



February 2026

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

New Award Policy

Ed K3DNE announced a new SFCG Award Policy for when the SFCG wins a plaque or award for a Team effort in a contest. Because SFCG does not have a permanent meeting location or clubhouse where club awards can be displayed, the club voted at the annual meeting to adopt a fair way of distributing awards earned by the club.

Under this policy, when SFCG receives an award for a club achievement (such as State QSO Parties or first-place club competition finishes, etc.), the award goes to the club member who had the highest score for SFCG in that specific event.

However, if that operator has already received the same award for that same contest in a previous year, the award is passed down to the next highest-scoring club member from that event. This “trickle-down” process continues until the award goes to an operator who has not previously received that specific contest award.

In addition, the club will take a photo of each award and display it on the SFCG website so all members can share in the recognition and the recipient may make the award available, as appropriate and convenient, for use in SFCG exhibits where the display may enhance the club's image.

Sectionalized In-person/On-air Gatherings

By Ed K3DNE President SFCG

Another outcome of our annual meeting: This is based on an email I received from a member suggesting "sectionalized in-person gatherings" and/or on-air gatherings.

Below are the bullet-points discussed during our annual meeting on the subject. Several years ago, I hosted a club get-together at my QTH (Cross Hill, SC on Lake Greenwood) which I'm happy to do again in the future. John W7WZ volunteered to host a get-together at his QTH in Fort Mill, SC. Scott KG9V stated he'd assist W7WZ with that get-together. I'd really like to get a member (or two) to volunteer to host/coordinate an in-person gathering somewhere on the eastern area of SC to accommodate those members (Charleston/Hilton Head, Myrtle Beach/Florence, I actually know of a great lunch spot in Florence!).

On the subject of on-air gatherings - great idea! Need to come up with a time and freq and someone to be "net-control"/coordinator.

Our club needs member involvement to volunteer to host/coordinate in-person gathering(s) and/or to coordinate on-air gatherings. If you are interested in volunteering please either reply to this email or contact me directly. It can be as easy as sending a few emails via our reflector, reserving a couple of tables at a local eatery and gather and share a meal with fellow club members and/or interested guests - this is not intended to be overwhelming.

Meeting Bullet-Points specific to sectionalized in-person and/or on-air gatherings

- Increase camaraderie and mutual sharing. Eyeball QSO's.
- Especially nice for those who can't attend the annual meeting often due to distance (our club now uses a 250 mile diameter membership circle) or scheduling conflicts.
- Not to supersede the annual meeting - no official club business would take place.
- Location: Member's QTH, restaurant/diner/fast-food joint, picnic area at a park, club house of a member's general club, at or after a local hamfest/tailgate, etc.
- On-Air gathering: Attempted several years ago (for a few months) on 75m, averaged 3-6 check-ins, often asked to QSY due to another net on or near that freq. Maybe 160m would be better?
- Need: CLUB VOLUNTEERS to host/coordinate!

73,

Ed K3DN

Editor: There was considerable follow-on discussion to the posting on the SFCG reflector. Follow the discussion beginning with post #32381

Do You Have a 50 Ah LiFePO4 Battery to Loan?

Dave WN4AFP relayed this request:

KN6VTC, Jim Marks will be running Expedition style in South Carolina from a few parks/counties. He needs a favor.... Does anyone have a LiFePO4 battery (50Ah should last the entire contest), a folding table and chair that Jim could use just for the contest? He's flying into Charlotte and wants to operate for the entire contest. He can't bring the Li batteries on his flight. He was also thinking about operating from Landsford Canal State Park.

New Club Competition Category in South Carolina QSO Party

Dave WN4AFP reported the following:

The SCQP Club Competition is available for all amateur radio clubs located within the state of South Carolina. Club location is based upon the club's mailing address.

The scoring on this competition will be based upon the total combined score of all club members who submit a log to the SCQP before the log submission deadline of 14 days following the end of the contest. The log of each participant must include the club name in the Cabrillo log.

SCQP Bonus Station (W4CAE, WW4SF, K4TYZ) Operator's logs will not be included in their club's total score for the Club Competition.

A plaque will be awarded to the top scoring South Carolina amateur radio club.

Contest Tips

- Dave WN4AFP doesn't know he wrote this tip. While cleaning my shack I ran across a printout of an email Dave sent me in 2016. At the end of the email he wrote, "you know what it takes to win any contest... Here are a few of my "keys"
 - #1 BIC for the entire event (or at least as much time as your competitors) ...
 - #2 KNOW your "on-air" operator strengths and weaknesses and Maximize your strengths
 - #3 KNOW you station's strengths/weaknesses and Maximize your strengths
 - #4 KNOW the contest – read rules 7 times prior to the event
 - #5 SET REALISTIC GOALS - You can control your activity so set a REALISTIC QSO GOAL. Know what activity you have to produce to Win the contest.
 - #6 KNOW your top competitors – identify ops with similar station (I identify ONE target station for every contest... W2EG is my 'target' for WPX CW this year.) – Research previous scores.
 - #7 BE COMPETITIVE and ENJOY IT. Don't allow contesting to become a stressful event. Contesting is a stress reliever. One more tidbit – Please use an interesting and inviting audio CQ in your voice keyer. Encourage a response. Even in a contest Ops can tell who's enjoying it.

I personally believe that the Operator Skills is more important than any other factor.
- From "How to be Competitive" by Rob WS1A
 - **Acquire as much knowledge as possible about the contest.** First, learn the rules of the contest. That means knowing the exchange and the scoring. It also means understanding what strategy you should use to maximize your score. Figure out how long should you chase a multiplier and how many Qs do you need to be competitive. Figure out if a multiplier a 3-point QSO is more valuable to you toward the end of the contest. Calculate how many mults you will need to be competitive.
 - **Study the local competition.** Study the scores, multipliers, and prefixes worked by those in your area. Call them or write them and find out their strategies. (Of course, they may not want to tell you!) Ask for copies of their logs. Study where they pointed their antennas and

when. Find out what bands they favored and why. Anyone who beats you is in a position to teach you something. Instead of reviling them, study them. Don't forget the other end of the spectrum. Some of the most valuable lessons I've learned have come from low-power stations with wire antennas.

- **Learn your radio.** All (well, most) of those knobs on your radio have a purpose. Find out what they do. Read and study the manual. Do you know where the manual is? If you can quickly set a split frequency, you might be the first to work a new station of 40m. If you learn how to use those 100+ memories efficiently, you can stack up big stations and throw your call in rapidly to 2, 5, or more stations simultaneously. Get all your filters in place. Get a voice keyer. Learn your DSP. Get a better mike. Tweak the audio until it sounds crystal clear and with all the punch of a buzz saw cutting through aluminum. Remember that setting for the contest, then turn it back to mushy so the boys on 80m don't complain.

(Editor's Note for N1MM users: Setting a split frequency is easy. Enter the frequency for the other VFO and press CTRL+Enter.)

Reflector:

- There was a bit of chatter about moving our Annual Meeting to March, but it kind of petered out.
- John W4IX has been dropping emails with some amazing scores. Too many to list. To get a feel for how well John is doing go to 3830, type in his call, and look over the list of scores. Click on his call for a particular contest and see how well he placed against others. You will usually find him in the top 5 of 3830 posts for any given contest.
- Bob KZ3P lost his ZS6BKW antenna due to our ice storm but was thankful that was his only loss.
- Dave WN4AFP shared his certificate from the 2025 IARU contest. 2nd place W/VE, 2nd place Zone 8, and 1st place SC Mixed Mode, Low Power. Great job Dave!
- Dave WN4AFP also shared his IARU Log Check Report (LCR) from that IARU effort. If you aren't looking at your LCR's you aren't looking at a valuable tool which can help you improve your accuracy and scores.
- Frank KG4IGC found an apparel source that can print our SFCG Logo. With a bit of modification to our Logo it is easy to add your call sign too. See the thread starting with post 322262. Five logo files were added to the SFCG reflector website for use.
- Dave KD4D is looking for Alpha testers for his new Contest Log Analytics Web site. See post #32275 for details.
- Dick KD4S was the featured member on QRZ's website. He was quite humble about the honor. "Geesh! I didn't know they put old fat guys on that page."
- Some participated in the new Real Time Contest Contest. I assume that was a trial run for the new real time score reporting system being set up within N1MM (and other?) contest loggers. It was also good advertising for the effort and undoubtedly a recruiting effort for participants. There was some post contest critique beginning with post #32321
- We were saddened to hear Elwood Downey WB0OEW became a SK. HamClock will soon follow its founder to the grave. Herschel KA2G reported this from a third source, "HamClock

has reached end-of-life, the last release is version 4.22. All HamClocks will cease to function in June 2026.”

- John W7WZ reported his contest station used the call AA4V in the CQWW DX SSB contest. They are looking placed well in the M/2 HP category. #3 US, #7 NA, and #20 World. Congratulations John and team!
- There was considerable activity in the CQ WPX RTTY contest.

Schofield Middle School

Many Amateurs say they like to encourage Youth in Amateur Radio, but the North Augusta Belvedere Radio Club backs up the talk with action by supporting Ham activities in Aiken, SC's Schofield Middle School. SFCG members Dr. Jim N2ZZ and Dave WB5NHL are also in NABRC and support NABRC's long standing effort to spread Ham radio to young people. In post #32417 Dr. Jim wrote this comment and shared information from Dave about this year's efforts.

Congrats to all the kids, and the Elmers! What an accomplishment!

Schofield Middle School in Aiken is a regular top competitor in the bi-annual SCR for many years. Here is last week's totals for 5 days of after school operating by 5 students (7th-8th grade)

Station is an Icom 7300 with an Elecraft KPA500 using an OCF dipole. Most operation is 20M with some 40M late in the day.

Totals

901 total contacts
252,280 points
22 DX
45 STATES
6 CANADIAN PROVINCES
18:14 air time
Hourly rate average 48.39

This the second highest score in 15 years, and highest since COVID.

Excerpts from Riley Hollingsworth's Dayton Hamvention FCC forum Comments, May 19, 2007

By Kevan N4XL

Some of our newer Hams might not know who Riley Hollingsworth is. He was the Special Counsel for the Spectrum Enforcement Division of the FCC's Enforcement Bureau legal for many years and was both enforcer and supporter of the Amateur Community. He retired from the FCC in 2008. Many Hams were saddened to lose his voice in the FCC and his guidance being backed-up with authority to our Amateur Service. He is still very well respected by many of our Old Timers. He was employed by the FCC when he gave this talk.

... Now I have specific messages for more of you.

To the Nets: Just because you have been on the same frequency for 75 years, that doesn't mean you own it. All frequencies are shared. If you vary your frequency, or even if you don't have a net one night, the radio world isn't going to end

...

To the testers: be more courteous. You are responsible for the frequency you are operating on and realize that's true even when you operate split. All frequencies are shared.

To those who don't like testers" Lighten UP!! Contests are short lived. Use the QARC bands. Wash the car. Cut the grass. Learn from the testers – and this applies to you Traffic net folks too – learn from the testers. They pass information a lot faster and more efficiently than you do. Testers are some of the best radio operators on planet Earth. If the testers operated at the same pace as some of the emergency traffic nets, the contest would be over after the first few dozen signal strengths were exchanged.

...

To the QRP'ers: Thank you, thank you, thank you for your vitality, inspiration, enthusiasm and for being BUILDERS again! I wish I could take your enthusiasm and spread it over all segments of Amateur radio. When I watch you folks, I see the excitement and magic of my first contact.

To those who don't like QRP'ers: Lighten UP! ANYONE can use a linear amplifier as a crutch.

To the rag chew nets: 4 or 5 people meeting on the same frequency every night for 50 years using 1200 watts to talk a few hundred miles when 100 watts would do just fine is not a net. It's an informal roundtable. It ain't going to hurt you either to vary your frequency or skip a night. And the so-called "net" on 75 that bills itself as an "Oasis of Amateur Radio", Give us all a break. You are an ordinary roundtable. An no net is an "Oasis of Amateur Radio."

To those of you who don't like DXpeditions: Lighten UP! If a group of people want to spend a lot of money to go to a rock or sandbar in the ocean, live in a tent and swat flies

and scorpions for a week and talk over Ham radio 24 hours a day, SO WHAT: LET'EM DO IT!! DXpeditions, too, are short lived, and such operation must be important to SOMEONE. Scarborough Reef drew over 50,000 contacts didn't it. And weren't over half of them CW by the way? Nobody would have even known about it had it not been published in popular radio magazines.

Best Keyboard?

By Kevan N4XL

Bill AA7XT asked the N1MMLoggerPlus reflector, "Looking for recommendations on the best PC keyboard to use with N1MM during a long contest. In other words, best for accuracy, durability, ergonomics, etc." Here are some selected excerpts from the replies he received. I've been happy with my Razer Black Widow Chroma with its mechanical keys and extra programmable gaming keys, but I've never thought of some of these tips so may look further afield for my next keyboard.

Tom N1MM

If you don't touch type, I don't think it matters much. If you do, then you should look at mechanical keyboards. Unfortunately, Best Buy doesn't have good ones to try. Microcenter might. Mechanical keyboards have a whole subculture, as evidenced by this channel on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@HipyoTech>

I recently bought a Cherry XTRFY MX 3.1 because I knew Cherry made good keys some years ago. They have been eclipsed by Keychron and some others. While my keyboard is better than my much better than average non-mechanical keyboard, it is not as good as the best mechanicals. Avoid Logitech as well.

Features to look for:

- Hot swappable keys (i.e. you can replace broken ones, or even change them all for a different feel).
- Clicky, tactile or silent as you prefer - here is where you want to try them.
- Wired, 2.4 GHz, and Bluetooth capable. Wired gives n-key rollover, which only matters if you are a really fast typist.
- If you want to play with lighting, some are easier to program than others. I wanted to play around with lighting individual keys on my Cherry keyboard, and it was not practical to do on-the-fly.
- Some keyboards have knobs that can be reprogrammed to N1MM+ functions, like RIT tune or jumping spots in AMQ.
- Keyboards come in any number of keys. Whatever you do, you must have function keys.

My Cherry keyboard is well built, but doesn't have hot-swappable keys or any of the other features. But it did improve my typing speed by about 5 wpm.

Steve KB6OJS

... unless you get a "gamer" keyboard that allows you to reprogram "soft" keys for specific purposes, any PC keyboard that you're comfortable with will be fine with any application. I'm partial to the Unicomp keyboards, which are mechanical and are the same technology (licensed from IBM) that are like the original IBM PC/XT/AT/PS2 keyboards in terms of feel and durability...

... If you use a regular keyboard and need macros to do custom things in N1MM+, you may want to look into an app like KeyText which allows you to set a wide array of custom actions based on specific key combinations. I've set macros based on unusual key combinations that are not generally used, like Ctrl-Shift- or Ctrl-Alt-whatever...

Butchie KA0WWT

For digital (CW-RTTY) contests I use this: <https://www.razer.com/gaming-keypads/razer-tartarus-pro> and reprogram the keys that sit under my fingers. Between this and my mouse I have cut down keyboard entry to over 85%

For SSB contests I like my Logitech ergo keyboard.

Ty K3MM

A lot of that is subjective, but If you like 2kbd SO2R I recommend TKL kbds as it saves a lot of desk space. TKL=ten key less or without a number pad

John K3TN

Years ago I went with mechanical keyboard from Das Keyboards, a major supplier to gamers. I went with the TKL (Ten Key-Less) since with N1MM ESM I've stopped using the numeric keyboard long ago

Tim K9WX

You can read about my adventures with mechanical keyboards in the October 2021 issue of the CWops newsletter: <https://cwops.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/solid-copy-2021.10.6.pdf>

Gerald VE1DT

(Editor: The Keychron K Pro was mentioned. It has a rotary knob. Tom N1MM asked how the knob was used and Gerald replied.)

Google Ai says:

AI Overview

The rotary knob on Keychron K Pro keyboards is a fully customizable aluminum encoder—controlling volume/mute by default—that can be remapped using

VIA/QMK software to handle almost any keypress, combination, or macro. It functions as three distinct inputs (rotate clockwise, counter-clockwise, and press) and can be programmed for tasks like zooming, scrubbing video, changing browser tabs, or navigating apps.

Observations by the Editor:

- Don't want Skimmer spots flooding your Logging program? Select dxc.k1ttt.net:7373 as your cluster. When you log in it says, "No RBN spots are available on this node."
- CCUser is a popular Telnet spot filter program that was developed by VE7CC. It is very powerful, but its complexity can be difficult to master. Gary ZL3IFB has created a CC User Manual to help people navigate its intricacies. It is a work in progress and since it is in its infancy undergoes frequent updates. Gary posts:

It's still far from complete but I've squeezed in some more content this month:
https://www.g4ifb.com/CC_User_Manual.pdf

Although my time on this project is limited, corrections, better explanations and improvement suggestions are most welcome, particularly for any of the red text bits where I'm floundering, flapping around like a flounder on the deck of a fishing boat. Please email me: ZL2iFB@...

73

Gary ZL2iFB

Logger32 beater/tester & scribe

DXCC Honor Roll & QSL card checker

- Sourcing electronic repair parts can be time consuming. Dallas N4DDM uses FindChips.com . He says, "Works on any part number used in the electronic industry, not just Chips. The only downside is you need a part number." Enter a part and within a second or two a list of several vendors appears along with the price and stock status. If you have more than one part to order Dallas writes, "The trick is to find both at one vendor to share shipping cost."
- Thinking of buying your first Amplifier? From the Amateur-Repairs reflector: K4DDM owns an Ameritron 811 amp and just inherited an Acom 1011. He can only keep one and asked the group which he should keep. Two people responded with the same thought. Here is the reply from Dave W0LEV.

The 811 tubes are weak. They won't take ANY abuse and not at all appropriate for the digital modes (FT-8 et.al.). Nor is the power supply in the AL-811 appropriate for the digital modes. The CCS plate dissipation is only 45-watts while the ICCS rating is 65-watts. So, the AL-811 has three of these bottles with a maximum plate dissipation of only 195-watts (ICCS). RF Parts lists the price (Chinese???) between \$40 and \$80.

Addressing the 4CX250 tubes: They are everywhere, new and pulls. Sure, they are more expensive. RF Parts lists them around \$180 each. But at a plate dissipation of 250-watts each, you have a good solid rating of 500-watts with adequate cooling. This is certainly OK for the digital modes and a lot more. They also require much less drive for full output. They are FAR MORE ROBUST than the 811 tubes and used everywhere. I

ran two in P-P on 2-meters long ago. I could easily get 1.5 kW output with only 2.5-watts of drive without violating any ratings.

In spite of the cost of the 4CX250B tubes, I'd certainly and hands down go for the 4CX250B option.

- microHAM changed their USA vendor and some people are having trouble receiving repair support. Here are some comments from the microHAM Groups.io reflector. These comments are in a thread beginning with post #22456 should you wish to see the full text and who posted the comment.

Disclaimer: I do not endorse any product or necessarily agree or disagree with any stated opinion. I merely noted these comments for consideration in my own personal dealings. I also thought perhaps others might be interested in what some in our community think. After the reflector comments I give some personal thoughts about microHam and DX Engineering

- MicroHam says either WiMo or DX Engineering can service. Both those companies said they cannot.
- YMMV but my experience with DXE has been that their expertise and interest ends after your card is charged and the item put into the box. After that, you're on your own. Also, their 10 day return policy starts when your order is processed, not when it arrives at your QTH and only ends when the product is received, so unless you live within driving range, or have a personal airplane, good luck.
- *(Editor's note: this is in response to the previous comment)* I'd bet that a short note to K3LR would also generate action. He's a stand-up guy.
- If microHam changed distribution partners without some way to support hams that purchased them before the change, that's just unacceptable. If you haven't already, I'd suggest contacting the factory about the fact that both sources denied help and insist that they step up.
- I won't buy another MH product, and for that matter, I'm very selective about ordering anything from DXE since spending big bucks and then getting no or little informed support doesn't float my particular canoe.
- *(Editor's note: Apparently microHAM monitors and responds to posts on the reflector. I think Jozef is, or was, the owner of the company. As mentioned below Jozef has been responsive to a technical question I asked about a needed repair.)* Jozef OM7ZZ reached out to me and is helping me find US-based support to replace the screen.
- The screens on two of my MK3s faded, Joe helped me identify the replacement part #. They were not that expensive, and replacement was really straight forward.

My thoughts about microHAM. I own, or have owned, MicroKeyers, MicroKeyer II's, and a MK2R+ and like their products. I once asked about a repair to my MK2R+, but after exchanging emails with Josef OM7ZZ decided it was cheaper to replace the parts myself. I was told many years back there was a procurement issue involving optocoupler resulting in poor quality parts being substituted and installed. They were prematurely failing. After replacing the faulty parts myself the MK2R+ has worked well.

About DX Engineering. Although I no longer buy much new equipment, I have been a DX Engineering fan for over 10 years. I used to recommend them enthusiastically, but no longer do.

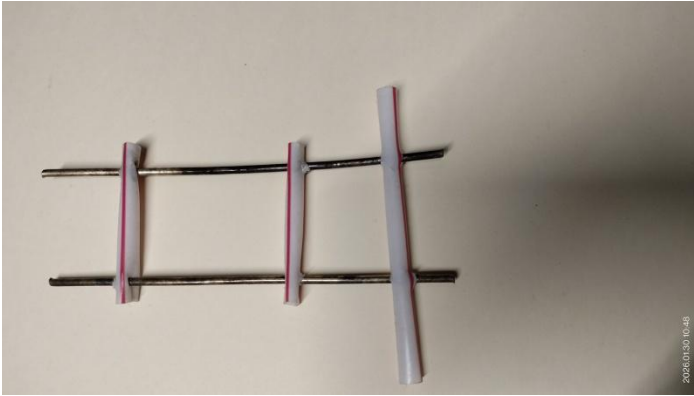
- While clearing old notes from my phone I found these...
 - You know what happens when you play a country tune backwards? You get your girl and truck back. You're not drunk anymore. And your dog comes back to life.
 - My wife likes Naguachampa incense.
 - "Contumacious". A talking head on the news used that word regarding a government official who was ignoring a Congressional subpoena. Jotted it down because I didn't know what it meant. Predominately used in the 1800's. 'Stubbornly or willfully disobedient to authority'. Who comes up with words like that? The dictionary says it originates from the Latin derivatives *con-* (with) and *tumere* (to swell). How did they get 'stubbornly or willfully disobedient' out of that combination?
 - From an audio book: How can 20-year-olds know so much? Because they have no experience to get in the way of their theories.
 - "Podcast The Distracted Brain Sanjay Gupta." That's a podcast I want to listen to. Forgot about it, but just looked up what it is about. Here's an excerpt from the description: She'll tell us what's actually going on in the brain when we're attentive and why we're less focused than we used to be. Professor Mark will also share tips for sharpening our attention spans that go beyond "just put down your phone." Glad I wrote that note to myself. I want to hear what she has to say.
 - Paraphrased lines from an audio book where a drug lord explains why even though he is rich he needs to keep making more money. 'You mean I should quit because I have enough money? I can't quit. I'm addicted to making money. I can't quit because being rich doesn't mean anything unless everyone else is poor.'
 - *(Editor's note: Joe Subich W4TV was the microHAM USA representative. He is still active and very helpful on the microHAM reflector)* My sentiments exactly. Drew is 100% correct (as usual) . Wimo screwed up Big Time when they screwed Joe over- he knew the product line inside out and offered copious, accurate and invaluable assistance to many of us who bought MH products. His customer service was top shelf and I still have my DKII and use it with my K3.

I won't buy another MH product, and for that matter, I'm very selective about ordering anything from DXE since spending big bucks and then getting no or little informed support doesn't float my particular canoe.

- *(Editor's note: Apparently microHAM is monitoring the thread because this comment came later in the thread)* Jozef OM7ZZ reached out to me and is helping me find US-based support to replace the screen.
- The screens on two of my MK3s faded, Joe helped me identify the replacement part #. They were not that expensive, and replacement was really straight forward.

- Ever had the head of a very small screw break off leaving the screw still in the hole? How do you get it out? I was lucky and a small pair of needle nose pliers worked. The RSGB Technical reflector had a thread on it. Here are some ideas people gave:
 - G0TLK: Use a #1 screw extractor and matching drill.
(Editor's Note: People obviously do that successfully, but I think I would probably end up drilling a bit off the center of those small screws. I'd probably end up with equipment damage. Glad people gave me some other ideas.)
 - WB4UIV: Try a reverse twist drill bit.
 - G10GDP: I once used a hammer and small flat bladed screwdriver as a chisel.
 - G4DBN: Use a small endmill to make a flat on the end of the remainder of the screw.
 - M0BMU: ... I have never had any luck with screw extractors. By their nature, the screw extractor is thinner and more delicate than the screw you are trying to extract with it, and is likely to leave you in a worse position than when you started! If you are lucky, and there is a bit of the shank of the screw projecting above the surface, it can be gripped with some hefty pliers and unscrewed, especially if the thread was not seized to begin with- but I guess probably not with countersunk screws. Otherwise, drilling the screw out has been the best approach for me. If available, the reverse twist drills suggested by WB4UIV can be successful in un-screwing the broken off part of the screw - with the drill bit turning the "wrong" way, the drill chuck tends to work loose, so do it up tight.
 - G8JNJ: Gripping the heads of chewed up screws, or the remaining shank, can also be achieved with small flush cutters (best to use an old pair), by firmly "biting" into the metal. This trick was taught to me when I was working as a young bench technician, and it's served me well over the following years, and has allowed me to cleanly remove many seized Japanese pan headed screws.
 - G8HUL: Just a thought; does the screw protrude enough through the hole so as to be accessed from below and simply screwed out?
 - G0TLK: Another solution is to drill and tap a new hole nearby, or maybe drill out the existing hole slightly over size and use a self tapping screw?
 - G4DBN: <https://brokenbolt.com/> do a couple of kits that includes a fancy bushing system and clamp that allows you to drill and tap a perfectly-centred 5 thou oversize hole in your snapped stud that leaves just the thread coil to pull out, then you can run a plug or spiral-flute tap to clean up the threads... The absolute best screw extractors I've used have a star-shaped hardened shaft that you hammer in to an undersized drilled hole. <https://ridgidtoolshop.co.uk/product/model-1-2-3-4-5-screw-extractor-set/> but they are only good for 6mm and up. If you wreck the end, you can grind them back many times. There are also square ones like this: <https://bowerstool.com/mayhew-5pc-square-screw-extractor-set-37332-1-5-screw-bolt-made-in-usa/> and <https://www.rapidonline.com/sealey-ak719-screw-extractor-set-5pc-square-type-89-1275> and the Proto J9500A.
- Want to build your own ladder line and need some spacers? Found this in a box of stuff I bought at an estate sale. Not sure how well it works, but a great idea. The SK was a Green

Beret in Vietnam so was undoubtedly used to innovating. I'd be sure to use some good glue to hold them in place on the metal.



N3FJP Tips:

None this month

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.)
 - New Radio: Added IC-7300MK2. Limited testing, report any issues.
 - Macro: For the following macros, {FREQ} {FREQROUND} {OTHERFREQ} {OTHERFREQROUND}, return a frequency with an "R" replacing the decimal point only in CW mode.
 - SPRINTSSB: Remove LB and NF multipliers, add NL multiplier.
 - Available Window: When the Points column is displayed, reduce the delay in updating the points column.
 - AMQ: Added warning messages for more than 8 columns and for points column cpu usage.
 - New Contest: Added EUDXC (replacement for it's UDC version EU_DXC)

- People are tired of Busted spots. So tired some don't use spots at all.

There is an option on the Telnet Filters page to Remove Busted Spots and another for Two Character Errors. I haven't used these yet, but it appears they work John K3CT, N1MM Development Team member wrote about the remove feature, "The feature does increase the loading on the computer, especially with an RCN CW telnet spot flow. During ARRL DX SSB there were nearly 500 busted spots removed on my computer." It also seems to me that you many lose some legitimate spots by having

such situations as N4XL and K4XL actually operating near to each other but N1MM thinking we are a busted spot. Here are what the N1MM manual says about them:

Remove Busted Spots

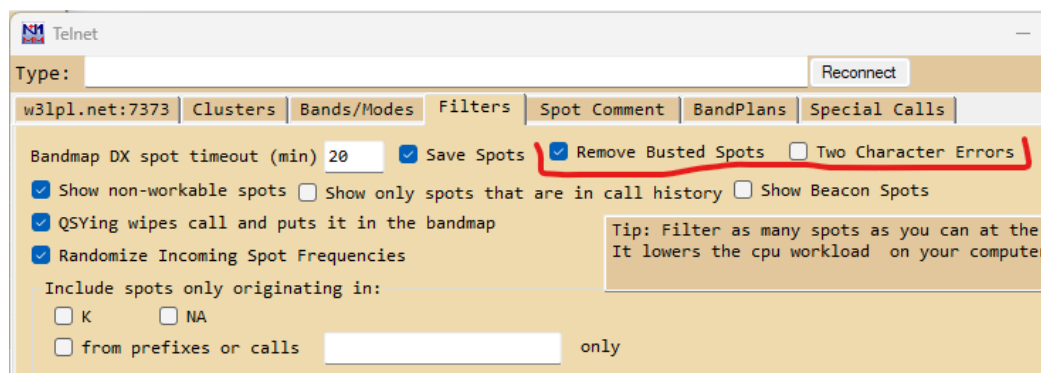
This checkbox can be used to remove busted spots from the spot table. These spots are identified by the program based on spotted callsigns appearing near the same frequency (within the tuning tolerance) and differing by one, or optionally two, characters. The busted call may arrive either before or after the correct call. The code trains to the contest spots and purges the history after 60 hours.

Two Character Errors

When this checkbox is checked, the busted call option will consider two-character errors as well as single character errors

Don't forget though that comment about finding and eliminating busted spots requires CPU time. If you are using a marginal computer you may find the problems caused by selecting the Remove Busted Spots are worse than leaving them alone and just dealing with them.

Another way to reduce busted spots is at the Cluster level before they are even sent to you. John K3TN wrote, "Turn on NOT SKIMBUSTED on any AR cluster or N1MM telnet button - search on N1MM skimbusted and you'll find info."



Upcoming Contests:

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

SFOTA Current Leaderboard:

Current Leaderboard

2026 OVERALL STANDINGS

CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1) WB4HRL	62	3778	35	0	445	4258
2) KE4EA	37	2402	323	2	0	2727
3) K3DNE	4	543	789	105	0	1437
4) WB3X	8	962	366	0	0	1328
5) K4FT	13	1002	9	0	210	1221
6) WN4AFP	11	735	426	7	0	1168
7) N4IIT	13	710	1	0	374	1085
8) K4QQG	8	16	908	0	114	1038
9) KG4IGC	4	0	131	0	775	906
10) KD4S	7	255	0	23	575	853
11) KS4YX	2	0	0	0	800	800
12) KZ3P	7	249	34	0	185	468
13) NV4T	12	0	153	44	217	414
14) NJ4F	1	0	0	0	365	365
15) K7OM	3	0	0	0	336	336
16) W4ANT	9	115	27	0	150	292
17) WA4LDU	8	26	80	62	98	266
18) K2SX	3	213	0	0	0	213
19) W1RPG	2	0	166	0	0	166
20) N4QI	5	107	51	0	0	158
21) NI7R	2	145	6	0	0	151
22) N2OG	1	0	101	0	0	101
23) K4AMA	4	71	0	0	0	71
24) KA2G	2	0	29	0	0	29
25) KS4VJ	1	0	0	9	0	9

2026 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS

CALL	CW QSO'S	CALL	SSB QSO'S	CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S	CALL	RTTY QSO'S
WB4HRL	3778	K4QQG	908	K3DNE	105	KS4YX	800
KE4EA	2402	K3DNE	789	WA4LDU	62	KG4IGC	775
K4FT	1002	WN4AFP	426	NV4T	44	KD4S	575
WB3X	962	WB3X	366	KD4S	23	WB4HRL	445
WN4AFP	735	KE4EA	323	KS4VJ	9	N4IIT	374
N4IIT	710	W1RPG	166	WN4AFP	7	NJ4F	365
K3DNE	543	NV4T	153	KE4EA	2	K7OM	336
KD4S	255	KG4IGC	131			NV4T	217
KZ3P	249	N2OG	101			K4FT	210
K2SX	213	WA4LDU	80			KZ3P	185
NI7R	145	N4QI	51			W4ANT	150
W4ANT	115	WB4HRL	35			K4QQG	114
N4QI	107	KZ3P	34			WA4LDU	98
K4AMA	71	KA2G	29				
WA4LDU	26	W4ANT	27				
K4QQG	16	K4FT	9				
		NI7R	6				
		N4IIT	1				

3830 Activity:

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
1010WinSSB				
02/08/26	K4QQG	Single Op	HP	6

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
ARRL Jan VHF				
01/19/26	K3DNE	Single Op-All Modes	HP	6,572
01/19/26	KD4S	Single Op-All Modes	HP	299
01/19/26	WA4LDU	SO3Band-All Modes	LP	3,619
AWT Feb 11				
02/11/26	WN4AFP	Single Op	LP	1
BARTG Sprint				
01/25/26	K7OM	Single Op	HP	3,528
01/25/26	KD4S	Single Op	HP	2,120
BC QSO				
02/09/26	K4AMA	Single OpCW	LP	100
02/09/26	K4FT	Single OpCW	LP	3,208
02/08/26	K4QQG	Single OpSSB	HP	198
02/09/26	KE4EA	Single OpMixed	HP	546
02/10/26	KZ3P	Single OpMixed	LP	5,588
02/09/26	N4QI	Single OpMixed	LP	690
02/08/26	NV4T	Single OpSSB	HP	560
02/09/26	W4IX	Single OpMixed	LP	18,144
02/10/26	WA4LDU	Single OpSSB	LP	482
02/09/26	WB4HRL	Single OpMixed	HP	1,278
02/10/26	WN4AFP	Single OpCW	LP	64
CQ160 CW				
01/25/26	AA5JF	Single Op Assisted	HP	44,718
01/25/26	K4FT	Single Op	LP	848
01/26/26	KE4EA	Single Op Assisted	HP	8,364
01/26/26	NN4SS	Single Op	HP	17,931
01/25/26	W4IX	Single Op Assisted	LP	144,564
01/25/26	WB3X	Single Op Assisted	LP	15,160
EU-DX				
02/09/26	W4IX	SOABCW	LP	41,840
MnQP				
02/08/26	AA5JF	Single OpMixed	HP	16,416
02/08/26	K1ZZI	Single OpCW	HP	15,288
02/09/26	K4AMA	Single OpCW	LP	216
02/08/26	K4FT	Single OpCW	LP	1,232
02/08/26	K4QQG	Single OpSSB	HP	442
02/09/26	KE4EA	Single OpMixed	LP	144
02/11/26	KZ3P	Single OpMixed	LP	384

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
02/08/26	N4QI	Single OpMixed	LP	220
02/08/26	NV4T	Single OpSSB	HP	1,426
02/10/26	WA4LDU	Single OpSSB	LP	1,440
02/08/26	WB3X	Single OpMixed	LP	2,610
02/09/26	WB4HRL	Single OpMixed	HP	442
02/10/26	WN4AFP	Single OpMixed	LP	4,288
NA Sprint CW Feb				
02/08/26	N4IIT	Single Op	LP	252
02/08/26	W4IX	Single Op	LP	14,050
NA Sprint SSB Feb				
02/01/26	AA5JF	Single Op	HP	10,149
02/01/26	K4QQG	Single Op	HP	1,326
02/01/26	NU4E	Single Op	HP	12,546
02/01/26	NV4T	Single Op	HP	2,015
02/01/26	W4ANT	Single Op	HP	288
02/01/26	W4IX	Single Op	LP	11,648
02/01/26	WN4AFP	Single Op	LP	828
NAQP SSB Jan				
01/18/26	K3DNE	Single Op Assisted	LP	179,103
01/18/26	K4QQG	Single Op	LP	20,330
01/18/26	KE4EA	Single Op Assisted	LP	36,344
01/18/26	KG4IGC	Single Op Assisted	LP	13,100
02/05/26	N2OG	Single Op	LP	6,262
01/18/26	N6YMM	Single Op	LP	7,140
01/23/26	NI7R	Single Op	LP	30
01/18/26	NU4E	Single Op Assisted	LP	235,914
01/18/26	NV4T	Single Op	LP	6,283
01/19/26	W1RPG	Single Op Assisted	LP	7,315
01/18/26	W4ANT	Single Op	LP	15,010
01/18/26	W4IX	Single Op Assisted	LP	302,634
01/18/26	WB3X	Single Op Assisted	LP	47,656
01/18/26	WB4HRL	Single Op	LP	620
01/18/26	WN4AFP	Single Op Assisted	LP	53,352
PACC				
02/15/26	KA2G	SO SSB	HP	50
RTTY WPX				
02/16/26	KD4S	SOAB	HP	67,308
02/15/26	KG4IGC	SOAB	LP	268,308

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
02/16/26	KS4YX	SOAB TB-Wires	LP	215,646
02/16/26	KZ3P	SOAB	LP	7,056
02/16/26	N4IQ	SOAB TB-Wires	HP	1,607,750
02/15/26	NJ4F	SOAB	HP	200,538
02/16/26	WB4HRL	SOAB	HP	148,302
VtQP				
02/09/26	K4AMA	Single Op	LP	1,125
02/09/26	K4FT	Single Op	LP	576
02/08/26	K4QQG	Single Op	HP	6
02/09/26	KE4EA	Single Op	HP	88
02/10/26	KS4VJ	Single Op	HP	20
02/11/26	KZ3P	Single Op	LP	240
02/09/26	N4QI	Single Op	LP	97
02/10/26	NV4T	Single Op	HP	40
02/09/26	W4IX	Single Op	LP	3,051
02/10/26	WA4LDU	Single Op	LP	126
02/09/26	WB3X	Single Op	LP	1,710
02/09/26	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	85
02/10/26	WN4AFP	Single Op	LP	792
WFD				
01/25/26	K4QQG	1H	LP	6
01/26/26	KE4EA	1H	LP	608
01/26/26	N4IIT	1H	LP	546
01/26/26	N4QI	1H	LP	356
01/28/26	W1RPG	1H	LP	33
01/30/26	W4ANT	1H	LP	17
01/26/26	WB4HRL	1H	HP	300
XE RTTY				
02/10/26	K7OM	Single Op	HP	9,538
02/09/26	KG4IGC	Single Op	LP	27,086
02/08/26	NV4T	Single Op	LP	49

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73 es QRT de N4XL