

YOUR FIRST DXPEDITION, WHAT TO EXPECT



DX ACADEMY
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By N1DG, Don Greenbaum

DX Academy



Don Greenbaum, N1DG, has been licensed since 1962 when at age 11 he received the call WN2DND. He achieved DXCC before going to college and a 10 year ham hiatus for college, career, and starting a family. In 1978 he returned to the bands, upgraded to Extra class and continued his love of DXing and contesting. Today Don has worked all entities on mixed modes, and only needs P5 on CW. His mixed country total stands at 358 and he has DXCC on 9 bands and 5BWAZ. His Challenge total is 3,002.



Don has been on several major DXpeditions including VP8ORK, K4M and A52A. He has also operated as A61AD, A51DG, A73A, and /KH9, /VP9, /VS6, /BV2, /4X and /9V.

In 1995 he authored the web pages of VK0IR and posted online logs daily there that were received via ham radio satellites. It was the first major DXpedition utilizing online logs and ushered in a new era for DXers. Since then he has been webmaster for over 50 dxpeditons.

In 2005 Don was honored at Dayton by CQ Magazine by being inducted into the CQ DX Hall of Fame.

In 2009 Don was one of the founding members of the CW Operators' Club (member number 2). He is also Treasurer of the Northern California DX Foundation.

Don's day job is CEO of Al Anabi Racing. He is in charge of 2 NHRA Top Fuel drag teams in the US as well as race teams visiting the Middle East.

Types of DXpeditions

- Single operator, visit a local ham or vacation.
- Fly –in, team.
- Semi-rare requiring a charter flight or vessel.
- Very rare, usually in the Antarctic.

Where should you go?

- Your experience, health and skill sets.
- Your budget.
- Your job.
- Your family.
- The team.
- The entity.

Experience Considerations to determine where to go

- Are you a seasoned contester? Mult-op experience for social skills?
- Have you a lot of years of chasing DX under your belt?
- Other skills needed on some trips include radio maintenance, antenna erection, computer and/or generator troubleshooting.
- Can you lug heavy equipment up a mountain?
- Language skills?

Budget Considerations

- Team fees range from 58% to 66% of the total budget. A team DXpedition to a non rare flyin entity costs around \$50,000 while Antarctic type operations could run as high as \$500,000. Can your budget afford a \$20,000?
- These costs exclude personal survival items and travel to departure points.
- Will a month away mean a period of non wages?

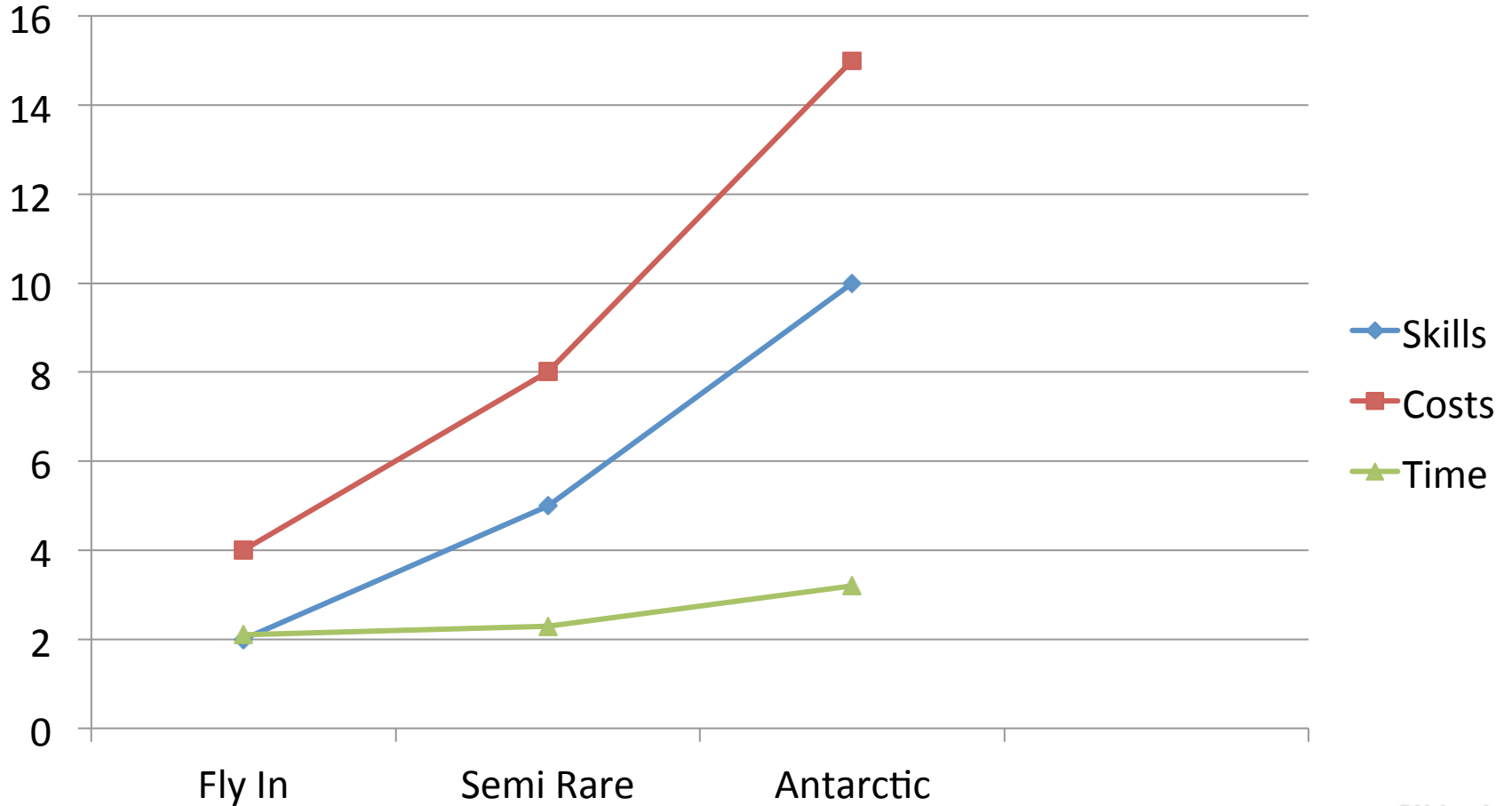
Job Considerations

- Flyin category expeditions can take 2 weeks.
- Semi rare islands and Antarctic trips require 4 to 5 weeks of your time (excluding preparatory sessions).
- Weather and transit delays are always a possibility.
- How understanding is your boss?

Family Considerations

- Spousal support.
- Family calendar, will you miss the 50th anniversary or birth of your grandchild?
- Is your estate plan up to date?

Location Matrix



Team Considerations

- More than friends, business partners.
- Past expeditions.
- Do you know most of them?
- What others are saying about them and their past operations.
- Is it an ethical group.
- Is it a fun group?

Typical Jobs of teammates

- Vessel chartering.
- Radios, antennas, computers, plan practice sessions.
- Website and publicity.
- Fundraising.
- Permitting and legal contracts for team.
- Crating and shipping.
- Insurance, medical evaluations.

Typical Goals

- Get there and back safely.
- Give as many as possible an all time new one.
- Concentrate on bands in most need.
- Make the DXpedition enjoyable to those trying to work you by keeping the website informative with online logs, news and pictures.
- Return still friends.

Before you go

- Visas, permissions.
- Vaccinations and evac medical insurance.
- Procure items specific to the location (sunscreen, DET, subzero clothing).
- Comm plan to those at home (sat phone, email lists, emergency numbers of team).
- Practice putting together or assembling items you are responsible for once getting there.

Misc. items

- Research the country you are visiting to take the most cultural advantage of your trip.
- Know propagation from where you are to major areas of need. Most teams run propagation charts. Know them before leaving.
- Practice your CW skills ie. MorseRunner. Know how to run RTTY. Phone: buy ear plugs. If you've never been the DX be prepared for something you've never experienced.
- Bring a good and open attitude so you learn from the more experienced members of the team. Remember, this is your first trip. Others have done this and can help your experience be a pleasant and productive one.

Pre and post trip camaraderie



How big a boat do we need?



How big a boat? Be prepared



Be in good physical good shape



Know your job in advance



Preassemble what you can



Team size dictates certain antennas



Prepare for beauty



Some places are
rougher than others!







Take lots of pictures



Greetings from Antarctica



The QSL Shot!

Oh the sights you will see



Lastly, don't forget to thank your supporters

