TALES FROM THE SWAMP

August 2019

Author: Frank KG4IGC

From Your President:

Greetings my fellow Swamp Foxes, I would like to take this time to announce a bit of bad news. If you have not heard, for those of you who know Bryce Meyers K4LXF it is with a heavy heart that I have learned that his XYL Jenny Meyers WN4NGV has passed away. Jenny was a wonderful lady, and very active over the years with her husband Bryce in the Charleston Amateur Radio Society. funeral services will be held 10AM Tuesday, July 30 at the J Henry Stuhr Northwoods Chapel, 2180 Greenridge Rd. Interment to follow at Beaufort National Cemetery, 1601 Boundary St, Beaufort, SC at 1PM. Jenny will be very much missed by many. Please keep Bryce and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Once again, it is that time of year for one of the biggest domestic CW contests of the year. The North American QSO Party is this upcoming weekend, 1800 UTC August 3 to 0600 UTC August 4, 2019 (the first full weekend in August). I am currently looking for team members; if you are interested in being on a team, please let me know before the start of the contest so that I can make sure you are registered. We are still a week away so there is still plenty of time to volunteer to be on a team. We can have as many as five people per team, or as little as two. Here are the rules: http://www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf

As of this writing, we have enough members to form a very good team of five. Last year we had six members participate in the NAQP CW, and the score to beat will be 201,020 points. I think that Bill N4IQ will most likely have that beat in the first hour hihi!

Note: *I am also looking for team members for the upcoming NAQP SSB 1800 UTC August 17 to 0600 UTC August 18, 2019* (third full weekend in August) If interested in becoming a team member, be sure to let me know so that I can get you registered!

A word about multipliers:

To multiply or not to multiply, what is a good strategy for the little pistol? This is a question that I have asked myself many times during a contest. Well, I guess it all depends on the situation. There a few things to consider when you come out of that starting gate such as what shape are the bands in, if are there tons of stations running and how quickly can I work them? How are my spot filters set up and where are the spots coming from?

There are two approaches that you can take, and again, it all depends on the situation. Sometimes it is best to work as many stations as possible in a domestic contest. For instance, in the upcoming NAQP CW; is the only open band seem to be 20 meters and only to the North and South? Then you might want to work on building up your Q count. Other times there may be a good opportunity to work a bunch of multipliers at the beginning of the contest. In the case of a contest where DX stations and continents are counted as multipliers, if the band is open to DX, then the best option is to go after those mults!

Using that VFO B is another good way to work on getting that multiplier count up. Granted, it may take some practice, but it is most certainly an effective way to boost your multipliers as well as your Q count and rate. Rate is everything, if I learned anything from Kevan N4XL's contesting class, if one strategy is not working, try something else!

It also depends on if the rules state that you as a single op can use spotting assistance. Say the latter is true, and you can use spotting assistance. If you are using N1MM plus, the multipliers are usually pretty easy to spot; they show up with their calls either red for single multiplier or green for a double multiplier. There is even an available mults box for you to use. Racking up those multipliers should prove to be an easy job, right? Not so fast says I.

There are many instances when the multiplier that you have found on the cluster is not even there. Why you ask? It could be a number of reasons. Who spotted the station that you are trying to work? Are you hearing other stations from that area?

It is always good practice to listen in the case of CW or voice modes to *make sure that the call and exchange are correct*. Never assume that what you are seeing on the cluster is correct, as it is often wrong. Same rule applies to digital modes; make sure the information is correct before inputting it into your log. A good practice when running RTTY for example is to watch the multiplier station work other stations. This will increase your chances of getting the call and exchange correct.

What to do in the case of no spotting assistance allowed? One thing that I tend to do is to work what I can, as fast as I can. I look at it with the approach that the faster I can move through the band; the faster those multipliers will show up.

In the case of no assistance allowed in a particular contest, I will make it a point to put the call that I can actually "hear" or see in the logging box. This way when I decide to move on, the multiplier will be marked for another go at it later on.

I have made it a practice to try and no get stuck on any one station, no matter if he/she is a mult, double mult, or in some cases not even a mult at all. When I do happen to come across a pileup, the first thing that I do is LISTEN. This will give me most of the time a general idea of how the op is working the pile.

Here is something that I see happening all the time: A much needed multiplier shows up in the form of a pileup. A common mistake made by many contesters, (including your author) will be to get caught up in the moment. You *really* want to work this particular station, perhaps it is an ATNO (all time new one) for you. After many

tries, you revel in the satisfaction that you beat out WN4xxx and got the Q, but at what cost? Suddenly you realize that it has taken you 12 minutes to work ONE station. Time is everything in contesting, and you could have racked up a bunch of much needed Q's and mults in that amount of time.

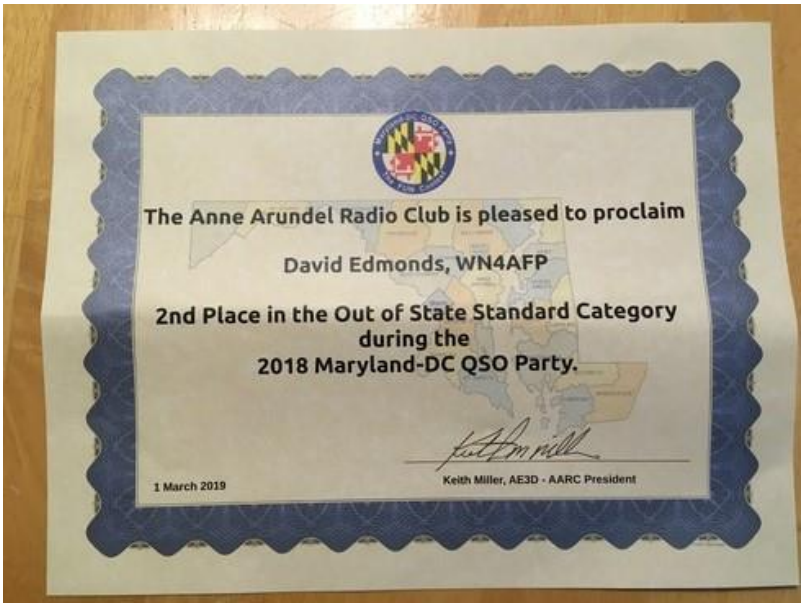
Usually, if I cannot manage to work that station within one or two calls, the best advice that I can give is to work someone else and come back to that one later. I cannot begin to tell you how far behind you can get by wasting too much time trying to work that unworkable Q. One last thing, always make sure to check the lower bands for activity. Remember, a station can be worked not only once per mode, but also on each band as well! This adds up to a LOT of multipliers and the more mults, the higher score you and you team can achieve! Good luck to all in the upcoming NAQP, I look forward to working as many of you as possible!

Notable Mentions:

A note to our SFCG club members: Dave WN4AFP's mother took a bad fall after the IARU and broke 5 ribs. Please keep Dave and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Dave also celebrated his 65th birthday on July 3rd, 2019. On behalf of the entire club, happy belated Birthday OM!

Brag List:



ARRL Announces "Happy 150!" [Hiram Percy Maxim Birthday Celebration]

Member Contributions:

Two Transceivers Using One Antenna?

By Kevan N4XL

Having the ability to work two bands while contesting is a proven way to improve your score. Sometimes "working" the other band is nothing more than finding new mults to work on 15 meters while Running or S&P on 20. When you get some time on 20 you can jump to 15, quickly work the mult there, then jump back to 20. You don't necessarily need a second rig or band pass filters to do that. You can use Single Operator Two VFO (SO2V) operation. Icom and Yaesu, and maybe others, offer "Dual Watch" that lets you use both VFO's like that. As long as your transmitter isn't keying you can hear both receivers at the same time. But maybe you are at a 2A Field Day site or a contest shack with both a 10 and 15 meter station sharing the same yagi or multi-band dipole. You have two separate transceivers that can be used to listen on one band while the other band's transmitter is on. How can you use that single antenna safely? My particular situation is that I wanted to use my single tribander in an SO2R setup.

Having separate antennas for each rig gives you additional rig-to-rig isolation. That comes from the physical distance between the antennas of course, but additional isolation can come from vertical separation on a tower or from one antenna being horizontally polarized and the other vertical. But both of those mechanisms are missing when you share the same antenna. I doubt you will be able to find any commercial band pass filters that alone provide enough attenuation to protect both rigs in that situation. Even if there are some that provide that level of protection it is likely the signal bleeding through those

filters will make it very difficult to copy anything on the other receiver when one of the two radios is transmitting. Except for QRP power levels that is.

The solution is a triplexer such as the Low Band Systems (LBS) LBS-PB-TP200 available at DX Engineering and other suppliers. Connect a single multiband antenna, such as a triband yagi or multiband dipole to one side of the triplexer and two or more transceivers to the 10, 15, and 20 meter inlet ports. 35 dB isolation is provided between ports. This is not enough to provide protection for 100 watt radios so additional single band filters should be used on each of the ports. The LBS version of those single band filters provide an additional 55 to 100 dB of protection. Duplexers or quadplexers for other bands are available too. Besides the 10-15-20 triplexer and filter combination for my yagi I use an 80/40 duplexer for a horizontal loop. The duplexer allows both transmitters to simultaneously use that antenna too.

You can feed the triplexer/filter combination directly from the rig with coax from the rig if you want. The configuration at N4XL uses an Array Solutions 2x8 antenna switch. 5 of the switch's antenna lines send signals from each rig to the three triplexer and two duplexer inputs. Switching logic prevents the two rigs from sharing the same antenna line until AFTER the LBS filter equipment provides isolation. I also have separate band pass filters for each rig for use with other antenna combinations not going through the LBS components. With this arrangement I am able to operate both rigs using the same (or different) antennas without even knowing the other is transmitting. Sometimes I hear a slight S1 or 2 hashy noise of less than 5 KHz width on the second receiver, but it is rare and normally easy to copy through. Harmonics from the transmitter are also rarely noticeable on the other receiver.

So if you are limited in what antennas you can put up and would like to explore using a second rig options are available to you.

I should note three things.

1. LBS, and others, state any unused port should be terminated with a 50 ohm load capable of withstanding your transmitted power. (For example: you are using transceivers on 10 and 15 meters, but none on 20. The 20 meter terminal should have a 50 ohm dummy load connected to it.) Failure to do that will skew the filter attenuation curves. I have a single band pass filter connected to each port (which is 50 ohm) and when one port is not being used it is left connected. However, I do not put a 50 ohm load on the unused single band pass filter input as many recommend. My performance is acceptable. Yours may not be.

2. Band pass filters and triplexers like 50 ohm loads. Their specifications change if you are using an untuned antenna presenting an other than 50 ohm reactance/resistance. High SWR's also cause heating of the filters and could cause failure. I try to use mostly resonant antennas. For those that aren't I accept the power loss and use an autotuner between the filters and antenna to keep the SWR present at the filter output low.

3. High duty cycle modes (i.e.: FM and RTTY or other digital modes) cause high heat buildup in the filters. So does calling CQ or running stations at a >100/hr rate for a significant period of time. I advise you buy filters rated much higher than the maximum power you intend to run. I run 100 watts. I considered 500 watt filters but went with 200 watt LBS equipment due to cost considerations. The LBS filters and triplexers cases are open to atmosphere so get very good cooling air flow. I also have a fan behind the transmitters and located near the filters to give them even more air flow. They have performed very well.

Club Happenings:

Frank KG4IGC informed everyone results that the 2019 OQP have been posted, they are available ***here*****.**

Gil KS4YX reminded everyone that you can download your ARRL Certificates at contests.arrl.org Gil has also offered his Elecraft KX-3 and accessories for sale. Interested parties can contact him directly.

Kevan N4XL let the group know that ED K3DNE has a Force 12 C3 tribander for sale, 300.00 in Simpsonville, SC. Ed can be reached at (410)274-6261.

Dave WN4AFP reported that he came home to a new antenna arrangement; he now has two 40 meter slopers, thanks to the wind!

Bill N4IQ informed the club about the new release of WSJT-X Version 2.1.0. From Joe K1JT: "WSJT-X 2.1 is a major upgrade that introduces FT4, a new protocol for HF contesting. Improvements have also been made in the following areas:

- FT8 waveform generation using GMSK, fully backward compatible
- user options for low-sidelobe waterfall and spectrum display
- UDP messaging for inter-program communication
- accessibility

... as well as many minor enhancements and bug fixes.

We now provide a separate installation package for 64-bit Windows, offering significant improvements in decoding speed.

A more detailed list of program changes since WSJT-X 2.0.1 can be found in the cumulative Release Notes:
http://physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/k1jt/Release_Notes.txt

Upgrading from earlier versions of WSJT-X should be seamless. There is no need to uninstall a previous version or move any files.

Please do not continue to use any release candidate -- that is, any beta release with "-rc#" in the version name.

Links to installation packages for Windows, Linux, and Macintosh are available here:
http://physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/k1jt/wsjtx.html

You can also download the packages from our SourceForge site:
https://sourceforge.net/projects/wsjt/files/
It may take a short time for the SourceForge site to be updated.

WSJT-X is licensed under the terms of Version 3 of the GNU General Public License (GPL). Development of this software is a cooperative project to which many amateur radio operators have contributed. If you use our code, please have the courtesy to let us know about it. If you find bugs or make improvements to the code, please report them to us in a timely fashion.
We hope you will enjoy using WSJT-X Version 2.1.0.

-- 73, Joe, K1JT, for the WSJT Development Group”

Contests:

CWops Mini CWT Test 1300z July 24th, 2019

N4IQ 113Q's 102 Mults 11,526

NCCC RTTY Sprint July 26, 2019

N4IQ SO2R SOAB LP 32 Q's 16 Mults 512

CWops Mini-CWT Test 1900z July 24th, 2019

N4IQ SO2R SOHP 106 Q's 100 Mults 10,600

North America QSO Party July 20, 2019

WB4HRL M/2 LP 103 Q's 51 Mults 5,253

KG4IGC SOLP 167 Q's 78 Mults 13,026

NI7R SOLP 60 Q's 37 Mults 2,220

KS4YX SOLP 75 Q's 8 Mults 2,700

Claimed Aggregate Score: 23,199

CQ Worldwide VHF Contest July 20th, 2019

NI7R SOSB/6 HP 66 Q's 43 Mults 2,838

IARU HF World Championship July 13, 2019

N4IQ M/S HP 837 CW Qs 207 Phone Q's 93 Zones 97 HQM 455,620

NI7R SOAB(A)CW HP 347 CW Q's 60 Zones 60 HQM 111,960

N4XL SOAB(A)CW LP 230 CW Q's 24 Zones 21 HQ Mults 25,290

WU0B SOAB(A)SSB LP 96 Ph Q's 23 Zones 27 HQ Mults 11,100

KG4IGC SOAB Mixed LP 108 CW Q's 16 Ph Q's 34 Zones 13 HQM 13,771

WB4HRL SOABSSB LP 202 Ph Q's 40 Zones 40 HQ Mults 36,320

Claimed Aggregate Score: 654,691

DL-DX RTTY Contest July 6th, 2019

WB4HRL SOAB-24 LP 50 Q's 30 Mults 12,300

N4IQ SOAB-6-Dipole HP 108 Q's 51 Mults 43,350

RAC Canada Day Contest July 1st, 2019

WB4HRL SOAB/Ph HP 20 Ph. Q's 20 Ph. Mults 2,952

Upcoming Contests:

QCX Challenge, Jul 29, 1300z to Jul 29, 1400z and, Jul 29, 1900z to Jul 29, 2000z and, Jul 30, 0300z to Jul 30, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10

m; RST + Name + (state/province/country) + Rig; Logs due: August 1.

Phone Fray, Jul 31, 0230z to Jul 31, 0300z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 m; NA: Name + (state/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: August 2.

CWops Mini-CWT Test, Jul 31, 1300z to Jul 31, 1400z and, Jul 31, 1900z to Jul 31, 2000z and, Aug 1, 0300z to Aug 1, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m; Member: Name + Member No., non-Member: Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: July 27.

NRAU 10m Activity Contest, Aug 1, 1700z to Aug 1, 1800z (CW) and, Aug 1, 1800z to Aug 1, 1900z (SSB) and, Aug 1, 1900z to Aug 1, 2000z (FM) and, Aug 1, 2000z to Aug 1, 2100z (Dig); CW, SSB, FM, Digital; Bands: 10 m Only; RS(T) + 6-character grid square; Logs due: August 15.

SKCC Sprint Europe, Aug 1, 1900z to Aug 1, 2100z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, **6 m**; RST + (state/province/country) + Name + (SKCC No./power); Logs due: August 8.

QRP Fox Hunt, Aug 2, 0100z to Aug 2, 0230z; CW; Bands: 20 m Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: July 27.

NCCC RTTY Sprint, Aug 2, 0145z to Aug 2, 0215z; RTTY; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: July 28.

NCCC Sprint, Aug 2, 0230z to Aug 2, 0300z; CW; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: July 28.

10-10 Int. Summer Contest, SSB, Aug 3, 0001z to Aug 4, 2359z; SSB; Bands: 10 m Only; 10-10 Member: Name + 10-10 number + (state/province/country), Non-Member: Name + 0 + (state/province/country); Logs due: August 12.

European HF Championship, Aug 3, 1200z to Aug 3, 2359z; CW, SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m; RS(T) + 2-digit year first licensed; Logs due: August 5.

North American QSO Party, CW, Aug 3, 1800z to Aug 4, 0559z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m; NA: Name + (state/DC/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: August 9.

SARL HF Phone Contest, Aug 4, 1400z to Aug 4, 1700z; SSB; Bands: 80, 40, 20 m; RS + Serial No.; Logs due: August 11.

ARS Spartan Sprint, Aug 6, 0100z to Aug 6, 0300z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m; RST + (state/province/country) + Power; Logs due: August 8.

Phone Fray, Aug 7, 0230z to Aug 7, 0300z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 m; NA: Name + (state/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: July 26.

CWops Mini-CWT Test, Aug 7, 1300z to Aug 7, 1400z and, Aug 7, 1900z to Aug 7, 2000z and, Aug 8, 0300z to Aug 8, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Member: Name + Member No., non-Member: Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: July 27.

VHF+ CONTESTS

WAB 144 MHz Low Power Phone, Aug 3, 1400z to Aug 3, 1800z; Phone; Bands: 2 m Only; British Isles: RS + serial no. + WAB square, Other: RS + serial no. + country; Logs due: August 24.

ARRL 222 MHz and Up Distance Contest, Aug 3, 1800z to Aug 4, 1800z; Any; Bands: 222 MHz and up; 6-character grid square; Logs due: August 18.

Also, see SKCC Sprint Europe, above.

Tamitha Skov's YouTube Channel:

Goodbye Sunspot, Hello Coronal Hole | Space Weather News 07.25.2019

From QST:

2018 Dec 8-9 ARRL 10 Meter Contest Results

Affiliated Club Competition (Medium)

#34 *Swamp Fox Contest Group* 9,512 points 4 entries Pg.87 July QST

SFOTA:

2019 OVERALL STANDINGS

	CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1)	N4IQ	55	4950	506	51	3327	8834
2)	WN4AFP	53	2279	1048	0	290	3617
3)	K7OM	25	1435	543	0	1409	3387
4)	KG4IGC	15	401	1061	0	1257	2719
5)	NI7R	15	2235	33	0	392	2660
6)	WB4HRL	35	258	1616	1	218	2093
7)	KS4YX	8	280	49	38	1086	1453
8)	N4XL	1	1269	0	0	0	1269
9)	N4VZ	7	0	612	321	271	1204
10)	KG6MC	9	755	393	0	54	1202
11)	WU0B	9	0	857	0	42	899
12)	NJ4F	6	310	54	0	115	479
13)	W1TEF	4	332	79	0	0	411
14)	K4KWB	1	0	125	0	0	125
15)	NE4EA	3	0	43	2	74	119
16)	AJ4UQ	4	1	0	1	100	102
17)	KD4CB	3	9	35	0	0	44

2019 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS

CALL	CW QSO'S
N4IQ	4950
WN4AFP	2279
NI7R	2235
K7OM	1435
N4XL	1269
KG6MC	755

CALL	SSB QSO'S
WB4HRL	1616
KG4IGC	1061
WN4AFP	1048
WU0B	857
N4VZ	612
K7OM	543

CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S
N4VZ	321
N4IQ	51
KS4YX	38
NE4EA	2
AJ4UQ	1
WB4HRL	1

CALL	RTTY QSO'S
N4IQ	3327
K7OM	1409
KG4IGC	1257
KS4YX	1086
NI7R	392
WN4AFP	290

KG4IGC	401
W1TEF	332
NJ4F	310
KS4YX	280
WB4HRL	258
KD4CB	9
AJ4UQ	1

N4IQ	506
KG6MC	393
K4KWB	125
W1TEF	79
NJ4F	54
KS4YX	49
NE4EA	43
KD4CB	35
NI7R	33

N4VZ	271
WB4HRL	218
NJ4F	115
AJ4UQ	100
NE4EA	74
KG6MC	54
WU0B	42

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