# Tales From The Swamp

## December 2017

## Author: Frank KG4IGC

## From your President:

Season's greetings fellow Swamp Foxes, I hope everyone is staying warm with this recent cold snap that is now upon us. First off, I would like to say a few words about the club. 2018 will be the fourth anniversary of the formation of the Swamp Fox Contest Group. When Dave NJ4F, Ted K7OM, Mark KM4RK and myself started this club we never expected it to grow into the great group of guys that we have today. It was initially intended to be a local club only until I persuaded the guys to take it state-wide.

We have come a long way since the beginning, and we could not have done it without the help of each and every one of you.

Like any club, we have had a few bumps in the road over the past couple of years, and have had members come and go. The fabric that makes any club is its members and their willingness to make it into a successful club. I think we now have a pretty solid foundation and a core group of contesters who want this club to be the best South Carolina has to offer.

This year alone we have participated in 27 contests with three or more participants and several other contests with just a couple of guys participating! The decline of the sunspots has made things a little rough on the airwaves but in my opinion, that only helps everyone work on their operating skills.

One thing that I really enjoy about this club is its member's willingness to share their knowledge with others. I personally have learned quite a bit about contesting by being a part of this club. The SFCG is a very diversified and knowledgeable group of guys and I would like to thank all of you for sharing your experiences with our members.

Now, on to contesting…Well, CQWW CW has come and gone. We did pretty good this year and had some pretty good band conditions to boot. This year's claimed aggregate club score was 2,613,468 points with seven operators which is up 849,964 points compared to last year's total of 1,763,504 with six operators. All I can say is "Way to go Swamp Foxes! Everyone did a fantastic job this year in both the CW and SSB contests.

There are a few big contests coming up here in the next couple of weeks, be sure to mark your calendars for the contests that you wish to participate in. For our digital guys, we have the OK DX RTTY Contest on December 16th. The ARRL Rookie roundup is on

December 17th, and the [Stew Perry Top band Challenge](#) is December 30th. There are also several smaller contests in there as well if you are looking to rack up your SOFTA scores.

On a final note, I would like to remind everyone about our annual club meeting on January 28, 2018 at the Lizards Thicket in Lexington, SC at 3 PM.  We will be holding general elections for the 2018 club officers, so please start making your considerations. After the club business, Bill N4IQ will be giving a presentation on SO2R. As usual, XYL's are welcome and please, feel free to bring a guest! With that being said, I would like to wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**Brag List:** A big congratulations is in order for Dave WB5NHL, he received the 5 band DXCC award from the ARRL. Great job Dave!

# Member Contributions:

## Oops and X-QSO

By Kevan Nason, N4XL

During the last CQWW SSB contest I wasn't paying attention and worked a guy from EU who was operating down around 7113 KHz. Oops. I could have just deleted the QSO from the log and pretended it never happened.  However, CQWW has that pesky penalty rule that says if you aren't in the log of the other station then you are penalized three times the QSO point value of that contact.  The log checking software would have taken his log, scanned mine looking for his call, not found it (Not In Log or NIL), and then penalized him for my mistake.

 The first column of a Cabrillo file says "QSO". What the CQWW FAQ page tells you to do is modify your Cabrillo file for any contact you do not want to claim by changing it to "X-QSO". (Cabrillo files are text files and can be edited in Notepad or other Text Editor.) The log checking software will not give me credit for any QSO's I mark that way so that is what I did. It was illegal for me to be there so I shouldn't get points for the contact. But he didn't do anything wrong making that QSO so he should get the points. Leaving his call in my log ensured he got the points he deserved.

 I could use software to keep track of q's needing to be modified like that, but I prefer keeping a pen and paper at the operating station for any notes I need to make.

## Other News:

Phil NI7R informed the club about an [excellent article](#) on the ARRL sweepstakes.

Kevan N4XL figured out what was causing his beam to spin. He had a nearby branch catching on his reflector.

AJ5E Robert made some improvements to his hamshack, he purchased a new Heil Pro 7 headset and a piano foot-switch. A good conversation was had between club members about various types of headsets and homebrew foot switches. A good review about the Heil Pro 7 can be found on [Eham](#).

Hans WU0B Had to take his down loop for repairs before the ARRL Sweepstakes SSB which kept him from operating on 40 & 80 meters. Hopefully he will get that antenna back in the air before it gets too cold!

Dave WN4AFP informed the club that the 2017 preliminary scores for the Pennsylvania QSO Party have been posted. The preliminary scores can be found [here](#).  Dave also shared his thoughts about CW speeds during the CQWW contest. Average sending speeds were about 30 WPM, upwards to 40 WPM. He suggested slowing down your sending speed during high noise levels and worsening band conditions. Dave noticed that slowing down your sending speed while in a pileup seems to garner more attention to your call.  Kevan N4XL and Phil NI7R agreed with this analogy as they experienced the same results. Kevan commented that it helps out when the guy at the other end of the pileup was having trouble with your call and exchange. This was a really good tip, and it does work well so if you are having trouble breaking that pileup, give it a try!

Kevan N4XL also started an interesting discussion about grey line. He gave a good explanation of how you can use a grey line program to your advantage and pointed us to a good [presentation](#) given by N4II.

Some examples are being able to plan on what times you will operate in a contest and the ability to predict when their might be an opening to the Pacific.  With a grey line program you can watch as grey line approaches a continent and hear increased signals from another part of the world.

 There was much discussion on the subject within the forum and has increased the interest of our members about the subject of propagation.  Phil NI7R mentioned that there is a grey line program within N1MM+. This is a very useful addition to N1MM+ and has the ability to show spots of stations heard on the cluster.

Thomas AJ4UQ reminded us of the upcoming Charleston Hamfest on February 3, 2018. Details, call in frequencies and directions can be found on the [CARS website](#).

## Notable Mentions:

Steve W4SLT celebrated his birthday November 25, happy belated birthday Steve and best wishes from the SFCG!

## Contests:

### ARRL Sweepstakes Contest, SSB

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| W4SLT | SOHP | 14,280 |
| AJ5E | SOLP | 28,408 |
| NE4EA | SOLP | 16,986 |
| WU0B | SOULP | 5,670 |

### CQWW DX Contest, CW

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| KG6MC | SOAB HP | 347,667 |
| K7OM | SOAB HP | 166,066 |
| KG4IGC | SOAB LP | 122,800 |
| NE4EA | SOAB LP | 77,119 |
| NI7R | SOAB (A) LP | 402,753 |
| N4XL | SOAB (A) LP | 1,455,753 |
| WN4AFP | SOSB 40 Classic LP | 41,310 |

### ARRL 160 Meter Contest

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| K7OM | SOHP | 16,952 |
| NJ4F | SOHP | 14,847 *(editor's note: Yep, Ted whooped Dave yet again…)* |
| KG4IGC | SOLP | 408 *(Apparently Frank slept the entire contest)* |

# SFOTA:

## OVERALL STANDINGS

| | CALL | CW QSO'S | SSB QSO'S | DIGITAL QSO'S | TOTAL QSO'S |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) | N4IQ | 12099 | 365 | 3940 | 16404 |
| 2) | WN4AFP | 3853 | 1420 | 222 | 5495 |
| 3) | KG4IGC | 1112 | 582 | 1776 | 3470 |
| 4) | NJ4F | 838 | 0 | 1728 | 2566 |
| 5) | KS4YX | 670 | 145 | 1721 | 2536 |
| 6) | K7OM | 840 | 252 | 1311 | 2403 |
| 7) | NI7R | 1459 | 0 | 289 | 1748 |
| 8) | W4SLT | 0 | 1517 | 0 | 1517 |
| 9) | N4VZ | 0 | 77 | 1349 | 1426 |
| 10) | AJ5E | 0 | 182 | 732 | 914 |
| 11) | WU0B | 0 | 545 | 192 | 737 |
| 12) | N4XL | 0 | 401 | 0 | 401 |
| 13) | NE4EA | 294 | 0 | 0 | 294 |
| 14) | AJ4UQ | 7 | 0 | 241 | 248 |

## INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS

| CALL | CW QSO'S |
|---|---|
| N4IQ | 12099 |
| WN4AFP | 3853 |
| NI7R | 1459 |
| KG4IGC | 1112 |
| K7OM | 840 |
| NJ4F | 838 |
| KS4YX | 670 |
| NE4EA | 294 |
| AJ4UQ | 7 |

| CALL | SSB QSO'S |
|---|---|
| W4SLT | 1517 |
| WN4AFP | 1420 |
| KG4IGC | 582 |
| WU0B | 545 |
| N4XL | 401 |
| N4IQ | 365 |
| K7OM | 252 |
| AJ5E | 182 |
| KS4YX | 145 |
| N4VZ | 77 |

| CALL | DIGITAL QSO'S |
|---|---|
| N4IQ | 3940 |
| KG4IGC | 1776 |
| NJ4F | 1728 |
| KS4YX | 1721 |
| N4VZ | 1349 |
| K7OM | 1311 |
| AJ5E | 732 |
| NI7R | 289 |
| AJ4UQ | 241 |
| WN4AFP | 222 |
| WU0B | 192 |

# Upcoming Contests

NCCC RTTY Sprint, Dec 15, 0145z to Dec 15, 0215z; RTTY; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: December 17.

QRP Fox Hunt, Dec 15, 0200z to Dec 15, 0330z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST +

(state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: December 21.

**NCCC Sprint**, Dec 15, 0230z to Dec 15, 0300z; CW; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: December 17.

**UN DIGI Contest**, Dec 15, 1400z to Dec 15, 1559z, Dec 15, 1600z to Dec 15, 1759z; RTTY, BPSK63; Bands: 160, 80, 40m; RST + QSO No.; Logs due: December 30.

**Russian 160-Meter Contest**, Dec 15, 2000z to Dec 16, 0000z; CW, SSB; Bands: 160m Only; Rus: RS(T) + Oblast code, non-Rus: RS(T) + Serial No.; Logs due: December 30.

**AGB-Party Contest**, Dec 15, 2100z to Dec 16, 0000z; CW, SSB, Digital; Bands: 80, 40m; AGB Member: RST + QSO No. + Member No., non-Member: RST + QSO No.; Logs due: January 12.

**OK DX RTTY Contest**, Dec 16, 0000z to Dec 17, 0000z; RTTY; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + CQ Zone; Logs due: December 23.

**Feld Hell Sprint**, Dec 16, 0000z to Dec 16, 2359z; Feld Hell; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; (see rules); Logs due: December 20.

**Padang DX Contest**, Dec 16, 1200z to Dec 16, 2359z; SSB; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; See Rules; Logs due: December 23.

**Croatian CW Contest**, Dec 16, 1400z to Dec 17, 1400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + Serial No.; Logs due: December 25.

**ARRL Rookie Roundup, CW**, Dec 17, 1800z to Dec 17, 2359z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6m; NA: Name + 2-digit year first licensed + (state/province/XE area/DX); Logs due: December 20.

**Run for the Bacon QRP Contest**, Dec 18, 0200z to Dec 18, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + (state/province/country) + (Member No./power); Logs due: December 24.

**QRP Fox Hunt**, Dec 20, 0200z to Dec 20, 0330z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: December 21.

**Phone Fray**, Dec 20, 0230z to Dec 20, 0300z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15m; NA: Name + (state/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: December 22.

CWops Mini-CWT Test, Dec 20, 1300z to Dec 20, 1400z, Dec 20, 1900z to Dec 20, 2000z, Dec 21, 0300z to Dec 21, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Member: Name + Member No., non-Member: Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: December 23.

NAQCC CW Sprint, Dec 21, 0130z to Dec 21, 0330z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20m; RST + (state/province/country) + (NAQCC No./power); Logs due: December 24.

NCCC RTTY Sprint, Dec 22, 0145z to Dec 22, 0215z; RTTY; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: December 24.

QRP Fox Hunt, Dec 22, 0200z to Dec 22, 0330z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: December 28.

NCCC Sprint, Dec 22, 0230z to Dec 22, 0300z; CW; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: December 24.

RAEM Contest, Dec 24, 0000z to Dec 24, 1159z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Serial No. + latitude (degs only) + longitude (degs only), N=North, S=South, W=West, O=East (e.g. 57N 85O); Logs due: January 23.

DARC Christmas Contest, Dec 26, 0830z to Dec 26, 1059z; CW, SSB; Bands: 80, 40m; DL: RS(T) + DOK (or Special Station abbreviation), non-DL: RS(T) + QSO No.; Logs due: January 15.

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

QRP Fox Hunt, Dec 27, 0200z to Dec 27, 0330z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: December 28.

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

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

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

QRP Fox Hunt, Dec 29, 0200z to Dec 29, 0330z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; RST + (state/province/country) + name + power output; Logs due: January 4.

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

RAC Winter Contest, Dec 30, 0000z to Dec 30, 2359z; CW, Phone; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6, 2m; VE: RS(T) + (province/territory), non-VE and VE0: RS(T) + Serial No.; Logs due: January 31.

Stew Perry Topband Challenge, Dec 30, 1500z to Dec 31, 1500z; CW; Bands: 160m Only; 4-Character grid square; Logs due: January 15.

Original QRP Contest, Dec 30, 1500z to Dec 31, 1500z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20m; RST + Serial No. + "/" + Power category; Logs due: January 31.

Bogor Old and New Contest, Dec 31, 1200z to Dec 31, 2359z; SSB; Bands: 80, 40m; RS + operator age; Logs due: January 31.

AGB New Year Snowball Contest, Jan 1, 0000z to Jan 1, 0100z; CW, SSB, Digital; Bands: 80m Only; AGB Member: RST + QSO No. + Member No., non-Member: RST + QSO No.; Logs due: January 7.

IQRP Quarterly Marathon, Jan 1, 0800z to Jan 7, 2000z; CW, SSB, Digital; Bands: All; RS(T); Logs due: January 13.

SARTG New Year RTTY Contest, Jan 1, 0800z to Jan 1, 1100z; RTTY; Bands: 80, 40m; RST + QSO No. + name + happy new year (native language); Logs due: January 2.

AGCW Happy New Year Contest, Jan 1, 0900z to Jan 1, 1200z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20m; AGCW: RST + Serial No. + "/" + Member No., non-AGCW: RST + Serial No.; Logs due: January 6.

AGCW VHF/UHF Contest, Jan 1, 1400z to Jan 1, 1700z (144), Jan 1, 1700z to Jan 1, 1800z (432); CW; Bands: 144 MHz, 432 MHz; RST + "/" + Serial No. + "/" Power class + "/" + 6-character grid locator; Logs due: January 7.

QRP ARCI New Years Sprint, Jan 1, 1500z to Jan 1, 1800z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + (state/province/country) + (ARCI number/power); Logs due: January 7.

ARS Spartan Sprint, Jan 2, 0200z to Jan 2, 0400z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + (state/province/country) + Power; Logs due: January 3.

Phone Fray, Jan 3, 0230z to Jan 3, 0300z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15m; NA: Name + (state/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: January 5.

CWops Mini-CWT Test, Jan 3, 1300z to Jan 3, 1400z, Jan 3, 1900z to Jan 3, 2000z, Jan 4, 0300z to Jan 4, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Member: Name + Member No., non-Member: Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: January 6.

UKEICC 80m Contest, Jan 3, 2000z to Jan 3, 2100z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; 4-Character grid square; Logs due: January 9.

AWA Linc Cundall Memorial CW Contest, Jan 3, 2300z to Jan 4, 2300z, Jan 6, 2300z to Jan 7, 2300z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40m; RST + Eqpt Year + Input Power (see rules for format); Logs due: January 13.

NRAU 10m Activity Contest, Jan 4, 1800z to Jan 4, 1900z (CW), Jan 4, 1900z to Jan 4, 2000z (SSB), Jan 4, 2000z to Jan 4, 2100z (FM), Jan 4, 2100z to Jan 4, 2200z (Dig); CW, SSB, FM, Digital; Bands: 10m Only; RS(T) + 6-character grid square; Logs due: January 10.

NCCC RTTY Sprint, Jan 5, 0145z to Jan 5, 0215z; RTTY; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: January 7.

NCCC Sprint, Jan 5, 0230z to Jan 5, 0300z; CW; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: January 7.

PODXS 070 Club PSKFest, Jan 6, 0000z to Jan 7, 0000z; PSK31; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + (state/province/country); Logs due: January 12.

WW PMC Contest, Jan 6, 1200z to Jan 7, 1200z; CW, SSB; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; PMC: RS(T) + PMC abbreviation, World: RS(T) + CQ Zone; Logs due: January 13.

**ARRL RTTY Roundup**, Jan 6, 1800z to Jan 8, 0000z; RTTY, Digital; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; W/VE: RST + (state/province), non-W/VE: RST + Serial No.; Logs due: January 11.

Kid's Day Contest, Jan 6, 1800z to Jan 6, 2359z; SSB; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 17, 15, 12, 10, 2m repeaters; name + age + QTH + favorite color; Logs due: January 7.

EUCW 160m Contest, Jan 6, 2000z to Jan 6, 2300z, Jan 7, 0400z to Jan 7, 0700z; CW; Bands: 160m Only; Affiliated Club Member: RST + name + club + membership no., Other: RST + name + "NM"; Logs due: January 9.

Phone Fray, Jan 10, 0230z to Jan 10, 0300z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15m; NA: Name + (state/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: January 12.

CWops Mini-CWT Test, Jan 10, 1300z to Jan 10, 1400z, Jan 10, 1900z to Jan 10, 2000z, Jan 11, 0300z to Jan 11, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Member: Name + Member No., non-Member: Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: January 13.

**VHF+ CONTESTS**

See ARRL Rookie Roundup, CW, above.

*SFCG Newsletter December 2017*