KB9ZDD	Mike	7.071397	PSK31	599	599
20230819	225100	W3BUG	John	7.071130	PSK31	599	599
20230819	231800	VA3TPS	Steve	7.071004	PSK31	599	599
20230819	233000	W3HF	Steve	7.070999	PSK31	599	599
20230820	002100	N5SLY	Lee	7.070991	PSK31	599	599
20230820	002900	KO4CVU		7.071868	PSK31	569	599
20230820	003400	K4VBR	Richie	7.071279	PSK31	599	599
20230820	004900	KG0LH	Bruce	7.071259	PSK31	599	599
20230820	010100	KG4Q	Larry	7.071239	PSK31	599	599
20230820	102600	VY2PLH	Bernie	7.071498	PSK31	599	599
20230820	115731	KC9UR		7.071005	PSK31	599	599
20230820	125001	KC4LZN		7.071503	PSK31	599	599
20230820	125637	N7WE		7.070699	PSK31	599	599
20230820	130236	W8VYM	John	7.070699	PSK31	599	599
20230820	131244	W4UOC	Tom	7.070699	PSK31	599	599
20230820	131723	KC3FL	John	7.070699	PSK31	599	599

Signed: Stephen M. Shearer NR3I 21-AUG-2023