



TALES FROM THE SWAMP

April 2019

Author: Frank KG4IGC

From Your President:

There have been many occasions in the past that the bands were terrible on a contest weekend. There is nothing like getting yourself all pumped up for a contest only to race into the shack and turn the rig on to be met with dead bands or plenty of QSB. What a big disappointment and then the question looms "Do I really want to sit through this contest?"

Let me ask you this: With the bands being as they are, is it possible to actually win a contest? The answer to that question is yes! A shining example of this is K3ZO Al who won the First Place North America plaque in the Padang DX (YB) Contest. He won this prestigious award *with only three contacts* in his log. Despite the fact that it does not sound like much, it really is. Not many hams can boast about having recent YB contacts in their logs.

I can recall many a time that I have turned the rig on only to be discouraged by such things as bad band conditions, problems with something in the shack, or antenna failure. I have also turned in logs with as little as one contact. Point is this, don't let the bad band conditions prevent you from getting on the air. Remember, part of contesting is the thrill of the chase. Believe it or not, bad band conditions can be a good thing! This is the time to really hone your skills as a good operator.

I can tell you from experience, there is nothing more satisfying than hearing (or seeing DX on your waterfall) that is really down in the noise and actually working them. The great part is that you don't have to have a superstation with stacks of beams 100 feet up to do this. Anyone with a modest transceiver and a wire can do well in a contest, so don't get discouraged by the bleak band conditions forecast, get on the air and have some fun! You never know, you might just work some really rare DX!

Speaking of DX, if you haven't heard, the 3Y0I team that was headed for Bouvet Island has postponed the DXpedition due to unsafe weather conditions. The latest update was that, their ship the MV Atlantic Tuna had to deviate from their original course to attempt to escape a severe storm that is crossing an area surrounding Bouvet Island.

The good news is that the team is safe, but for now they are headed back to Cape Town, South Africa. The MV Atlantic Tuna was hit by 36 foot waves and winds of 83 knots which caused the loss of one of the radars which include the VSAT, VHF and HF marine antennas. The captain decided that it was not safe to continue without these important navigational tools and that they needed to return to Cape Town for necessary repairs. Once an estimate of the time to make repairs to the ship is made, the team will decide whether or not to

return attempt another trip in April to Bouvet Island. For now, keep your fingers crossed, hopefully the team will be able to safely make the trip back to the island next month. [Here is a good article](#) about Bouvet Island from 73 magazine written in 1967 by Gus Browning, LH4C.

This upcoming weekend is the [CQ WW WPX SSB Contest](#), Mar 30, 0000z to Mar 31, 2359z. If you're looking for another ATNO, keep your ears open for Alex 5B4ALX. He will be active as E6ET from Niue Island, (OC - 040) during the contest. For our newer members, the CQ WW WPX SSB Contest is one of the bigger contests that we compete in as a club and is a ton of fun!

Last year we made a club total of 1,407,899 points with six operators. I would like to challenge our club members to beat last year's score, and not only that, let do one better....lets knock the socks off of the Georgia Contest Group! Both your club President and Vice President will be on the air, will you? We would like to invite you to meet the challenge and put those Swamp Fox stations on the air!!

Reminder: Yearly Dues

Just a friendly reminder, dues are due at the January club meeting. If you have not paid your dues as of yet, there are a couple of ways to do this. You can pay via the [PayPal link](#) on our club website, or you can send them to our club treasurer, Phil NI7R. Dues are 10.00 a year and the funds go to support awards and sponsorship of contests like the SCQP.

Member Contributions:

Understanding vs. Memorizing

By Kevan N4XL

Way back in 1975, about the time I received my Novice license -- WN8VDI, my best friend and I went to a Vocational-Technical school and learned to fix stereos and television sets. We had both spent many classroom hours learning basic electrical things like Ohm's law ($E = I * R$), Kirchhoff's Current Law, and many others. Between straight A's and many hours using my "Ham Ticket" brass pounding out 40 meter CW I had convinced myself I was well on the way to becoming an electronic genius. Ah... What sweet memories... Wouldn't it be nice to be young and all-knowing again?

The curriculum was well planned out and the instructor gave us plenty of time at the work bench putting our theoretical knowledge to work on actual circuits. One day we built a resistive circuit. We did some calculations and then measured voltage drops and current flows in different parts of the circuit to prove theories actually do work. We finished with plenty of time to spare and decided to use up the half hour playing. We changed a resistor here or there and varied the applied voltage. We noticed something odd. We had left the current meter in its original place, but as we changed resistors in a different branch of the series-parallel circuit the ammeter would show a current change. Wow! We had just discovered something really neat! Thinking maybe no one had ever noticed such a thing before we summoned the instructor and proudly demonstrated our

amazing observation. With a straight face he simply said: "Congratulations. You've just proven Ohm's Law." My friend and I stupidly looked at each other. We thought of all the classroom hours and "aced" tests we had done without ever really understanding what it was we were learning. We burst out laughing at ourselves.

That turned out to be one of the most pivotal experiences in my life. It forever changed how I learn new information. It isn't enough to simply regurgitate something. It is far more important to understand how the new thing you are learning can be effectively used, and how it both relates to and affects other bits of knowledge you have. Very few facts are useful by themselves. That lesson pushes me to always try and integrate new information into the bigger scheme of things. Sadly though most people, too often myself included, can't be told. We have to see for ourselves. A lot of time and money is "wasted" that way. ("Wasted" is in quotes because half the fun of being a ham is learning for yourself how to make your signal get from here to there. That thing about the money though...)

This article came about from a comment a fellow ham made. I won't give details. I'll just say I'm positive this person had heard and read dozens of times other experienced hams talk about how important it is to blah, blah, blah. I know for a fact he had been encouraged to blah blah several times and was told "blahing" would let him enjoy his hobby more. Sadly, despite all that advice he never "blahed". Until recently. He's now a convert and thinks "blahing" is great!

The point of that last silliness is twofold. First, if many experienced people tell you it would be worthwhile for you to do something then you should definitely try it – even if you haven't experienced it before and think you are doing okay without it. The second point is reading a book about ham radio or passing a test isn't enough. Get out there and do some hands on stuff. I guarantee it will shake up your life.

From the reflector:

Frank KG4IGC reported that he has built and installed a second 40/20 Super Loop antenna.

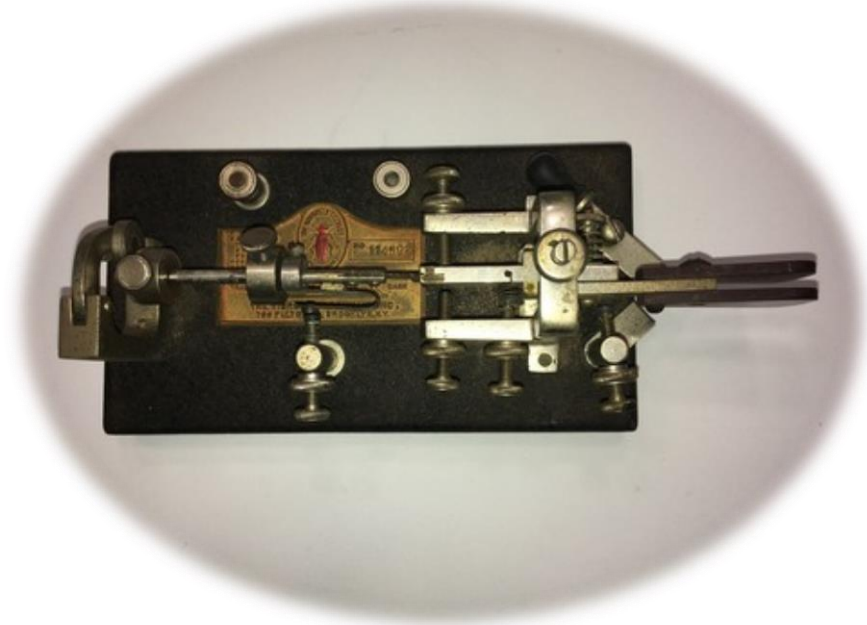
Phil NI7R shared a great video of [SO2R Dual QSO's at YV1KK](#)

Kevin N4XL shared some great tips for the upcoming CQ WPX Contest, SSB

Dave NJ4F is working on sending out QSL's for the 2019 SCQP. He has two QSLs that are not in the logs that he has and has requested that the SCQP ops please check their logs for K6ACV & N1MID.

Frank KG4IGC has found a standalone [DX Cluster for use of QSO Parties and Operating Events.](#)

Dave WN4AFP showed us his latest acquisition, a vintage bug!



Contests:

ARRL DX Contest, SSB March 2

N4IQ SO Unlimited HP SO2R 284 Q's	124,392
WB4HRL SO Unlimited HP 133 Q's	38,703
KG4IGC SO Unlimited LP 119 Q's	28,203
WU0B SO Unlimited LP SO2R 96 q's	21,312
K70M SOAB HP 212 Q's	66,144
KD4CB SOAB QRP 12 Q's	432

Club Total: 279,186

Stew Perry Topband Challenge March 9

K7OM SOHP 71 Q's 207

NJ4F SOHP 30 Q's 84

Oklahoma QSO Party March 9

WN4AFP SOAB CW LP 34 CW Q's 2,550

WB4HRL SOAB Mixed HP 8 CW Q's 2 Ph. Q's 280

Idaho QSO Party March 9

WN4AFP SOAB CW LP 1 CW Q 2

Wisconsin QSO Party March 10

WN4AFP SO Fixed LP 35 CW-DIG Q's 2,754

Virginia QSO Party: March 16

WB4HRL SOAB/Mixed Fixed HP 16 CW Q's, 86 Ph. Q's 9,120

Louisiana QSO Party March 16

WB4HRL SO SSB HP 4 Q's 32

BARTG HF RTTY Contest March 16

N4IQ SOAB HP S02R 463 Q's 275,022

K7OM SOAB HP 306 q's 116,280

Upcoming Contests:

SKCC Sprint, Mar 27, 0000z to Mar 27, 0200z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + (state/province/country) + Name + (SKCC No./power); Logs due: March 29.

QRP Fox Hunt, Mar 27, 0100z to Mar 27, 0230z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: March 28.

Phone Fray, Mar 27, 0230z to Mar 27, 0300z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15m; NA: Name + (state/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: March 29.

CWops Mini-CWT Test, Mar 27, 1300z to Mar 27, 1400z and, Mar 27, 1900z to Mar 27, 2000z and, Mar 28, 0300z to Mar 28, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Member: Name + Member No., non-Member: Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: March 30.

UKEICC 80m Contest, Mar 27, 2000z to Mar 27, 2100z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; 4-Character grid square; Logs due: March 27.

RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB, Mar 28, 2000z to Mar 28, 2130z; SSB; Bands: 80m Only; RS + Serial No.; Logs due: March 29.

QRP Fox Hunt, Mar 29, 0100z to Mar 29, 0230z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: April 4.

NCCC RTTY Sprint, Mar 29, 0145z to Mar 29, 0215z; RTTY; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: March 31.

NCCC Sprint, Mar 29, 0230z to Mar 29, 0300z; CW; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: March 31.

CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB, Mar 30, 0000z to Mar 31, 2359z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RS + Serial No.; Logs due: April 5.

Feld Hell Sprint, Mar 30, 0000z to Mar 30, 2359z; Feld Hell; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6m; (see rules); Logs due: April 2.

[IQRP Quarterly Marathon](#), Apr 1, 0800z to Apr 7, 2000z; CW, SSB, Digital; Bands: All; RS(T); Logs due: April 21.

[RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW](#), Apr 1, 1900z to Apr 1, 2030z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + Serial No.; Logs due: April 2.

[ARS Spartan Sprint](#), Apr 2, 0100z to Apr 2, 0300z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + (state/province/country) + Power; Logs due: April 4.

[QRP Fox Hunt](#), Apr 3, 0100z to Apr 3, 0230z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: March 21.

[Phone Fray](#), Apr 3, 0230z to Apr 3, 0300z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15m; NA: Name + (state/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: March 22.

[CWops Mini-CWT Test](#), Apr 3, 1300z to Apr 3, 1400z and, Apr 3, 1900z to Apr 3, 2000z and, Apr 4, 0300z to Apr 4, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Member: Name + Member No., non-Member: Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: March 23.

[UKEICC 80m Contest](#), Apr 3, 2000z to Apr 3, 2100z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; 4-Character grid square; Logs due: March 27.

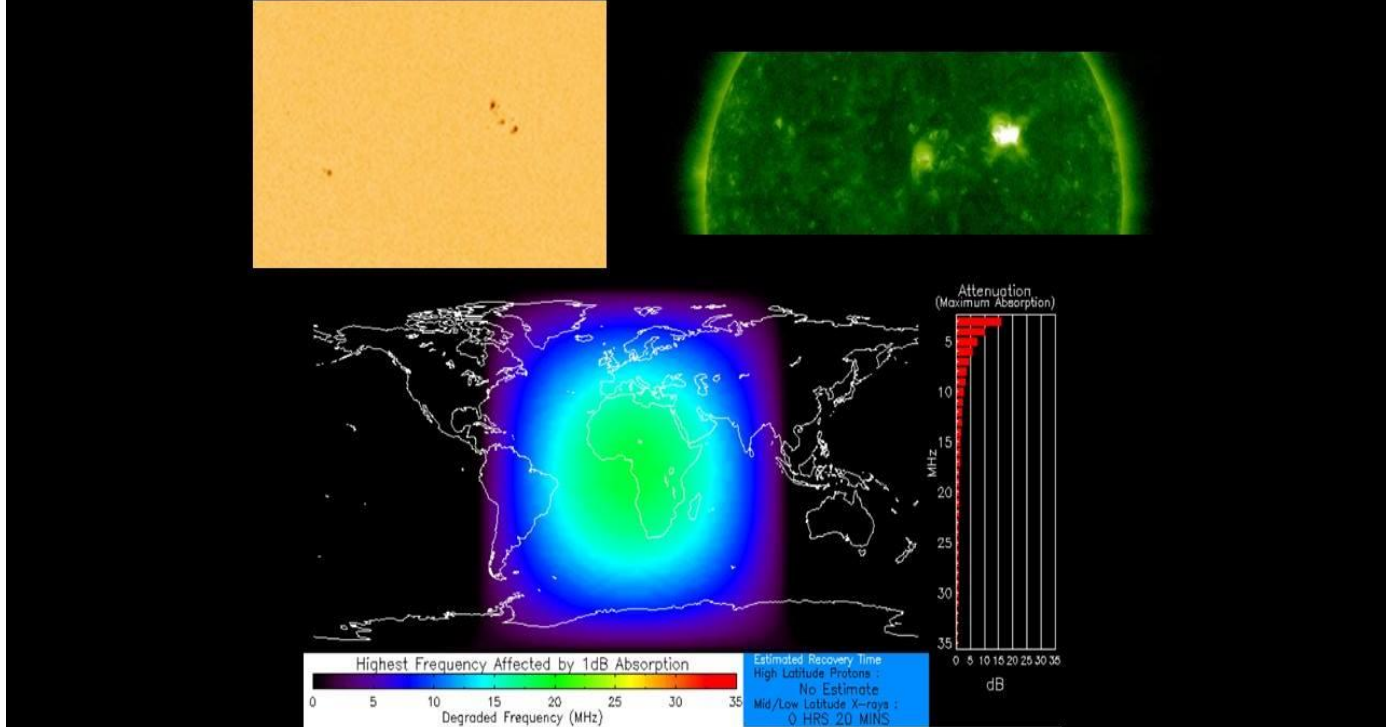
VHF+ CONTESTS

[UBA Spring Contest, 6m](#), Mar 24, 0600z to Mar 24, 1000z; CW, Phone; Bands: 6m Only; ON: RS(T) + Serial No. + UBA Section, non-ON: RS(T) + Serial No.; Logs due: April 7.

Also see [FOC QSO Party](#), [Feld Hell Sprint](#), [IQRP Quarterly Marathon](#), above.

Tamitha Skov's Space WX : [A Filament Sandwiched by Sunspots](#) 03.20.2019

C4 Flare on 20 March at 1118 UTC (0718 EST) from Region 2736



Picture credit: [NOAA NWS Space Weather Prediction Center](#)

Upcoming Hamfests:

Upstate Hamfest

Date: 4 May 2019

Location: Piedmont Interstate Fairgrounds, 575 Fairgrounds Rd, Spartanburg, SC 29303

Hours: 8:00 am – 2:00 pm

Sponsor: Blue Ridge Amateur Radio Society

Talk-In: 146.610 (primary), 146.820 (back up)

SFOTA:

Let's work on those contacts guys; we want you to win a category if not two or three! *Remember:* even if you can work only a few Q's in any particular contest, every single Q counts! Last year we had some really close numbers, and a couple of categories came down to one or two Q's to win!

Current Leaderboard

2019 OVERALL STANDINGS

	CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1)	N4IQ	20	1823	444	8	2116	4391
2)	WN4AFP	45	1471	699	0	290	2460
3)	KG4IGC	9	255	763	0	1089	2107
4)	K7OM	12	770	355	0	953	2078
5)	KS4YX	8	280	49	38	1086	1453
6)	NI7R	7	1048	15	0	332	1395
7)	KG6MC	7	719	79	0	54	852
8)	WB4HRL	11	24	688	0	0	712
9)	N4VZ	2	0	171	232	241	644
10)	NJ4F	6	310	54	0	115	479
11)	W1TEF	4	332	79	0	0	411
12)	WU0B	7	0	346	0	42	388
13)	K4KWB	1	0	125	0	0	125
14)	NE4EA	3	0	43	2	74	119
15)	AJ4UQ	3	1	0	0	100	101
16)	KD4CB	2	0	23	0	0	23

2019 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS

CALL	CW QSO'S	CALL	SSB QSO'S	CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S	CALL	RTTY QSO'S
N4IQ	1823	KG4IGC	763	N4VZ	232	N4IQ	2116
WN4AFP	1471	WN4AFP	699	KS4YX	38	KG4IGC	1089
NI7R	1048	WB4HRL	688	N4IQ	8	KS4YX	1086
K7OM	770	N4IQ	444	NE4EA	2	K7OM	953
KG6MC	719	K7OM	355			NI7R	332
W1TEF	332	WU0B	346			WN4AFP	290
NJ4F	310	N4VZ	171			N4VZ	241
KS4YX	280	K4KWB	125			NJ4F	115
KG4IGC	255	W1TEF	79			AJ4UQ	100

WB4HRL 24
AJ4UQ 1

KG6MC 79
NJ4F 54
KS4YX 49
NE4EA 43
KD4CB 23
NI7R 15

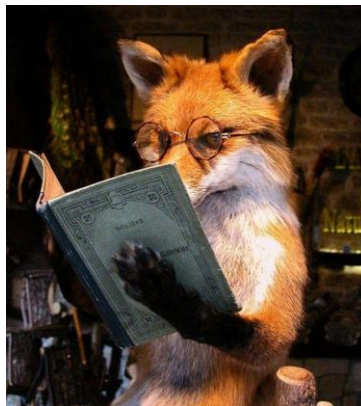
NE4EA 74
KG6MC 54
WU0B 42

The Tip Line:

Getting tired of trying to untangle paracord? Try a [paracord donut!](#)

Newsletter Contributions:

If you would like to submit an article, contesting news, or perhaps a write up on any projects you are working on that you would like to share with the club please send them to kg4igc@att.net.



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SFCG Newsletter April 2019