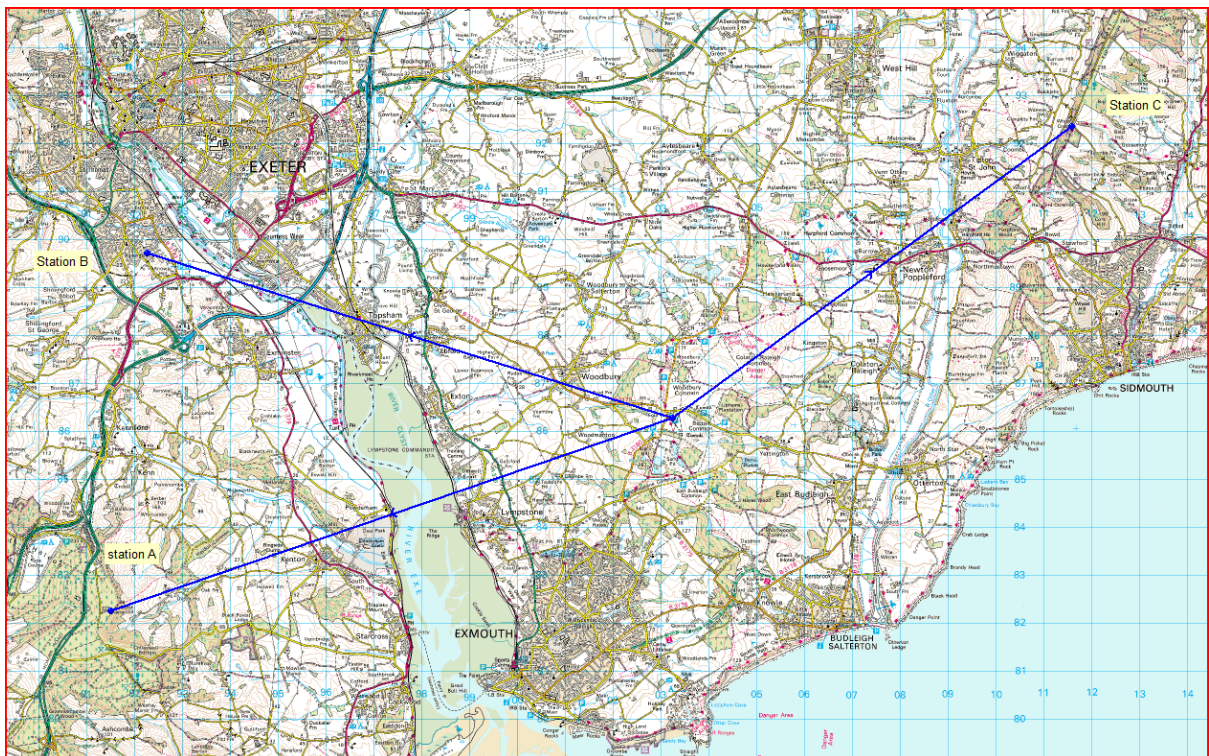


Topband DF Final 2015

The 2015 TopBand Direction Finding Final was held on the Exeter and Sidmouth map on 27th September.

The weather had been fine, bright and calm for several days which allowed erection of the antenna systems to be completed with no real issues. Friday saw all three station antennas erected and Saturday was used to ensure signals arrived at the start. Sunday was a repeat of the previous two days being fine and sunny.

The sites



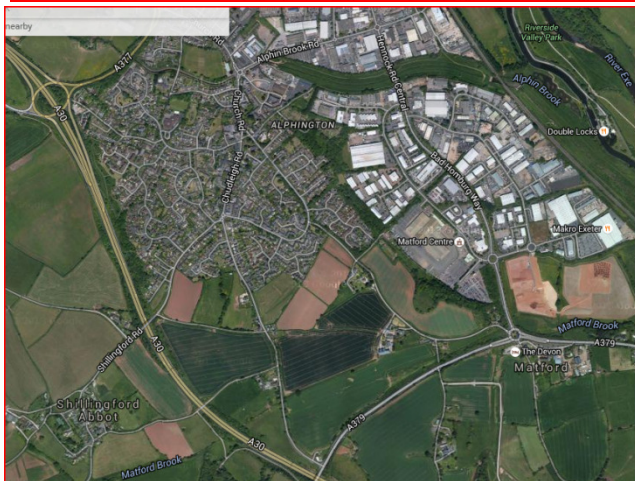
From the start at Woodbury Common the three sites were arranged clockwise A, B and C on 1920, 1940 and 1960kHz.

Station A was at Haldon Hill, hidden not too far from the road in some dense evergreen plantation. A lot of wire was used in the hopes of confusing the DF hunters.



x marks the Tx position

Station B was hidden on the outskirts of Exeter in a suburb called Alphington. No footpaths or greenery was obvious on the map:-

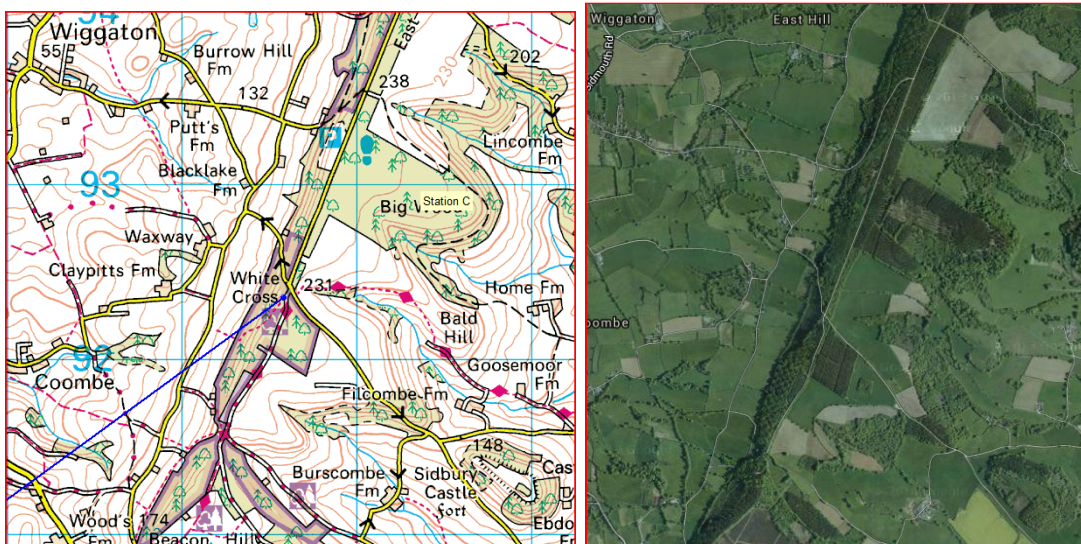


But on the satellite view a broad avenue of green cover is seen. Well done the Matthew for finding this site. There were several footpath access point to this green area and it is used by many dog walkers as we found when putting up the

antenna. The aerial shot below shows the antenna – using the fence to carry signal to the far end wire. Matt was in a green “sniper suit” lying under a small bush at the X point.



Station C was sited on the top of a long ridge at White Cross, 4km North of Sidmouth with beautiful views from its high position :-





The ridge was covered in thick vegetation with plenty of trees to hold up the antenna system. Several dummy quarter wave, earth staked antennas criss-crossed the main long wire radiating element.

The event

Panic was unfortunately setting in for station A operator as it got closer to 12:50 first transmission as he could not find the antenna feed point in the Haldon forest site despite being on site for over an hour. We had left an empty reel as a marker and Dick had made an arrow pointing to the Tx hide on the path but the site proved too good – even for the Tx operator.

The start was therefore in receipt of two signals, B and C with station A approximate bearings and distance being given out for station A and the cause of the quiet station. Dick was mortified and apologised to all at the tea.

Competitors then left to try out their luck.

With the problem at Tx A, I expected more competitors to go for Tx C in the East, but only about half the teams plumped for that strategy. It still seemed to be difficult to access the site as competitors took some time coming on site C.

Once there, the power of numbers meant that even the complicated antenna and thick cover could not keep out the determined DF competitor and once one was in other keen eyed teams soon found the way in and were off to the next site.

Matt's site in Alphington, Tx B, was to prove too much for some as it gave no easy clues. Some got caught under nearby power lines and some gave up on it but thankfully most persevered and found

Matt under a bush far too small to hide such a big lad – but it did. Many walked past several times before finally getting clocked in.

Then Station A came under attack. Signals came on at about 1:40 when Dick finally found the hide and the transmitter. This site seemed to give most hunters the biggest trouble as the antenna was long and had many false tee ins and earth stakes (as there were at station A) and the zig zag feed to where Dick was also seemed to give as much grief to competitors as it had to Dick.

The Tea was held at the Brewers Fayre Pub, Honiton Road, Exeter and we heard how the winner Graham won it and how Tim just missed out.

Well done to Graham!

Position	Competitor	Finish	Time A	Time B	Time C
1	Graham Jones	15:52:44	15:52:44	15:19:47	14:03:39
2	Tim Parker	15:52:51	15:52:51	15:02:41	14:02:56
3	Alan Simmons	15:53:27	15:53:27	15:27:30	14:09:38
4	Philip Cunningham	16:25:18	16:25:18	15:17:54	14:09:02
5	Colin Merry	15:52:09	15:52:09	-	14:09:13
6	Graham Phillips	15:52:59	15:52:59	15:18:15	-
7	Gary Parker	15:53:09	15:53:09	14:42:47	-
8	Roy Emeny	16:19:39	-	16:19:39	14:56:53
9	Geoffrey Foster	16:24:39	-	16:24:39	14:03:31
10	Peter Lisle	16:25:47	-	15:18:01	16:25:47
11	Chris Plummer	16:25:50	16:25:50	15:20:54	-
12	Dave Wyatt	16:25:58	16:25:58	15:23:21	-
13	John Mullins	16:27:14	16:27:14	15:27:15	-
14	Bill Pechey	15:06:44	-	-	15:06:44