

Crazy Field Day Story and CQWW SSB 2013 (M/M) on Lampedusa (IG9Y)

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THE IDEA

The first idea of the IG9Y expedition reaches back to November 2012, when Romeo (S52RU) thought about a possible participation of a IG9Y team in CQ WW SSB-2013 from the island of Lampedusa which is interesting because it is counted as a separate country located in zone 33.

THE TEAM

Soon after the idea was posted on our website <http://ig9.yi9p.com/>, the team was formed and the exchange of emails and phone numbers began. You can read all about the preparations on the website mentioned above.

TRAVEL TO LAMPEDUSA



In this article, we would like to describe our journey to Lampedusa. As the story continues the team grows. The journey/adventure starts on the 11th of October; Romeo took a bus to Murska Sobota where the equipment was stationed and where cars were rented (thanks to Vulkanizerstvo Franc Benki ě. A good friend S52ZW picked up Romeo from the bus station and drove him to his home where Romeo

tried delicious Prekmurje cuisine. He spent the night in the Hotel Štrk. On Saturday 12th of October, Romeo joined up with Renato S57UN, Drago S59A and Peter S54W. Gaby HA1YA and his wife Edit joined the team (of now 6 people) one day later and we put Gaby's VHF equipment in the car. That night, Romeo was a guest at Renato's house S57UN. In the early morning, the group (Romeo, Renato, Drago, Peter, Gaby and Edit) gathered at 4.10 a.m. and set off on a long awaited journey to Lampedusa. During the ride, we picked up Silvo S50X in Celje and Slavko S57DX in Vrhnika. The IG9Y team also made a stop in Koper at Romeo's place and then continued towards Italy. Along the way, we had a few stops to take a short break from driving, relax and have a snack that S50X prepared for us. In Calabria, we decided to take a larger nap in our cars. After that, we continued towards Villa San Giovanni, where we took a ferry to Sicily. After a 45 minute long travel, we reached IT9 and picked up Aurelio PC5A from the airport in Catania. We continued towards the location of I19P, where our friend Dale N3BNA was already waiting for us. After lunch we visited a company called NOVAQUADRI, the owner - Antonello IT9EQO - is a friend of Romeo. There we picked up a most valuable package from EAntenna: several aluminum masts, 1 VHF and 4 HF yagi's. Also we loaded an amplifier in our biggest car. After handing over some gifts, making a group picture and shaking hands we continued towards Porto Empedocle in the province of Agrigento.

A horrible road led us to Porto Empedocle, and when we arrived, Romeo immediately rushed to the SIREMAR office and asked for tickets for the overnight ferry to Lampedusa. We were shocked by the news that the ferry would not sail that night because of the bad weather on the open sea. We were all very disappointed because we wanted to reach the destination as soon as possible. After the news had sunk in arrangements were made how to spend the night. Some of the members found a cheap hotel, some slept in the cars.

On Wednesday the situation on the open sea unfortunately did not improve so the ferry would not depart again... Romeo's next move was to find a cheap B&B, so that we could all sleep comfortably and enjoy something cooked from S50X. A Sicilian local was so kind to take him to Margeritha B&B in the center of Porto Empedocle. The owners showed the rooms and with a few negotiations over the price, we finally came to an arrangement. We were allowed to use their kitchen and the Internet too. Slavko S57DX (2nd night!) and Aurelio PC5A were prepared to watch the cars so they slept there. Thank you Slavc!



On Thursday morning – hurray! The ferry finally got the permission to “sail” out of the harbor. We immediately bought the tickets and when the clock struck midnight, we were underway for a 9 hour long journey to Lampedusa.

LANDFALL

Early next morning (Friday the 18th), the ferry stopped at Linosa. Some passengers got out, some got on the ferry. From afar, we saw Lampedusa – our long awaited destination. Around 10 a.m, we arrived to Port Vecchio - Lampedusa and while we were disembarking, Sebastiano and his brother Angelo, the owners of the contest location, were already waiting for us. First, Sebastiano took us to the village and then to the IG9Y contest location: Punto Alaimo (at the North side of Lampedusa). The view left all of us speechless: from west over north to east the edge of the cliffs over the sea was only few (tens of) meters away! Then, our Slavc S57DX started to sing a verse of the popular song “More, more, more, more svud oko nas”.

BUILDING UP THE STATION – FIELD DAY STYLE



After lunch, Drago S59A and Peter S54W started to set up the 4-SQ antennas for 80m, and the others started to assemble the monoband antennas. Gaby HA1YA set up his equipment for 2, 4 and 6 meters.

On the 21st of October, Ken VE3LA, Vlad RC0F and Igor RT4RO arrived on Lampedusa, and the next day also Rob PE1ITR arrived (our next operator on VHF bands). The team was complete on the 23rd, when Don JH5GHM (CQWW CC member) joined us.

Moreover, Romeo had many errands to run during our stay on Lampedusa. He was promised to get an electric generator, but its rated power capacity was far from enough so he, Sebastiano, Luigi IK8HCG and Salvatore Belviso were quite resourceful and solved the problem. They found a new generator rated at 66kVA, rented it from Tuesday till Monday and tested it, if it was appropriate for M/M operation. With Sebastiano's help, we also got a good Internet connection going by making a point to point link over about 2 km.



The following days passed by working from sunrise till way after sunset. Every day the routine was similar: breakfast at 06:30h (still dark), get into your working clothes, drive (or walk) to the contest location (witness a spectacular sunrise) and spend the rest of the day getting all the outside hardware in the air. This was done in small teams to maximize efficiency. After 7 days working non-stop from morning to well after dark the following antennas were ready to be used in the contest:

160M: dipole at cliff (about 70mtr above the sea) and 400 meter beverage towards North America

80M: 4-square and dipole, 2 reversible beverages 170 meter long NW-SE and NE-SW

40M: 4-square and dipole

20M: two 4 EL OWA Yagi's by EAntenna, one on a rotor the other rotatable by (hand) wire

15M: two 4 EL LFA Yagi's by EAntenna, both rotatable by (hand) wire because the rotor was broken...

10M: one 4 EL Yagi's by PKW (lent from II9P) on a rotor and one 3 EL delta loop beam (lent from II9P) rotatable by (hand) wire



The Thursday afternoon/evening before the contest was spent to start setting up all six stations inside. The list with transceivers: FT1000D (160M), FT1000MP (80M), FT2000 (40M), FT1000MP (20M), K3 (15M), TS850 (15M). Each station had an amplifier except 10 & 160, they shared one.

Friday morning more setting up was done and in the afternoon the team took a short break by visiting Rabbits beach. It was only during the last hours before the contest on Friday evening when we were able to test all stations simultaneously. It turned out 80M was making a lot of QRM on 160M, but there was no time to cure this problem.

One hour before the contest we had a short meeting to make band teams:

160m Renato S57UN , Dale N3BNA
80m Drago S59A , Gaby HA1YA
40m Romeo S52RU , Igor RT4RO
20m Slavko S57DX , Peter S54W, Silvo S50X
15m Aurelio PC5A , Vlad RC0F
10m Don JH5GHM , Ken VE3LA
VE3LA + JH5GHM on 10M, RC0F + PC5A on 15M,
S57DX + S54W on 20M, S52RU + RT4RO on 40M,
S59A + HA1YA on 80M, S57UN + N3BNA on 160M
and S50X to help out on any band. The group then split into teams to decide who would start.





At 00:00UTC the battle began. 10M was very quiet. First station worked there was our neighbour in Sicily I19P, in the next hour only D4C made it into the log. 10M opened again between 5 and 6 UTC. A similar story on 15M. First station logged was a nice multiplier ZD8O. This station turned out to be the last surprise of the contest, 20 minutes before the end it was a double mult on 80M. Around 4UTC JA5FDJ was loud and clear via long path but did not hear us... also a number of stations from South America were loud on 15M during the following hours but did not hear us; probably they had their beams to NA. 20M started slow but after one hour the rate picked

up and Slavo got some nice runs going toward NA. The hour between 2 and 3 UTC was the best of the first night: 150Q's. 40M started with hourly rates <100. Igor racked up 130 Q's between 3 and 4 UTC. 80M started strong with hourly rates ~150 during the first 4 hours. The 4-square proved its capabilities. 160M suffered a lot from QRM caused by 80M. It was difficult to run rates on this band also because we were limited to a *10kHz* bandwidth. Only very strong stations were copied despite the beverage.

After 24 hours of contest we reached a score of 19.6M points, with 8.4M QSO's. The second half is always slower in terms of QSO rates but per QSO you get more points. It seemed feasible to reach 40M if things continued like the first half. On the second day less QSO's were made. On most bands worked 35 to 40% less QSO's on the 2nd day there were two exceptions, 10M did only 25% less than day1 but 20M however did only 50% of day1. At the end of the contest when the dust settled and all bands were dead empty the score had reached 36.7M, 13.5k QSOs and 912 mults. WHAW. Everyone was *very* pleased with this first result. At that time we were at the 5th place world-wide. None of our competitors had a comparable field day style station like we did which made us feel even more proud and gave us a very positive drive to try this again next year.



Analyses show that 20M and 10M were the bread and butter bands (only 10M got 40 zones). 40M was more than 1000 QSOs behind 20M which was disappointing, despite a decent antenna system (4-square). It was

just impossible to keep a clear frequency and running rates with our current setup. Also we missed quite a few multipliers because we didn't have a multiplier station or 2 stations per band, like most of our competitors.

Here's a breakdown:

Band	QSOs	Pts	ZN	Cty
1.8	405	1203	12	65
3.5	1631	4864	28	98
7	2317	6918	32	110
14	3701	11035	39	160
21	2394	7118	39	137
28	3057	9087	40	152
Total	13505	40225	190	722

Score : 36,685,200

% of QSO's across bands and continents

Band	Total	EU	AS	AF	OC	SA	NA
1.8	3	92	3	1	0	0	3
3.5	12	80	2	1	0	0	16
7	17	78	7	1	0	1	14
14	27	63	6	1	2	2	26
21	18	65	6	1	1	3	23
28	23	48	13	1	1	5	32
Total all Bands	100	66	7	1	1	2	23

Worked stations breakdown:

6 bands	5 bands	4 bands	3 bands	2 bands	1 band	UNIQUE CALLS
144	303	412	666	1194	5109	7828

Band with highest hourly rate: 10M with 235Qs between 15 and 16 UTC on the first day

The split of Qs in percentage over continents:

Band	Total	EU	AS	AF	OC	SA	NA
1.8	3	92	3	1	0	0	3
3.5	12	80	2	1	0	0	16
7	17	78	7	1	0	1	14
14	27	63	6	1	2	2	26
21	18	65	6	1	1	3	23
28	23	48	13	1	1	5	32
Total all Bands	100	66	7	1	1	2	23

In summary it was an awesome experience for each and every one of us.

TAKING DOWN AND PACKING UP

At midnight, CQWW SSB 2013 Contest ended. The whole team was satisfied with the result, if we take in consideration that we transferred the whole equipment from Slovenia and set it up in 6 days. We opened Radgonska Penina and took a group photo. Soon, Don JH5GHM and Dale N3BNA said goodbye, and in the afternoon, Ken VE3LA left the island too. Meanwhile the rest of the team was working hard to take the entire station down pack all gear into the two cars and leave the club spotless.

On Tuesday, others took a day off, enjoyed the city, shopped and bathed in the sea. Aurelio PC5A and Romeo S52RU took care of some expenses and on Wednesday, we were ready to depart. Around 11 a.m., we boarded the ferry Laurana Siremar. Goodbye Lampedusa, see you in 2014.

On the ferry, the team reminisced about our adventures on Lampedusa. We were satisfied with the work done. Around 9 p.m., we arrived on Sicily. We said goodbye to Igor RT4RO, Aurelio PC5A and Luigi IK8HCG, who chose stay overnight in a B&B and continued their journey on the next day. The rest of the team travelled to Ragusa where we returned the borrowed equipment and then continued towards Mesinna, where we boarded a ferry to Italy. We arrived safe and sound in Slovenia.

A few personal words from **Romeo S52RU**:

*I would like to thank my team IG9Y 2013 for their work and effort during the expedition, all sponsors and donors that are mentioned on the website and to our major sponsor **Boyko Iliev LZ1QN**, who unfortunately did not participate in expedition due to health reasons. You are kindly invited on the expedition in 2014.*

I also want to express thanks to radio amateurs around the world for all contacts. The gained experience will ease the planning of the next expedition and we are looking forward to our new adventure in 2014.

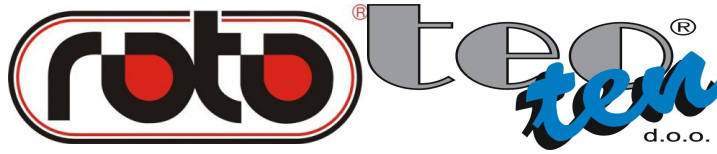
On behalf of the IG9Y team 2013

Romeo Rabic - IG9Y team leader

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