



August 2024

Editor: Kevan Nason, N4XL

Thank you to our group leadership:

President – Ed, K3DNE

Vice President - Dave, WN4AFP

Treasurer – Scott, KG9V

Secretary – Kevan, N4XL

Web Master – Frank, KG4IGC

SFCG Webpage: swampfoxcontestgroup.com

Welcome W1MRC

Please welcome Matthew W1MRC to the Swamp Fox Contest Group!

Matthew is our new ARRL SC Section Manager! He was referred to SFCG by SFCG member John NJ4Z (our previous SM who's now an Assistant SM). Matthew holds an Amateur Extra ticket and was first licensed in 1997. Matthew is also Vice President of the Ridge Amateur Radio Club in Batesburg-Leesville and a member of the Columbia Amateur Radio Club W4CAE, Richland County Cert Team KC4ERT, and the York County Amateur Radio Society YCARS.

Matthew enjoys operating State QSO Parties, ARRL contests and is active with POTA. He's primarily a SSB op but is starting to use some digital modes (FT4/FT8/PSK31) and is learning CW. He hopes to operate CW by the end of the year! Stations: His POTA Go Kit is an Icom ID-800H, Yaesu FT-710, ATAS-120A when in the car and a Wold River Coil or EFHW not in the car. At home gear consists of Yaesu FTdx10, Yaesu FTM-400XDR, Icom IC-9700, SDS200, RigRunner, Palstar AT-AUTO Tuner, Ameritron 811, and a OpenSpot. He has a 4 Element Arrow Yagi (I assume this is for 6m?) on the roof, Arrow J-Pole in the attic, and an OCF 80-10 wire Antenna in the back yard. He also has a Yaesu FT-891 and a Yaesu FTM-500DR in the car.

I noticed that on his QRZ.com page that Matthew proudly displays a Boston Red Sox logo - I guess I'll have to add a NY Yankee logo to my QRZ page now (lets go Yankees)!!! 😊

Matthew: Welcome to the Swamp Fox Contest Group!

73,

Ed K3DNE

Contest Tips:

- A tip for continuous improvement is to do some post contest analysis and capture it in your 3830 posts. It can be as detailed or general as you think is needed to help you make a contest band plan later. Dave WN4AFP did some of that after his IARU effort this year. He wrote, "My strategy was to start with 15m and work it as long as possible then getting some 10m Qs, believing that 20m and 40m would be open all night. My strategy worked! I was able to work EUs at just about any time during the contest. I picked up the elusive B5HQ and a few other exotic stations like 3D2, ZD7 and TO7. Looking back, I should spent more time 20m during the night to get more of those higher point value Qs."
- Contesting has traditionally been mostly a solo ride. You sit in your home shack and do the best you can not really knowing if you're in the running or not. It's easy to give in to the siren call of the great outdoors or that game on TV. We're a contest club. Contesting is by definition competitive. An aide to keeping your Butt In Chair (BIC) is looking at the Contest Online Scoreboard and seeing that other Ham is only a few Q's ahead of you. More and more people are discovering it brings a bit more excitement to the game. Give it a try. Yeah, it depresses some people to see how far behind the leaders they are. The way to look at it is you couldn't compete with AA3B's SO2R skills and great antenna farm anyway (check out his QRZ page) so pick someone in your own geographical area with a similar sized station as yours and set your sights on whuppin' that person. Kind of like comparing apples to apples. Using the scoreboards you can see in real time how you're doing.
- Our newer members might benefit from looking at tips in past newsletters. Check out the SFCG webpage. There's a section containing those old rags.
- When using CW, RTTY, or FT8 the Reverse Beacon Network (RBN) can tell you in real time during a contest how strong your signal is around the world. Type in your call and search DX sites for spots of your station. A world map is displayed showing where you are being heard. A line listing showing details, including signal strength, is below that. I regularly use that to decide whether it is worthwhile continuing to call CQ on a band.
<https://www.reversebeacon.net/srch.php>
- Some basics...
 - Always work dupes. You might think you worked them before but they might have put someone else in the log that you couldn't hear instead of you.

- Use your speech processor
- Use RF gain to reduce atmospheric static noise to a low level. It increases your radios dynamic range. It reduces ear fatigue.
- Accuracy is critical. Read the penalty points for getting the call wrong, the exchange wrong, or if you are not in the log of the other person when the log check is done. Make sure you hear the other station say YOUR call. Don't assume they are working you. Don't trust spots. Make sure you hear the other person say their call and it matches the spotted call.
 - Don't trust spots
 - Don't trust spots
 - Don't trust spots, verify them.
- Every Q counts. Be hungry to log everything you can from the moment the contest starts. Don't believe your logger when it says the first Q you log is only worth 100 points. That first Q is worth however many points the last Q in your log is worth – because if you lose that first Q it is one less you have at the end of the contest.
- To get a good score you need both a lot of multipliers AND a lot of logged Q's. Chasing mults is fun, but their advantage is they multiply the points you got by working those many non-mult stations. Don't fall into the trap of thinking mults are the key. Virtually every top scorer will tell you Rate wins. The flip side is you need to give up rate now and then to put some mults in the log. Learning how to balance that ratio during the actual contest when conditions are constantly changing is a critical ability to develop. It's one of those things that is mystically part art and part skill.

Highlights From The Reflector:

- Dave WN4AFP wrote, "I usually miss the SC mult on at least one or possibly two bands every tum i work the NAQP. I start on 10-15 and progress through the bands. Does anyone have a strategy to help us get all six SC mults?" Ed K3DNE usually operates Assisted. He replied, "I usually use the available mult and Q window to look for needed mults." Frank KG4IGC suggested building a couple NVIS antennas for close in contacts. *(Editor's note: I didn't post this online, but we need to be careful in how we ethically address this issue. It would be easy to slip down the proverbial slippery slope and be accused of arranging contacts. I like both Frank and Ed's suggestion. Finding mults is part of the fun challenges contesting presents.)*
- It was great to see strong SFCG participation in the NAQP's. Several posted modest scores from their efforts. Ed K3DNE wrote "My modest contribution to the club/team." Hey!! We love to see those modest scores. Getting them does a couple things. In many contests every score helps towards our overall club scores. And regardless of how we place it gets the SFCG name in print and helps draw more members. SFCG appears in the contest writeups, and our club is identified on every 3830 line entry y'all make. It's on the right of your line score.

- Matt NU4E has lately come down with a mild case of burnout. He might be getting better though. He wrote "I have to remind myself that I enjoy contesting and I must do it more, WOW that was fun." To back up a contest tip above he also wrote, "It was a nice race on the score board with Bill and Kevan."
- Bill N4IQ is kicking himself. He read the NAQP rule saying breaks have to be 30 minutes long, but... He wrote, "For my first half hour break at 5 PM, I only stayed off 25 minutes (instead of the required half hour) but the ten hour clock was going." He and I were neck and neck on the scoreboard at the end. He probably would have beaten me if he hadn't made that mistake. Two things come to mind. First, I've done the same bonehead thing before. I'm now careful about checking when my last Q was when I come back from a break. Second, never give up. Watching the scoreboard, I saw Bill was outscoring me using his two radios. (I only have one going these days.) I thought it unlikely I could beat him and considered dropping out early, but I kept my BIC hoping he would run out of time before me. He did. My score is higher right now, but maybe he'll beat me in the log check. He's the better CW op and his score reduction due to errors will probably be lower than mine.
- During the NAQP CW John K4FT verified an EFHW antenna with the feed point only 6 feet of the ground and a maximum height of 12 feet will not result in many Q's in your log. We appreciate you helping put SFCG in print more, John.
- Bob KZ3P pushed hard to put a 160 mult in the log. He used his 80 meter dipole. It took some effort, but he and I finally completed the Q. That's the drive needed to get good scores. Try everything.
- Frank KG4IGC figured out those buttons at the top of the N1MM Band Map might be useful for something. They are. Let us know what you end up doing with them, Frank.
- Frank KG4IGC worked Amanda KY4GS during the NAQP CW. I did too and imagine others in the SFCG put her into the log.
- Ed K3DNE shared some good news about expected 6 meter propagation this fall.
- Al NE4EA thinks he was visited by the HOA Nazi. He had checked out his station before a contest and on contest day found a 20:1 SWR and all his elevated radials were down. Huh.
- David AA4VT and John W7WZ are working hard to set up remote operating from John's station. Anyone have an IC7610 to sell?
- Dave WN4AFP posted a neat audio file about the ABC's of CW. Jim N2ZZ wrote, "Dave, this is major cool!!"
- Herschel KA2G keeps threatening to learn CW. I'm kind of the same way about setting up to do RTTY. Herschel, should we petition President Ed K3DNE to establish a SFCG Procrastination Committee? You and I could be charter members.

- Frank KG4IGC added a folder about WAE Contest QTC information to the SFCG Groups.io reflector. See the files section on the reflector. Thanks, Frank.

Observations by the Editor:

- Congratulations Matthew for accepting the role of ARRL SC Section Manager. Also, thank you John NJ4Z for stepping up and finishing Marc Tarplee's term. We appreciate the support both of you give the Amateur community.
- Thought I'd put in a shameless plug for the Greenwood Hamfest. We're back and will be holding it January 11th. It will be at a new location this year. I'll put out some more info as we get closer.
- Some of the DXpeditions have begun using WSJT-X in Super Fox Mode. Look it up if you don't know what that is because it will undoubtedly become more common. Gary W4EEY wrote this on another reflector.

I was able to work K8R this morning on 20M using the new Super Fox mode. I had installed version 2.7.1 which has the Super Fox mode built in but could never decode K8R. I am reading emails from the developer... that there might be some coding issues with this version.

I had to uninstall all versions of WSJT-X previously installed, then install the older 2.7.0-rc5. When I ran this older version I was able to decode K8R just fine and had them in the log with three calls.

Save yourself a headache and use 2.7.0-rc5 for now.

73, Gary W4EEY

- Found this on the Contesting.com reflector
Cautionary tale about cable waterproofing
I've been having problems with my rotator, currently stuck due west. Today, in order to verify connection from the controller in the shack, I cut open the jacket of the good quality 6 x #18 cable at the tower base - imagine my surprise when water flowed out of the cut, even though all the cable above that point is vertical.
73, Pete N4ZR
- In last month's newsletter I wrote this about clusters, "They all receive the same data as VE7CC, so there isn't any need to always go to that particular one." Ran across this response to a man asking the N1MM reflector what cluster he should choose:

Most if not all clusters are interlinked. My cluster at dxc.k0xm.net:7300 (K0XM-5) is based in Kansas City, but I have connections to 5 USA clusters and a few in EU. We exchange all the info freely, and allow all connections so it is your choice.

Chuck K0XM

N1MM+ Tips:

NOTE: Unless otherwise specified references to problems people are having, solutions, and tips come from the N1MMLoggerPlus Group.io reflector. A search there for items described should turn up the original posts and replies.

- Selected changes made since last newsletter. (NOTE: These often come from a user requesting a change or fix to a problem.)
 - Added {SwapContests}, {SwapContests3} and {SwapContests4} macros to facilitate switching contests with QSOs already in progress (many) (Coded by N1MM) (Editor's Note: See below)
 - Moved QSO Party Bonus Station NIMB from EW to the Log window to improve visibility when switching contests (Coded by N1MM)
 - Disabled {SentRSTCut} and {SentRST} when no RST fields in EW (Coded by N1MM) (Editor's Note: An example is Field Day where the exchange is Section and Class. Such as 2A SC)
 - Added keystroke mapping capability see:
<https://n1mmwp.hamdocs.com/setup/keyboard-shortcuts/#key-mapping>

- How to delete a log from a database.
 - Go to "File."
 - Open the desired database, or verify you have it already open. If already open you will need to go to File>Open Log in Database.
 - Left click on the desired contest. NOTE: You must left click on the log even if it is already highlighted.
 - Push the Delete key. NOTE: Left clicking does not bring up an option to delete the log. You must push the actual Delete key.
 - Select Yes when asked if you really want to delete the file.

- There have been a few N1MM reflector questions about why they must push enter twice to enter a contact into the log, why N1MM sends Fkey messages unexpectedly, or why some of the Entry Window Fkey blocks are highlighted. In almost every case it is because Enter Sends Message (ESM) was inadvertently turned on. ESM is turned on and off two different ways. First is a selection on the Config drop down list. Second is pushing CTRL+M. Accidentally doing either of those things can cause surprises as several hams have found out. It is worth

noting that at least one of those people replied 'No. I don't use ESM' when asked if it was on. They didn't realize it had accidentally been activated. Eventually, they were convinced to check and saw it was in fact on.

- A ham sent me his Run Fkey file asking why his RIT wouldn't clear after logging a Q by hitting F3 (or Enter). This would have stumped me if I hadn't remembered something I had read years back. See if you can figure out what is wrong before moving on to the solution.

```
F1 Run CQ,{TX}{ENTERLF}CQ NA * * CQ {RX}
F2 Run Exch,{TX}{enterLF} {EXCH} ! {RX}
F3 Run TU,{TX}{ENTERLF} TU * CQ {CLEARRRIT} {RX}
F4 Nw.POP,{TX}{ENTER}! {LOGTHENPOP}TU NOW...{ENTER}{F5}{F2} {RX}
F5 His Call,{TX} ! {RX}
```

My reply was "Don't know for sure if it makes a difference regarding {CLEARRRIT}, but I would put it after the {RX} in the F3 line. I once read that some macro commands need to be at the end of the line to work correctly." Doing so solved his issue.

Now seems like a good time to mention that Bill N4IQ told me that when doing RTTY with N1MM the {RX} macro isn't required to change back to receive. N1MM is apparently smart enough to know that when the Fkey string ends the operator wants to go back to receive. I mentioned that to the ham, but also warned N1MM might not be smart enough to know it was supposed to run {CLEARRRIT} in the case where he both moved {CLEARRRIT} to the end AND removed {RX} from the string. He didn't tell me if he tried that so I've no idea what would happen with that coding arrangement.

- Prepopulated exchange information from Call History Files (CHF) in contests like the NAQP's isn't always accurate. Like spots, don't trust prefills. Verify before logging the Q. An example situation. You work someone on 10 meters. The CHF says the name should be Andy and they are in GA. Instead, the op gives you the name Climber. You correct the name and move on. You later run across the guy on 15. Again, the CHF says the name is Andy. Nope, its Climber. You change the name and log the Q. You run across him on 20. Guess what happens? Enough! N1MM Development Team to the rescue. Tools>Update Log Call History with Current Log. His name will be Climber when you later work him on 40. I now make it a habit to update the Call History file whenever I find myself in a slower rate period.
- N1MM is complicated.
 - There is a Frequently Asked Questions page at <https://n1mmwp.hamdocs.com/faq/>
 - "How To" videos are available at <https://n1mmwp.hamdocs.com/support/how-to-videos/>
 - The latest documentation is available at <https://n1mmwp.hamdocs.com/>

Upcoming Contests:

See the WA7BNM webpages <https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html>

SFOTA Current Leaderboard:

Aug-14-2024						
Current Leaderboard						
2024 OVERALL STANDINGS						
CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1) N4IQ	68	9980	2095	549	3897	16521
2) WB4HRL	243	11973	1013	394	1485	14865
3) KE4EA	174	9887	498	8	3	10194
4) WN4AFP	74	7518	2559	0	0	10077
5) K2SX	26	6819	0	0	0	6819
6) KZ3P	64	1985	2976	0	1322	6283
7) K3DNE	33	1442	3688	929	0	6057
8) K4QQG	38	0	4280	513	586	5379
9) N4XL	10	4178	1057	0	0	5235
10) NU4E	6	2400	2151	44	0	4595
11) K4FT	63	4188	166	0	0	4354
12) KG4IGC	11	564	863	0	1826	3253
13) AA5JF	7	1745	806	14	0	2565
14) KD4S	47	1582	208	87	528	2405
15) KA2G	30	0	2051	316	0	2367
16) N1UZ	11	333	0	688	1188	2209
17) N4QI	39	1548	313	0	222	2083
18) NI7R	6	1568	88	0	0	1656
19) KY4ID	13	1185	62	0	377	1624
20) N1SUZ	28	0	1615	0	0	1615
21) K7OM	12	553	0	0	976	1529
22) AA4SD	12	1452	0	0	0	1452
23) WA4LDU	26	246	519	431	184	1380
24) N4VZ	13	0	433	595	326	1354
25) W1RPG	18	0	708	102	27	837
26) KS4YX	5	176	0	13	565	754
27) N2OG	7	253	294	0	0	547
28) WA2BCK	1	0	0	375	0	375
29) WB5NHL	9	0	194	0	102	296
30) K4CU	3	272	3	0	0	275
31) N4VGE	1	0	167	0	0	167
32) NE4EA	1	50	0	0	0	50

2024 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS							
CALL	CW QSO'S	CALL	SSB QSO'S	CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S	CALL	RTTY QSO'S
WB4HRL	11973	K4QQG	4280	K3DNE	929	N4IQ	3897
N4IQ	9980	K3DNE	3688	N1UZ	688	KG4IGC	1826
KE4EA	9887	KZ3P	2976	N4VZ	595	WB4HRL	1485
WN4AFP	7518	WN4AFP	2559	N4IQ	549	KZ3P	1322
K2SX	6819	NU4E	2151	K4QQG	513	N1UZ	1188
K4FT	4188	N4IQ	2095	WA4LDU	431	K7OM	976
N4XL	4178	KA2G	2051	WB4HRL	394	K4QQG	586
NU4E	2400	N1SUZ	1615	WA2BCK	375	KS4YX	565
KZ3P	1985	N4XL	1057	KA2G	316	KD4S	528
AA5JF	1745	WB4HRL	1013	W1RPG	102	KY4ID	377
KD4S	1582	KG4IGC	863	KD4S	87	N4VZ	326
NI7R	1568	AA5JF	806	NU4E	44	N4QI	222
N4QI	1548	W1RPG	708	AA5JF	14	WA4LDU	184
AA4SD	1452	WA4LDU	519	KS4YX	13	WB5NHL	102
K3DNE	1442	KE4EA	498	KE4EA	8	W1RPG	27
KY4ID	1185	N4VZ	433			KE4EA	3
KG4IGC	564	N4QI	313				
K7OM	553	N2OG	294				
N1UZ	333	KD4S	208				
K4CU	272	WB5NHL	194				
N2OG	253	N4VGE	167				
WA4LDU	246	K4FT	166				
KS4YX	176	NI7R	88				
NE4EA	50	KY4ID	62				
		K4CU	3				

3830 Activity:

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
1010SumSSB				
08/03/24	K4QQG	Single Op	HP	70
222Up				
08/10/24	WA4LDU	Single Op	LP	1,720
50FallSprnt				
08/10/24	WA4LDU	Single Op	LP	4
AIQP				
07/28/24	K4FT	SOCW	LP	48
07/28/24	KE4EA	SOMixed	LP	320
07/27/24	KZ3P	SOMixed	LP	180
07/29/24	N4QI	SOCW	LP	18
07/28/24	WA4LDU	SOSSB	LP	50
07/28/24	WB4HRL	SOMixed	HP	800
08/01/24	WN4AFP	SOMixed	LP	286
Batavia FT8				
08/03/24	KA2G	Single Op	LP	1,920
CQWW VHF				
07/22/24	WA4LDU	SOAB	LP	3,828
IARU				
07/16/24	KE4EA	SOAB(A)Mixed	LP	90,294
07/15/24	KG4IGC	SOAB(A)Mixed	LP	58,149
07/15/24	N2OG	SOAB(A)Mixed	LP	39,886
07/15/24	NI7R	SOAB(A)CW	HP	25,088
07/15/24	WN4AFP	SOAB(A)Mixed	LP	443,190
IOTA				
07/28/24	K4QQG	SO(A)12SSB	HP	19,778
MDC QP				
08/11/24	K4CU	Standard	LP	72
08/11/24	K4FT	Oddball	LP	1,490
08/11/24	KA2G	Amplified	HP	110
08/12/24	KD4S	Fixed	HP	110
08/12/24	KE4EA	Fixed	LP	114

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
08/11/24	KZ3P	Standard	LP	554
08/11/24	WB4HRL	Unlimited	HP	110
08/11/24	WN4AFP	Standard	LP	330
NAQP CW August				
08/04/24	AA4SD	Single Op	QRP	14,432
08/04/24	K3DNE	Single Op Assisted	LP	41,406
08/04/24	K4FT	Single Op	LP	18,746
08/05/24	KE4EA	Single Op Assisted	LP	25,935
08/05/24	KG4IGC	Single Op Assisted	LP	12,060
08/04/24	KY4ID	Single Op Assisted	LP	31,605
08/05/24	KZ3P	Single Op Assisted	LP	27,685
08/04/24	N1UZ	Single Op	LP	1,290
08/04/24	N4IQ	Single Op Assisted	LP	154,833
08/04/24	N4XL	Single Op Assisted	LP	174,440
08/04/24	N17R	Single Op Assisted	LP	7,920
08/04/24	NU4E	Single Op Assisted	LP	193,900
08/04/24	WB4HRL	Single Op Assisted	LP	21,930
08/04/24	WN4AFP	Single Op Assisted	LP	97,194
NAQP RTTY July				
07/23/24	K4QQG	Single Op	LP	4,550
07/22/24	KD4S	Single Op Assisted	HP	34,815
07/21/24	KG4IGC	Single Op Assisted	LP	11,178
07/21/24	KZ3P	Single Op Assisted	LP	16,356
07/21/24	N1UZ	Single Op	LP	16,683
07/21/24	N4IQ	Single Op Assisted	LP	94,809
07/29/24	N4VZ	Single Op	LP	3,621
07/21/24	NN4SS	Single Op	HP	6,042
07/21/24	WB4HRL	Single Op Assisted	LP	7,155
WAE CW				
08/12/24	NN4SS	Single Op	HP	75,750
07/26/24	W1RPG	Single Op	LP	256

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73 es QRT de N4XL