

# HF Contesting 101: The Very Basics



Silvercreek Amateur Radio Association June 2019 Meeting

**AB8OU**

# HF Contesting 101: The Very Basics

## RADIO SPORT



Silvercreek Amateur Radio Association June 2019 Meeting

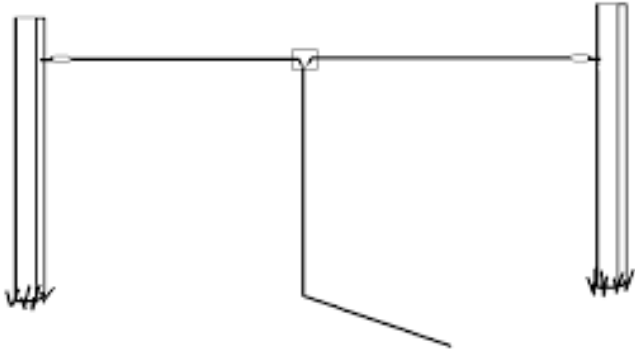
**AB8OU**

# About AB8OU

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- Allan “Zeke” “AL” Zadiraka
- Originally licensed as KN3MCP in 1960
- Previous calls - K3MCP & WA8VWX
- 40+ years power plant automation & control
- Little operation until 2014 - ARRL Centennial
- First contest - 2014 – ARRL DX Contest, SSB,  
*Field Day is not a contest!*
- Feeder fish in 20+ contests a year
- DXCC, WAS, WAC, WPX, WAE, ...

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# Antenna



# Rig

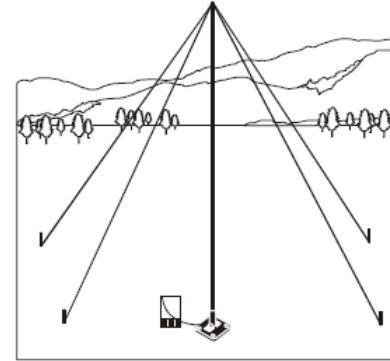
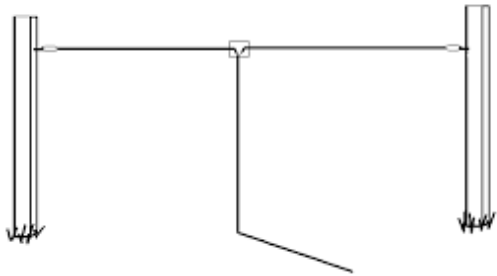
[illegible]

# Log Sheet

CALL		BAND		FREQUENCY		Time for full set of each series relative to the beginning of one third cycle for the next cycle. If you use a different starting value please note																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
1	14	18	22	26	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86	90	94	98	102	106	110	114	118	122	126	130	134	138	142	146	150	154	158	162	166	170	174	178	182	186	190	194	198	202	206	210	214	218	222	226	230	234	238	242	246	250	254	258	262	266	270	274	278	282	286	290	294	298	302	306	310	314	318	322	326	330	334	338	342	346	350	354	358	362	366	370	374	378	382	386	390	394	398	402	406	410	414	418	422	426	430	434	438	442	446	450	454	458	462	466	470	474	478	482	486	490	494	498	502	506	510	514	518	522	526	530	534	538	542	546	550	554	558	562	566	570	574	578	582	586	590	594	598	602	606	610	614	618	622	626	630	634	638	642	646	650	654	658	662	666	670	674	678	682	686	690	694	698	702	706	710	714	718	722	726	730	734	738	742	746	750	754	758	762	766	770	774	778	782	786	790	794	798	802	806	810	814	818	822	826	830	834	838	842	846	850	854	858	862	866	870	874	878	882	886	890	894	898	902	906	910	914	918	922	926	930	934	938	942	946	950	954	958	962	966	970	974	978	982	986	990	994	998	1002	1006	1010	1014	1018	1022	1026	1030	1034	1038	1042	1046	1050	1054	1058	1062	1066	1070	1074	1078	1082	1086	1090	1094	1098	1102	1106	1110	1114	1118	1122	1126	1130	1134	1138	1142	1146	1150	1154	1158	1162	1166	1170	1174	1178	1182	1186	1190	1194	1198	1202	1206	1210	1214	1218	1222	1226	1230	1234	1238	1242	1246	1250	1254	1258	1262	1266	1270	1274	1278	1282	1286	1290	1294	1298	1302	1306	1310	1314	1318	1322	1326	1330	1334	1338	1342	1346	1350	1354	1358	1362	1366	1370	1374	1378	1382	1386	1390	1394	1398	1402	1406	1410	1414	1418	1422	1426	1430	1434	1438	1442	1446	1450	1454	1458	1462	1466	1470	1474	1478	1482	1486	1490	1494	1498	1502	1506	1510	1514	1518	1522	1526	1530	1534	1538	1542	1546	1550	1554	1558	1562	1566	1570	1574	1578	1582	1586	1590	1594	1598	1602	1606	1610	1614	1618	1622	1626	1630	1634	1638	1642	1646	1650	1654	1658	1662	1666	1670	1674	1678	1682	1686	1690	1694	1698	1702	1706	1710	1714	

# Dup Sheet

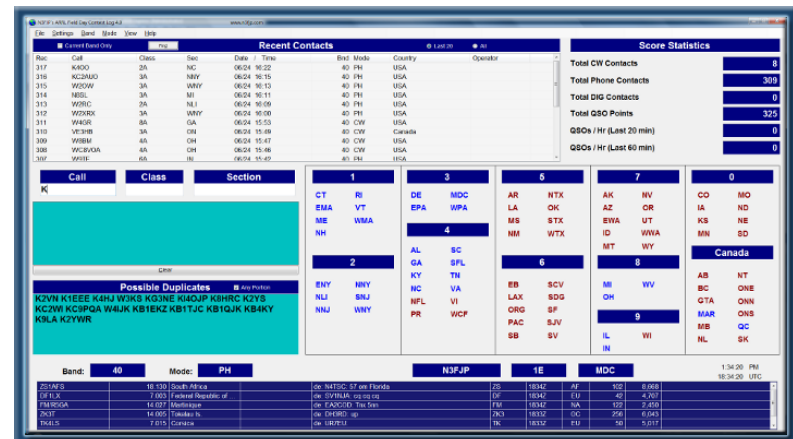
# What you need – Today



Antennas



21st Century Rig



Logging Software

# Contest Logs

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- Cabrillo format - standard for electronic logs
- Paper logs increasingly not accepted
- Contest logging software will create Cabrillo file with a click
- Web forms available to manually enter log data to produce a Cabrillo file
- File name - <your call>.log
- Submit through contest web form (or email)
- File checking and scoring automated
- Send in your log before you forget!

# Cabrillo File - ab8ou.log

START-OF-LOG: 2.0

ARRL-SECTION: OH

CALLSIGN: AB8OU

CLUB: Mad River Radio Club

CONTEST: STEW-PERRY

CATEGORY: SINGLE-OP 160M LOW CW

CLAIMED-SCORE: 468

OPERATORS: AB8OU

NAME: Allan Zadiraka

ADDRESS: 4110 State Rd

ADDRESS: Akron, OH 44319

ADDRESS: UNITED STATES

CREATED-BY: N1MM Logger+ 1.0.7403.0

QSO: 1819 CW 2018-12-29 2101 AB8OU	599 EN90 N8EA	599 EN82
QSO: 1816 CW 2018-12-29 2103 AB8OU	599 EN90 K1GQ	599 FN43
QSO: 1813 CW 2018-12-29 2104 AB8OU	599 EN90 AB3CX	599 FN22
QSO: 1811 CW 2018-12-29 2108 AB8OU	599 EN90 W4NA	599 FM19
QSO: 1816 CW 2018-12-29 2109 AB8OU	599 EN90 K3WW	599 FN20
QSO: 1819 CW 2018-12-29 2112 AB8OU	599 EN90 N1LN	599 FM05

# Contesting is a game

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- Players
- Rules
- Scores to determine winners
- Strategy



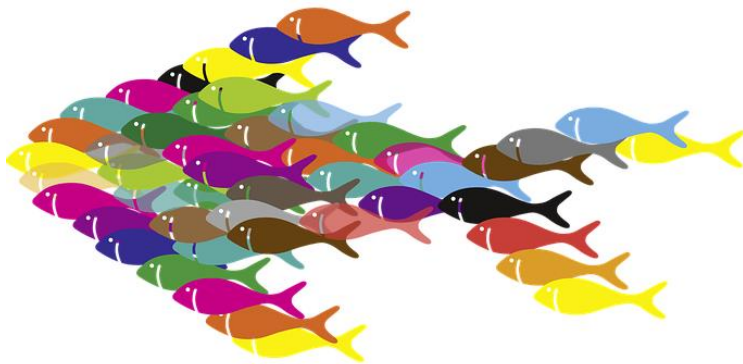
# Players

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- **Competitors** (30-50 World Wide?)
  - Winning records
  - Peer recognition
  - Full time
- **Enthusiasts**
  - Enjoy the challenge
  - Chasing personal goals
  - Use time available
- **Participants**
  - Make contacts
  - Help others
  - Have fun

# Feeder Fish Are Needed

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# Or Else

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# Strategy

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- **Set a goal**
  - Have fun
  - Beat last year's score
  - Win a certificate
  - Set a record
- **Select category**
  - All band or single band?
  - Power - High, Low, QRP?
  - Assisted or unassisted?
- **Know the Contest's Rules**

# Certificates Of Participation





# Certificates Of Participation



# Certificates Of Participation



# Contest EXCHANGE

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- Required exchange is contest specific.
- Penalized if your RECEIVED does not match the other station's SENT.
- Don't leave until you have correctly received the other station's exchange – Ask for FILLS.
- Contest logging software has the fields for the required information in the exchange.
- Don't send more than required information.
- Set up Function Keys in logging program to send the individual parts of the exchange



# RST

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- All Contest RST's are **59** or **599**
- Contest logging software prefills 59(599)
- Be alert, occasionally evil beings will send something else
- Not having correct RST in your log will cost you points.

# NAME

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- **NAME is NOT operator's name.**
- **Cannot change names during a contest!**
- **No requirement to use your real name.**
- **No requirement to use same name in every contest.**
- **Sometimes a number of stations will honor a SK by using their name.**
- **Will see DUDE, BOBO, BEAR, BUBA, etc.**
- **Common spelling & short names are good!**

# SERIAL NUMBER

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- A counter that begins at 1 for the first contest QSO, and increments by 1 for each successive contact.
- Contest logging software will generate your SERIAL NUMBER.
- You have to log the other station's number.
- Some will add leading zeros to low serial numbers.
- Your SERIAL NUMBER should equal your number of contacts.

# GRID SQUARE

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- **Alphanumeric geographical coordinate system, based on the Maidenhead Locator System.**
- **Four characters (or six characters) specifying your location.**
- **Most of us are EN90 or EN91.**

# ITU Zone or CQ Zone

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- **Two different divisions of world.**
- **All stations send their zones in some contests, other contests only DX stations send their zone.**
- **Most of us are ITU Zone 8 and CQ Zone 4.**
- **Logging software provides zones when it can identify zone from call prefix.**

# STATE and ARRL Section

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- 50 states and 80 sections.
- DX stations send their zone or “DX”.
- Ohio (OH) is both state and ARRL section.
- Logging software typically prevents entering invalid but not incorrect state or section abbreviations.

# Counties

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- **Used in State QSO parties.**
- **Have to use correct abbreviations in log.**
- **Logging software typically prevents logging invalid county.**
- **Most SARA members are SUMM, MEDI, or WAYN for Ohio QSO Party.**

# Contest Exchange

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CQ Ohio QSO Party **AB8OU**

**N8CD**

N8CD 59 Summit **SUMM**

59 Wayne **WAYN**

TU CQ OHQP **AB8OU**

**W8TB**

W8TB 59 Summit **SUMM**

59 Medina **MEDI**

TU CQ OHQP **AB8OU**



# Contest Logging Software

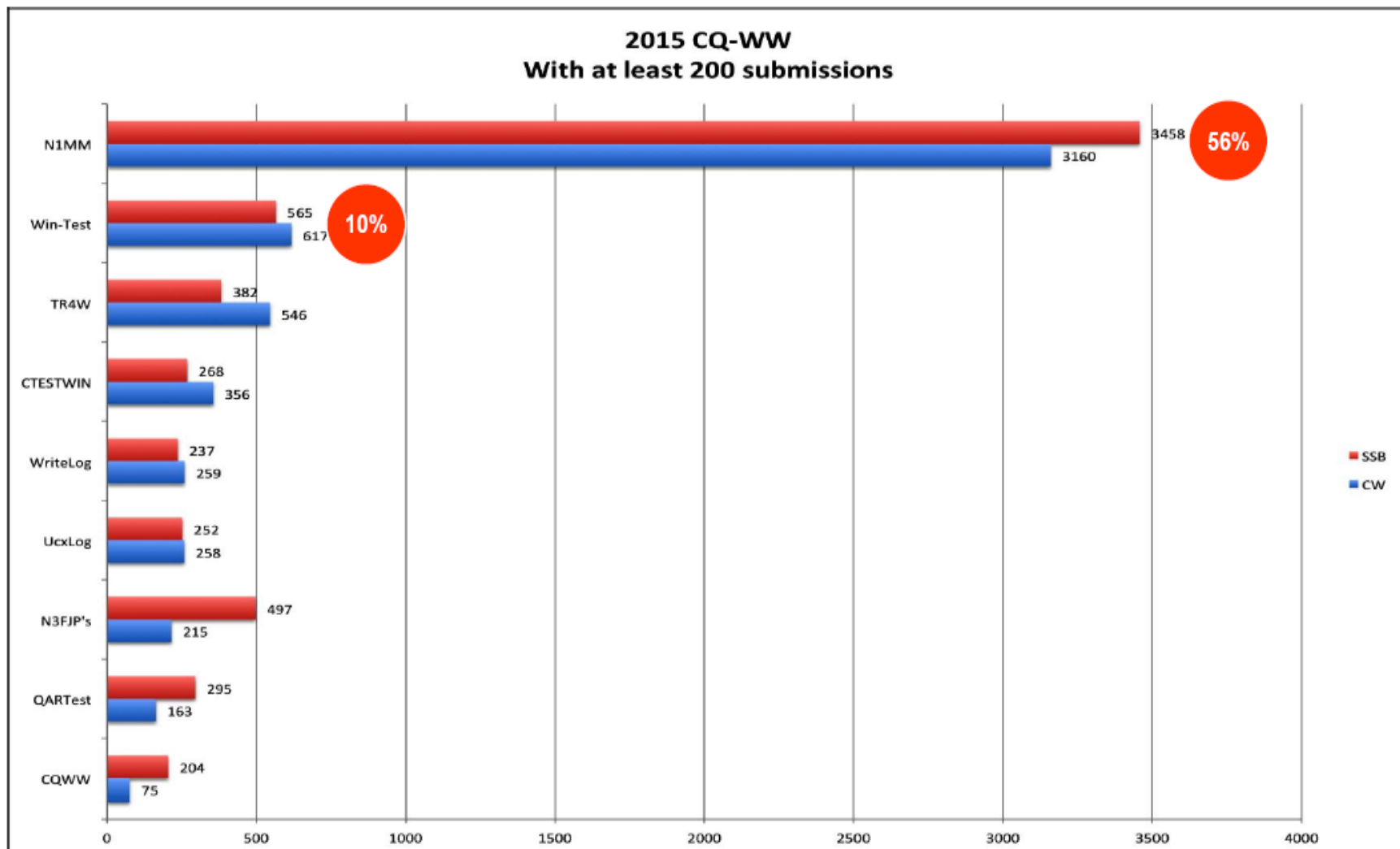


Chart generated by NY4I from CQWW Cabrillo logs

# Contest Logging Software

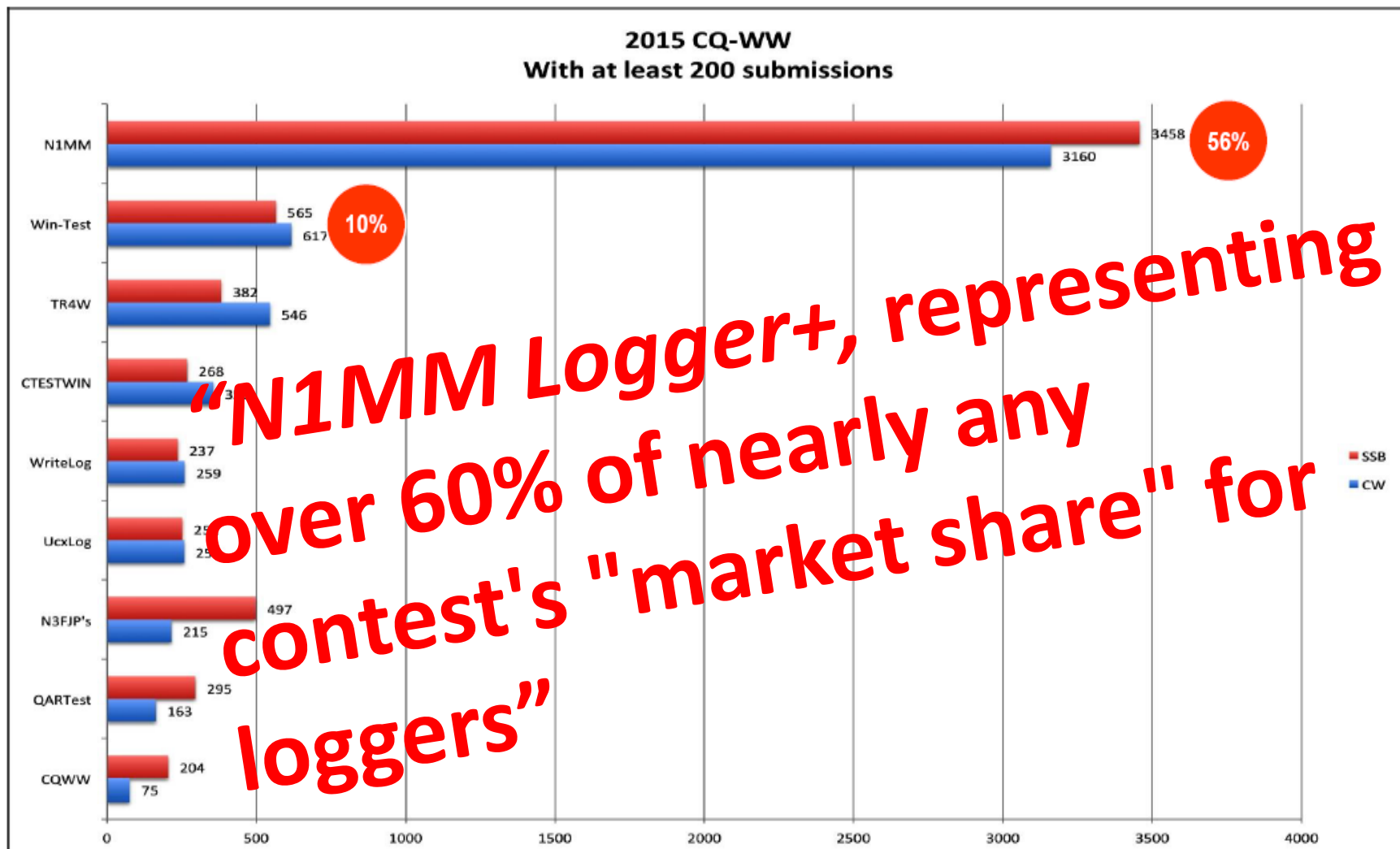
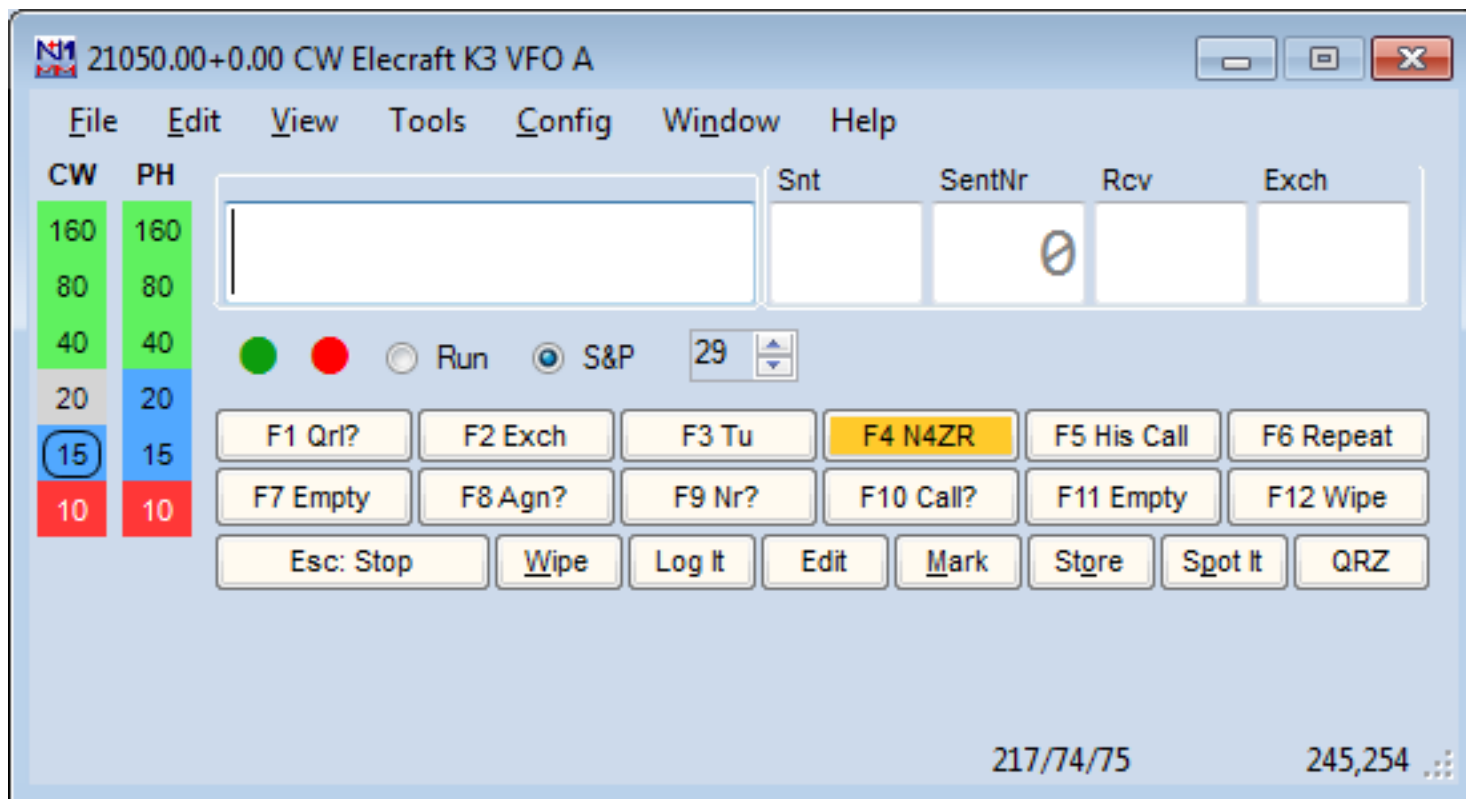


Chart generated by NY4I from CQWW Cabrillo logs

# Call History

- Fills in exchange info from previous contests
- Fills in exchange info from previous contacts

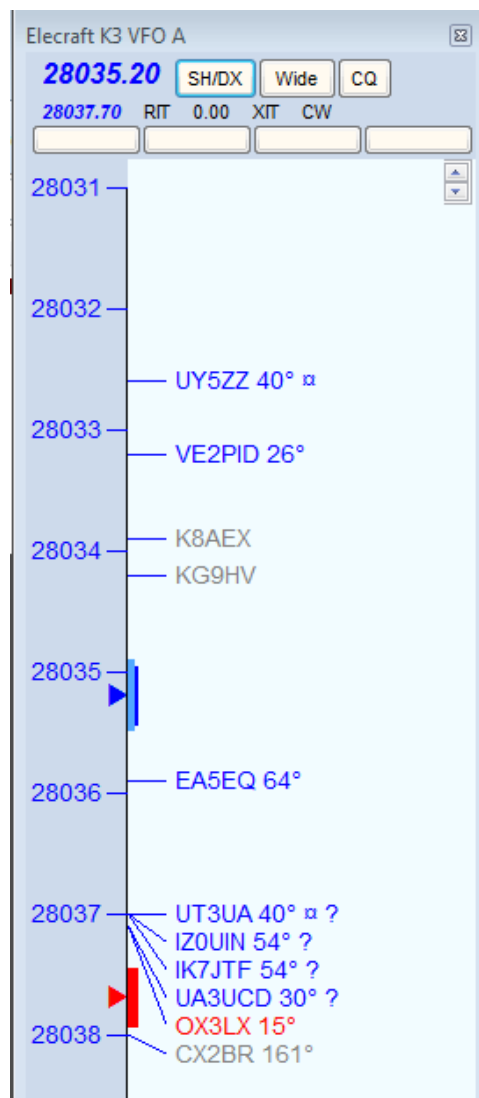


# Super Partial Check

- Calls that have shown up in past contest logs

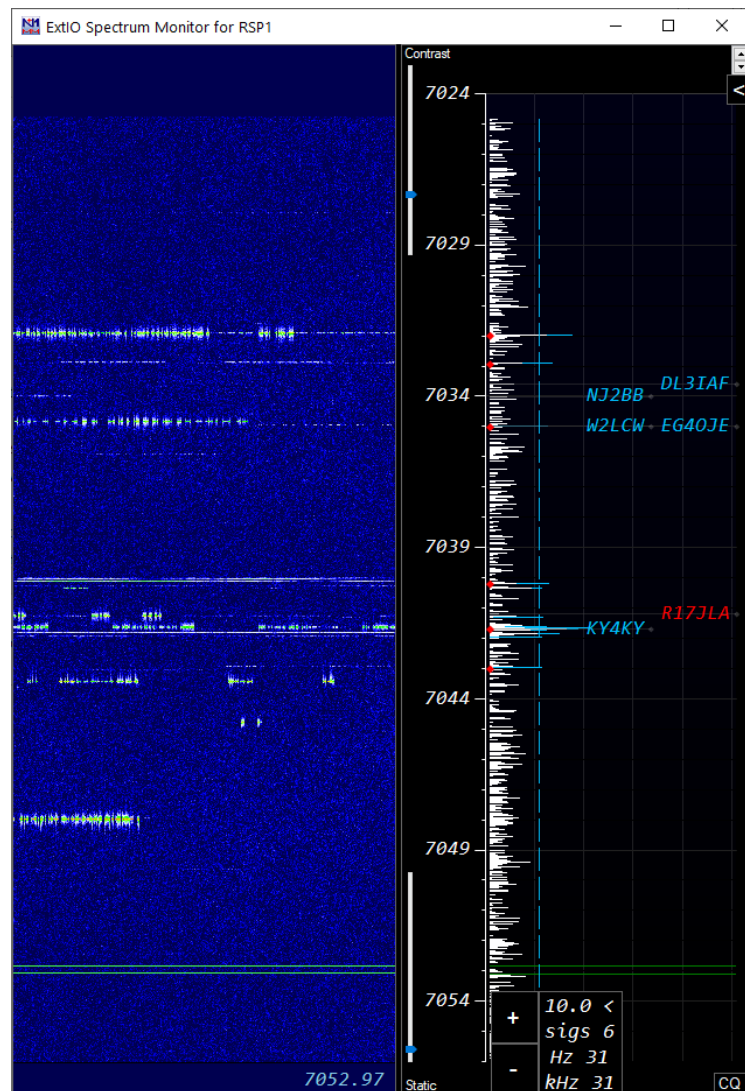
Check Log/Master/Telnet/Call history/Reverse lookup			
YT1A	YT1E		
	YT1ET		
	JT1E		
	YT3E		
	YT1A		
	YT1Q		
	YT1R		
	YT1S		

# Band Map

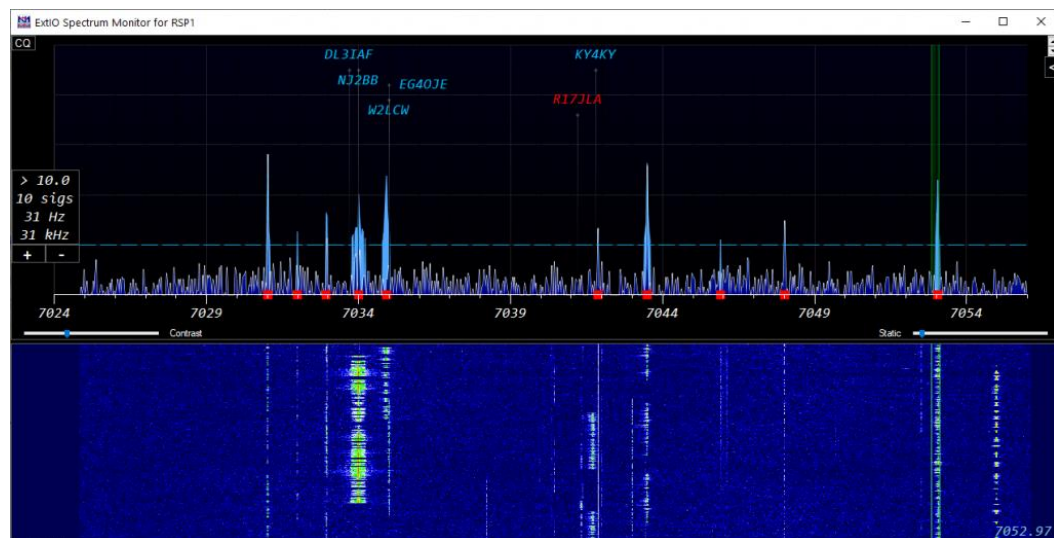


- Shows spots you have entered.
- Spots from spotting networks if you are operating assisted.
- Click on spot to jump to it.

# Spectrum Display Window



- Need
  - CAT spectrum output from radio.
  - Separate SRD radio with spectrum output.
- Click on spot to jump to it.



# Other Windows

7/25/2014 20:36:55Z ARRL DX CW - 2014 migrated.s3db

MM-DD	HH:MM	Call	Freq	Snt	Rcv	Power	M1
02-16	22:27	GM4ZUK	7019.10	599	599	400	
02-16	22:27	9A6XX	7023.60	599	599	KW	
02-16	22:28	OL1C	7037.70	599	599	100	
02-16	22:28	IK0GDG	7027.20	599	599	500	
				599	599	100	
				599	599	100	
				599	599	KW	
				599	599	KW	✓
				599	599	KW	

Info - VE3KI - Exch: 59 001

MIDBPB - 14090.07 [VE3KI @ 0 min]  
Gt EU/NORTHERN IRELAND, Zn 14, Hdg 51° LP 232° 3012mi 4847km  
Sunrise:06:29Z Sunset:18:38Z His time: 1412(Sat)

Q's - 10, 100, 60m, 14m

Q's/Hr

VE3KI

Off Time ^ (180)

00:02

5 Min Band Time

02:56

Next Goal 50

Score - 1,817,946 Points

Band	QSOs	Pts	ZN	Cty
1.8	139	277	10	18
3.5	133	342	15	51
7	277	738	20	64
14	338	837	20	60
21	337	868	24	65
28	381	1051	19	76
Total	1605	4113	108	334

Score: 1,817,946  
1 Mult = 3.6 Q's

Countries - 481 mults worked of 2082 possible

Worked Expected Spotted Spotted (Dbl Mult) All AF AS EU NA OC SA

Clear Message Window

Callframe Spot

Country Info

Sunrise/Sunset

WWV Messages

Message Window

Show Goals

Show QSO Timers

Rates & Goals - All Comp

Rates & Goals - Only Cur

Goals Chart - 20min Mov

Goals Chart - 30min Mov

Goals Chart - 60min Mov

Edit, Export Goals...

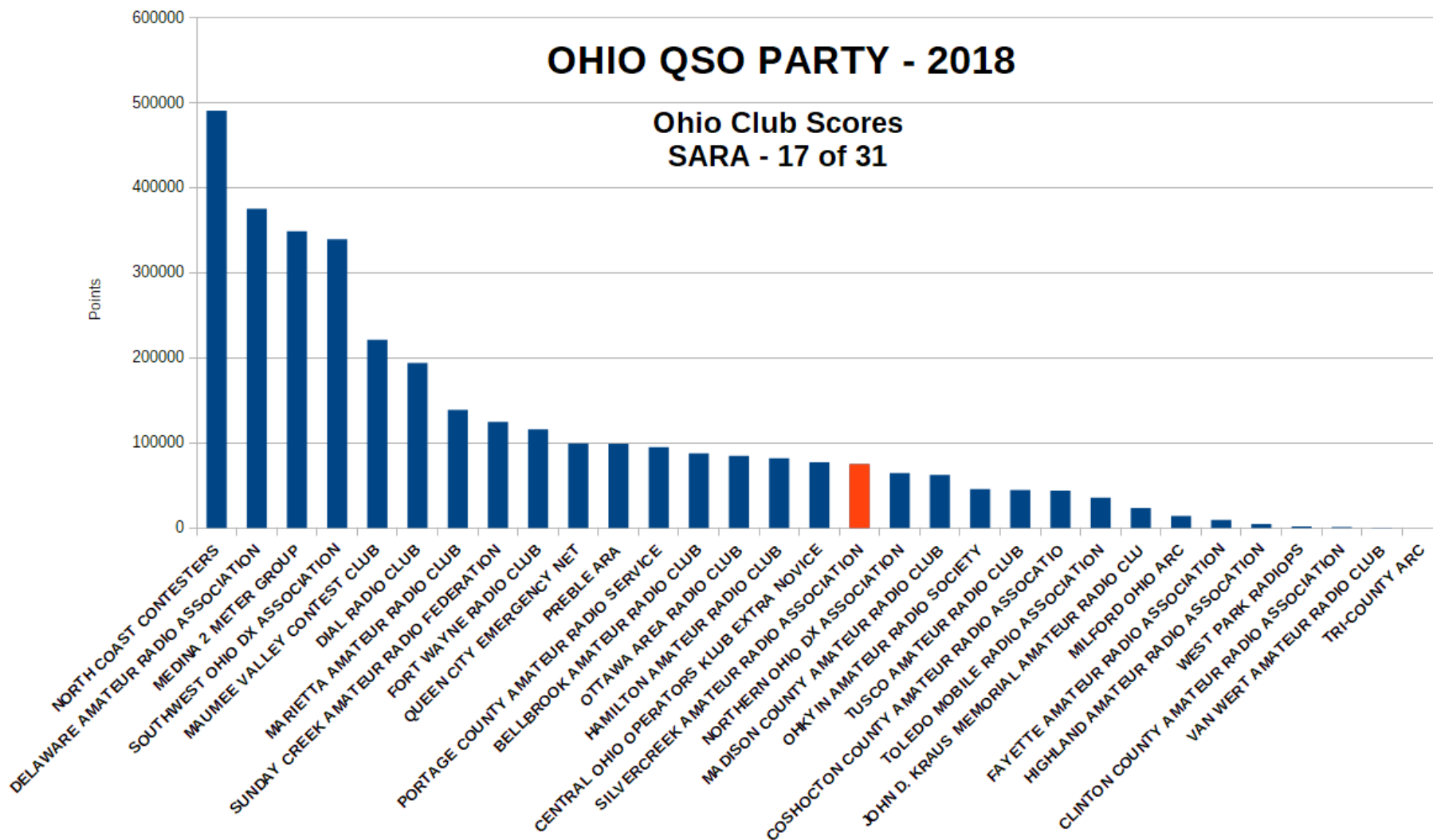
Import Goals...

Copy Message Text to C

Show RBN Spots of this S

Help

# Ohio QSO Party 2018 - SARA





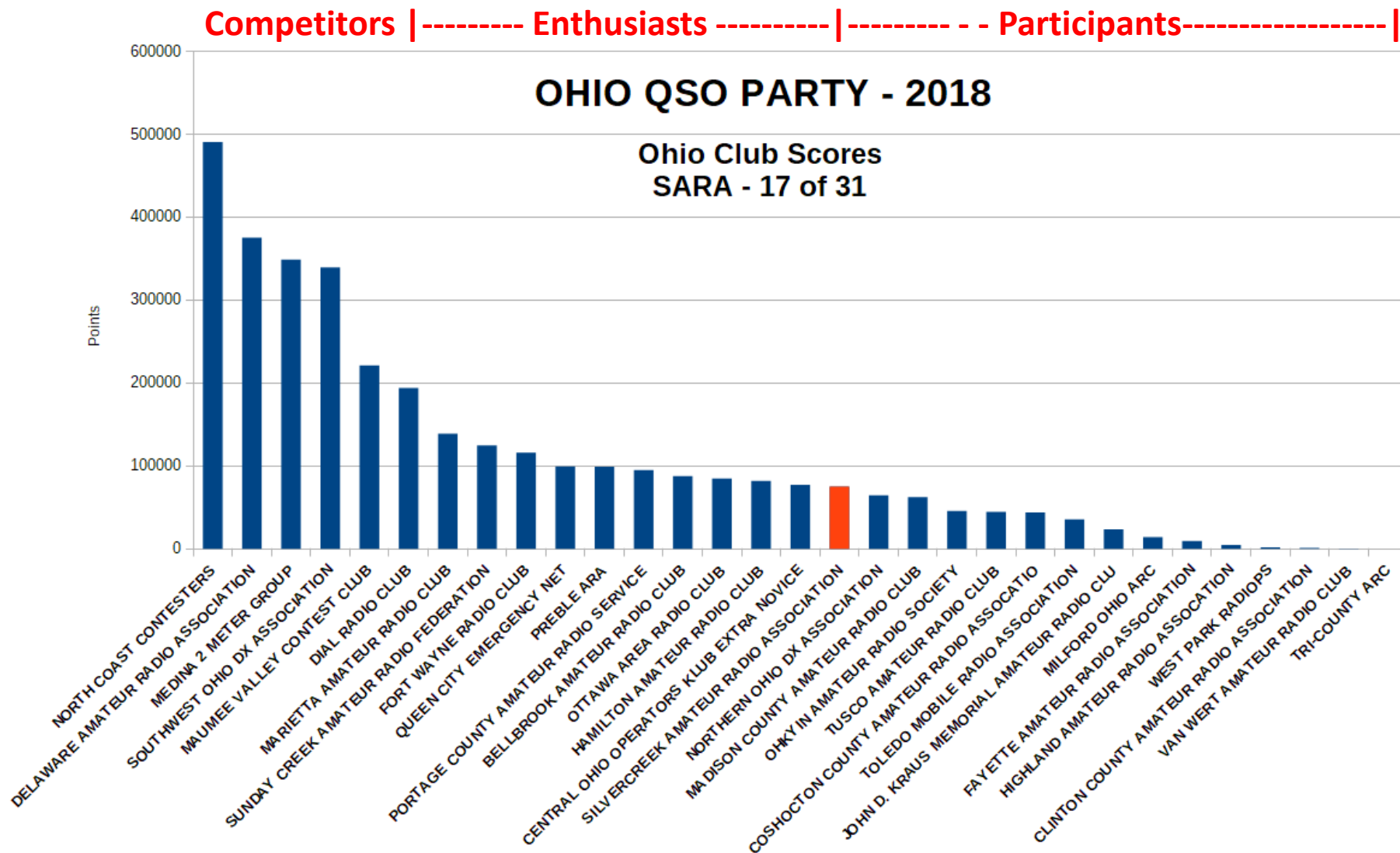
# Ohio QSO Party 2018 - SARA

CALL	QSOs	Mult	CW QSO	CW mult	PH QSO	PH mult	Score	QTH	PWR
KS8Z**	198	106	34	22	164	84	24,592	MEDI	L
N8JDM*	259	88	0	0	259	88	22,792	SUMM	L
AB8OU	135	86	50	38	85	48	15,910	SUMM	L
N8CD	109	72	48	31	61	41	11,304	WAYN	H
WD8KNL	16	14	0	0	16	14	224	SUMM	L

\*now N8EIEIO

\*\*now W8TB

# Ohio QSO Party 2018 - SARA



# How to improve your contest scores

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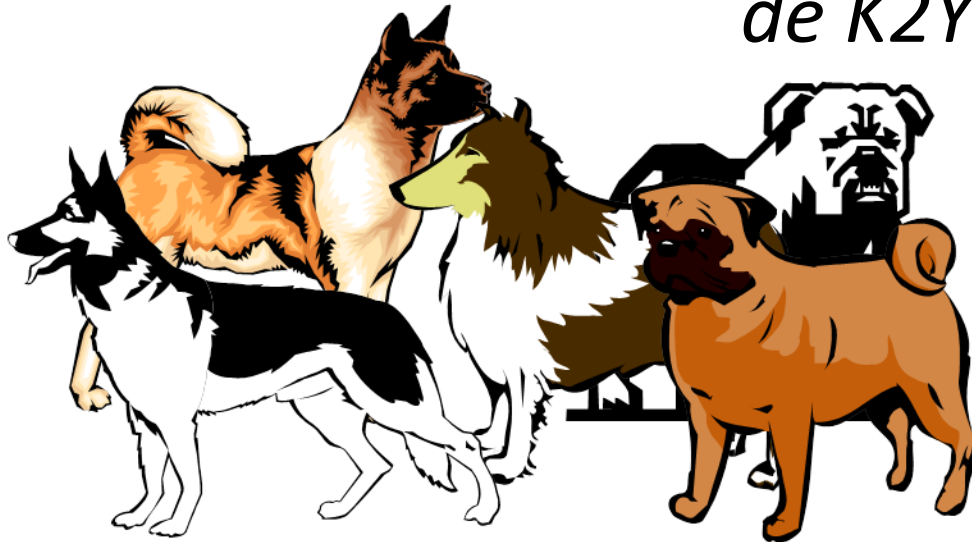
- Get on air a lot - 10,000 hour rule
- Learn the bands, propagation and your station capability.
- Practice your timing at breaking pileups.
- **LISTEN to good operators and learn.**
- **RUN as much as you can rather than S&P**

# Act & Sound Like A Big Dog

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*“If you think and act like you’re a big dog, you will convince most of the pack that you are, although you may get bitten once in a while.”*

*de K2YWE*



# Upcoming Operating Events

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- **ARRL Field Day - Jun 22 - 23**
- **13 Colonies – July 1 - 7**
- **IARU HF World Championship - Jul 13 - 14**
- North American QSO Party, RTTY - Jul 20 -21
- RSGB IOTA - Jul 27 - 28
- **North American QSO Party, CW - Aug 3 - 4**
- **North American QSO Party, SSB - Aug 17-18**
- **Ohio QSO Party - Aug 24 - 25**
- **Ohio State Parks on the Air - Sep 7**
- CQ WW DX Contest, RTTY - Sep 29 - 30

# Contesting is a game

**CTU Presents**

**Contesting with Integrity**  
**Randy Thompson, K5ZD**



• CTU •  
CONTEST  
UNIVERSITY

ICOM®

# ARRL Contest Update



- **ARRL Contesting Newsletter** – Every two weeks.
- Timely information on contests, operating and **technical** for both active and casual contesters.
- Sign-up on ARRL Web site.

# National Contest Journal



- North American QSO Parties
- Articles on Contest Stations, Contest Operators, Station Design, Antennas, Contest Operation, Little Pistols, etc
- 6 Issues a year



# 3830scores.com - (Contest Score Rumors)

3830scores.com - (Contest Score Rumors)

Home Preferences Contest Summaries Activity Trackers Updates/FAQ

Submittal Forms

Current Contests

All Asian DX Contest, CW

ARR BPSK63 Contest

CWops Mini-CWT Test - 1300Z Jun 19

CWops Mini-CWT Test - 1900Z Jun 19

CWops Mini-CWT Test - 0300Z Jun 20

NCCC RTTY Sprint - Jun 21

NCCC Sprint - Jun 21

Phone Fray - Jun 19

SMIRK Contest

Stew Perry Topband Challenge - Summer

Ukrainian DX Classic RTTY Contest

West Virginia QSO Party

Recent Contests

Aegean RTTY Contest

ARRL June VHF Contest

Asia Pacific Sprint, SSB

CQWW WPX Contest, CW

DRCG WW RTTY Contest

Summaries of Current Contests

ARR BPSK63 Contest

NCCC RTTY Sprint - Jun 21

Stew Perry Topband Challenge - Summer

Summaries of Recent Contests

Aegean RTTY Contest

ARRL June VHF Contest

Asia Pacific Sprint, SSB

CQWW WPX Contest, CW

DRCG WW RTTY Contest

GACW WWSA CW DX Contest

IARU Reg 1 Field Day - CW

Portugal Day Contest

SEANET Contest

VK Shires Contest

West Virginia QSO Party

Summaries: Scores Score Breakdowns Comments Calls Used Compare Scores

Stew Perry Topband Challenge 2019 Summer Claimed Scores

Sort by Class/Power Show All locations All clubs Go

Page link: <http://www.3830scores.com/editionscores.php?arg=X0cgmhzLmacmU>

Click on a call below to see the claimed score detail. Lines highlighted in yellow are pending correction.

Multi-Op HP

Call	SO2R	Remote	QSOs	Op Time	Score	Club
AA3B			55	0:55	90	FRC

Multi-Op LP

Call	SO2R	Remote	QSOs	Op Time	Score	Club
N1SOH			19	01:00	47	YCCC

Single Op HP

Call	SO2R	Remote	QSOs	Op Time	Score	Club
KV4FZ			107	9.5	747	
NP2J(K8RF)			77	4:00	504	
NA8V			150	4.5	324	MRRC
K1KI			154	5:11	320	YCCC
K4XL			154	5	293	PVRC
K2AV			114	2.8	237	PVRC
W1KM	x		102	3	233	YCCC
VE3XB			114	5	230	CCO
N4XD			105	2	214	
VE3NE			117	5	212	CCO

# Live Scoreboard

## Contest Online ScoreBoard



12 Jun 2019 14:48 UTC Phone Fray SSB (12.06 02:30z - 12.06 03z) details

SF:70 Kp:1

Powered by ICOM



Closed: Phone Fray SSB

Go

Home	Profile	Filter	View	Clear Filter	Breakdown	Clubs	Manual post	Supported contests	Help with logger set up	Blog
SO-ALL HP PHONE		Score	QSO	States/Provinces	Last	Log				
1	K6JO	221	17	13	11:54	N+				
SO-ALL LP PHONE		Score	QSO	States/Provinces	Last	Log				
1	N3QE	357	21	17	11:34	N+	Potomac Valley Radio Club			
2	KG5HVO	247	19	13	11:46	N+	Alabama Contest Group			
3	AB8OU	195	15	13	11:33	N+	Mad River Radio Club			
4	WV4P	42	7	6	11:41	N+	Tennessee Contest Group			
5	K8JT	9	3	3	11:43	N+	TB-Wires			

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Run on 12.06.2019

*I love the live online scoreboard! It makes it feel more like a competition because you know where you stand ...I think it makes you try harder..." -ZL4YL*

# Ohio QSO Party 2019

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**Get ready for the  
2019 OhQP  
Aug 24, 2019  
noon-midnight  
Eastern Time**