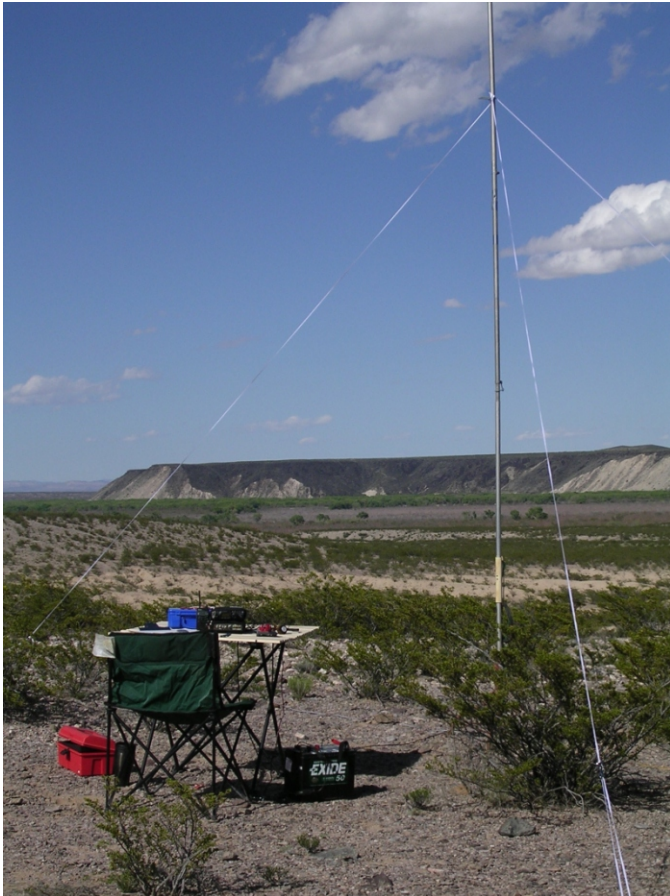


QRP To The Field — 2004

Theme: "Battle Stations"

The NA5N QRPTTF Station at Fort Craig, New Mexico and overlooking the Valverde Battlefield – Civil War Battle February 21, 1862

(See <http://www.zianet.com/qrp> for rules, scores, other station photos, etc.)



QRPTTF Battle Station overlooking the Valverde Civil War battlefield. QTH is on the west side of the Rio Grande looking east-north-east. Fort Craig is about one mile away, to the right of the photo but out of view. Jan NØQT operated from Ft. Craig.



I used my homebrew portable vertical antenna, FT-817, modified Z-11 tuner and an old car battery to work QRPTTF 2004 Battle Stations, 5W.

QRPTTF Battle Stations from the Valverde Civil War Battlefield

The location for the NA5N/NØQT 2004 QRPTTF is about 25 miles south of Socorro, New Mexico on the Rio Grande and near I-25. In both photos, "Black Mesa" (Mesa del Contradero) is seen in the background. It is a fairly new volcanic outcropping of very black lava. On February 21, 1862, about 2,000 Confederates (Texas Mounted Volunteers under Gen. Sibley) and 2,000 Union soldiers from Fort Craig, under Col. Canby, had a day long battle

along the north side of Black Mesa (left side in photos). The area of green trees along the front of the mesa and to the north is known as Valverde (the Green Valley), and hence the name of the battle. This is where the Rio Grande runs around the mesa. Each army suffered about 10% losses. Fort Craig is out of view in these photos, but to the right about a mile away, where Jan NØQT operated her station. Fort Craig served to protect travel along the El Camino Real and Jornada del Muerto (Journey of Death) trails from 1854–1887 and one of the largest forts in the southwest. The 1968 (?) movie "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" was loosely based on this Civil War battle, and the Army Fort where Blondie and Tuco were taken prison is clearly identified as Ft. Craig in the movie. There was no bridge across the Rio Grande to blow up in the real battle, however.

Jan and I had fun, although a couple of problems kept us from working much of the contest. Jan's FT-100 developed some field problem, giving her a distinctive chirp. The most amazing thing to me is after participating in every QRPTTF since it's inception, this was the first one with NO WIND! A nice warm, very calm day. The serenity of this site was enjoyable. We did not see one car or another human being all day!