

# Road to 9BDXCC

“How I earned 8BDXCC”

Christian Bravo - W4ALF





# About Me

- Started hobby in 2016, EXTRA license
- Sat, HF, SOTA, POTA, QRP, Bike and Ped Mobile
- Cwops member and Instructor
- SKCC Senator
- DX Chaser
- Paper/Award Chaser
- Presenting/Writing about Ham Radio

# Awards

- 8BDXCC  
10m/15m/17m/20m/30m/40m/80m/160m –  
[12m 62 confirmed] - Endorsements for DXCC  
Qrp, Digital, CW
- WAC 6 Bands QRZ, WPX 1000 CQ, WAZ CQ, WAE I  
DARC, Worked All Pacific NZART, Canada Award  
RAC, AJD all japan districts JARL, All Africa Award  
SARL, South America QRZ
- Satellite – 28 DX entities, 6m 8 DX confirmed

# Awards Other...

- WAS – 5 Bands: 20m/30m/40m/80m/160m –  
Satellite, Triple Play, Qrp, SKCC
- SOTA Explorer
- VUCC – Satellite [362] and 6m [120]

# Antennas – Hustler 5BTV

- Hustler 5BTV with add ons and 6m/10m/12m/15m/17m/20m/30m/40m/80m and 20ft wire off 80m resonator for 160m.
- 10 bands workable [160m or 80m must be chosen bandwidth for both 80-100khz]
- 23ft ground mounted vertical with 32 radials @20ft each. Located in between trees.
- Vert allows low take off for small lot, especially for low bands where height/horizontal length required for wire antennas.

# Antennas – Cushcraft MA5B

- CushCraft MA5B mini beam 10m thru 20m.
- Rotatable on roof on 4.5 foot tower @ approx 33ft .
- Traps end loaded with Cap hats. 7Ft Boom/17ft elements
- Nice to Have for HF bands. Also loaded on 160m!
- Worked well as a low band receive antenna!

# Antennas – Other...

- Homebrew 80m/160m Mag loop for receive.
- Wire Antennas:
  - 66ft OCF
  - 20/40m trapped dipole
  - End Feds, DX mostly in inverted L config.

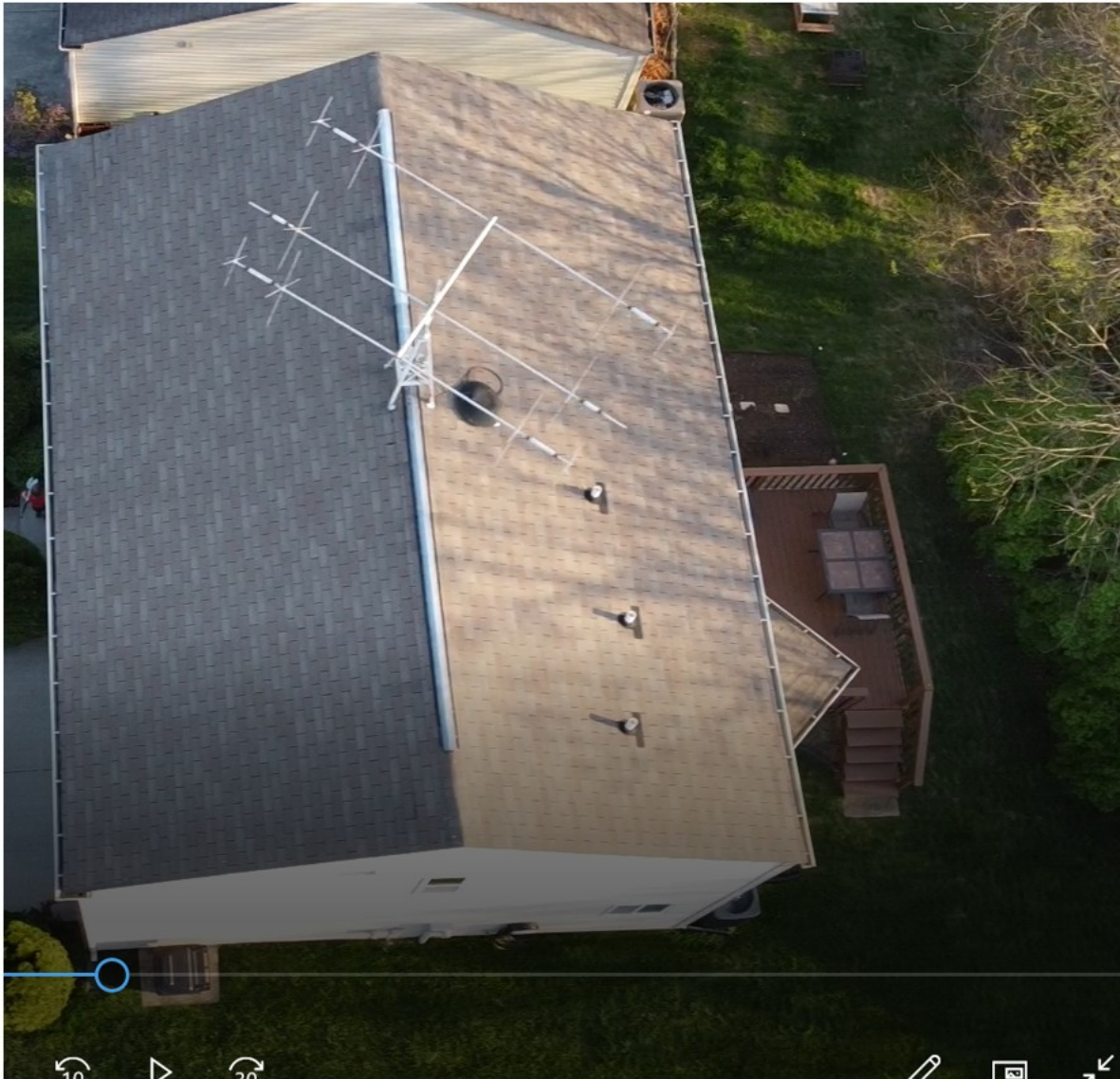
NOTE: wire antennas were used in mostly portable situations.

# Antennas – Pics





# Antennas – Pics





# Equipment

- Elecraft K3
- Elecraft Panadapter [Audio Scope]
- Elecraft KPA500 amplifier. Only used when needed
- Elecraft Kx2 – Portable
- ICOM 9700 - VHF/UHF Satellite
- HRD for Logging software and award tracking

# Choosing the Right Band

- Pick a band to focus on. But take advantage of propagation or contest/event opportunities.
- Low bands during low spot solar cycle condx.
- Learn the Band propagation characteristics!
  - e.g. 160m night time band Nov-april peak Northern Hemisphere
- Be open to different modes CW and FT8
- Use online sites to determine opening opportunities



# Weak Signal Modes

- FT8 Weak Signal mode can be extremely effective at pulling out a signal.
- CW. IF you aren't using CW, you are missing a portion of DX ops.
-

# Use the Right Tools

- Use your Logging software to track your awards status and use to indicate what spots on air are needed for your awards
- VOACAP - <https://www.voacap.com/>
- DxMaps - <https://www.dxmaps.com/spots/mapg.php?Lan=E>
- DxWatch - <https://www.dxwatch.com/>
- Reverse Beacon Network - <http://www.reversebeacon.net/main.php>
- Clublog - <https://clublog.org/propagation.php>

# More Tips

- Use Skeds to fill gaps. Be creative use your current log to find QSL's on other bands. I have used QST mag with contest results to find big stations
- Use Grey line to your advantage. Great time to be on for DX!
- Play with antennas! A/B testing. You can use EBN or WSJTX - FT8 and WSPR to compare signal reports between antennas

<https://www.wsprnet.org/drupal/wsprnet/map>