TALES FROM THE SWAMP

October 2018

Author: Frank KG4IGC

Greetings fellow Swamp Foxes! The fall contesting season has finally arrived and I couldn't be happier. It is time to dust off those rigs and start warming up those amps if you own one. The starting gates opened with one of the year's biggest contests this past weekend, the [CQWW RTTY Contest](#).

We did pretty well this year, with so far a total of six entries and a submitted cub total of 1,008,574 points compared to years score of 942,282 points with eight entries. We may have a couple of guys that have not posted their scores as of this printing of the newsletter, and if so our submitted aggregate score for this year will go up.

There were some reports that the log submission for the CQ WW RTTY contest was not working. The issue has been addressed and the problem has been resolved. If you have not done so already, you can submit your log on the [log upload page](#).

This is the time of year that I start looking at ways to better configure my antenna farm and make repairs if needed. Most of my antennas are wires, so it is much easier to see them in the fall with all of the leaves off of the trees.

I have already had to make one repair; my Gap Challenger had a bad bend in it. This was cause by a storm that blew through, and even though the antenna was guyed it still wound up getting damaged. When Hurricane Florence was headed toward the coast, I made the smart decision to lay it down on the ground. Fortunately I had a good friend in town that helped me make the necessary repairs and stand it back up. This is a tall antenna and although it is not heavy, it is rather unwieldy.

As for my wires, I need to move my 15 meter Super Loop from its current location to somewhere else in the yard. I think that it is too close to the house as it is giving me some major RFI problems. My 20/40 Super loop needs to be higher, but I am rather limited on tree height.

Last year I talked about replacing my 80 meter horizontal loop with a new one, but life got in the way and it never got

done. I am hoping that I can some time to work on that as well. One reason that I have procrastinated on putting up that antenna is because it requires me to climb up on the roof several times. I'm starting to realize that I am not a young as I used to be and that I don't have the agility that I used to have in my younger years.

As for Hurricane Florence, we got lucky and were spared from any major damage here in the low-country. Our neighbors to the North and possibly some of our upstate members were affected by this slow moving storm. The media is filled with plenty of images of damage and flooding, and I hope that our members and their families are made it through the storm unscathed. I know that things have been rough for the past few weeks, but if you can please check in on the groups.io reflector and let us know that you are OK.

The Beachfest and Computer Expo is right around the corner on Saturday October 27th, 2018. For those of you that plan to attend, you can find more information on both their [website](#) and also their [Facebook page](#). If all goes well, my wife Sarah KG4NKG and I plan on attending to do some recruiting for the club.

One last thing for this month, I was looking at the N3JFP website and noticed that there is a CW practice program available called [CWTeacher](#) . I know that there are some club members including myself that are working on improving

their CW skills, so I thought that I might throw that out there in case you would like to have another practice program in your arsenal. Best of all it is free so give it a look!

Member Contributions:

Who cares about Rob Sherwood?

By Kevan N4XL

Tom, W1TEF, and Dave, WB5NHL, sometimes rag me for talking about Rob Sherwood's, NC0B, receiver tests. They say those results aren't nearly as important as people make them out to be. They are right. This is true for both Contesters and DXer's.

As a teaser for the Competitive Contesting class given twice this year I wrote "Most importantly, for those of you not yet in the know the "Big Secret" used by all the highest scoring contesters will be revealed!" I did that being tongue-in-cheek because I had read a post from 2005 by John Dorr, K1AR, which he starts by saying "Shhhh...it's a Secret!" He went on to write "… So, here's the secret to winning (and don't tell ANYONE ELSE):"   and listed things to do and distractions to avoid. The most important being at the end.

"Other advice:

1) Stop reading all of the endless technical banter that people write about this subject and use your newly acquired free time to get on the air and become skilled at understanding propagation, callsigns and your station.

2) Operate enough so that people know your call by simply sending the first few dits.

3) Answer your QSLs.

If you do most of the above, you will do well in contests. Again, my only request is for you to please keep this information to yourself. "

K1AR also wrote monthly contest tips for the National Contest Journal (NCJ). A partial quote from one is "… something that can help your contest score nearly as much as a big signal… focus and utter concentration. Whether you're trying to lift a heavy weight in a gym or push a few more QSOs out of your station, the key is diligence and unabated attention to the task at hand… If you apply the same techniques to contesting that you do in your other endeavor, your scores will climb--and without a single dB of added signal strength."

Ken Keeler, N6RO, was profiled in a NCJ article in which these memorable lines can be found: "The best of the best gained their winning edge practicing the basics over and over in numerous forgettable events, often using inadequate radios and second-rate antennas. Discovering how to overcome such obstacles are lessons never forgotten."

Having a great station doesn't affect your contest scores or DX results nearly as much as people think it does. I'll pull an unjustifiable number out of the air and say 80% of your final score comes from your operating skills rather than from the size or power level of your station. Look at some of us in the Swamp Fox Contest Group. They get good scores using low power into a 40 meter dipole at 15 feet or while using an amplifier to feed a mobile antenna mounted on an aluminum ladder.

It isn't until you've developed yourself to the point where there isn't much low hanging operating fruit left that things like Sherwood's receiver results begin to matter. And if you have ever read contest score postings on the 3830 reporting site you know there are an awful lot of people working hundreds of stations during contests with rates of 50+ an hour using just 100 watts and wires in the trees.

Solar Storm Report & Space WX:

Here is the latest news on the current solar conditions from [Tamitha Skov's Youtube channel](#).

Club Happenings:

Dave WN4AFP reminded the club of the College, Iowa, New Jersey and New Hampshire QSO parties.

Kevan N4XL started a good discussion concerning whether or not runners should give their call after every Q.

Gil KS4YX mentioned that he has a Yaesu FT-900AT that he is selling for Doug Clark - KU4OC, who lives in Mt.Pleasant.

Randy N4SXX is moving his shack indoors and was looking for advice on a good keyboard for contesting.

Dave NJ4F shared a letter addressed to the club from John Humphrey, W4IM. John is the candidate running against the incumbent Vice Director Bill Morine, N2COP for the position of Vice Director of the Roanoke division.

Kevan N4XL advised the club that his old call NS4T will be up for grabs at the end of the month for anyone looking for a 2X1 call.

Kevan also mentioned that Joe, W1JT, has announced the release of WSJT-X 2.0 rc1. This is a new major version number for the WSJT-X program, with many new FT8 and MSK144 features of particular interest (and impact) to contesters.

Gary W4EEY has invited the club members to join his [Youtube Channel](#) that he has started a YouTube channel where he recently recorded his activity in the WAE SSB contest.

Dave NJ4F offered up a free HP L7680 inkjet printer that he no longer needs.

Robert AJ5E provided club members with a link for a [free antenna book](#).

Contests:

CQWW DX Contest, RTTY

N4IQ   SO(A)AB HP SO2R   575,024

NI7R   SO(A)AB LP   52,500

K7OM   SOAB HP   177,246

NJ4F   SOAB HP   73,790

KM4RK   SOAB LP   23,994

N4CO   SOSB20 LP   106,020

N4CO   SOSB20 Classic LP   106,020

Club Total: 1,008,574

CW OPS Open 2018   2000Z-2359Z

N4IQ SOHP SO2R 36,490

WN4AFP SOLP 2,704

NA Sprint CW Contest

WN4AFP Single Op LP 1,188

BARTG Sprint 75 2018

N4IQ Single Op HP 1,326

Tennessee QSO Party

WN4AFP SO Fixed Mixed LP 6,719

WAE SSB

W4EEY Single Op HP 32,032

K7OM Single Op HP   2,460

Hamfests:

Beachfest 2018 & Computer Expo: Sponsored by the Grand Stand ARC Saturday October 27th, 2018 8 AM-2 PM Location: Academy of Hope (formerly the Old Pee Dee School) 3521 Juniper Bay Road, Conway S.C. 29527 VE testing at 10:00 am Talk in 145.110 {PL 85.4}

SFOTA:

Current Leaderboard

2018 OVERALL STANDINGS

	CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1)	N4IQ	108	8906	453	0	5152	14511
2)	K7OM	36	1750	637	16	3861	6264
3)	WN4AFP	74	3543	957	0	0	4500
4)	NI7R	14	1667	183	0	754	2604
5)	KG4IGC	18	547	927	0	722	2196
6)	NJ4F	8	437	20	0	1094	1551
7)	N4XL	2	380	1037	0	0	1417
8)	WU0B	6	0	902	0	307	1209
9)	KG6MC	4	463	621	0	0	1084
10)	KS4YX	4	229	0	0	692	921
11)	W4SLT	6	0	581	0	0	581
12)	NE4EA	5	222	46	0	0	268
13)	AJ4UQ	6	1	132	1	119	253

2018 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS

CALL	CW QSO'S	CALL	SSB QSO'S	CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S	CALL	RTTY QSO'S
N4IQ	8906	N4XL	1037	K7OM	16	N4IQ	5152
WN4AFP	3543	WN4AFP	957	AJ4UQ	1	K7OM	3861
K7OM	1750	KG4IGC	927			NJ4F	1094
NI7R	1667	WU0B	902			NI7R	754
KG4IGC	547	K7OM	637			KG4IGC	722
KG6MC	463	KG6MC	621			KS4YX	692
NJ4F	437	W4SLT	581			WU0B	307
N4XL	380	N4IQ	453			AJ4UQ	119
KS4YX	229	NI7R	183				
NE4EA	222	AJ4UQ	132				
AJ4UQ	1	NE4EA	46				
		NJ4F	20				

Upcoming Contests:

4-Oct - 17 Oct 2018

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

NRAU 10m Activity Contest, Oct 4, 1700z to Oct 4, 1800z (CW), Oct 4, 1800z to Oct 4, 1900z (SSB), Oct 4, 1900z to Oct 4, 2000z (FM), Oct 4, 2000z to Oct 4, 2100z (Dig); CW, SSB, FM, Digital; Bands: 10m Only; RS(T) + 6-character grid square; Logs due: October 18.

SARL 80m QSO Party, Oct 4, 1700z to Oct 4, 2000z; SSB; Bands: 80m Only; RS + Serial No. + Grid Locator or QTH; Logs due: October 11.

SKCC Sprint Europe, Oct 4, 1900z to Oct 4, 2100z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + (state/province/country) + Name + (SKCC No./power); Logs due: October 11.

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

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

YLRL DX/NA YL Anniversary Contest, Oct 5, 1400z to Oct 7, 0200z; CW, SSB, Digital; Bands: Any; Serial No. + RS(T) + (ARRL Section/province/country); Logs due: November 5.

TRC DX Contest, Oct 6, 0600z to Oct 7, 1800z; CW, SSB; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; TRC Members: RST + Serial No. + "TRC", non-TRC Members: RST + Serial No.; Logs due: October 14.

Oceania DX Contest, Phone, Oct 6, 0800z to Oct 7, 0800z; Phone; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RS + Serial No.; Logs due: October 31.

Russian WW Digital Contest, Oct 6, 1200z to Oct 7, 1159z; BPSK63, RTTY; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; UA: RST(Q) + 2-character oblast code, non-UA: RST(Q) + QSO No.; Logs due: October 12.

International HELL-Contest, Oct 6, 1600z to Oct 6, 1800z (80m), Oct 7, 0900z to Oct 7, 1100z (40m); Hell; Bands: 80, 40m; RST + QSO No.; Logs due: October 21.

California QSO Party, Oct 6, 1600z to Oct 7, 2200z; CW, Phone; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; CA: Serial No. + County, non-CA: Serial No. + (state/VE area/DX); Logs due: October 22.

FISTS Fall Slow Speed Sprint, Oct 6, 1700z to Oct 6, 2100z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; FISTS: RST + (state/province/country) + first name + FISTS No., non-FISTS: RST + (state/province/country) + first name + power; Logs due: November 5.

SKCC QSO Party, Oct 6, 1800z to Oct 7, 1800z; CW; Bands: All, except WARC; RST + (state/province/country) + Name + 4-Character Grid Square; Logs due: October 15.

RSGB DX Contest, Oct 7, 0500z to Oct 7, 2300z; CW, SSB; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RS(T) + Serial No.; Logs due: October 12.

UBA ON Contest, SSB, Oct 7, 0600z to Oct 7, 0900z; SSB; Bands: 80m Only; ON: RS + Serial No. + ON Section, non-ON: RS + Serial No.; Logs due: October 28.

Peanut Power QRP Sprint, Oct 7, 2200z to Oct 7, 2359z; CW, SSB; Bands: 40, 20, 15m; RS(T) + (state/province/country) + (peanut no./power output); Logs due: October 21.

RSGB 80m Autumn Series, CW, Oct 8, 1900z to Oct 8, 2030z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; [other station's call] + [your call] + [serial no.] + [your name]; Logs due: October 11.

10-10 Int. 10-10 Day Sprint, Oct 10, 0001z to Oct 10, 2359z; All; Bands: 10m Only; 10-10 Member: Name + 10-10 number + (state/province/country), Non-Member: Name + 0 + (state/province/country); Logs due: October 18.

NAQCC CW Sprint, Oct 10, 0030z to Oct 10, 0230z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20m; RST + (state/province/country) + (NAQCC No./power); Logs due: October 13.

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

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

NCCC RTTY Sprint, Oct 12, 0145z to Oct 12, 0215z; RTTY; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: October 14.

NCCC Sprint, Oct 12, 0230z to Oct 12, 0300z; CW; Bands: (see rules); Serial No. + Name + QTH; Logs due: October 14.

Makrothen RTTY Contest, Oct 13, 0000z to Oct 13, 0800z, Oct 13, 1600z to Oct 14, 0000z, Oct 14, 0800z to Oct 14, 1600z; RTTY; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; 4-character grid square; Logs due: October 21.

Nevada QSO Party, Oct 13, 0300z to Oct 14, 2100z; CW, SSB, Digital; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, **VHF/UHF**; NV: Serial No. + "NV" + county, non-NV: Serial No. + (state/province/"DX"); Logs due: November 1.

Oceania DX Contest, CW, Oct 13, 0800z to Oct 14, 0800z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + Serial No.; Logs due: October 31.

QRP ARCI Fall QSO Party, Oct 13, 1200z to Oct 14, 2359z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; ARCI: RST + (state/province/country) + ARCI No., non-ARCI: RST + (state/province/country) + power out; Logs due: October 28.

Scandinavian Activity Contest, SSB, Oct 13, 1200z to Oct 14, 1200z;

SSB; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; RST + Serial No.; Logs due: October 19.

SKCC Weekend Sprintathon, Oct 13, 1200z to Oct 15, 0000z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, **6m**; RST + (state/province/country) + Name + (SKCC No./"NONE"); Logs due: October 21.

Arizona QSO Party, Oct 13, 1600z to Oct 14, 0600z, Oct 14, 1400 (local) to Oct 15, 0000 (local); CW, Phone, Digital; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, **6, 2m**; AZ: RS(T) + county, non-AZ: RS(T) + (state/province/country); Logs due: October 24.

Pennsylvania QSO Party, Oct 13, 1600z to Oct 14, 0500z, Oct 14, 1300z to Oct 14, 2200z; CW, Phone, PSK, RTTY; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, **6, 2m**; PA: Serial No. + County, non-PA: Serial No. + ARRL/RAC Section; Logs due: November 14.

FISTS Fall Unlimited Sprint, Oct 13, 1700z to Oct 13, 2100z; CW; Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; FISTS: RST + (state/province/country) + first name + FISTS No., non-FISTS: RST + (state/province/country) + first name + power; Logs due: November 12.

South Dakota QSO Party, Oct 13, 1800z to Oct 14, 1800z; CW, Phone, Digital; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, **6, 2m**; SD: RS(T) + county, non-SD: RS(T) + (state/province/country); Logs due: November 3.

PODXS 070 Club 160m Great Pumpkin Sprint, Oct 13, 2000z to Oct 14, 2000z; PSK31; Bands: 160m Only; RST + (state/province/country); Logs due: October 21.

UBA ON Contest, CW, Oct 14, 0530z to Oct 14, 0800z; CW; Bands: 80m Only; ON: RST + Serial No. + ON Section, non-ON: RST + Serial No.; Logs due: November 4.

4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint, Oct 15, 0000z to Oct 15, 0200z; CW, SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Member: RS(T) + (State/Province/Country) + Member No., Non-member: RS(T) + (State/Province/Country) + Power; Logs due: October 17.

ARRL School Club Roundup, Oct 15, 1300z to Oct 19, 2359z; CW, Phone, RTTY/Digital; Bands: All, except 60, 30, 17, 12m; RS(T) + Class (I/C/S) + (state/province/country); Logs due: November 3.

Telephone Pioneers QSO Party, Oct 15, 1800z to Oct 16, 0300z; CW/Digital, Phone; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, **VHF/UHF**; Members: RS(T) + chapter no. + name, non-Members: RS(T) + name; Logs due: December 10.

Phone Fray, Oct 17, 0230z to Oct 17, 0300z; SSB; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15m; NA: Name + (state/province/country), non-NA: Name; Logs due: October 19.

CWops Mini-CWT Test, Oct 17, 1300z to Oct 17, 1400z, Oct 17, 1900z to Oct 17, 2000z, Oct 18, 0300z to Oct 18, 0400z; CW; Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m; Member: Name + Member No., non-Member: Name + (state/province/country); Logs due: October 20.

RSGB 80m Autumn Series, Data, Oct 17, 1900z to Oct 17, 2030z; RTTY, PSK; Bands: 80m Only; [other station's call] + [your call] + [serial no.] + [your name]; Logs due: October 20.

VHF+ CONTESTS

Microwave Fall Sprint, Oct 6, 0800z to Oct 6, 1400z; not specified; Bands: 902 MHz and above; 6-character grid square; Logs due: October 20.

UBA ON Contest, 6m, Oct 14, 0800z to Oct 14, 1000z; CW, Phone; Bands: **6m Only**; ON: RS(T) + Serial No. + ON Section, non-ON: RS(T) + Serial No.; Logs due: November 4.

See Nevada QSO Party, SKCC Weekend Sprintathon, Arizona QSO Party, Pennsylvania QSO Party, South Dakota QSO Party, Telephone Pioneers QSO Party, above.

SFCG Newsletter October 2018